



## Sign Ordinances

The following sign ordinance summaries are designed as a guide for REALTORS® when selling homes in or near SILVAR's jurisdiction. If you have questions or need more detailed information, please contact the Government Affairs Department at 408-200-0108.

### Real Estate Signs are Prohibited on Public Property in the Following Jurisdictions

Town of Atherton  
City of Campbell  
City of East Palo Alto  
City of Menlo Park  
City of Mountain View  
City of Palo Alto  
Town of Portola Valley  
Unincorporated San Mateo County  
Redwood City  
City of Santa Clara  
Town of Woodside

### Right-of-way of all County Expressways or State Roads

### Real Estate Signs are Permitted with Restrictions on Public Property in the Following Jurisdictions

City of Cupertino  
City of Monte Sereno  
City of Los Altos  
Town of Los Altos Hills  
Town of Los Gatos  
City of Saratoga  
City of San Jose  
City of Sunnyvale

### Real Estate Signs are Unregulated on Public Property in the Following Jurisdictions

Unincorporated Santa Clara County

### San Mateo County

#### San Mateo County (Unincorporated Areas)

On-site signs: No permit needed. Signs only permitted on private property. Signs not to exceed 6 square feet in height.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

[San Mateo County Zoning Regulations](#) (Sec. 62940.4-7, Chapter 22, Article 1, Section 6400 (e))

#### Atherton

On-site signs: One sign on property 9 square feet in area permitted after filing a notice of erection with the city clerk of the town, which includes a brief description of the property on which the sign is to be located, consisting of a legal description of the property, an assessor's parcel number or a street address; a description of the sign, including dimensions thereof; and a statement as to whether there are any real estate signs presently on the property and the location of such signs in relation to the location of the proposed sign. No sandwich boards allowed.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

[Atherton Municipal Code](#) (Chapter 15.36)

#### East Palo Alto

On-site signs: one temporary real estate sign, not exceeding six square feet. Freestanding signs may not exceed four feet in height. No permit required. Cannot be erected for more than 12 months.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**East Palo Alto Municipal Code**(Chapter 8.08.020.C.7, Zoning Ordinance Section 6421.3 and 6421.4)

### **Menlo Park**

On-site signs: Not exceeding six square feet in total display area pertaining only to the prospective sale, rental or lease of the premises upon which displayed are permissible outdoor advertising.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Not allowed for real estate signs, only allowed in certain cases with a city permit.

**Menlo Park Municipal Code** (Chapter 16.92.050-070, 16.92.120)

### **Portola Valley**

On-site signs: No permit required, one per house. 4 square feet in area.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Portola Valley Town Code** (Chapter 18.40, 18.40.050)

### **Redwood City**

On-site signs: Unless a building permit or electrical permit is required, real estate signs that comply with the requirements of this Division may be displayed without obtaining a permit from the City. Each sign shall be removed within ten (10) days following the close of escrow on the sale or exchange of the property, the execution of a lease or the withdrawal of the property from the market, or the completion of the economic transaction proposed by the sign. The signs may not be placed in such a manner as to constitute a traffic hazard or an obstruction of view for drivers.

Freestanding signs are allowed for properties with four (4) or more units: maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet in area, fifteen feet (15') in height; and properties with less than four (4) units: maximum of twelve (12) square feet in area, six feet (6') in height. Wall or window signs can be a maximum of four (4) square feet in area, three feet (3') in height for properties with four (4) or more units; and a maximum of twelve (12) square feet in area for properties with less than four (4) units. A maximum of one of each type may be displayed per street frontage (four (4) units or more). One sign of either type is allowed for properties with less than four (4) units. Wall signs may be displayed above the building roof line no higher than thirty percent (30%) of the sign height (properties with six (6) or more units only).

Off-site signs: Portable sign must be less than nine square feet in area, three feet (3') in width, three feet (3') in height. Portable signs may be displayed at off-site locations so long as they are on private property with the property owner's consent. Portable signs: a maximum of four (4) signs total for both on-site and off-site locations. Portable signs may be displayed only when the property is offered for sale, lease or exchanged, and any additional days as designated by the director.

Illuminated signs: Not allowed on residential property, only allowed on nonresidential property with a permit.

**Redwood City Municipal Code** (Chapter 3, Article II, 3.90, 3.92, 3.117)

### **Woodside**

On-site signs: signs shall not exceed six square feet in area for each lot or parcel advertised. Signs advertising the sale or lease of more than one lot or parcel shall not exceed an aggregate of 50 square feet in area. No individual sign shall be larger than 12 square feet. A renewable permit valid for six months, with a maximum of a six-month extension, shall be secured from the Planning Director prior to placement.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Woodside Municipal Code** (Chapter 153.075, 153.08)

### **Santa Clara County**

#### **Santa Clara County (Unincorporated Areas)**

On-site signs: Advertising signs not exceeding eight (8) square feet in area, that pertain only to the sale, rental, or lease of the premises upon which the sign is located.

Off-site signs: Not regulated

Illuminated signs: Signs may be illuminated only with continuous (non-blinking) lighting. Signs may be illuminated only with: Neon tube lighting, if fully contained within a cabinet covered with a clear glass or plastic face, or if comprised of individual pan channel letters covered with a clear glass or plastic face; External lighting; Internal lighting; or Halolighting.

**Santa Clara County Zoning Ordinance (Article 4.40.070, 4.40.040)**

**Campbell**

On-site signs: not exceeding twelve square feet in aggregate total display area pertaining to the prospective sale, rental, or lease of real property. One sign per street frontage shall be allowed. In addition, one on-site open house sign is allowed per lot, provided the total allowable sign area is not exceeded, and the *sign* is removed at the end of each day of the open house event.

Off-site signs: open house signs to direct people to a property offered for sale, rent, or lease during an open house event are allowed provided they are located on private property, have the consent of the property owner where they are located, are limited to one per parcel, do not exceed twelve square feet in total sign area, and are removed at the end of each day of the open house event.

Illuminated signs: Internal or reflective light only allowed with permit for multi-unit residential or commercial property, all others prohibited.

**Campbell Municipal Code (Chapter 21.30.070, 21.030.040, 21.30.050, 21.30.080)**

**Cupertino**

On-site signs: sign is limited to four square feet per side. Freestanding un-illuminated sign shall not exceed six feet in height

Off-site signs: Each parcel with a unit for sale is permitted up to six off-site open house signs. Signs shall be no larger than four square feet of sign area per sign side with no more than two sides per sign, shall be no more than three feet tall measured from the grade of the sidewalk or adjacent ground level, shall have a maximum length of any part of the sign of three feet, shall not be located on the street or on street medians, shall not be illuminated, shall not be located on private property without the oral or written consent of the owner or other person entitled to possession of said property, shall maintain at least 36 inches of clear and continuous width along a sidewalk or pathway plus any other area needed for handicapped accessibility, shall not restrict in any way the safe vision of any vehicular or pedestrian traffic or obstruct any directional or safety sign or other sign permitted by the City, all parts of the sign shall be set back a minimum of eighteen inches from the face of the curb or from the edge of the street, bicycle or vehicle travel lane, whichever is the greatest distance from the edge of the street, bicycle or vehicle travel lane, and shall be removed by sunset.

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Cupertino Municipal Code (Chapter 19.104)**

**Los Gatos**

On-site signs: Sign may not exceed six square feet in area if the sign is in residential zone. This exception is only available when all or part of the premises is actually available for the transaction advertised.

Off-site signs: One double-faced open house sign per corner of an intersection or zoning plot. The signs shall not exceed an area of one (1) square foot per face and shall not be more than four (4) feet high. Open house signs shall contain no individual, or company advertising. Prior permission shall be obtained from the property owner if the sign is to be placed on a privately owned parcel. The signs shall be removed each day after the closing of the open house.

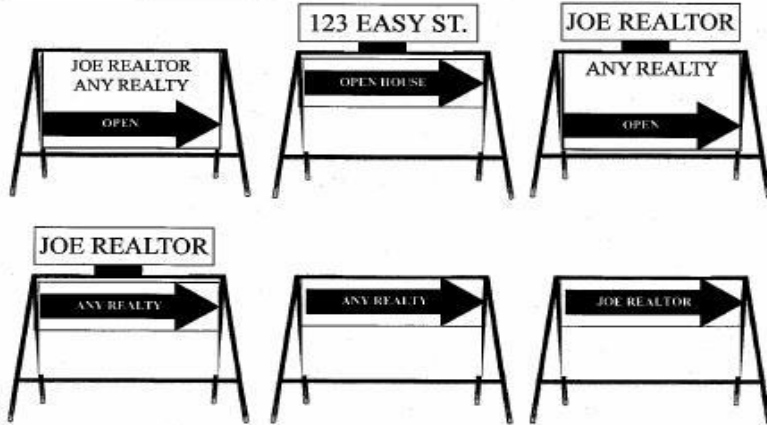
Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Los Gatos Town Code (Chapter 29.10.110)**

## ONLY ALLOWED IN LOS GATOS



## NOT ALLOWED AT ANY TIME IN LOS GATOS



Artwork by Tim Alston

### Los Altos

On-site signs: One non-illuminated for sale sign allowed per property. For sale sign can be no taller than six feet in height and the sign face no larger than four square feet. Up to 12 square feet of real estate signage is allowed per property, which allows for both an A-frame open house sign and a for sale sign to be placed on private property at the same time (Note: Open house signs are allowed on private property, but cannot be placed in the public right-of-way immediately in front of the property unless the property is at an intersection). There are no day or time restrictions for real estate signs on private property.

Public Property (offsite) open house signs:

- ⌚ Size: A-frame signs no larger than four square feet per face, plus two riders, can be no taller than 32 inches.
- ⌚ Location: Signs are prohibited on public property and right-of-ways, except they are allowed at intersections, so long as the sign does not obstruct pedestrian or bicycle access. Signs cannot be placed on any medians or in the street. Signs are prohibited on Foothill Expressway and El Camino Real.
- ⌚ Number per intersection: A single open house can only have one sign per intersection.
- ⌚ Time restrictions: Signs will only be permitted during the following days and times:
  - Friday: 9 AM-1:30 PM
  - Saturday, Sunday and Holidays: 11:30 AM – 6 PM

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

[Los Altos Municipal Code \(Chapter 9.26 and 14.68\)](#)

### Los Altos Hills

On-site signs: Signs up 2 by 3 or 6 square feet in display size.

Off-site signs: Directional advertising displays indicating the location of improved or unimproved parcels of land for sale that are having an "open house" are permitted on public property as long as they do not obstruct the right-of-way. These displays must be temporary in that they are not fixed in the ground or on any plant or structure. They may be put up no earlier than one (1) hour before the beginning of the "open house" and taken down no later than one (1) hour after the "open house" is concluded; provided that, in no event, may any sign be left up overnight. \$70 fine for violations.

Illuminated signs: Unshielded outdoor light sources which are directly visible from offsite are prohibited.

[Los Altos Hills Municipal Code \(Chapter 8-6.03, 6-5.01\(L\)\)](#)

### **Monte Sereno**

On-site signs: One non-illuminated sign may be erected on each street frontage for any lot or building which serves solely to advertise the sale, lease or rental of or an offer to build to suit on the premises where the sign is located, provided the sign does not exceed six (6) square feet in area in a residential zone. This exemption is only available when all or part of the premises is actually available for the transaction advertised.

Off-site signs: Non-illuminated, off-site, portable signs directing customers to the location of an open house which is for sale are permitted, unlimited in total number, but limited to one double faced sign per corner of an intersection or on a privately owned parcel. The signs shall not exceed an area of one (1) square foot per face and shall not be more than four (4) feet high. Open house signs shall contain no individual, or individual company advertising. Prior permission shall be obtained from the property owner if the sign is to be placed on a privately owned parcel. The signs shall be removed each day after the closing of the open house. Open house signs are an exception to the rule prohibiting off-premises signs and signs on public property.

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Monte Sereno Municipal Code (Chapter 10.13)**

### **Mountain View**

On-site signs: For homes in the R-1 district (zoning classification of parcel), one sign, maximum of two faces, 4 sq. ft. per face, maximum ht. = 5 ft. unless placed in window, unlighted. R-2 Two signs, max. two faces, 4 sq. ft. per face, maximum ht. = 5 ft. unless placed in window, unlighted. R3, R3D, R4, one sign, maximum area = 12 sq. ft., attached to building below eave line or 6 sq. ft. if added to freestanding site sign, unlighted. R2M, one sign, maximum area = 12 sq. ft., attached flat to principal building below eave line, unlighted. One "open house" sign not exceeding three (3) square feet is permitted provided it is located on the particular premises which is for sale, lease or rent, and posted only when a salesperson is present.

Off-site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Mountain View Municipal Code (Article A36.38)**

### **Palo Alto**

On-site signs: On residential parcels signs may not exceed six square feet. All other districts maximum sign area is based on frontage size.

Off site signs: Prohibited

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Palo Alto Municipal Code (Chapter 16.20, 16.20.100(f)(5))**

### **Saratoga (New Ordinance as of June 4, 2012)**

On-site signs: One temporary on-site sign may be located on a property that is actively marketed for sale or lease, provided that:

- ε The sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height.
- ε The sign shall not include balloons, ribbons, streamers, or other attention-getting devices.

Off-site signs: Any number of temporary off-site signs (including, but not limited to real estate open house signs) are allowed in residential districts, provided that:

- ε No individual sign shall exceed two (2) square feet in area and three (3) feet in height.
- ε No more than two identical signs per intersection shall be displayed.
- ε The signs shall only be displayed between dawn and dusk.
- ε No sign shall include balloons, ribbons, streamers, or other attention-getting devices.
- ε No off-site signs shall be located on property without the permission of the property owner.
- ε No sign shall be located on any median, street, travel lane or on any sidewalk where it impedes pedestrian travel.

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**Saratoga Municipal Code (Article 15.30)**

### **Sunnyvale**

On-site signs: A real estate sign shall consist of a banner or temporary ground sign and may be located in any zoning district. Real estate signs advertising developed residential property for sale or lease do not require a permit provided the following provisions are met: each sign face does not exceed twenty square feet in area per sign face or forty square feet in total sign area; there is a maximum of one such sign per street frontage; for a temporary ground sign, it must not exceed six feet in height and may not extend into a required corner of driveway vision triangle; and such signs are removed within ten days after the advertised property has been sold (defined as close of escrow), rented, leased or removed for market. Real estate signs advertising developed nonresidential property or vacant, undeveloped real property for sale or lease do not require a permit provided that the following provisions are met: each sign face does not exceed forty square feet in area or eighty square feet of total sign area; there is a maximum of one sign face

per street frontage; and such signs are removed within ten days after the property has been sold (defined as close of escrow), rented or leased.

Off-site signs: An open house directional sign may consist of a portable sign (A-frame). Balloons are not permitted to be attached to the sign. An open house directional sign may be placed upon privately owned property in any zoning district without a permit, provided the following conditions are met: the sign shall not exceed three square feet in area or be taller than three feet in height; the sign shall not be displayed except between the hours of nine a.m. and seven p.m. of the same day; the sign may not be displayed on the portion of the public right-of-way that is used for pedestrian or vehicular traffic or movement, or for any other public purpose requiring physical use of the right-of-way.

Illuminated signs: Illumination of Signs. The color and thickness of glass, plastic or other translucent materials used in construction of all signs, as well as the brightness of bulbs or other illumination elements, shall be designed in such a manner so as to avoid excessive illumination and glare. Shedding significant quantities of light onto adjacent properties shall be considered excessive illumination. Real estate signs are classified as temporary signs, which are exempt from permitting requirements for lighting.

**Sunnyvale Municipal Code (Chapter 19.44.125)**

### **Santa Clara**

On-site signs: Sign shall not exceed four square feet per parcel of real property upon which such is located. In residential zoning districts such signs shall pertain only to the sale, lease or rental of the property upon which the sign is located.

Off-site signs: Open house and directional signs not allowed.

Illuminated signs: It is unlawful for any person to maintain any sign or lighting which creates a glare nuisance to surrounding or adjacent private and public property.

**Santa Clara Municipal Code (Chapter 18.80)**

### **San Jose**

On-Site signs: One sign that shall not exceed 8 square feet in area.

Off-site signs: May display one temporary portable A-frame sign in the adjacent public right-of-way, subject to the following conditions:

- ε Sign shall be displayed on the park strip adjacent to the parcel as follows:
  - Sign shall be placed in the area between the end of the curb return and that point along the curb line that is 15 feet distant from the end of the curb return
  - Sign shall not be placed
    - In any curb return
    - In any bus stop zone
    - Within two feet of any driveway or curb cut access ramp
    - Within eighteen inches of any curb where parking is allowed.
    - Attached in any manner to any other structure on the park strip such as, but not limited to trees, lampposts, utility poles, utility cabinets, street or traffic signs, benches, hydrants, and mailboxes
- ε Sign shall not exceed five square feet in area per sign side
- ε Sign shall not exceed three feet in height
- ε Sign may be displayed up to six hours during daylight hours
- ε Sign shall not be illuminated
- ε If the park strip adjacent to the residential parcel is not wide enough to display the sign, or if there is no park strip

Illuminated signs: Prohibited

**San Jose Municipal Code (Chapter 23.04)**