

# Committee of the Whole (1) Report

---

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 6, 2025

**WARD:** 1

**TITLE:** SIGN BY-LAW EXEMPTION – HWY 400 ONROUTE LOCATIONS

**FROM:**

Vince Musacchio, Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning, Growth Management and Housing Delivery

**ACTION:** DECISION

---

**Purpose**

As part of redeveloping and modernizing the Province's ONroute locations, new billboard signs are being erected along Highways 400 and 401 throughout the province. The City of Vaughan has two ONroute locations, however, the new billboard signs do not meet the criteria set out in the City's Sign By-law 140-2018, and therefore an exemption is required.

**Report Highlights**

- ONroute is erecting new billboard signs at its locations across the province, including its two locations in the City of Vaughan along Highway 400 (the "ONroute Billboards").
- Despite not meeting the criteria set out in Sign By-law 140-2018, staff are supportive of the two ONroute Billboards.
- This report seeks authority to enable the Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery to exempt the two ONroute Billboards from the sections of the Sign By-law that they contravene, subject to appropriate terms and conditions.

**Recommendations**

1. THAT the Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery be authorized to grant written approval for the billboards at the two ONroute locations in the City of Vaughan substantially in accordance with the locations and specifications set out in Attachments 1 & 2, subject to terms and

conditions satisfactory to the Interim Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery, including any necessary exemptions from the City's Sign By-law 140-2018, as may be required.

2. THAT Council shall approve this recommendation.

## **Background**

ONroute operates 23 locations along Highways 400 and 401 and provides travelers with amenities such as food and gas. ONroute has two locations along Highway 400 in the City of Vaughan located at 11200 Highway 400 S (west side of Hwy 400) and 12001 Highway 400 N (east side of Hwy 400). As part of the modernization of those two locations, ONroute has asked the City to permit the construction of one double sided billboard at each location.

The illustrations at Attachment 1 show that the billboards contain two components; 1) the digital billboard, which will be used for third party advertising with the ability to also project public safety information for motorists driving by (the "Digital Billboard"); and 2) signage attached to the billboard structure showing the types of amenities that can be sourced at the location where the sign is erected (e.g., the names of particular fast food vendors, etc.) (the "First Party Signage").

While an Order from the Minister of Transportation was issued permitting the construction of the new billboards at ONroute locations along Highways 400 and 401 subject to certain conditions (Attachment 3), both the Digital Billboard and the First Party Signage do not meet the requirements of the City's Sign By-law 140-2018.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

[Sign By-law Review – Phase One](#)

[Sign By-law Review – Phase Two](#)

[Sign By-law Technical and Minor Amendments](#)

## **Analysis and Options**

### ***The ONroute Billboards do not comply with Sign By-law 140-2018***

The billboards at the two ONroute locations in Vaughan have the same specifications and do not meet the criteria set out in Sign By-law 140-2018 in the following ways:

	<b>Sign By-law 040-2018</b>	<b>ONroute Billboard Sign</b>
1.	No ground sign shall have a sign face that exceeds 5.0m in any dimension (length, width).	The length of the First Party Signage's sign face is 7.163 metres.

2.	No ground sign shall exceed 7.5m in height from the finished grade level at the base of the supporting structure.	The First Party Signage is 8.99m in height.
3.	No ground sign shall exceed 10.0 square metres in area for any sign face, or 20.0 square metres in area for all sign faces combined.	One of the First Party Signage's sign faces is 17.46 square metres and all sign faces combined are 34.92 square metres.
4.	Every ground sign shall display the municipal address of the property where the sign is located.	The First Party Signage does not show the municipal address.
5.	The billboard shall be located within the limits of Employment Areas as shown in Schedule "E" of the Sign By-law 140-2018.	The Digital Billboard is not located within the limits of the demarcated employment areas.
6.	No billboard can exceed 20.0 square metres in area for any sign face, or 40.0 square metres in area for all sign faces combined.	One of the Digital Billboard's sign faces is 70.42 square metres and all sign faces combined are 140.84 square metres.
7.	No billboard can exceed 8.0m in height from the finished grade level at the base of the supporting structure.	The Digital Billboard is 15.24m in height.

### ***Staff support the ONroute Billboards***

In light of the Minister's Order which illustrates the Province's backing for this signage on their properties and along their highways subject to certain conditions, staff are supportive of the billboards. The authority being requested will enable the Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery to exempt the billboards, substantially in accordance with the locations and specifications set out in Attachments 1 & 2, from the sections of the Sign By-law that they contravene.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no anticipated financial impact to the City as a result of the adoption of this report's recommendation.

### **Operational Impact**

By-law and Compliance, Licensing and Permit Services, as well as the Office of the City Solicitor were consulted in the preparation of this report. No operational impacts are anticipated.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

This recommendation will assist in enabling ONroute to utilize the permission it was granted by the Ministry of Transportation to erect billboards at ONroute locations in the province.

## **Conclusion**

Staff are supportive of the two new ONroute billboard signs and recommend that the Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery be authorized to grant written approval for those signs substantially in accordance with the locations and specifications as set out in Attachments 1 & 2, subject to terms and conditions satisfactory to the Deputy City Manager, Planning Growth Management and Housing Delivery.

**For more information**, please contact Anthony-George D'Andrea, Legal Counsel, ext. 3633.

## **Attachments**

1. Billboard Specifications for ONroute locations at 11200 Highway 400 S (west side of 400) and 12001 Highway 400 N (east side of 400)
2. Location of ONroute Billboards at 11200 Highway 400 S (west side of 400) and 12001 Highway 400 N (east side of 400)
3. Minister of Transportation Correspondence and Order dated June 15, 2023

## **Prepared by**

Anthony-George D'Andrea, Legal Counsel, ext. 3633

Mark Antoine, Senior Manager of Development Planning, ext. 8212

Ben Pucci, Director of Building Standards, ext. 8872

Susan Kelly, Director, By-Law & Compliance, Licensing & Permit Services, ext. 8952