



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM31.15	ACTION			Ward: All
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Supporting Small Businesses with Costs of Toronto Hydro Wire Covering - Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailao recommends that:

1. City Council request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to consult with appropriate City staff, TABIA, and Toronto Hydro on measures that can be taken to reduce the costs of covering distribution lines for small businesses in the City, as well as exploring financial support mechanisms to mitigate unavoidable costs.

Summary

Over the past several years, the costs of covering and isolating Toronto Hydro distribution wires for simple maintenance of building facades has continued to rise. One property was quoted \$19,351 for a 17 foot wide property. Another was quoted \$43,825 for the same distance. Such costs can make it difficult for property owners to maintain their buildings, and can jeopardize safety when critical repairs are not made.

I have heard from property owners on Queen Street West who want to conduct maintenance and make repairs to their heritage buildings, but the rising cost of hydro wire covering has become prohibitive. One factor in the rising cost is likely due to Toronto Hydro requiring the hydro covering to be completed by private contractors.

At the April 13, 2018 meeting of the Economic Development Committee, a motion was approved (ED28.11) requesting that the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, consult with appropriate City Staff and Toronto Hydro on measures that can be taken to reduce the costs of covering distribution lines for small businesses in the City, including restoring the role of Toronto Hydro to complete line covering and isolation.

Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on small businesses, this issue has become more urgent than ever. The survival of our main streets will be essential to Toronto's economic recovery and livability, and it's critical that small businesses are able to safely maintain their buildings.

As a part of our economic recovery, the City must determine solutions to ensure small business owners are protected from the runaway costs of hydro wire covering.

Background Information (City Council)

(March 30, 2021) Member Motion MM31.15