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REGIONAL SIGN BY-LAW
ELECTION SIGNS

(Regional Council at its meeting on June 22, 2006 referred the following Clause to the Committee's meeting of September 6, 2006.)

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends:

- 1. The recommendations contained in the following report, June 1, 2006, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be adopted with the exception of Recommendation 1 (b) which should be replaced with the following:**

“1. (b) Election signs shall be permitted only from nomination closing date immediately prior to any election and shall be removed within 72 hours following the close of polls on Election Day.”; and
- 2. Staff be requested to prepare a report to the June 22, 2006 Regional Council meeting regarding issues raised by the City of Vaughan.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional sign by-law (R-1232-2000-074) be amended to include all of the following provisions with respect to election signs:
 - (a) No candidate shall place more than one sign per corner of each permitted intersection.
 - (b) Election signs shall be permitted only during a four (4) week period immediately prior to any election and shall be removed within 72 hours following the close of polls on Election Day.
 - (c) The requirement for a permit and fee shall be waived for election signs.
2. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary amendment to the by-law.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to address the issue of election signs on Regional roads during municipal, provincial and federal elections.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Regional Sign By-law

On August 31, 2000, Regional Council enacted by-law no. R-1232-2000-074 to regulate signs on Regional roads. This by-law permits placement of signs on Regional roads subject to certain limitations, including the following:

- Signs are permitted only at intersections, not along the length of the road allowance.
- Signs are prohibited at certain designated intersections.
- Signs are permitted only between the hours of 7:00 p.m. on Friday evenings and 6:00 a.m. on Monday mornings.
- No more than 12 signs are permitted for each person or business.
- Each sign requires a permit and payment of a fee of \$100 per sign.
- Provision of public liability insurance of \$5,000.

The by-law does not include any special provisions or exemptions for election signs. Therefore, they are currently subject to the same criteria as any other sign including the permit and insurance requirements.

Historically, Regional Council has permitted election signs for a limited time during election campaigns. A resolution is passed prior to the election to provide for temporary exemptions from the by-law. Generally, candidates have been required to comply with the specifications set out in the by-law but the permit requirements and fees have been waived.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Transportation and Works staff are already receiving inquiries about the Region's policy on election signs in anticipation of the 2006 municipal elections. Although Regional Council typically passes a resolution supporting placement of election signs during election periods, there is no formal Regional policy. It is recommended that the Region's sign by-law now be amended to include special provisions for election signs and that the criteria established in previous years should be applied. Accordingly, the following amendment is recommended:

- Election signs will be subject to compliance with the specifications set out in the by-law.
- Candidates will only be permitted to erect signs during the month preceding the election and all signs should be removed within 72 hours following Election Day.
- The requirement for a permit and fee will be waived.
- Candidates will not be restricted to 12 signs each, but will, however, be restricted to placing one sign per corner of each intersection.

- Election signs will not be included in the maximum number of signs permitted at intersections.

It is recommended that all other signs be required to comply with the by-law. To compensate existing permit holders for the increased number of permitted signs at intersections, it is also recommended that existing permits be extended for one month, at no charge to the permit holder.

It is proposed that these special provisions for election signs be incorporated in the Region's by-law and that the by-law be amended accordingly.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There is no local municipal impact associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

The existing Regional sign by-law does not make any special provision for election signs. Historically, Council has passed a resolution on each occasion exempting election signs from the permit and fee requirements of the by-law. It is recommended that these provisions be incorporated into the Region's sign by-law and the by-law be amended accordingly.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.