



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

Inter Office Communication

Community Development Department

TO: Eric Parra, Interim City Manager

FROM: Jennifer Villasenor, Community Development Director *JV*

DATE: January 30, 2024 (revised 4/30/24)

SUBJECT: SIGN CODE SURVEY

On November 15, 2022 the City Council (via H-item) directed the City Manager and City Attorney to review our Sign Code for compliance with recent Supreme Court rulings and provide an analysis of the City's noncommercial sign requirements contained in the Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance (HBZSO). The City Attorney's Office is in the process of completing a review of the Supreme Court rulings and will provide its findings in a separate memo. In addition, planning staff surveyed 10 cities in Orange County regarding noncommercial, real estate, and garage sale signs and a summary of the survey results is below.

Survey Question	Huntington Beach	Yes	No
Noncommercial signs allowed in public right-of-way?	Yes, but not in medians/dividers	2 (Irvine, CM)	8
Noncommercial signs display timeframe?	No sooner than 50 days prior to election but no provision regarding being on the upcoming ballot	7 (no provision regarding being on upcoming ballot)	2
Noncommercial signs allowed in commercial or industrial?	Yes	10	0
Real estate signs allowed in public right-of-way?	Yes, but not in medians/dividers; cannot obstruct right-of-way	0	10
Garage sale signs allowed in public right-of-way?	No	0	10

(Survey included Newport Beach, Irvine, Orange, Anaheim, Seal Beach, Westminster, Costa Mesa, Santa Ana, Laguna Beach, and Garden Grove.)

Based on the survey and review of other cities' codes, Huntington Beach noncommercial sign policies generally align with current practices of other surrounding Orange County cities. Regarding noncommercial signs in the public right-of-way, all surveyed cities either prohibit noncommercial signs within the public right-of-way or allow them with additional safety provisions. In addition to Huntington Beach, two other large cities allow

noncommercial signs within the right-of-way. These cities follow best practices to ensure noncommercial signs do not pose traffic or safety hazards. Since Huntington Beach already has these provisions in place, staff does not recommend revisions to the sign code based on current best practices. However, the question of whether to allow noncommercial signs in public rights-of-way as a matter of community policy is entirely up to the City Council.

Finally, although the City of Huntington Beach was the only city in the survey that permits real estate open house signs in the public right-of-way, the provisions of the HBZSO do not allow such signs to obstruct the sidewalk or right-of-way and are not permitted in medians, dividers, on street signs, or traffic control devices. Given that this code has been in place for many years, staff does not recommend amendments to the real estate sign provisions unless further directed by the City Council and outreach is done with the real estate community.

JV:RR:kdc

xc: Travis Hopkins, Assistant City Manager
Catherine Jun, Deputy City Manager