



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Additional Consultation - Area Specific Amendment Concerning Certain Rail Lands Respecting Third Party Ground Signs

<b>Date:</b>	December 16, 2011
<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:\2011\Cluster B\BLD\PG11024

#### SUMMARY

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At its October 6, 2011 meeting the Planning and Growth Management Committee deferred item PG8.1 to the January 5, 2012 meeting in order to "allow consultation to take place with the City Planning Division, affected communities and stakeholders, in cooperation with local Councillors."

This report outlines and summarizes the extent of consultation in respect of the comprehensive consolidation and upgrade program for third party ground signs located on certain rail lands within the City of Toronto, which has taken place between October 6, 2011 and December 16, 2011. Staff are in the process of disseminating the information and feedback received and intend to report back with the results of consultation during the March Committee cycle.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. This report be received for information and that Item PG8.1 be deferred to the March 22, 2012 meeting of the Planning and Growth Management Committee.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

## **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: Additional Considerations

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

Amendments to Chapter 694 of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Respecting a Comprehensive Consolidation and Upgrade Program for Third Party Ground Signs Located on Certain Rail Lands within the City of Toronto

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.PG8.1>)

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The comprehensive consolidation and upgrade program for third party ground signs located on certain lands within the City of Toronto, made on a request by Blair Murdoch of Allvision Canada, on behalf of the Canadian National Railway Company (CN Rail), seeks to obtain amendments to Chapter 694, Signs, General, of the City of Toronto Municipal Code. The request is to amend Chapter 694 to: a) permit the replacement of existing third party ground signs displaying static copy with new third party ground signs displaying electronic static copy at select locations along the premises consisting of "rail corridors" which are owned by CN Rail ("CN Rail Corridors"); b) remove additional third party ground signs displaying static copy, and c) prevent the erection and display of any future third party signs in and around the CN Rail Corridors at the portions of the premises where the existing third party ground signs are proposed to be removed.

The report presented to the Planning and Growth Management Committee on October 6, 2011 contemplated approval of the requested amendments, as the application reflects the higher order Council objectives established in the City's recently approved sign regulation and revenue strategy by aspiring to manage the impact and contribution of signage to the visual character of the City's public realm, appropriate to the goals expressed in the Official Plan.

## **COMMENTS**

Considerable consultation has taken place with respect to this comprehensive proposal.

Staff in the City's Sign By-law Unit met with the applicant over the course of 2011 discussing and reviewing a list of potential locations where these signs might possibly be erected and displayed. The ten locations finally chosen were selected through an in-depth review that considered the prevailing regulations found in the new City-wide Sign By-law.

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Such regulations are intended to protect sensitive land uses such as residential and parkland; reduce the concentration of third party signs in a surrounding; and, control the visual impacts of billboard signs by regulating such things as their height and size.

As per the regulations contained in Chapter 694, an amendment to Chapter 694 requires that a notice be posted on the property where the sign is proposed to be located, for not less than 30 days prior to the item being heard. In this case, ten notices were posted at the various locations proposed, on or before September 6, 2011. The notices were intended to be visible to passers-by and protected from the elements. Further, and also as prescribed by Chapter 694, mailed notice was delivered to all persons within a 120 metre radius of the various locations proposed. The notice was provided to approximately 27,000 people. The City Clerk's office also posted a public notice on the City's website, in accordance with §694-31D of Chapter 694.

On November 1, 2011, detailed letters were sent out to respective Ward Councillors where one (or more) of the proposed third party ground signs displaying electronic static copy are intended to be located. The letters invited each of the Councillors to conduct a consultation exercise with their respective constituents along with providing information about a separate consultation session to be conducted by City staff, in conjunction with the proponent. Each letter provided site-specific photographic renderings showing the location of the sign proposed in the respective Ward. The Chair and Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee were copied.

Concurrent with the invitation to the respective Ward Councillors to conduct their own consultation session, Sign By-law Unit staff consulted with Area Managers from the City Planning Division. The proposal was presented to each of the respective Community Planning Managers to ensure that any of the proposed locations would not be impacted by possible future-planned developments, including developments with sensitive land use components, such as residential. Feedback was provided on four proposed locations and staff intends to include this feedback in the future report.

An advertisement was placed in both the Toronto Star and the local community newspapers (the Metroland papers) on December 1, 2011. The advertisement intended to solicit interest from the public in respect of the comprehensive proposal and to invite the public to attend a consultation session which was held on December 14, 2011. In addition to the newspaper advertisements, invitations were sent to the Mayor and all Members of Council along with invitations to a list of identified stakeholders. The list of identified stakeholders was derived from a list developed through the sign regulation and revenue strategy project which took place between August 2008 and December 2009. The identified stakeholders include those people with an active interest in sign and billboard related matters as well as those people working in the outdoor advertising industry.

The consultation session was scheduled from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on December 14, 2011 and was held in Committee Room 2 at Toronto City Hall. It was attended by approximately 55 people, including one member of City Council. The results of the consultation session, with all of the comments disseminated and addressed, will be

reported to the Planning and Growth Management Committee during the March Committee cycle.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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