



## STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

### Update on the Status of a New City-wide Sign By-law

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| <b>Date:</b>             | May 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2009                                      |
| <b>To:</b>               | Planning and Growth Management Committee                         |
| <b>From:</b>             | Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building |
| <b>Wards:</b>            | All  |
| <b>Reference Number:</b> | BLD2009PG005   |

#### **SUMMARY**

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The existing pre-amalgamation sign by-laws of the former municipalities (“Pre-amalgamation Sign By-laws”) continue to apply throughout the various districts of the City. Since the summer of 2008, the Sign By-law Project Team has been working with staff from various city divisions, outside stakeholders, and the public towards the development of a new Sign By-law for the City of Toronto.

In April 2009, the Planning and Growth Management Committee referred an interim report from the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building on the progress to date along with recommendations to be considered in the development of the new sign by-law, to be submitted to the June 4, 2009 Planning and Growth Management Committee meeting. The Committee also requested the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building to host a further meeting of all interested stakeholders to discuss issues related to the draft sign by-law. Those meetings were held on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

As the draft by-law is not yet available in a form suitable for consideration by this Committee, the report cannot be provided to the Committee for the June 4 meeting as requested. In the meantime, the Sign By-law Project Team will consult further with all interested stakeholders on the proposed by-law provisions during the month of June and report back during the September Committee cycle.

#### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

Harmonization of Sign By-laws

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2000/agendas/committees/ey/ey000323/it014.pdf>

Development of a City-Wide Sign By-law

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2001/agendas/committees/plt/plt010911/it005.pdf>

Coordinated Street Furniture Program - Revenues; and Establishment of a New "Public Realm" Reserve Fund (All Wards)

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-8835.pdf>

Current Status of Harmonized Sign By-law

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-9032.pdf>

Harmonized Sign By-law Interim Report

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-17603.pdf>)

New Sign By-law Second Interim Report

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-19916.pdf>)

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

In addition to the mandate to produce a City-wide Sign By-law for consideration by Council, the Sign By-law Project Team has also been considering a tax on third-party signs for the purposes of raising revenue to support: administration and enforcement of the by-law, arts and culture initiatives; and, city beautification in the conjunction with the development of the new Sign By-law, as directed by Council at its meeting of October 22-23, 2007. Along with these two directions, the Project Team has been considering other issues including those raised by the Planning and Growth Management Committee related to the resources and structure required to adequately enforce the new sign by-law and alternative models for governing the process of obtaining variances and amendments to the by-law. It is expected all of these will be considered together by Council when it considers the matters in September.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Consultation**

Considerable consultation has taken place throughout the sign by-law development process. The first round of public consultation sessions was held in September 2008. Meetings were held in each of the four respective districts of the City. Notice of the consultations was provided to City Councillors and the Mayor. Notice of the meetings

was also advertised in the Toronto Star as well as the local community newspapers on three separate dates. Approximately 100 people were in attendance at this initial round of public meetings. In addition, elected officials were invited to meet with members of the Sign By-law Project.

A second consultation with identified stakeholders took place on December 15, 2008, immediately following the Special Meeting of the Planning and Growth Management Committee to discuss the issues identified in the report to the Planning and Growth Management Committee.

In January 2009, the second round of public consultation sessions was held in a format similar to the earlier September 2008 sessions. Proposals for regulating signs as well as organizational and administrative proposals were presented for comment. These consultation sessions were also well attended by more than 200 people in total.

A third set of meetings with identified stakeholders was held on March 5, 2009. This set of meetings presented specific options for regulating third-party signs in the City. Comments were received and considered in drafting new regulations.

On April 14, 2009, as required by the Special Meeting of Planning and Growth Management held on December 8, 2008, an interim report on the sign by-law was brought forward to the Planning and Growth Management Committee. The report responded to the motions filed by the Committee members at the December 8, Special Meeting of Planning and Growth Management. The Planning and Growth Management Committee also heard deputations from the public.

As directed by the Planning and Growth Management Committee at its meeting on April 14, 2009, a fourth set of meetings with identified stakeholders was held on April 27, 2009. The meetings reviewed and considered all the submissions which had been made to the project team for consideration.

Concurrent with the face-to-face opportunities for consultation, the Sign By-law Project maintains a frequently updated website, containing the Project Plan, issues, comments, public consultation opportunities and the reporting schedule. The website includes the contact information of the project team and comments, suggestions and feedback are encouraged. The Sign By-law Project Team has received communications from over 1000 members of the public.

#### Next Steps

The Sign By-law Project Team, in consultation with other City Divisions, will continue to develop the provisions of the proposed By-law over the next few weeks.

Due to stakeholder interest in more information about the proposed by-law requirements there will also be an opportunity for further stakeholder consultation in June of 2009. This will assist staff in reaching conclusions on recommended by-law requirements to

regulate permanent signage in the City of Toronto that best reflect and balance the needs of the stakeholders, the public, and the city as a whole.

The Sign By-law Project Team will report to the September Committee cycle on all matters being considered in relation to a new City-wide Sign By-law for the City of Toronto.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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V. Ann Borooah

Chief Building Official and Executive Director

Toronto Building