
2006 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE – Potential Improvements to Enforcement of Sign By-Law

Issue:

Potential improvements to enforcement of sign by-law

Purpose:

To comment on a sign fee increase to fund sign enforcement.

Key Points:

1. Fees

- Sign fees are set out in Chapter 441, Fees, in the Toronto Municipal Code.
- The current sign permit fees are as follows:

Roof signs	\$31.77 per square metre
All other signs	\$26.49 per square metre
Minimum fee for all applications	\$185.34
Alterations for existing signs	\$185.34
Revisions and renewals	\$185.34
Sign Variance applications	\$635.47 (non-refundable)

- In 2005, it is estimated that revenues from sign permits will \$600,000.00.
- The fees will increase in 2006 by 2.3% representing the annual CPI applicable to these fees.
- In 2006, with the increase for the CPI, sign revenues will approximate \$613,000.00.

2. Current Enforcement

- MLS has four officers dedicated to sign enforcement on a weekly basis (Monday to Friday).
- Additionally, MLS has a maximum of eight officers, who undertake sign enforcement on weekends.
- The primary focus of these enforcement staff is temporary signs (a-frame signs, mobile signs, etc.).
- Since the implementation of the new Temporary Sign By-law, effective October, 2005, approximately 3,000 temporary signs have been removed.
- Other signs are enforced on a complaint basis only.
- The Building Division issues permits for signs and enforces compliance of signs with permits where permits are required and issued.

- The Building Division, and in the case of Toronto and East York District, the Planning Division, report to Council on variances to the sign by-law where required.
- The fees charged for sign permit and variance applications cover the cost of staff in the Building and Planning Divisions involved in processing the permits and variance requests.

3. Additional Enforcement

- To permit increased enforcement related to signs, other than temporary signs, additional staffing would be required.
- The cost of each additional MLS officer is approximately \$75,000.00 on an annualized basis including salary, benefits, mileage and parking etc.
- Additionally, the start-up costs would be approximately \$9,000.00 for a computer, work-station, etc.
- These costs will have the effect of increasing sign fees approximately 14% for each officer.

- If any trucks are required to be purchased for the usage of the officers, an additional amount of approximately \$40,000.00 would be required for the capital cost of each truck.
- Additionally, approximately \$18,000.00 for fuel, maintenance and fleet contribution would be required for each vehicle on an annual basis.
- These costs will have the effect of increasing the sign fees an additional 9.5% for each truck to be purchased.

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