

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: October 4, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Tracey Arthur, Director, Corporate Administration

SUBJECT: White Rock Sign Bylaw, No. 1923, Amendment No. 4, Bylaw 2021 No. 2380
(Election Signage)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the October 4, 2021 corporate report from the Director of Corporate Administration, titled “White Rock Sign Bylaw, No. 1923, Amendment No. 4, Bylaw 2021, No. 2380 (Election Signage).”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Placement of political signage is permitted and administered through the City’s sign bylaw. Each election there are questions regarding signage, where it is permitted to be located, where it is not, the size of signage, etc. White Rock Sign Bylaw, No. 1923, Amendment No. 4, Bylaw 2021 No. 2380 is being brought forward to help clarify permitted locations and proposes a fee to candidates in the event their signage is found, following a written warning, in an unpermitted location.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Each election campaign brings signage issues that utilizes staff resources, such as the Chief Election Officer, Corporate Administration, and the City’s Bylaw Enforcement Officers in addressing and following up on numerous complaints related to campaign signage issues and ensuring that the Bylaw is complied with.

The main concerns with campaign signage appear to be location, types of signs and dimensions. On election day itself the location issue ramps up as further legislation comes into effect whereby no candidate signage is permitted within 100 meters of the voting building site.

Most candidates and their campaign teams try and abide by the Bylaw; however, there are usually many circumstances where the regulations are not followed. When signs are erected and not in compliance with the Bylaw the City’s Bylaw Enforcement staff will retrieve signs and bring them back to the City’s Engineering and Operations Works Yard. For larger signs, the candidate will be contacted and asked to remove or move the sign. Most candidates will comply and ensure their campaign team are aware of the bylaw regulations.

Campaign signage is permitted to be in place thirty (30) days before general voting day and must be removed within seven (7) days of general voting day.

Another issue occurs following the election, whereby signage is not removed within seven (7) days following the election.

From the time campaign signage is permitted the City's Bylaw Enforcement spend a large amount of time enforcing, collecting, and communicating regarding the sign Bylaw.

Often, inquires arise related to repeat offenders and staff are questioned as to why the City permits such infractions. The month of the election is an incredibly busy time for both the candidates and City staff. The City's Bylaw Enforcement Officers do their best to collect illegal signs when met with obvious infractions and to follow up on specific complaints. The election is an important process, however, all other regular day to day enforcement duties still need to be carried out during this time. Repeated infractions of campaign signage impact staff's ability to carry out these other duties.

A consideration to address reoccurring issues with campaign signage would be to charge for sign infractions. This would be done when campaign signage does not comply with the sign Bylaw.

The following new provision in the Bylaw outlines steps prior to a sign infraction being charged:

Any political sign that does not comply with the sign bylaw will be removed by the City and the candidate will be contacted with a written warning via email. If political signage from the same candidate is found in the same prohibited location following 24 hours of the written warning being issued may result in a ticket and fine being issued in accordance with the City's Ticketing Bylaw.

To facilitate this there must be a corresponding amendment made to the City's Ticketing for Bylaw Offences Bylaw, 2011, No. 1929 (Attachment B). It is proposed to be amended as follows:

Designated Offense	Section	Penalty
Failure to comply with bylaw requirements in regard to political signs	Part 6, Sec. 10	\$50 1 st offense; \$100 2 nd offense or subsequent offense.

Staff surveyed other municipalities that impose penalties for campaign sign offenses. Many that responded don't have this provision in their bylaws however, the following noted they do:

City of Burnaby	We collect all signs that are non-compliant with our bylaw and the party candidate is charged \$300 per sign / infraction. If the party or candidate choose to retrieve the sign(s) after it is collected there is a \$50 storage/collection fee.
City of Port Coquitlam	Election Sign Bylaw 3810 Fine \$150 and if paid within 30 days \$100
City of Surrey	Election Sign Bylaw 13656, failure to comply may result in financial penalties along with removal of the sign(s) by the City. Penalties of not less than \$100 and not more than \$2,000 for each offense.
City of Vancouver	Memo Re: Information Regarding Election / Political Signage in the City of Vancouver. The city is authorized to charge for the removal of unlawfully placed signs on City streets. The impoundment charge ranges

	from \$100 to \$300 per sign or display based on the amount of staff and equipment required for removal.
--	--

Other concerns related to campaign signage include:

- Permitting signage “*on road ends and unopened road allowances.*” There are many road ends and unopened road allowances throughout the City however there is no succinct mapping to provide candidates for this provision. Having this statement in the Bylaw has led to confusion by the candidates, their volunteers and the public. It is proposed this provision be removed from the Bylaw.
- Campaign signage placed in large quantities on vacant buildings / storefronts and properties was an issue in 2018. New wording is proposed for the Bylaw as follows:
Political Signs shall not be placed on any vacant building(s) / storefront(s) and properties without written permission of the property owner or representative.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

Director of Corporate Administration and the Director of Planning and Development Services.

CONCLUSION

Amendments to the City's Sign Bylaw and Ticketing for Bylaw Offences have been brought forward for Council consideration. Campaign signage is an area that takes much staff time to address due to the number of complaints and non-compliance issues with the Bylaw related to signage placement, location and dimensions. The expectation by the candidates and the public is for a clear understanding of the Bylaws and potential penalties that will help to provides an environment that supports fair campaign signage opportunities for all. Amending the Sign Bylaw as described and incorporating penalties will assist in providing stronger clarity and signage compliance thereby limiting the number of complaints, call outs and collection related to signage that staff have had to address in the past.

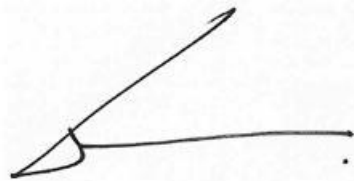
Respectfully submitted,



Tracey Arthur
Director, Corporate Administration

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendation of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: White Rock Sign Bylaw, No. 1923, Amendment No. 4, Bylaw 2021 No. 2380
Appendix B: Ticketing for Bylaw Offences Bylaw, 2011, No. 1929, Amendment #11, Bylaw
2021, No. 2395.