



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 4, 2026  
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Meeting Date: May 19, 2026

[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law to Authorize Large-Format Electronic Advertising Signs on Streets

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve in principle amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law as detailed in this report and Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council direct the Director of Legal Services to prepare and bring forward for enactment amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law as generally outlined in Appendix A.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report recommends amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law to authorize the placement, construction, maintenance and operation of large format third party electronic advertising signs on streets in alignment with the Public Realm Advertising Framework.

### Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- Council approved the Public Realm Advertising Framework in September 2025.
- Subsection 319(1)(d) of the *Vancouver Charter* provides that Council may make by-laws for regulating the placing of signs or other advertising on, in, or above any street.
- The Street and Traffic By-law regulates the use of streets.

### City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

## Context and Background

In 2023, Council approved *Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities, 2023-2026*, which included increasing non-tax revenues through sponsorships, donations, fees and other sources under the "Responsible Financial Management" objective.

In September 2025, Council approved the Public Realm Advertising Framework to guide the City's approach to third party advertising visible in the public realm. The Framework seeks to ensure that impacts to the public realm are offset by appropriate public benefit, while maintaining safety and protecting the quality of the public realm. The Framework applies to all third party advertising visible in the public realm.

Staff recommend amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law, as outlined in this report and in Appendix A, to authorize the placement of electronic advertising signs on streets as part of the implementation of the Framework.

## Discussion

If approved by Council, the amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law described in Appendix A of this report will authorize the placing of large-format third party electronic advertising signs on City streets under certain conditions, including that the third-party owner/operator enter into an agreement with the City as a condition to obtaining a City permit for the sign.

Subsection 319(1)(d) of the *Vancouver Charter* provides that Council may make by-laws for regulating the placing of signs or other advertising on, in, or above any street.

The Street and Traffic By-law, which regulates the use of streets, does not currently authorize the placement of large format electronic advertising signs on streets. Subsection 71A(d) of the Street and Traffic By-law authorizes "advertising devices" only if they are integral with "public conveniences" such as bus shelters, map stands or automated public toilets.

The Public Realm Advertising Framework recognizes that advertising impacts the public realm and should therefore be offset by public benefit, and that there is a maximum threshold for public realm advertising for both public realm experience and revenue. The Framework aims to optimize non-tax revenue while managing impacts to the public realm.

The proposed by-law amendments support these principles by enabling the City to pursue an approach that seeks benefit at each sign location that reflects the impact to the public realm, while also minimizing that impact. Third party sign owners/operators will be required to enter into agreements with the City addressing financial return, safety, risk, and other considerations deemed necessary by staff.

## Financial Implications

Given the impact of large format electronic advertising signs in the public realm, agreements with third party sign owner/operators are expected to generate meaningful financial returns to the City through guaranteed payments, revenue-sharing, or the greater of the two.

Specific financial terms may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis through the agreements with the third-party owner/operators, and brought forward for Council consideration in accordance with the Public Realm Advertising Framework.

### **Legal Implications**

If the Recommendations in this report are adopted by Council, Council will authorize a process to allow large format electronic advertising signs on streets through amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law. The proposed amendments are authorized by the Vancouver Charter and comply with the Motor Vehicle Act.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**DRAFT BY-LAW TO AMEND STREET AND TRAFFIC BY-LAW NO. 2849**  
**TO AUTHORIZE AN ELECTRONIC SIGN ON STREET**

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the Street and Traffic By-law.
  
2. Council adds a new section 71K as follows:
  - “71K. (1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this or any other By-law, the City Engineer may issue a permit for a person to construct, maintain and operate an electronic sign on a street.
  
  - (2) The City Engineer may impose conditions on a permit for an electronic sign on street regarding:
    - (a) traffic and safety matters;
    - (b) hours and levels of illumination;
    - (c) construction requirements;
    - (d) timing of construction;
    - (e) timing of and requirements for reviews and inspections;
    - (f) the term of the permit;
    - (g) responsibilities of the permit holder;
    - (h) the size, appearance, location, design and form of the sign;
    - (i) operational matters including how long the static image must remain static and how quickly an image must transition to the next image;
    - (i) proof of commercial general liability insurance, wrap-up liability insurance, or other insurance, to the satisfaction of the Director of Risk Management, naming the City as an additional named insured; and
    - (j) compliance with this by-law or other enactments.
  
  - (3) Every person applying for a permit for an electronic sign must apply in writing to the City Engineer.
  
  - (4) No person may apply for or hold a permit for an electronic sign unless they have entered into a valid agreement with the City authorizing the placement of an electronic sign on the proposed site.
  
  - (5) Any agreement with the City must stipulate the term of the agreement, the rent, indemnities in favour of the City and may include such other terms as are considered necessary and be executed by the City Engineer on behalf of Council.
  
  - (6) The City Engineer may revoke a permit for an electronic sign if the permit holder breaches any condition of the permit or if the agreement is terminated or expires.
  
  - (7) In this section 71K:

**“Electronic Sign”** means a third-party electronic advertising sign:

- (a) that displays an electronic static image where the image remains static on the screen for a stipulated period of time and the transition between images occurs within a stipulated period of time;
- (b) that is self-supporting and is attached to the ground; and
- (c) that complies with the terms of the permit issued for the sign.

**“Street”** does not include the roadway.

- 3. A decision by a court that any part of this By-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this By-law, and is not to affect the balance of this By-law.
- 4. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this                      day of                      ,  
2026

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Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

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