



Subject ADVERTISING SIGNS ON PUBLIC LANDS		Policy PL 4.06.02	
Compiled by - Branch Lands & Waters	Section Land Management	Date Issued February 11, 1997	
Replaces Directive Title Advertising Signs on Crown Land	Number LM 8.04.01	Dated Sept. 17, 1982	Page 1 of 3

1.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

"highway" includes a Kings highway, a common and public highway, or a navigable waterway;

"identifiable group" means any group in society which is distinguished by colour, race, ancestry, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability;

"pertinent road authority" includes the Ministry of Transportation, a Regional Municipality, District Municipality, County, lower tier municipality, a Local Roads Board, or a Statute Labour Board having jurisdiction over the highway or road.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Many commercial enterprises (e.g. tourism industry, retail industry) seek permission to place advertising signs on public lands adjacent to roads or highways to promote their businesses.

The Ministry's review of such signs will have regard to the policies of road authorities, safety requirements and the preservation of scenic views.

3.0 PROGRAM DIRECTION

3.1 Application

This policy applies to all public lands.

3.2 Guiding Principle

Signs are a legitimate use of public land, subject to appropriate controls.

3.3 Goal

To allow signs to be placed on public lands where such use does not compromise safety or result in significant loss of scenic views.

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3.4 **Objectives and Strategies**

A) To support economic growth.

Advertising signs can be an effective mechanism for the promotion of commercial enterprises and can result in the expansion of Ontario's economy through the injection of foreign money into Ontario businesses, the growth of the tourism industry and the creation of new jobs.

B) To allow signs as interim uses of public land.

Subject to safety concerns and the protection of the social and physical environments, the placement of signs on public land is a permitted interim use.

Land use authority should be restricted to an annual land use permit to maintain future flexibility for the management of public land.

The placement of signs involves a minimal amount of investment on the land. As a result, there is no need to provide long term authority (e.g. no need for mortgage financing to be secured against the sign site, no need to capitalize the investment over a long time). The flexibility afforded the Ministry by restricting authority to a land use permit will also facilitate removal of the sign should any advertisements be considered, in the opinion of the Area Supervisor, to be in unsuitable. The flexibility also provides that the site may be made available, in the short term, for a higher and better use should the need arise.

Land Use Permits should contain appropriate conditions to ensure appropriate management of the site (e.g. sign must be erected on posts, not trees; the sign must be kept in good repair; the sign must be removed when no longer required, etc.).

C) To have regard to vehicular safety.

Where a sign is visible from a road or highway, its placement must conform with controls (if any) imposed by the pertinent road authority. (See Procedure PL 4.06.02, Appendix A, Section 6.113) Signs will not be permitted on highways under MTO control, unless MTO provide the sign owner/sign company with a sign permit.

Where signs are not controlled by a road authority, the Area Supervisor, shall provide appropriate guidance relative to size and positioning of each sign, considering factors such as preservation of scenic views and traffic safety.

Area Supervisors shall ensure that no condition in the land use permit is inconsistent with the provisions of approval or control issued by the road authority.

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D) To promote environmental protection.

The placement of signs must have regard for the protection of the physical and social environment, including the significant loss of scenic values. As a result, signs will not be permitted where significant scenic views will be adversely affected.

Applications shall be reviewed in accordance with Policy and Procedure Directives PL 4.02.01 entitled Application Review and Land Disposition Process.

E) To ensure that signs on public lands do not convey a message which promotes violence, hatred, or contempt against any individual or identifiable group.

Land Use Permits shall contain a condition prohibiting such practices.

F) To maximise non-tax revenues from public land.

The fee for the use of public lands will be no less than the minimum required by the Crown Land Rental Policy (PL 6.01.02).

3.5 Applicant Eligibility

Applicants applying for Land Use Permits for signs must obtain permission from the pertinent road authority, if such an authority exists.

4.0 POLICY CROSS REFERENCES

- PL 4.02.01 (POL & PRO) Application Review and Land Disposition Process
- PL 4.06.02 (PRO) Advertising Signs on Public Land
- PL 6.01.02 Crown Land Rental Policy
- MTO Policy "Signs - Billboards (Field Advertising) dated August 24, 1994