

Display of political advertising signage guidelines

The following guidelines have been prepared to ensure that the display of election and candidate signage is lawful during the election period.

These guidelines cover the display of signage on:

- private land;
- road reserves;
- public land;
- registered vehicles and trailers.

Signage on private land

Where a planning permit is required

State planning provisions, which form part of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, allow a sign publicising a local political event (such as an election) to be displayed on private land (not a road reserve) without the need to obtain a planning permit where the following conditions can be met:

- The advertisement area must not exceed five (5) square meters.
- Only one (1) promotion sign may be displayed on the land.
- The sign must not be animated or internally illuminated.
- The sign must not be displayed longer than 14 days after the election date or more than three (3) months, whichever is sooner.

A sign publicising a local political event may include information about a candidate for an election.

In some instances, a planning permit may be granted to vary the above requirements or allow more than one promotion sign to be displayed on private land.

Please note that an application would need to be accompanied by plans and the prescribed fee. You should allow sufficient time for the application to be assessed by officers. Council is required to take into account amenity and road safety issues when considering an application.

Where a planning permit is not required

In circumstances where a planning permit is exempt, it is still important to ensure the following:

- The consent of the landowner must be obtained.
- Signs must be securely fixed including coreflutes and banners affixed to fences.
- Where star posts are used, appropriate capping of the post should be undertaken.
- Signage should not be placed in areas designated for landscaping.
- Signs should not be affixed to heritage places or buildings (separate approval may be required) and should not be placed or nailed to mature trees, particularly River Red Gums.
- A-board signs on private land should be secured.
- Signs should not provide a distraction to road users.

Signage on road reserves

Residential roads under the control of Council

Council, in its capacity as the responsible road authority, does not consent to applications for promotion signs on road reserves because of impacts on road safety and amenity. This includes temporary signs, banners, placards and A-Boards. Candidates and parties are therefore encouraged to investigate the options available on adjacent private land along road corridors.

Arterial roads and freeways under the control of VicRoads

For the reasons set out above, VicRoads also does not support informal promotion signs within its road reserves. Candidates and parties may wish to use existing approved commercial promotion sign boards along arterial road and freeway corridors for political advertising.

Signage on public land

Land under the control of Council

The placement of election and candidate signs on Council reserves and Council- managed public land will not be supported.

Where a complaint is received in relation to electoral matter being placed on Council premises the following process will be followed.

1. The material will be removed as soon as possible and provided to the Office of the Chief Executive Officer with a description of where it was found.
2. If the material contains details of the person authorising the material, that person will be contacted and advised that it is prohibited to place electoral material on Council premises. If the material is posted again, the offender will be issued with a penalty infringement notice.

Signage on registered vehicles and trailers

Council does not control advertising on registered vehicles and trailers.

Trailer signs left unattached to a vehicle and placed on land so as to be visible from roads and public places may be deemed to be signage under the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

Definitions

'Electoral period' means the period commencing 20 September 2016 and ending 6pm on 22 October 2016.

'Electoral matter' means matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election including an electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice which contains an express or implicit reference to, or comment on the election, a candidate in the election, or an issue submitted to, or otherwise before the voters in connection with the election;

'Council premises' means any building or property managed or controlled by Council including a community activity centre, sporting pavilion, sporting ground, park, garden, leisure centre, pre-school and maternal and child health centre;

'Public place' means any public highway, road, street, bridge, footway, footpath, passage or thoroughfare notwithstanding that it may be formed on private property, any park garden reserve or other place of public recreation or resort and any railway station.