

**Brian Torry**  
**Speaking Notes**  
**City of Toronto Temporary Sign By-law Review**

Thank-you.

My name is Brian Torry and I am a member of the Board of Directors, and the Chair of the Government Relations Committee, of the Toronto Real Estate Board.

On behalf of the 55,000 Members of TREB, I would like to thank-you for this opportunity to provide our views.

It has been a pleasure to work cooperatively with City staff to provide input on this issue. In that regard, TREB fully supports the recommendations regarding real estate open house signs, and we believe that the proposed changes will help to ensure the appropriate use of these signs.

With that said, I would like to emphasize that TREB understands the challenges, faced by the City, with regard to the use of open house signs; and I want to stress that TREB stands ready to work with City Hall in addressing this issue cooperatively.

We have a strong mandate, from the vast majority of our Members who strive to comply with sign by-laws, to deal with the small minority of Members who choose to abuse these by-laws. In short, we are just as keen to work with you to deal with those who are taking advantage of the rules and we want to fix this.

It is for this reason that TREB has recently implemented a stricter process for disciplining Members who are reported to us for contravening municipal sign by-laws, in addition to City Hall's current sign bylaw enforcement regime. As part of this process, if a Member is found to have contravened the sign by-law, they will be subjected to TREB's professional standards disciplinary process with a range of measures from fines to revoking memberships.

Furthermore, as part of this process, we will be reporting members whom we receive complaints about to the City to aid your enforcement.

Lastly, we will be publishing examples of the implementation of these disciplinary measures to all TREB Members so that they are aware of the consequences of abusing municipal sign by-laws. This is in addition to the frequent communications that we regularly distribute to our Members strongly emphasizing the importance of complying with municipal sign by-laws.

With that in mind, I would also like to stress that TREB supports stronger enforcement by the City, including beefing up the current fines structure. We would be happy to work with you on ways to do this.

I'd like to end by providing some background and data on the use of open house signs and the legitimate role that they play when used appropriately.

Although they are one of the oldest tools used by Realtors, open house signs continue to be an important and legitimate marketing tool that home sellers expect and demand to be a part of the strategies used to promote the sale of their property, and that home buyers appreciate when house-hunting.

In this regard, I am happy to share with you the results of polling conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs in the first two weeks of August 2019. The results were as follows:

- 90% of Torontonians support the use of open house signs on public property, subject to limitations regulating things like location, time of day, and size;

- 84% of Torontonians expect their realtor to host an open house when marketing their property for sale;
- 88% expect open house signs to be used in marketing an open house for their property; and
- fewer than two in ten Torontonians agree with the statement that “open house signs are an eyesore and should not be allowed”.

These poll results demonstrate that Torontonians understand the importance of open house signs.

I hope our views have been helpful. Thank-you again for this opportunity and we would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.