



City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

☒ CITY COUNCIL ☐ NPUA ☐ HACN

☒ Regular ☐ Special

Meeting Date: July 28, 2026

Title: Adopt Resolution 2026-32 establishing Temporary Noncommercial Election Sign Parameters consistent with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requirements, incorporating the City's existing Corner Sight-Distance Policy, and authorizing the City Clerk to administer the policy and receive copies of the Caltrans Statement of Responsibility.

Background: During each election season, questions routinely arise regarding temporary political signs. The Needles Municipal Code does not currently contain a comprehensive, stand-alone policy establishing uniform parameters for these signs. To provide clear and consistent guidance to candidates, campaigns, property owners, members of the public, and City staff, the City desires to adopt a formal policy. The proposed resolution establishes clear parameters by incorporating applicable Caltrans requirements and the City's existing corner sight-distance standard.

California Business and Professions Code section 5405.3 establishes conditions under which a temporary political sign may qualify for an exemption from certain provisions of the State Outdoor Advertising Act. Under those conditions, a sign must encourage a particular vote in a scheduled election, be placed no sooner than ninety (90) days before the election, be removed within ten (10) days after the election, be no larger than thirty-two (32) square feet, and be covered by a Statement of Responsibility filed with Caltrans.

Caltrans also advises that temporary political signs may not be placed within the right-of-way of a state highway or, where applicable, within six hundred sixty (660) feet of the edge of and visible from the right-of-way of a classified landscaped freeway. Unauthorized signs within Caltrans jurisdiction may be removed, and the responsible party may be billed for removal costs.

The City currently uses a political sign placement diagram that requires a clear sight-distance triangle at street corners. Beginning at the end of the curb radius, thirty (30) feet is measured in both directions, and the area between the two points must remain clear of political signs so motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians have an unobstructed view.

The proposed resolution consolidates the applicable Caltrans parameters and the City's existing corner sight-distance standard into one Temporary Noncommercial Election Sign Policy. The policy is intended to provide candidates, committees, campaigns, measure proponents and opponents, property owners, and City staff with a single, clear reference for the placement, maintenance, and removal of temporary election signs.

To avoid duplicative filing requirements, the proposed policy uses the same Caltrans Statement of Responsibility for both filings. The responsible party must file the completed form with Caltrans and provide a copy of that same completed form to the City Clerk before placing temporary noncommercial election signs within the City. No separate City Statement of Responsibility form would be required. The City Clerk's receipt of the copy is ministerial and does not constitute a sign permit, approval of a particular location, or a determination that a sign complies with all applicable laws.

The proposed resolution attaches the Temporary Noncommercial Election Sign Policy as Exhibit "A," the City's existing corner sign-placement diagram as Exhibit "B," and the current Department of Transportation Statement of Responsibility for Temporary Political Signs, DOT ODA-0027 (Rev. 04/2025), as Exhibit "C." The City Clerk would be authorized to distribute the policy, provide the then-current Caltrans form and filing instructions, and update election-specific administrative information that does not alter the substantive standards adopted by the Council.

The resolution does not amend the Needles Municipal Code, create a new sign permit or exemption, or authorize signs on City property or within a public right-of-way. Temporary election signs must continue to

comply with Needles Municipal Code section 104.17.4 and all other applicable requirements, including property-owner permission, visibility and access protections, lawful placement, maintenance, and timely removal. The Caltrans thirty-two-square-foot standard is a maximum for purposes of the state exemption and does not override any smaller or more restrictive local standard.

Fiscal Impact: There is no significant direct fiscal impact associated with adoption of the resolution. Administration of the policy and receipt of Statement of Responsibility copies would be performed using existing City Clerk Department resources. Any enforcement, removal, abatement, or cost recovery would occur only under existing Municipal Code or other lawful authority.

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution 2026-32 establishing Temporary Noncommercial Election Sign Parameters consistent with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requirements, incorporating the City's existing Corner Sight-Distance Policy, and authorizing the City Clerk to administer the policy and receive copies of the Caltrans Statement of Responsibility.

Submitted By: Candace Clark, City Clerk

City Manager Approval: Patrick J. Martinez **Date:** 7/24/2026

Other Department Approval (when required): _____ **Date:** _____