

Department of Public Works

Joshua Palmer, County Engineer
719-520-6460
Chuck Brown Transportation Complex
3275 Akers Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
www.ELPasoCo.com

Board of County Commissioners
Holly Williams, District 1
Carrie Geitner, District 2
Stan VanderWerf, District 3
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4
Cami Bremer, District 5

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 01 November 2023

SUBJECT: Private Signage in Unincorporated El Paso County

FAQ Sheet for Private Signage in Unincorporated El Paso County

Signs are an important part of economic vitality and communication. This information will assist residents, organizations, and private property owners to correctly place any private signage (“private signs”) in unincorporated El Paso County. El Paso County’s residents, organizations, and private property owners can expect equal treatment regarding signs and other communications, regardless of content.

Where is El Paso County Right of Way?

Generally, along most El Paso County roadways, the right-of-way is at least sixty feet in width or approximately 30 feet from the centerline of the roadway in residential areas and is larger for other roadways. Right-of-way varies in width between roads and may vary in width along different segments of the same road. In most cases, right-of-way width is greater than the surface of the roadway and does not end at the edge of pavement, back of curb, or back of sidewalk. The county does not have right-of-way maps, but there are several ways to help determine the location of a right-of-way line including:

- Locating property monuments on a property. When a property is subdivided there are typically surveyor pins or rebar placed at the property corners indicating the location of the property line in relationship with the right-of-way.
- Reviewing the County Assessor’s website. The property lines are not always accurate in relationship with the aerial maps, but they often are able to provide general guidance.
- Reviewing existing surveys of the property obtained with title work or, if the property is part of a subdivision, its subdivision plat. Recorded surveys and subdivision plats are typically provided with title work when you purchase property or are available for purchase from the El Paso County Clerk and Recorder’s Office.
- Engaging a licensed professional land surveyor to complete a land survey and, if appropriate, a title search of the public records in the Clerk and Recorder’s Office. This is an accurate and reliable method to locate right-of-way, property boundaries and encumbrances on the property.

What are the Limitations on Private Signs Placed in El Paso County Right of Way?

El Paso County Department of Public Works’ primary focus is to maintain and keep County Highways safe. If a sign or group of signs are identified as posing a safety hazard, interfering with traffic or pedestrian flow, damaging County right of way, interfering with maintenance activities, having been permanently installed/affixed, or causing or contributing to a violation of state or local law or regulation, authorized County staff will determine if the sign is located within the right-of-way and may remove the sign immediately or contact any individual believed to be associated with the sign to have it removed within a provided timeframe. The County may impose additional content neutral right of way sign regulations in the future.

Signs removed by El Paso County Department of Public Works will be placed in one of the Department's maintenance yards. El Paso County Department of Public Works will make a reasonable effort to contact someone associated with the sign to coordinate a time for the sign to be retrieved. If a sign is not claimed within 30 days, it will be disposed of.

Who do I Contact About a Private Sign Violating El Paso County's Limitations?

If you observe a sign that you believe creates a traffic hazard which could, or does, pose an immediate threat to the health, safety and welfare of others, please call 911. If you believe a sign placed within County right-of-way violates this guidance without creating an immediate threat to the health, safety and welfare of others, you can submit an online Customer Service Request to the Department of Public Works through our Citizen Connect process <https://publicworks.elpasoco.com/customer-service/>. Citizens Connect will allow you to follow the progress of your request, or call (719) 520-6460 and leave a detailed message.

Can a Private Citizen Remove a Sign?

El Paso County cannot give legal advice to private citizens. Citizens removing signs may expose themselves to safety concerns, criminal legal exposure, or civil legal exposure in the removal of signs from public or private property.

Signs on Private Property or Within Other Jurisdictions:

Private signs can be placed on private property only with the owner's approval. All signs placed on private property in unincorporated El Paso County are regulated by the Land Development Code which is administered through the El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department. Many private properties at intersections also have sight easements for intersections that may not allow signs to be located within certain areas of private property. If you have a question regarding placing or otherwise constructing signs on private property, call the El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department at (719) 520-6300 and ask to speak with a planner, or review the El Paso County Land Development Code, linked here:

https://library.municode.com/co/el_paso_county/codes/land_development_code.

Municipalities, Homeowners Associations (HOAs), and Special Districts such as metropolitan districts may also have regulations that affect signage on private property. You will want to investigate laws, rules, and regulations of any municipality, HOA, or District having jurisdiction prior to placing any signs on private property. Additionally, the Colorado Department of Transportation ("CDOT") has jurisdiction for right of way along state highways; you will want to consult CDOT's regulations prior to placing signs on CDOT right of way.



Joshua Palmer, PE