

Report to Committee of the Whole

Date: 4/13/2026
From: Julia McCaugherty-Jansman, Clerk
Re: Draft Election Sign By-law

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee of the Whole receive for information the draft by-law to regulate election signs in the Village of Merrickville-Wolford;

AND FURTHER THAT Committee recommend to Council that the draft By-law to Regulate Election Signs be brought to the April 27th Regular Council Meeting for approval and adoption.

BACKGROUND

Election signs are currently regulated by the Village's Sign By-law 24-10. There was an Election Sign Policy drafted and in place for the 2022 Municipal Election, attached as Schedule "A" for reference.

By-law 24-10 briefly references election signs as follows:

Definitions in this By-law

2.13 'Election Sign' means any sign advertising or promoting the election of candidates and does include a portable sign.

Permit Exemptions

4.1 No permit under this By-law shall be required for the following, however all other regulations of the By-law shall be adhered to:

a) any poster, banner, or sign of a candidate in a Municipal, Provincial or Federal election.

5.22 Removal of Signs

a) Election signs erected within the municipality shall be removed by the campaign office within five (5) days following the election.

The By-law then has a section for administration of signage regulations in general.

ANALYSIS

With the upcoming Municipal Election in October 2026, staff have been reviewing all election-related documents to ensure that they remain consistent, reflect best practices, and meet legislative requirements.

With the limited mention of election signs in By-law 24-10, staff felt it was worth looking into drafting a dedicated standalone by-law for the regulation of election signs. The draft By-law, attached as Schedule “B” would regulate municipal, provincial, and federal election signs. Having a dedicated by-law to regulate election signs, at all government levels, has the potential to increase consistency and provide clear guidelines for candidates, staff, and the public going forward. This will also assist in the provisions of the election sign by-law to be administered and enforced if contravention does occur.

It is recognized that election signs remain an important method of communication for many candidates’ campaigns. They allow the public to be aware of the candidates and that there is an upcoming election.

The provisions of the new draft by-law do not contradict the current provisions of the Sign By-law 24-10. There will be no permit required for election signs under the new draft by-law, and the removal of election signs remains at the proposed five (5) days. With this in mind, staff suggest leaving Sign By-law 24-10 as it is and making no amendments at this time. The Sign By-law remains on the list of by-laws to review, so when the general review of the Sign By-law occurs, these provisions can be considered for removal at that time, should the dedicated Election Sign By-law be adopted and put in place.

BUDGET/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

OTHERS CONSULTED

CAO

By-law Enforcement Department

Public Works Department

Building Department

CONCLUSION

If Committee decides to recommend to Council to not adopt the draft by-law, then the existing policy from 2022 would be updated and maintained for the 2026 Municipal Election.

The recommendation is to recommend approval of the draft by-law to have in place for the 2026 Municipal Election. Committee can propose changes or amendments to the draft by-law prior it to being brought forward to Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule “A” – 2022 Election Sign Policy

Schedule “B” – By-law XX-2026 – Election Sign By-law

Submitted by:

Julia McCaugherty-Jansman, Clerk

Approved by:

Darlene Plumley, CAO