

Guidelines for Managing Local Body Election Signs on State Highways

With local body elections approaching in September 2025, **NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA)** would like to remind local bodies and election candidates of its approach to managing candidates' election signs adjacent to state highways.

NZTA tries to minimise the potential for road crashes arising from drivers distracted by indiscriminate installation of election signs and seeks consistency of application of NZTA's policy on such signs by local bodies and election candidates.

When erecting election signs adjacent to state highways, there are several fundamental considerations to keep in mind:

In rural areas (Speed limits 70km/h or above):

- Signs should not be located on the legal road. For signs on adjacent private land candidates will need to consult property owners and the local authority to gain any necessary consent.
- If the sign requires resource consent, approval from NZTA, as an affected party under Section 95 of the Resource Management Act, will probably be needed.
- If candidates wish to place signs along state highways on the legal road, consultation with NZTA is essential as the signs will be subject to the State Highway Bylaw which has provisions about the positioning, size, and content of signs.
- Signs must not be reflectorised or erected in such a location that will create an obvious conflict with existing road signs.
- Signs must not imitate or be of a similar form to any traffic signs. (This is a legal requirement in terms of the Land Transport Act 2003.)
- The location of signs must consider visibility and other traffic safety aspects.
- Signs must be located **at least 100m** from intersections, bends in the highway and from other regulatory signs
- Signs are not permitted on or adjacent to **motorways**.
- For the above noted safety reasons, vehicle mounted signs situated on State Highways **are not permitted**.

In urban areas (Speed limits 70 km/h or less):

- Candidates should seek the local authority's approval for erection of signs within or adjoining the road reserve.

Signs erected on rural State highways in a location or manner likely to cause distraction or danger to road users may be removed by NZTA or its agents, without prior notice.

Where a sign has been removed the candidate will be advised where they can collect it. There may be a fee to cover NZTA's costs.

NZTA welcomes enquiries from candidates and councils so if you have any queries please contact:

Alan Catchpole at environmentalplanning@nzta.govt.nz.