

ELECTION SIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction

An election sign is a temporary sign announcing or supporting political candidates or issues in connection with any vote or referendum pursuant to municipal, provincial or federal legislation.

Given the City's ever-changing physical and social environment, it is expected that these guidelines will evolve over time. It is the responsibility of those employing the use of this document, to ensure they have the most current and up-to-date version.

Purpose

These guidelines will outline the requirements for the installation of election signs and has been prepared with public traffic safety concerns in mind.

Signs are not permitted within municipal right of ways or public property. Signs are only permitted on private property and on provincial right of ways as detailed in this document. Any signs that are in an illegal location will be removed. They will not be given back until after Election Day.

Sign Installation and Removal

- **For Federal and Provincial** - On Provincial ROW – allowed starting **Day of the Writ**. To be removed three days after the Election
- **For Municipal** - On Provincial ROW – allowed starting **Nomination Day**. To be removed three days after the Election
- On Private Property – allowed **once the candidate has filed their nomination papers**. To be removed three days after the Election

DISCLAIMER: ANY PERSON(S) PLACING A SIGN UNDER THESE GUIDELINES, ACCEPTS LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFIES THE CITY AS A RESULT OF THE SIGN PLACEMENT.

Fees

There are no user fees associated with the placement of any election sign provided all requirements outlined in these guidelines are adhered to.

Provincial Right of Ways

For regulations on Provincial roadways, refer to Alberta Transportation <https://www.alberta.ca/election-signs.aspx> Roads within City limits governed by these regulations include:

- Highway 3 (Crowsnest Trail);
- Highway 4;
- Highway 5

General Requirements for Signs on Private Property

- All signs must have the permission of the property owner if placed on private property;
- Sign on private property cannot be animated or equipped with flashing lights;
- Permits are required for a "**portable sign**" (which means any sign or advertising device that can be transported from one site to another and includes licensed vehicles placed in a location for advertising purposes). Signage permanently attached to or forming part of a licensed vehicle used in the day-to-day conduct of a business where the signage advertises only that business does not constitute a portable sign.
- Portable signs are not allowed on residential property. They are allowed on commercial and industrial properties.
- With the exception of portable signs, there are no size limitations

Operational Requirements

- All election signs **MUST** be removed three days after Election Day;
- If a sign is in contravention of these guidelines, a Bylaw Officer or a person authorized by the City of Lethbridge Traffic Operations may, without notice or compensation, remove the sign;
 - **Confiscated signs will be held by Public Operations until after Election Day;**
 - **Any sign impounded can be picked up after Election Day**
 - They will be kept for a period of 14 days after which it will be destroyed without compensation by the City to the Owner.

Safety Requirements

- Any type of sign that gets installed into the ground requires utility locates to be completed prior to sign installation. Many signs are forced into the ground with tools, and have sharp pointed ends that may damage infrastructure. Under the Occupational Health and Safety Code, Alberta Electrical Utility Code and Alberta Pipeline Regulation, field location of all existing utilities is mandatory prior to any ground disturbance. Existing utilities are to be located through the services of Utility Safety Partners, by calling 1.800.242.3447.

- Signs shall **not** be placed:
 - on any municipal right of way including boulevards;
 - on interchange ramps;
 - on any traffic control device or where it obstructs, detracts from or could be confused with a traffic control device;
 - on any physical roadway structure including bridges, guardrails, retaining walls, fences, concrete barriers, fire hydrants, sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks or street light poles, on any street or highway sign or sign post;
 - within 500 meters of a construction zone;
 - within a playground zone/area or adjacent to a school;
 - within 2 meters from the edge of pavement;
 - within a minimum spacing of 20 meters between the same candidate's signs;
 - at or adjacent to a polling station on an Election Day or Advance Voting Day;
 - within a road right of way adjacent to a park;
 - in a park.

Safety Precautions

- When installing/removing election signs, taking proper safety precautions to ensure your safety and safety of the public, including reducing driver distraction, are of utmost importance;
- All persons working near roadways shall wear reflective vests and bright clothing;
- Election signs should be installed/removed during daylight hours only; signs shall not be installed/removed during peak traffic volume times (7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday);
- Vehicles used for transporting election signs must be parked in such a way that to minimize the impact to the traveling public;
- Park vehicles as far as possible from the travel lanes with four-way hazard warning signals operating at all times

For safety tips or advice, do not hesitate to contact 311 (403.320.3111)

Questions? Please contact 311 (403.320.3111)

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General

Approximately every four years, a parliament/legislature/council is dissolved and an election is called to form a new government or council.

Each party or candidate competing for an electoral riding then embarks on an election campaign.

During election campaigns, parties and municipal candidates place election signs along the highways to inform the voting public that they represent the constituency.



Guidelines for Use

Policy/Eligibility

All parties and candidates participating in the federal, provincial or municipal elections are eligible to place election signs within the provincial highway rights-of-way.

Sizes of Signs

For signs located within highway rights-of-way, the maximum sign size will be one and a half square metres.

There is no size restriction for signs located on private property.

Provisions for Sign Use

Election signs are temporary signs and are only permitted from the date the election is called until three days after the election.

Provincial Legislation

Alberta Transportation, through the Traffic Safety Act (TSA) and the Highways Development and Protection Act (HDDPA), has control over the use of traffic control devices along the provincial highways.

Based on the HDDPA, Highway Development and Protection Regulation (Alberta Regulation 326/2009), Section 15, the following types of signs will not be allowed:

- a) *any sign that displays an intermittent flashing, rotating or moving light;*
- b) *any sign that is flood-lighted in such a manner as to cause visual distraction to the motoring public;*
- c) *any sign that has any moving or rotating part;*

- d) *any sign that bears*
- (i) *a legend giving a command to stop, stop ahead, look, caution or similar command, or*
 - (ii) *a legend that in any way imitates a standard or commonly used highway traffic sign.*

Based on the TSA, Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation (Alberta Regulation 304/2002), Section 110, the following regulation will apply:

110(1) A person shall not place, maintain or display in view of persons using a highway any sign, marking or device that

- (a) purports to be, is an imitation of or resembles a traffic control device,*
- (b) gives any warning or direction as to the use of the highway by any person.*

110(3) If a sign, marking or device is placed, maintained or displayed in contravention of subsection (1),

- (a) a peace officer, or*
 - (b) a person authorized by the road authority,*
- may, without notice or compensation, remove the sign, marking or device.*

110(4) For the purposes of carrying out powers under subsection (3), the person exercising those powers may enter on privately owned land.

Guidelines for Placement

In general, election signs should be placed as far from the shoulder line as practical, always allowing the traveling public to have an unobstructed view of the roadway.

The following specific criteria should be applied when locating election signs along the highway:

- Signs must be placed no closer than two metres from the edge of pavement (or, in the case of gravel roads, no closer than two metres from the shoulder of the road).
- During winter conditions, there is a high probability that signs less than six metres from the road will be either covered with snow or damaged during snow removal and sanding operations.
- No election signs will be allowed within the median of a divided provincial highway.
- No election signs shall be mounted on highway signs or sign posts. These signs will be removed immediately.
- No election signs shall be placed in or within 500 metres of construction zones.
- No election signs shall be placed within 50 metres of an intersection in an urban area and within 250 metres of an intersection in a rural area.

Safety Precautions

Persons installing election signs must use safety precautions so as not to cause vehicle collisions.

All persons working near the highway should wear reflective vests and bright clothing.

Election signs should be installed during daylight hours only.

Vehicles used for transporting the signs must be parked so as to minimize the impact to the travelling public (preferably on an approach), as far as possible from the travel lanes, and have four-way hazard warning signals operating at all times.

Removal of Election Signs

All election signs should be removed three days after the election has ended. The removal should include the sign panel, supporting structure and any wiring used to install and support the sign.

Sign fragments (i.e., tie wires, posts), when not removed properly, may cause damage to highway maintenance equipment.

When removal of an election sign is necessary due to safety or operational concerns, the appropriate Alberta Transportation district office will notify the campaign office to take the required action.

Usually campaign offices are given a day to respond to the notification. Failure to respond within the specified time will result in the sign being removed. Signs will be stored at the nearest highway maintenance facility or Alberta Transportation district office. The campaign office will be notified to arrange to have the signs picked up.

Signs that pose immediate hazard to the public will be removed immediately by the department maintenance contractors without notification.

Alberta Transportation will not be responsible for any signs damaged during the removal process. The campaign office is responsible for installing and removing election signs.