

# Sign By-law Review

# Sign By-law Review

## Introduction

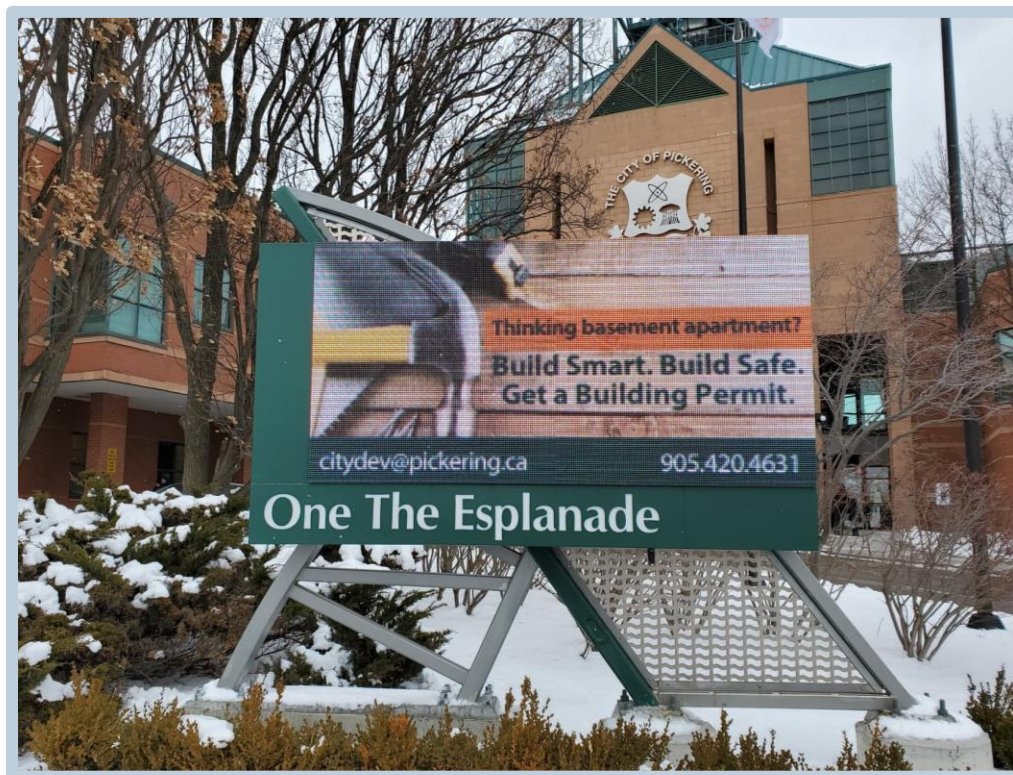
Pickering's proposed new sign by-law has been developed to support the City's urban design objectives and respond to emerging trends in marketing and sign products.

The format of the by-law has been revised to make it easier to navigate and find out specific sign requirements (i.e. maximum size of face area).

## Objectives

Below are the objectives of the sign by-law review:

- The City recognizes the need for the public to be able to erect signs on a property, in order to easily identify facilities, businesses and services.
- Signs should be designed and located in a manner that does not create distractions or safety hazards for pedestrians or motorists, or a danger to the public.
- Signs should not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of adjacent public or private property.
- Signs should be designed to complement the physical appearance and architecture of any building.
- Signs should not create unnecessary visual clutter due to their size, number or location.



# Sign By-law Review

## Highlights of the Proposed New Sign Regulations

**Real Estate Open House Signs** – the Sign By-law permits 5 signs associated with one property, and must now must include the municipal address, date, and time of the open house.

**Electronic Message Displays** – permitted on Ground Signs, Wall Signs and Billboard Signs, subject to specific restrictions.

**Wall Signs** – revised requirements based on the use of the building to help ensure the proposed signage is properly incorporated into the design of the building.

**Flag Signs** – a new sign category with provisions based on a review of Municipal Best Practices.

**Billboard Signs (new)** – the maximum height has been reduced from 10 metres to 7.5 metres to align with the Ministry of Transportation's regulations.

**Portable Signs** – two portable signs are permitted where two street frontages are greater than 70 metres.

**Variations** for permanent signs (sign permits) will continue to be administrated by the City Development Department, however variations to temporary signs (sign licences) will be administrated by the By-law Enforcement.

**Fees** that apply to all sign permits and sign licences have been removed from the Sign By-law and will remain in the City's current General Municipal Fees By-law.

**Enforcement** provisions are more detailed and clear to assist the City with the effective and efficient enforcement of the new by-law.

# Sign By-law Review

## Prohibited Signs

The by-law prohibits signs:

- that do not comply with the by-law or any condition of the sign permit, sign license or variance
- that advertise a use not permitted by the zoning by-law applicable to the property where the sign is located
- erected without a sign permit or sign licence, if required
- on or over, or partly on or over a driveway or public property or any part of a highway without the City's approval
- closer than 1.0m from the curb of the road or, where there is no curb, within 2.0m of the travelled portion of the highway
- within 3.0m of a driveway at the streetline
- within 15.0m of a traffic light
- that has more than 2 sign faces
- in a location that obstruct the view of any pedestrian or motorist so as to cause an unsafe condition
- that interfere with, or obstruct the view of, an authorized traffic sign, traffic signal or official sign
- located within a visibility triangle formed by the intersection of the street line and a driveway line, or the projections thereof and a straight line connecting 6 m from their point of intersection
- that obstruct a required parking space
- on a walkway or other means of egress on private property unless there is a minimum of 1.5m of unobstructed footpath space between the sign and the nearest structure
- that project less than 2.4m above the walking surface of a pedestrian walkway
- that pertain to an event/purpose that no longer applies
- that are not properly maintained
- on a roof or projecting the roof, eaves or parapet of a building
- that are obscene or in bad taste
- that advertises a business, service, or product that is not located on the property where the sign is erected, unless expressly permitted by this by law
- that are painted, marked or inscribed on pavement, on the exterior wall of a building, on a utility pole, tree, stone or other natural object, or on a vehicle or trailer that is parked or located for the primary purpose of sign display
- electronic message displays in a Special Sign District or within 100 metres of any low density residential uses

# Sign By-law Review

## Ground Signs (Permanent Signs)

- Prohibited for Low Density Residential uses
- Prohibited in the Open Space System
- For High Density Residential and Institutional uses, permitted 1 ground sign, setback a minimum 3 m from the property lines, a maximum of 4 m<sup>2</sup> in area and 2 m in height
- For Commercial or Industrial uses with less than 30 m of frontage, permitted 1 ground sign per street frontage, setback a minimum 3 m from the property lines, a maximum 10 m<sup>2</sup> in area and 4 m in height
- For Commercial or Industrial uses with greater than 30 m of frontage, permitted 1 ground sign per street frontage, setback a minimum 3 m from the property lines, a maximum 18 m<sup>2</sup> in area and 6 m in height
- For all other uses, permitted 1 ground sign per street frontage, setback a minimum 3 m from the property lines, a maximum of 6 m<sup>2</sup> in area and 3 m in height
- A second ground sign shall be permitted on a property in a commercial or industrial zone where the street frontage is not less than 200 metres, and the ground signs are not located within 100 metres of each other
- Ground sign are permitted to have Electronic Message Display

Figure 1 Examples of Permitted Ground Sign



# Sign By-law Review

## Wall Signs (Permanent Signs)

- Prohibited for Low Density Residential uses
- For High Density Residential and Institutional uses, permitted 1 wall sign per frontage, a minimum 2.4 m from the ground, and a maximum of 4 m<sup>2</sup> in area
- For Commercial or Industrial uses, permitted 1 wall sign per owner/tenant per frontage of the tenancy walls, a minimum 2.4 m from the ground, and a maximum 15% of the tenancy walls in area
- For Mixed-use Buildings, permitted 1 wall sign per owner/tenant per frontage of the tenancy walls, a minimum 2.4 m from the ground, and a maximum 15% of the tenancy walls in area
- For all other uses, permitted 1 wall sign per frontage, a minimum 2.4 m from the ground, and a maximum of 4 m<sup>2</sup> in area
- The maximum sign area per tenancy includes the combined sign area of wall signs and canopy signs
- Expansion into adjacent tenancies does not permit additional signage
- Wall signs can project up to 0.5 of a metre from the building and canopy signs can project up to 2.0 metres from the wall it is attached to
- Wall sign are permitted to have Electronic Message Display

*Figure 2 Examples of Permitted Wall Signs*



# Sign By-law Review

## Development Signs (Permanent Signs)

- Prohibited in the Open Space System
- Maximum 6.0 m in height
- Maximum 1 sign not exceeding 20.0m<sup>2</sup> per street frontage on any single development site
- Maximum 2 additional signs not exceeding 10.0m<sup>2</sup> on any vacant property outside of the development site
- Maximum 3 development signs per single development project
- Removed 30 days after completion of sales or 24 months after it is erected, whichever occurs earlier

*Figure 3 Example of a Permitted Development Sign*



# Sign By-law Review

## New Billboard Signs (Permanent Signs)

- No billboard signs permitted outside of the Billboard Sign District
- Maximum sign area of 20 m<sup>2</sup> and maximum sign height of 7.5 m
- No billboard signs permitted on a roof of a building
- No billboards are permitted within 250 m of another Billboard Sign

## Billboard Signs (Temporary Signs)

- No sign licence shall be issued for a new billboard sign unless a sign permit has been issued for such billboard sign
- A sign licence for a billboard sign shall be valid for a period of 1 year

*Figure 4 Example of a Permitted Billboard Sign*





# Sign By-law Review

## Portable Signs (Temporary Signs)

- Prohibited for all residential uses, and within Special Sign Districts or the Open Space System
- For all other uses, permit 1 portable sign with a maximum sign height of 2 metres, a maximum sign area of 4 m<sup>2</sup>, setback a minimum of 3 metres from the lot lines
- Permit 1 per street frontage where two street frontages are greater than 70 metres
- Portable signs may be illuminated but shall not incorporate electronic message displays, moving parts, or flashing lights or fluorescent materials
- Licence is valid for 30 days

Figure 5 Example of What Not to Do



Figure 6 Example of a Permitted Temporary Sign



# Sign By-law Review

## Flag Signs (Temporary Signs)

- Prohibited for all residential uses, and within Special Sign Districts or the Open Space System
- For all other uses, permit 2 flag signs with a maximum sign height of 1.8 metres, a maximum sign area of 2 m<sup>2</sup>
- The Flag Sign should be located on the property to which the sign(s) relates
- Licence is valid for 30 days

*Figure 6 Example of a Permitted Flag Sign*



# Sign By-law Review

## Banner and Inflatable Signs (Temporary Signs)

- Prohibited for all residential uses, and within Special Sign Districts or the Open Space System
- For all other uses, permit 1 banner or inflatable sign with a maximum sign height of 6 metres, a maximum sign area of 4 m<sup>2</sup> per tenant, setback a minimum of 3 metres from the lot lines
- A banner or inflatable sign should be secured to the exterior wall or a roof of a building, or to the ground
- The sign should be located on the property to which it relates to
- No banner or inflatable sign is permitted on canopies, awnings, fences or on sidewalks
- Licence for a banner sign is valid for 30
- Licence for an inflatable sign is valid for 14 days

Figure 7 Example of Banner Signs that are not permitted



Figure 8 Example of a Permitted Banner Sign



# Sign By-law Review

## Sidewalk Signs (Temporary Signs)

- Only permitted within a Special Sign District
- Maximum sign height of 1.0 metres or a width of 0.6 metres.
- Must be installed immediately in front of the business to which it pertains to during hours of operation
- May be located on a public sidewalk provided 1.5 metres of unobstructed sidewalk space is maintained
- Maximum of 1 sign per owner which is valid for 1 year

# Sign By-law Review

## Signs Exempt from Obtaining a Permit or Licence

<p><b>Community Event Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> in area</li> <li>• Permitted 14 days prior to event</li> <li>• Must be 100 m from another related Community Event Sign</li> </ul>	<p><b>Construction Information Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Density Residential: max 3 m in height or 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> in area</li> <li>• All other uses: max 6 m in height or 10.0 m<sup>2</sup> in area</li> <li>• Must have site plan agreement, building permit or fill and topsoil permit for the construction</li> </ul>	<p><b>Development Sales Office Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Must be shown on building permit application documents and authorized by the City through issuance of building permit</li> </ul>	<p><b>Development Sales Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max 1.2 m in height</li> <li>• Max 0.8 m in width</li> <li>• Must be 500 m apart from another related Development Sales Sign</li> <li>• Permitted to be erected for 72 hours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Directional Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• No promotional or advertising content</li> </ul>
<p><b>Directory Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Max 1 per access point from a street to a building</li> </ul>	<p><b>Farm Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Max 1 per property</li> </ul>	<p><b>Filming Location Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only permitted if a filming permit has been approved</li> </ul>	<p><b>Flags</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• If permitted, a max 3 per property</li> </ul>	<p><b>Garage/Yard Sale Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Permitted 3 days prior to the sale</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gasoline Station Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Can erect electronic message displays</li> </ul>	<p><b>Home-Based Business Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.2 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Only permitted if a home-based business licence has been issued by the City</li> </ul>	<p><b>Home Improvement Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Permitted 2 days prior to when the improvements begin &amp; for 90 days max</li> </ul>	<p><b>Interior Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Max area is 20% of the total window area on the first storey</li> <li>• Only permitted on office, commercial or industrial buildings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Menu Boards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• 1 per business</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Model Home Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Only permitted on a property containing a model home</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Trespassing Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.3 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> </ul>	<p><b>Posters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.5 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• May not be placed on a fixture or vehicle</li> </ul>	<p><b>Real Estate Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential and Open Space System: max 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Other uses: max 2.5 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• Permitted 2 signs on separate street frontages if the property is 0.5 hectares or greater in size</li> </ul>	<p><b>Real Estate Open House Signs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> max area</li> <li>• 1.0 m max height</li> <li>• 5 signs max</li> <li>• May be erected 24 hours prior to open house</li> <li>• Must be taken down 4 hours after the open house</li> <li>• Must include address, date and time of the open house</li> </ul>
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# Sign By-law Review

## Special Sign Districts

Special Sign Districts have been established in smaller communities and the Whitevale Heritage Conservation District. Some additional requirements are proposed to apply to these areas, including:

- More detailed information is required on sign application documents, in order to confirm that the proposed sign will be appropriate to the local community architecture
- A permit is required for any changes to an existing sign face
- Ground signs are limited to 1.5m in height and 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in area
- Wall signs are limited to 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in area
- Electronic message displays, portable signs, banners or inflatable signs, or flag signs are not permitted
- Internally illuminated signs are not permitted
- Community event signs of any type are permitted
- Sidewalk signs for local businesses are permitted
- In the Whitevale Heritage Conservation District, signs must conform to the District Guidelines, and meet all requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*

## Special Sign District Requirements

- Conform to the applicable heritage conservation district guidelines designation and the *Ontario Heritage Act*
- Scale drawings clearly showing,
  - the proposed sign materials, letter fonts and colours
  - the proposed means of any sign illumination
  - in the case of a wall sign, an accurate building elevation and the proposed method of affixing the sign to the building

Figure 10 Examples of Signs in a Special Sign District (Liverpool Road Waterfront District)



# Sign By-law Review

## Permanent Sign Provisions

### Application Requirements:

- Identify and describe in detail the proposed sign and all other signs existing on the property
- Identify the legal description and municipal address or other equivalent description that will readily identify the property to which the sign is being erected
- Name, address, telephone, email address and facsimile numbers of the applicant and the persons designing or erecting the sign
- Plans, specifications, documents and other information describing the construction, dimensions, materials and specific location of the proposed sign
- Applicable fee payment
- Where the applicant is not the owner of the property, an authorization for making the application from the owner
- Proposed sign must comply with the by-law, the Ontario Building Code, an approved site plan, any applicable heritage district guidelines and any other applicable laws

## Sign Permit Variance

- A variance may be applied for to obtain relief from any permanent sign by-law requirement
- A variance application must be filed with the Director, Planning & Development
- Applicant must provide reasons why compliance with the provisions of the by-law cannot be met
- Applicant may appear before Site Plan Committee to make representations respecting the application
- Approval of the variance will be based on,
  - Conformity with the applicable site plan agreement
  - special circumstances or conditions applying to the property, building or use referred to in the application
  - whether strict application of the by-law in the context of the special circumstances applying to the property, building or use, would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary and unusual hardship for the applicant
  - whether such special circumstances or conditions are pre-existing and not created by the owner or applicant
  - whether the proposed sign will detrimentally alter the character of the area; and
  - whether the general intent and purpose of this by-law is maintained
- The Director may approve or refuse any variance application, and may impose any conditions upon an approval



# Sign By-law Review

## Temporary Sign Provisions

### Application Requirements:

- A separate licence is required for every sign
- Licence Application shall be accompanied by details of size, location and fee
- For an individual business in a building containing multiple tenants, the application must include written permission from the owner or the owner's authorized representative consenting to the placement of the portable sign
- Expires on date indicated on the licence
- Maximum of 4 sign licences per business or service per year
- Maximum of 1 sign licence per property at any one time, irrespective of the number of business tenancies located on the property
- No licence may be issued on any heritage property
- A proposed temporary sign must comply with this by-law, the Ontario Building Code, an approved site plan, heritage conservation district guidelines, or any other applicable law
- The City's Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement, may grant relief from any sign licence requirement provided such relief is consistent with the objectives of the sign by-law and the relief is for a maximum of 3 months
- Other conditions may be imposed at the issuance of a temporary licence