



NATIONAL SIGN PLAZAS

How to Eliminate Temporary Sign Clutter While Supporting Home Builders



Before



After



Eliminating Rogue Signs in High-Growth, Pro-Growth Cities

A high-growth, pro-growth city is an inviting place to live – as long as growth is managed. Few things signal a lack of management to potential residents like rights-of-way cluttered with temporary home builder signage.

Rogue or snipe signs can really clutter your streets, especially in a housing boom. Left unchecked, these signs create a broken window effect on your streets and deter home buyers from exploring your community.

There's a catch though...

More than 50% of traffic to new home communities comes from directional signs. Not digital ads. Not social media. Physical signage!

The NSP Homebuilder Directional Sign Program is a fully-managed no-cost solution that helps cities and counties rein in chaotic home builder signage without alienating the builders upon whom your economy relies.

- Generate revenue for your community – at no cost to you.
- Welcome visitors with signage bearing your civic brand.
- Simplify enforcement of temporary signage codes.

In this paper, we'll explore the challenges of unchecked temporary signage and the benefits of uniform signage programs like the NSP Homebuilder Directional Sign Program.





Eliminating Rogue Signs in High-Growth, Pro-Growth Cities

Codes and Clutter: The Cost of Rogue Signs

Did you know that the City of Houston spends \$282,000 annually removing illegal signs?

The city's three-person sign removal crew eliminates 30,000 signs annually. Additionally, Harris County has deputized 246 volunteer "sign rangers" who educate local businesses and (when necessary) enforce sign codes in unincorporated areas.

Texas state lawmakers are considering increasing penalties for repeat offenders to make hanging illegal signs hurt to the point it isn't worth it.

Now, these numbers reflect the cost of managing all kinds of rogue signs (not just builder signs) but they speak to the broader expense of sign code enforcement.

Uniform signage programs transform sign management costs with a new revenue source thanks to administration fees paid by builders for placement on attractive sign plazas.

Over the last five years, NSP has remitted more than \$2.5 million to cities and counties. Those funds have been reinvested in code enforcement, wayfinding systems, parks and recreation signage, and other programs.

** Houston Chronicle, "Illegal signs cost Houston \$300K yearly. 'Sign rangers,' new legislation are fighting back", March 20, 2023.*

Case Study » Waxahachie, Texas

Population growth: 22,000 in 2000; 48,000 in 2023

As its population doubled in just 20 years due to Dallas-Fort Worth's expansion, the City of Waxahachie faced a problem – chaotic and unsightly homebuilder signs.

Today, the NSP Homebuilder Directional Sign Program mitigates Waxahachie's rogue signage challenge. It also supports the city's new wayfinding and placemaking system that captures I-35 traffic and directs it toward points of interest in the city.

Waxahachie city manager Michael Scott called our program: "A unique sign solution to the growing problem of homebuilder 'snipe' signs."





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Win-Win Solution: Partnering with Home Builders

More than 50% of home buyers follow directional signs to a new community. That's right. Less than half come from online or print advertising.

Why? Because people don't shop for the right home builder brand. They don't say, "I really want an ABC Home." Instead, people shop for the right community. They say, "I want to live in this City" and then they browse.

That's not to say that digital marketing serves no purpose. It's a key brand awareness channel. It just requires directional signage to connect brand awareness efforts to direct response (i.e. foot traffic) in the physical environment.

Uniform sign plazas support your builders' marketing efforts, aid potential residents in browsing your community, and protect your streets from clutter.

"It's an excellent win-win solution," said Peter Schwartz, CEO of the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago. "The benefits of the NSP program to homebuilders and municipalities alike are numerous."



Case Study » Walton County, Georgia

Population growth: 61,000 in 2000; 101,000 in 2023

New home construction is back in Walton County ... and so is the NSP Homebuilder Directional Sign Program.

During its last housing boom, Walton County adopted our program to curb temporary home builder signs. When the county's growth leveled off in the 2010s, we removed our sign plazas.

With construction back on the rise, we've installed 21 new sign plazas to help the county to rein in unsightly temporary signage.

Walton joins Cherokee, Douglas, and Cobb counties and numerous municipalities as adoptees of our program in metro Atlanta.



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Civic Branding: Showcasing Your Community

As stated above, people don't shop for home builder brands. They shop for communities. They select your community for its schools, career opportunities, civic amenities, etc., and then follow directional signage to new home developments in the area.

And, yet, the vast majority of directional signage focuses on the builder's brand and offers – and largely ignores the civic brand.

Uniform sign plazas flip the script by showcasing the civic brand through visual plaza toppers first and then assisting traffic in navigating the environment.

Whereas temporary directional signs focus on the home builder brand, uniform sign plazas focus on the community.

"This has been one of those rare opportunities where our City has taken a risk in order to solve an ongoing problem and has pleased everyone in the process," said Jim Bechtol, Community Development Director for the City of Leander, Texas.

Future Residents: Supporting Home Buyers

For home buyers, visiting a new residential development is a sociological activity largely made up of impromptu decisions. Remember, the home buying process typically begins with semi-passive browsing of developments based on a desire to live in your city.

Cluttered street corners create a broken window effect on your streets and deter home buyers from further exploration of your community.

What's even worse? Getting lost!

In especially high-growth areas, many roads are so new that they don't yet appear in Google Maps and other GPS navigation systems.

Directional signage prevents buyers from getting lost, giving up, and taking their wallets with them.



Case Study » Queen Creek, Arizona

Population growth: 3,800 in 2000; 79,000 in 2023

In 2022, the Town of Queen Creek grew faster than any other municipality in Arizona – continuing a boom dating back to the early 2000s.

That growth led to both unsightly temporary home builder signs and a new roadway that diverted traffic away from Queen Creek's historic downtown.

Today, NSP's sign plazas declutter the town's streets while also tying into and funding a new wayfinding and placemaking system that helps visitors locate downtown businesses.



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“It’s an excellent win-win situation.”

- Peter Schwartz, CEO, Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago

Since 1997, National Sign Plazas has rescued high-growth pro-growth cities nationwide from the blight of temporary home builder signage.

The NSP Homebuilder Directional Sign Program is a fully-managed no-cost solution that protects your streets from chaotic weekend and offsite home builder signage – without alienating the builders upon whom your economy relies.

- Rein in chaotic signage without alienating builders.
- Generate revenue for your community – at no cost to you.
- Welcome visitors with signage bearing your civic brand.
- Simplify enforcement of temporary signage codes.

Endorsed by the residential development community, our program is designed as an added value to your city’s community development goals, allowing your city to build revenue for investment in other beautification efforts such as public art, landscaping, and wayfinding.

No wonder Waxahachie city manager Michael Scott called our program: “A unique sign solution to the growing problem of homebuilder ‘snipe’ signs.”



Learn more at www.nsp.biz or call (888) 982-1234.