



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Sale of Decommissioned Street Name Signs

Date:	April 30, 2013
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards:	All Wards
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Clusterb\TRA\TMC\pw13003tmc

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request for City Council's approval to sell decommissioned street name signs (not including oversized street name signs) to the public. Since the implementation of the consolidated street name sign design in 2007, Transportation Services Division has received over 675 requests to purchase decommissioned street name signs.

To facilitate the sale of decommissioned street name signs, it is proposed that an inventory of the signs be posted on the City of Toronto website for the public to review. It is recommended that the decommissioned street name signs be sold at a price of \$30.00 per sign, on a first come-first serve basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council approve the sale of decommissioned street name signs (not including oversized street name signs), at the price of \$30.00 per sign; and
2. City Council approve that decommissioned street name signs be made available based on the terms and conditions in Appendix 1.

Financial Impact

There is no incremental financial impact resulting from the adoption of this report. The salary costs associated with the management and implementation of the program to sell decommissioned street name signs is included in the Transportation Services Division's

2013 Operating Budget. The revenue received from the sale of decommissioned street name signs will be deposited into the Transportations Services Division, Signs and Pavement Markings Unit, Sundry Revenue Account.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At the meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting on May 16, 2012, a Member Motion from Councillor Vaughan on the "Sale of Decommissioned Street Name Signs – Motion MM22.3" was referred to the Acting General Manager of the Transportation Services Division for a report back to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-46611.pdf>

COMMENTS

Following amalgamation of the seven former municipalities in 1998, there were numerous styles, sizes, colours and formats of street names signs used by the former municipalities. Some of the former municipalities used "simple" street names signs that consisted of blue blades with white lettering while others use more decorative signs that consisted of a frame and white blade and black lettering.

Based on complaints from the public, it was apparent that the street name signs were not meeting the needs of the public. In particular, many of the signs were not retro-reflective, therefore making it difficult to see the signs at night. In addition, a number of the signs were small and were difficult for pedestrians and drivers to see, thereby potentially causing driving frustration and dangerous driving behaviour such as sudden lane changes or turns.

To address this issue, City Council adopted a new harmonized street name design to be used within the city of Toronto in 2007. The design of the new street name sign was larger, utilized reflective material, incorporated upper and lower case font and was to be placed consistently at all intersections. The new street name signs included a section of the sign that could be used for branding by Business Improvement Areas. The new design and consistent placement of the street name signs across the city led to increased legibility and visibility of the signs.

As it would be cost prohibitive to convert all existing street signs in a relatively short period of time, it was determined that the new street name signs would be installed when: a) existing street name signs became illegible due to age or damaged; b) as part of new

sub-divisions, or; c) when Business Improvement Areas requested and funded the change to the new design.

In a typical year, approximately 1,800 street name signs are replaced due to poor legibility or damage, of which, approximately 5-10 percent are deemed appropriate for sale. Signs that are damaged in such a way that it poses a hazard to the public (e.g. having extremely sharp edges or totally unreadable) are sold as scrap metal at an average price of \$15.00 per sign. At the present time there are approximately 950 decommissioned street name signs in stock.

Since 2007, Transportation Services has received approximately 675 requests from the public to purchase street name signs that have been removed from the field. When receiving the requests, the public have cited wanting a "piece of nostalgia" or for sentimental reasons why they would like to purchase a street name sign.

In considering Councillor Vaughan's motion, staff explored the following options as methods to sale decommissioned street name signs:

- Utilizing the City of Toronto auction process; and
- Utilizing the City of Toronto's website to post an inventory of decommissioned street name signs available for purchase.

In regards to utilizing the City of Toronto auction process, staff determined that the existing contract with the City's auction company does not allow for a minimum or reserve bid. Therefore, the potential exists to receive bids lower than the scrap value of a sign. In addition, items that are not sold at the auction become the property of the auction company, which means that the City would not recover the scrap value for signs not sold. Therefore, based on the potential of not recovering the scrap value of decommissioned street names, this option is not recommended.

Staff also reviewed the possibility of utilizing the City website to post an inventory of decommissioned street names signs. Staff found this method to be efficient from a staff and purchasers perspective. The posting of an inventory to the City's website and the process of ordering a sign either by phone or an email is relatively straight forward and does not require a significant amount of staff time. In addition, the purchase price of a sign is set by the City which ensures that scrap value of the sign can be recovered. Based on the efficiency of this method and ability to ensure the sale price of the sign, this option is recommended.

In determining a recommended sale price for each decommissioned sign, staff considered the scrap value of each sign and the associated administration cost to manage the inventory and to process a sign order. The \$30.00 recommended sale price is based on the average scrap value for each sign, estimated at \$15.00, plus the estimated \$15.00 administrative cost per sign.

If the public wishes to purchase a sign, they will be able to do so either by phone or email and will be subject to the terms and conditions in Appendix 1.

The revenue received from the selling of the street name signs would be placed in the Transportation Services Division, Signs and Markings Unit, Sundry revenue Account.

In order to maintain a reasonable sized inventory, a decommissioned street name sign will remain in the inventory for up to one year, after which, the sign will be recycled in an environmentally appropriate manner, such as selling the scrap metal for recycling.

Implementation

Following City Council approval to proceed, it is anticipated that the sale of decommissioned street name signs could commence within 6 to 8 weeks. In conjunction with the deployment of the program, the public will be notified that they can purchase decommissioned street name signs through the City of Toronto's "Our Toronto" publication, the City's website and a media release.

CONTACTS

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SIGNATURE

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Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Terms and Conditions for Purchase of Decommissioned Street Name Signs

Appendix 1

Terms and Conditions for Purchase of Decommissioned Street Name Signs

1. Decommissioned street name signs will be made on a first come first served basis;
2. Decommissioned street name signs will be placed on hold for fifteen business days following receipt of request to purchase, after which, the signs will be returned to the inventory for sale; and
3. The purchaser will be required to sign a waiver that they will not display the decommissioned street name sign adjacent to any City of Toronto streets in such a way as to confuse road users.