MOTT Technical Circular T-01/25

Date: April 1, 2025

Subject: Election and Referendum Signs and Posters Policy

Purpose:

This Technical Circular supersedes T-03/18 regarding election and referendum signing procedures found within the Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs.

Background:

An election sign for Federal and Provincial elections is a sign, poster or other notice posted during the period between the issue of a writ of election and general voting day, by a political candidate, political party, or election advertising sponsor registered with Elections BC or Elections Canada.

An election sign for general local elections (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/governance-powers/general-local-elections), including municipality, regional district, specified parks board, local community commission, boards of education or the Islands Trust, is a sign, poster or other notice posted by a registered political party, candidate or election advertising sponsor. Signs may be placed only during the campaign period (campaign period as defined by Election BC) and must be removed on the day following the end of the electoral event.

A referendum sign for Federal, Provincial or Municipal referenda is a sign, poster or other notice posted during the period between the issue of a writ or order of referendum and the polling day for the referendum, by a referendum proponent, opponent, or referendum advertising sponsor registered with a Municipality, Election BC (https://elections.bc.ca) or Elections Canada (https://www.elections.ca/home.aspx).

A recall or initiative sign for a Provincial recall petition, initiative petition or initiative vote is a sign, poster or other notice posted between the beginning of a recall petition period, initiative petition period or initiative vote period and the end of the respective period as described in the Recall and Initiative Act, by a proponent, opponent, authorized participant, or a recall or initiative advertising sponsor registered with Elections BC.

Policy:

The Ministry conditionally allows signs in relation to election, referendum, initiative vote, initiative petition and recall petition (henceforth collectively referred to as "election signs") on highway rights-of-way, with the exception of any major highway structures and highways specified in the policy. Only individuals and groups registered in accordance with this policy may post signs on highway rights-of-way.

Procedures:

Election signs must:

- Only be installed by an individual or organization that is registered with a Municipality, Elections BC or Elections Canada to sponsor advertising, such as a political candidate, political party, registered advertising sponsor, a proponent or opponent, or an authorized participant.
- Identify the owner of the sign, and a BC telephone number or BC mailing address at which the owner may be contacted.
- Only be installed during the campaign period as established by Elections BC for local elections, or by the drop/issue of a writ for federal/provincial government elections and must be removed on the day following the end of the electoral event.
- Be further from the road than standard traffic signs.

Election signs must not:

- Obstruct, simulate or be attached to any traffic control device (e.g. signs, sign posts or traffic signal poles),
- In any way pose a traffic hazard,
- Be placed on bridges, overpasses, tunnels or other highway structures,
- Be placed on the roads/ramps of interchanges interconnected to the highways listed under prohibitions. Some interchanges located on highways found on the prohibition list may be approved for sign placement. Notice of placement approval, if granted, is obtained through the office of the District Transportation Manager where the interchange resides.
- Belong to unregistered individuals or groups (i.e., any group or individual that is not a political candidate, political party, or other authorized participant registered with Elections BC, Elections Canada, or a Municipality as required).

<u>PROHIBITIONS</u>

Election signs may not be placed on:

- Highways within Provincial Parks,
- Highway 1, from Horseshoe Bay to Hope;
- Highway 5, from Hope to Kamloops;
- Highway 19, from Duke Point Ferry Terminal to Trans-Canada Highway;
- Highway 19 - Nanaimo Parkway, from Trans-Canada Highway to Island Highway;
- Highway 19, Parksville to Campbell River;
- Highway 91 and 91A;
- Highway 99, from the US border to Horseshoe Bay
- Highway 17, from Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal to Highways 1/15
- Highway 17A, from Highway 17 to Highway 99; and
- Highway 97C, from Aspen Grove to Peachland

REMOVAL OF SIGNS

Signs in contravention of this policy will be removed from the highway right-of-way by the ministry. After advising the Regional Director of the number and location of the offending sign (s) and the name of the sign owner, if identified, the District Transportation Manager will contact the owner to discuss the reasons for removal and potential proper placement.

The removal of signs in contravention of this policy will be contingent on the workload of the Ministry's Road Area Maintenance Contractors, and how their tasks and available resources are prioritized and scheduled.

Signs not removed by the owners on the next working day following the election, referendum, initiative vote, initiative petition or recall petition will be removed by maintenance contractors. Maintenance contractors will invoice the identified owner for the cost of removal.

LEGISLATION

This policy is supported by the Motor Vehicle Act, Sec. 214 and the Transportation Act, Sec. 62.