



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Amendments to Chapter 694 of the Toronto Municipal Code with respect to Signs on Hospitals for Fundraising Purposes

<b>Date:</b>	August 3, 2010
<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>	P:\2010\Cluster B\BLD\CBO Office\2010PG10010

#### SUMMARY

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In response to a direction by City Council at its meeting of July 6, 7 and 8, 2010, this report recommends that Chapter 694 of the Municipal Code, Signs, General, be amended so that Hospitals, (as defined in Chapter 694 of the Municipal Code), will be exempted from the need for a sign permit for the erection and display of signs associated with charitable and/or fundraising activities or events for the benefit of the premises where they are located.

This report does not recommend an exemption for these types of signs from the requirement(s) to obtain a building permit under Section 8 of the *Building Code Act* or the need to comply with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building recommends that:**

1. City Council amend Section 693-6(A) of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 694, Signs, General, by adding (9) to exclude certain non-illuminated signs on hospitals from the requirements to obtain a permit, substantially in accordance with the Administrative Design attached as Appendix A to this report; and

2. The City Solicitor be authorized to prepare the necessary Bills for introduction in Council to implement the above recommendations, subject to such stylistic and technical changes to the draft bills as may be required.

### **Financial Impact**

Toronto Building estimates a non-material loss of revenues from sign permit fees associated with exempting these sign types, as recommended. There are approximately one to two sign permit applications received per year for these large-format “banners” associated with charitable and/or fundraising activities, constituting approximately one half of one percent of the total estimated annual sign permit revenues collected by Toronto Building.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

New Sign Regulation and Revenue Strategy

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-24387.pdf>)

New Sign Regulation and Revenue Strategy - Supplementary Report

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/cc/bgrd/backgroundfile-25449.pdf>)

Amendments to Chapter 694 of the Toronto Municipal Code with respect to Signs for Institutional Uses

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-30772.pdf>)

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

This report is in response to the following motion adopted by City Council at its meeting of July 6, 7 and 8, 2010:

*City Council request the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building to report to the Planning and Growth Management Committee on an amendment to the provisions of the Sign By-law with respect to hospitals to permit signs associated with any current charitable or fund-raising events and/or campaigns taking place to support that facility, and exploring possible exemptions from Sign Permits or Sign Permit Fees associated with those signs.*

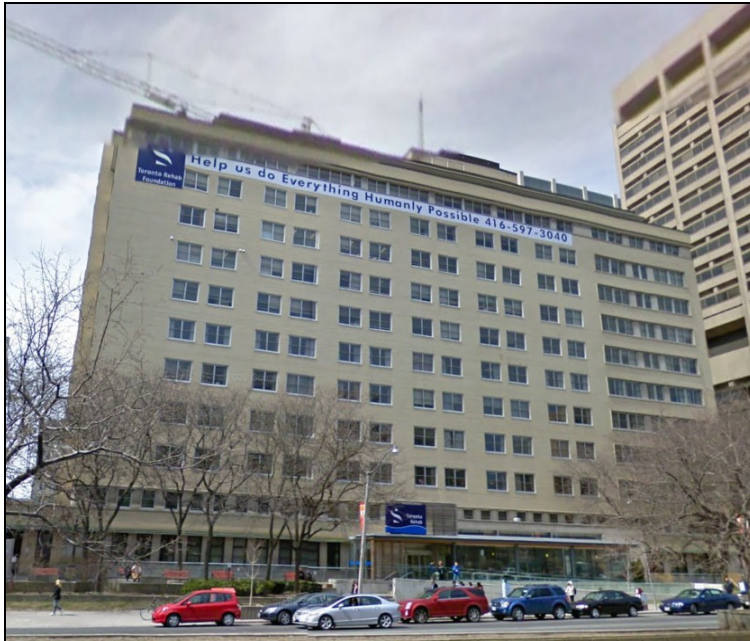
This proposed amendment to Chapter 694 attempts to allow a streamlining of the process for Hospitals to erect or display fundraising signs while further advancing the goals and objectives of Chapter 694.

Figure 1 and 2 on the following pages illustrate two examples of signs associated with charitable or fundraising events taking place at hospitals. In the past, signs of this type

have been required to obtain a sign permit and have often been required to apply for a sign variance due to the size of the signs for the duration of the fundraising campaign.



**Figure 1 - Princess Margaret Hospital Lottery Sign**



**Figure 2 - Toronto Rehab Fundraising Sign**

## COMMENTS

Section 694-6A (3) currently contains exemptions for signs that are erected by a charitable, cultural or community organization or a BIA subject to limitations on size and the time for which the sign will be displayed. While this exemption generally accommodates smaller scale signs within the community for local fundraising initiatives, 694-6A (3) does not contain permission for large-format “banner” signs on large institutional buildings, such as hospitals, which are often set back further from roadways and other land uses (such as North York General Hospital or Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre), or are surrounded by buildings of a similar size and scale (such as Women’s College Hospital or The Hospital for Sick Children).

The proposed amendment to Chapter 694 will allow hospitals across the city to erect or display one non-illuminated wall sign on a hospital associated with fundraising and/or charitable events taking place at that hospital without the need to obtain a sign permit provided that the sign complies with specific provisions concerning the sign face area, the method by which the sign copy is displayed and for how long and when the sign may be displayed.

**The sign must have a maximum sign face area of 100 square metres or 20% of the wall area where the sign is located, whichever is lesser.**

In reviewing past variance and permit applications for signs of this type and purpose, it was found that the sizes of these signs are often in the range of 90 square metres to 110 square metres. A maximum sign face area of 100 square metres will be permitted; despite that, in no circumstances shall the sign face area exceed 20% of the area of the wall on which the sign is erected. The regulation permitting a large sign face area will enable these signs to be seen on hospitals that are set back from roadways or other land uses, without the need to obtain a sign permit, reflecting the reduced visual impact of these signs as they are commonly surrounded by buildings of similar scale.

**The sign shall be erected or displayed for no more than 90 days.**

Although fundraising activities may be on-going at a hospital, it is not the intention of the proposed amendment to allow for the on-going advertising of a fundraising campaign or a charitable event. Signs associated with fundraising activities will only be exempted from the requirement for a sign permit if they are displayed for a maximum of 90 days; otherwise, a sign permit in accordance with Chapter 694, as well as more than likely, a variance from the provisions of Chapter 694, will be required prior to the erection or display of the sign.

**Only one such sign shall be erected or displayed per calendar year.**

Similar to the limitations placed by the proposed amendment on the duration for which the sign can be displayed or erected, limiting the frequency as to which these signs can be displayed or erected ensures that these signs are seen as extraordinary time-limited signs related to a specific event only and not a permanent addition to the more conventional signage of the hospital building.

**The sign shall display static copy only.**

This is consistent with the requirements of Chapter 694 for signs on Hospitals and for Institutional sign districts. The requirement for static copy will also ensure that the sign erected will be used only to draw attention to the fundraising activity and have minimal impact on surrounding land uses.

**Impacts on Adjacent Properties and Communities**

The signs that would be exempted from the requirements for a sign permit by this amendment would not be permitted to be illuminated; this will reduce the overall visual impact, light trespass and light pollution that is possible from large signs in those areas where sensitive uses may be located. This is particularly important since Section 694-18 D exempts hospital signage from time of day lighting restrictions.

Currently, there are instances where signs associated with hospital fundraising activities are: projecting signs, wall signs, or ground signs. The proposed exemption would only apply to wall signs associated with fundraising activities taking place at hospitals. Wall signs are permitted in Chapter 694 in every Sign District due to the fact that they can easily be integrated into the architecture of the building and tend to have fewer impacts on existing built form.

The requirements of the Ontario Building Code and *Building Code Act* will still apply to these signs regardless of the exemption from the provisions of Chapter 694. Every such sign will be required to go through a structural review to ensure that it does not interfere with any building systems (i.e. required windows and openings, heating and cooling vents), as well as to ensure that the sign is properly attached to the building and will not have any adverse impacts on the structure of the hospital itself.

**CONTACT**

Ted Van Vliet  
Manager, Sign By-law Unit  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, West Tower, City Hall  
416-392-4235  
[tvanvli@toronto.ca](mailto:tvanvli@toronto.ca)

**SIGNATURE**

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V. Ann Borooah  
Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix A – Administrative Design of Proposed Amendment to Chapter 694 of the Municipal Code

## **Appendix A**

### **Administrative Design - Proposed Amendment to Chapter 694 of the Toronto Municipal Code with respect to Signs on Hospitals for Fundraising Purposes**

#### **694-6. Exemption from permit requirements.**

(9) A non-illuminated wall sign on a hospital advertising a fundraising event for that hospital provided:

- a. The sign has a maximum sign face area of 100 square metres or 20% of the wall area where the sign is located, whichever is lesser;
- b. The sign shall display static copy only;
- c. The sign shall be erected or displayed for no more than 90 days; and,
- d. Only one such sign shall be erected or displayed per calendar year.