



## **REQUEST FOR DECISION**

**MEETING DATE:** September 13, 2021

**TITLE:** C-1173-21 – Land Use Bylaw Amendment – Election Signs

**DIVISION:** Corporate Services

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### **SUMMARY:**

Second and third reading of C-1173-21 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment - Election Signs are proposed for Council's consideration. This bylaw amends C-824-12 - Land Use Bylaw by changing the time election signs can begin to be displayed from "noon on a nomination day/election writ day" to "12:01 a.m. on a nomination day/election writ day".

Administration supports this bylaw.

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### **PROPOSED MOTION:**

That second reading be given to C-1173-21 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment - Election Signs.

That third reading be given to C-1173-21 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment - Election Signs.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

C-824-12 - Land Use Bylaw was adopted in late 2012 and implemented on January 1, 2013. In order to improve this regulatory document, the Planning and Development department undertakes an annual review of the bylaw. Based on this review, amendments are brought forward to fine-tune the regulations, provide enhanced clarity and fix inconsistencies. Amendments based on the last annual review received third reading on May 25, 2020. An annual review was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and workload prioritization.

One of the amendments passed on May 25, 2020 was an amendment to section 96(2) which regulates election candidate signage. Prior to this amendment section 96(2) indicated that signs not requiring a permit include:

“Election candidate Signs displayed by or on behalf of a candidate participating in any federal, provincial or municipal election, provided such signs are displayed a maximum of 28 days prior to an election, and removed within 5 days after the election”.

While this provision was in place, it was interpreted that election signs may be erected as early as midnight 28 days prior to the election. The timing of this practice worked well and alleviated the potential safety issues in municipal elections, but did not meet the requirements for federal and provincial elections, where election campaign periods are longer than 28 days.

Following the May 25, 2020 Land Use Bylaw Amendment, section 96(2) now reads as follows:

“Election candidate Signs displayed by or on behalf of a candidate participating in any federal, provincial or municipal election, provided such signs are displayed no earlier than noon on a nomination day/election writ day, and removed within 5 days after the election”.

This amendment brought further clarity to the timing that election signs may be erected, however safety issues have been identified as an unintended consequence. The historical practice prior to the May 25, 2020 amendment was to begin to display signs beginning at midnight 28 days before the election day, when traffic was minimal.

For the reasons stated above, proposed C-1173-21 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment - Election Signs amends the time candidates may begin to display their signs from "noon on a nomination day/election writ day" to "12:01 a.m. on a nomination day/election writ day". Nomination day for the 2021 municipal election is September 20, 2021.

### **OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:**

This bylaw is being brought forward for consideration of second and third reading. Based on information provided at the public hearing, discussion and consideration of changes to the bylaw may be made. Alternatively, Council may defeat the motion for second or third reading and choose to defeat this bylaw.

### **CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:**

A statutory public hearing, advertised per the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*, was held prior to consideration of second reading.

### **IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:**

If the bylaw is passed, the amendments will be consolidated into C-824-12 - Land Use Bylaw and posted on the City's website. All 2021 election material referencing timing

regarding election sign display will be updated and all candidates will be notified of the updates.

**IMPACTS:**

The amendment will address safety issues with respect to when candidates can begin to display their election signage.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

n/a

**STRATEGIC VISION ELEMENT:**

Where People Choose to Live - A dynamic city with and exceptional quality of life

**RELATED GOAL:**

Citizens feel safe within their communities.