

MEMBERS' RESOLUTION

Committee of the Whole (2)

DATE: Tuesday, June 17, 2025

TITLE: ILLEGAL ADVERTISING SIGNS

FROM:

Councillor Marilyn Iafrate
Councillor Adriano Volpentesta
Councillor Rosanna DeFrancesca
Councillor Chris Ainsworth
Councillor Gila Martow

Whereas, the City of Vaughan's Sign By-law regulates the use of portable signs to ensure the safety of the public and to mitigate blight and nuisances;

Whereas, signs must comply with the Sign By-law, and in some cases require a City issued permit;

Whereas, non-compliant signs, in particular bag signs and sticker signs advertising a wide variety of businesses are continuously being placed across the city;

Whereas, non-compliant bag signs, due to their wire frames and placement pose a risk to pedestrians, animals and vehicles;

Whereas, non-compliant bag signs and sticker signs are a blight on the city, can damage the surfaces of infrastructure and street furniture, and are an ongoing source of public complaints;

Whereas, businesses using these types of methods to advertise are often unlicensed and pose a consumer protection risk;

Whereas, residents complain these non-compliant signs cause litter that reflect negatively on the communities and the City as a whole;

Whereas, the non-compliant signs negatively affect the hard work and pride of ownership of municipal property as well as private property;

Whereas, the removal of non-compliant signs are affecting City resources to continuously remove them each time they are placed illegally; and

Whereas, there is a need for a comprehensive review of the City of Vaughan Sign By-law.

It is therefore recommended:

1. Through the Mayor's budget process, staff submit a capital project, within their assigned 2026 Budget envelope to engage a consultant to comprehensively review the City's Sign By-law, including best practices with respect to the regulation and effective enforcement of bag signs and sticker signs;
2. That the City of Vaughan Sign By-law include penalties for each non-compliant sign placed illegally;
3. Subject to resources available, staff develop a comprehensive public awareness and education campaign to better inform the public about the risks of engaging companies that are not licensed and do not comply with the City's by-laws;
4. Staff consult and work, as appropriate, with external agencies, such as the Region of York, York Regional Police, Canada Post and the utility companies to create an effective removal and enforcement approach;
5. That the public be made aware of the non-compliant sign bylaw and penalties through the City Corporate media resources and mobile signage; and
6. That Staff work with the Region of York, and York Regional Police to develop a program to identify the perpetrators of the illegal signs to levy appropriate fines.

Financial and Staff Resource Impact

Sign by-law reviews are typically onerous and complex projects due to the intersection of land use, safety, and economic development objectives set against the background of technological advancements and evolving business models in how advertising media is deployed. As such, the most effective way to conduct a comprehensive review in a relatively timely way is to engage an experienced consultant to undertake the task. Thus, as indicated in recommendation no. 1, staff will submit a capital request as part of the City's 2026 budget process. The resulting report back to Council may include further budgetary requests in order to implement those recommendations from the consultant and staff that are approved by City Council.

Attachments

1. Examples of non-compliant signs