

# Election Sign Regulations Review

Council Meeting – January 27, 2025

# Background

## Notice of Motion – Jan 2023

- Undertake community consultation and report back
- Options to further regulate and prohibit election signage

## Sign By-Law

- Election signs are currently governed by Sign By-law 2018-153

# Considerations During Review

- Clarifying and simplifying language
- Balancing the interests of candidates, registered third party advertisers, registered referendum committees, voters and staff to ensure an equitable election process
- Ensuring the provisions of the by-law are enforceable
- Ensuring that health and safety is protected
- Providing standards that are unbiased and consistent

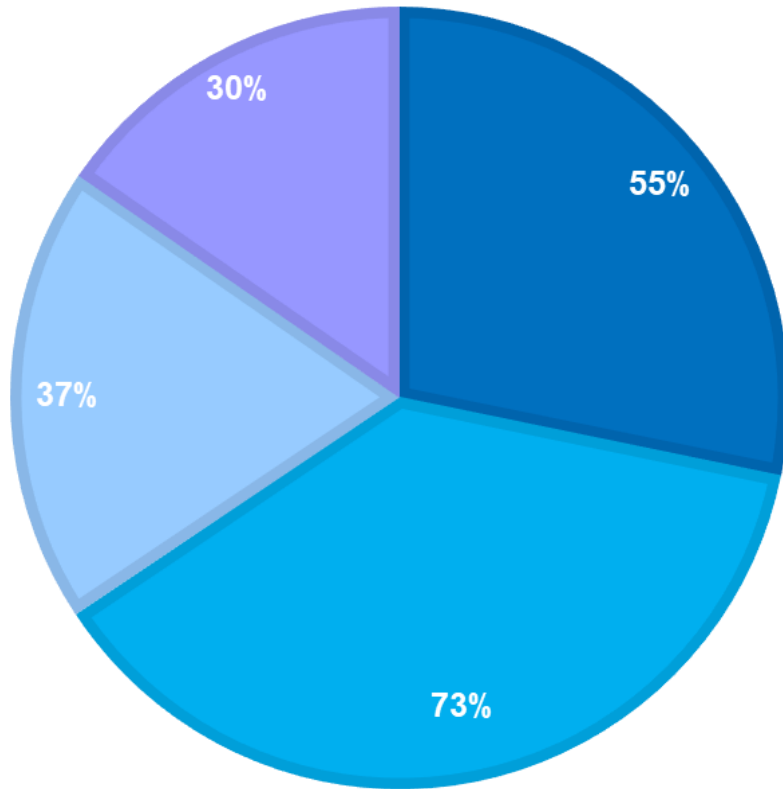
# Public Consultation Process

- An online questionnaire was available on the town's website for 21 days in March 2024
- 317 responses were received and reviewed
- 8 public open houses were held
  - 1 at Town Hall
  - 1 in each of the seven wards
  - Attendees were invited to provide feedback on specific questions related to election sign regulations

# Public Consultation

## ELECTION SIGN CONCERNS

■ Distraction ■ Visual Clutter ■ Necessary ■ Good Way to Promote



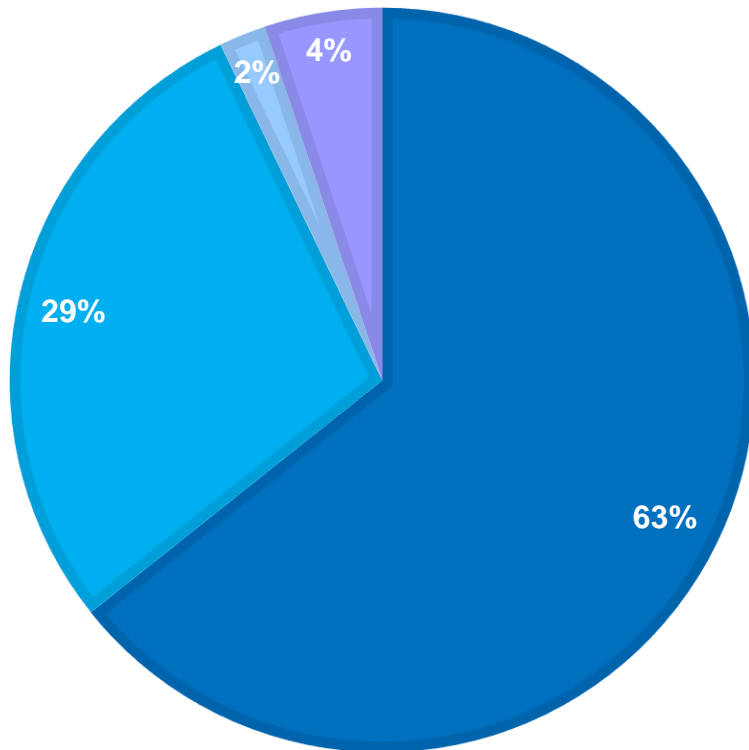
- 73% of respondents indicated they consider election signs as visual clutter
- 55% of respondents indicated they consider elections signs as a distraction while driving
- 37% of respondents indicated signs are a necessary part of a democratic election
- 30% of respondents indicated that signs are a good way to promote a candidate

Note: Respondents were able to select multiple responses

# Public Consultation

## DISPLAY PERIOD OF SIGNS

■ 30 Days ■ 45 Days ■ > 45 Days ■ No Opinion



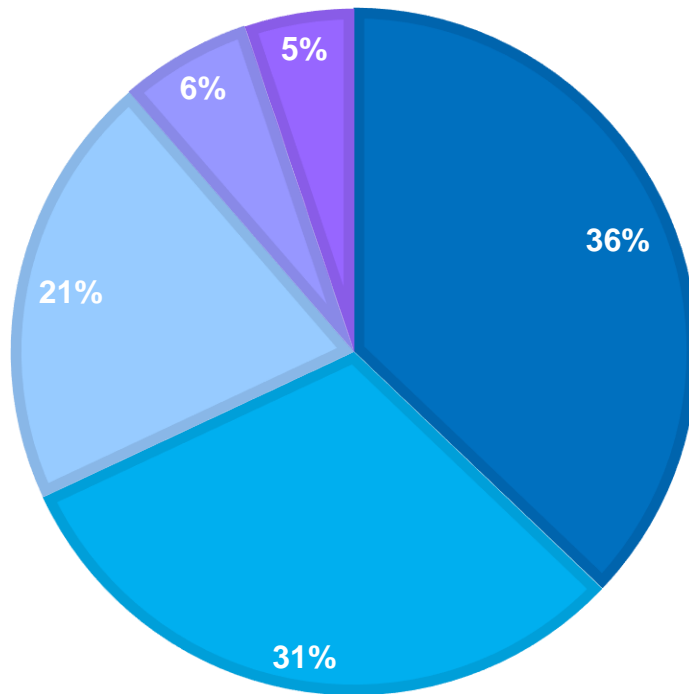
- 63% of respondents thought the current display period of 45 days prior to an election is too long
- Majority of respondents indicated display period should be 30 days

Answered 311 Skipped 6

# Public Consultation

## DISTANCE BETWEEN SAME CANDIDATE SIGNS

■ Keep the same ■ 20m ■ Other ■ 15m ■ No separation distance



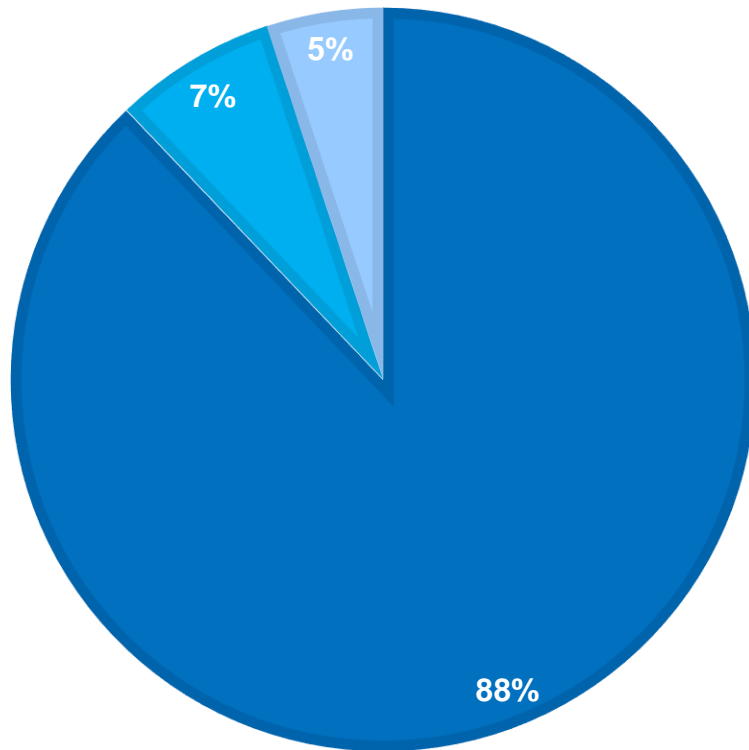
- 31% of respondents would like to see the distance of area that a candidate can place between their signs increased from 10m to 20m

Answered 312 Skipped 5

# Public Consultation

## SIZE LIMITATION

■ Yes to size limitation ■ No to size limitation ■ No opinion



- 88% of respondents would like there to be a size limitation for an election sign

Answered 314 Skipped 3



# Constraints with Current Regulations

- The cumbersome nature of accessing election sign provisions in the Sign By-law
- The large number of election signs resulting in sign blight
- The challenges with administering the current sign deposit program
- Enforcement & the storage of signs removed by MES due to non-compliance with the Sign By-law

# Proposed Regulations

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**Election Sign Display Period:** Reduce municipal election sign display period from 45 to 30 days before voting day; federal and provincial election periods remain unchanged.

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**Placement Restrictions:** Prohibit election signs on road allowances or boulevards adjacent to residences without occupant consent, excluding multi-unit buildings.

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**Size Limits:** Restrict election signs to a maximum of 1.22m in height and width, with a sign area limit of 1.49m<sup>2</sup>.

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**Spacing Requirement:** Increase minimum distance between signs for the same candidate from the current 10m to 20m.

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**Non-Compliance Storage:** Reduce storage duration for non-compliant signs from the current 30 days to 7 days.

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**Permit Program:** Replace the current deposit system with an election sign permit program for better administration and accountability.

# 2025 Fees & Enforcement

- **Permit Fee:** A non-refundable election sign permit fee is \$231.
- **Violation Penalty:** Signs violating the by-law will be removed; removal costs \$58 per retrieval. Candidates will be notified.
- **Post-Election Retrieval:** Retrieval fee for signs after election day is \$14 per sign.
- **Administrative Penalties:** Non-compliance may incur a \$300 penalty, with escalated penalties of \$400 for a second offence and \$500 for a third offence.

# Communicating New Regulations

- **Website Updates:** The town's website and social media will provide clear election sign regulation guidance to promote compliance.
- **Candidate Guide:** A detailed guide will be created to support candidates with updated by-law regulations.
- **Online Portal:** The election sign permit process will be integrated into the online portal.

# Questions/Comments?