

Appeal of the Chief Building Official's Decision for a Sign Variance Application for Two First Party Wall Signs at 70 Caledonia Park Road.

Date: September 3, 2026

To: Sign Variance Committee

From: Manager, City-Wide Priorities (A), Toronto Building

Wards: Davenport (Ward 9)

SUMMARY

This report addresses an appeal of the decision of the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building (the "CBO") concerning a sign variance application for two first party wall signs (the "Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance") filed by Priority Permits (the "Applicant"). The Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance pertains to variances sought respecting each of the wall signs (Proposed Sign #1 and Proposed Sign #2 collective referred as the "Proposed Signs"), each subject to one condition. The Applicant indicated the Proposed Signs are intended to offer identification and information for a self storage facility on property municipally known as 70 Caledonia Park Road (the "Subject Premises").

In accordance with the requirements of the Sign By-law, notice of the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance application was provided to the public, and two parties participated in the written hearing and filed materials in relation thereto.

Upon reviewing the materials submitted, the CBO decided to refuse variances for the Proposed Signs contained in the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance application. The CBO determined, based on the materials presented by the Applicant and others, that the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance application would not meet all eight of the mandatory criteria which would allow for the required variances to be granted.

At the same time, the CBO determined that sufficient information existed to establish that a different proposal for variances would meet the mandatory criteria. As a result, the CBO approved different sign variances for similar signs at the same locations, each subject to two conditions (the "CBO-Designed Variance"). The CBO-Designed Variance and the CBO's rationale in support thereof are described in Appendix 2 to this report.

One of the parties to the hearing, Matthew Aldoosh (the “Appellant”), filed an appeal of the CBO’s decision. As a result, the Sign Variance Committee (“SVC”) is now conducting an appeal de novo, meaning that the SVC are required to conduct an evaluation to determine whether the Applicant has demonstrated that the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance meets all eight criteria, on the basis of the information presented to the SVC.

The SVC may decide to refuse or grant the variances requested by Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance, or to make a decision to grant different variances, or impose conditions which the Applicant did not include in the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The Sign Variance Committee refuse to grant the two requested variances to subsection 694-21 I(5)(a), each subject to one condition, as required to allow for the issuance of a sign permit respecting the erection and display of Proposed Sign #1 and Proposed Sign #2 contained in the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance, as further described in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. The Sign Variance Committee grant the two requested variances to 694-21I(5)(a), each subject to one condition, as required to allow for the issuance of a sign permit respecting the erection and display of Proposed Sign #1 and Proposed Sign #2 contained in the CBO-Designed Variance, as further described in Attachment 2 to this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no current or known future year financial impacts arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

FP-26-135591 (File #26-135591)

On March 27, 2026, a Sign Variance application was submitted by Priority Permits, related for two wall signs, both located above the second storey, as described in Attachment 1 of this report (“Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance”). On May 22, 2026, a decision was made that refused to grant the variances within the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance which were applied for; and to issue a decision granting other variances not sought by any party before the CBO (the “CBO-Designed Variance”). The Decision

Notice can be found at Attachment 6 of this report. The Appellant appealed that decision on June 2, 2026.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Requested Variances

Table 1: Summary of Requested Variances – Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance

Requested Variance No.	Section	Requirement	Proposal
Requested Variance No. 1	§ 694-21 I (5) (a)	An E-Employment Sign District may contain a wall sign, other than a sign displaying a logo or corporate symbol permitted by Subsection (4), provided the sign shall only be erected at the first storey.	Proposed Sign #1 would be located on the 4 th storey, subject to Condition 1.
Requested Variance No. 2	§ 694-21 I (5) (a)	An E-Employment Sign District may contain a wall sign, other than a sign displaying a logo or corporate symbol permitted by Subsection (4), provided the sign shall only be erected at the first storey.	Proposed Sign #2 would be located on the 6 th storey, subject to Condition 2.
Condition 1		Notwithstanding 694-18. A(C), Proposed Sign #1 shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.	
Condition 2		Notwithstanding 694-18. A(C), Proposed Sign #2 shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.	

Table 2: Summary of Requested Variances – CBO-Proposed Variance

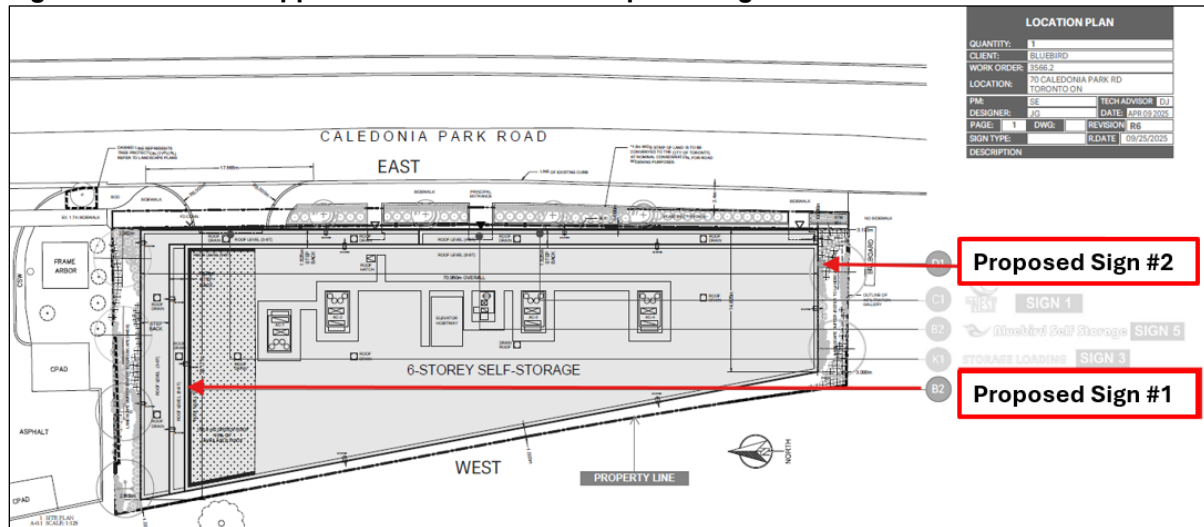
Requested Variance No.	Section	Requirement	Proposal
Requested Variance No. 1	§ 694-21 I (5) (a)	An E-Employment Sign District may contain a wall sign, other than a sign displaying a logo or corporate symbol permitted by Subsection (4), provided the sign shall only be erected at the first storey.	Proposed Sign 1 would be located on the 4 th storey, subject to Condition 1.
Requested Variance No. 2	§ 694-21 I (5) (a)	An E-Employment Sign District may contain a wall sign, other than a sign displaying a logo or corporate symbol permitted by Subsection (4), provided the sign shall only be erected at the first storey.	Proposed Sign 2 would be located on the 6 th storey, subject to Condition 2.
Condition 1		Notwithstanding 694-18. A(C), Proposed Sign #1 shall not be illuminated at anytime.	
Condition 2		Notwithstanding 694-18. A(C), Proposed Sign #2 shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.	

Sign Attributes and Site Context

The Applicant-Proposed Sign Variances pertains to variances sought for two illuminated first party wall signs to be located on the premises municipally known as 70 Caledonia Park Road. Proposed Sign #1 is proposed to be located on the North elevation, at the 4th storey of the building on the premises, featuring a maximum bisecting line of 1.21 metres, a maximum centre line of 15.84 metres, and a height of 18.21 metres. It is proposed that the sign face would display static copy, only.

Proposed Sign #2 is proposed to be located on the South elevation, at 6th storey of the building with a maximum bisecting line of 1.46 metres and a maximum centre line of 3.14 metres, and a height of 21.80 metres. It is proposed that the sign face would display static copy, only.

Figure 1: Detail and Approximate Location of Proposed Signs



The Subject Premises contains a newly constructed building, which is proposed to house Bluebird Self Storage, a self storage facility operated by Bluebird Caledonia Storage GP Inc. Staff have confirmed that the Subject Premises is designated as being entirely in an Employment ("E") Sign District. It is located at 70 Caledonia Park Road in Ward 9 – Davenport, see SignView Map in Figure 2. The Subject Premises is surrounded by Residential ("R"), Open Space ("OS") and ("E") Employment sign districts, which contain industrial and commercial uses, a railway corridor, low-rise dwellings, and a park respectively.

Figure 2: Sign View Map – 70 Caledonia Park Rd



Surrounding premises:

North: Employment ("E"), industrial and commercial uses

South: Employment ("E") Sign District industrial uses, Residential ("R") Sign District, low-rise single-family dwellings

East: Open Space ("OS") Sign District, City-owned public park

West: Open Space ("OS"), Railway Corridor

While first party wall signs are permitted in the E Sign Districts, the district-specific regulations do not permit first party wall signs to be located above the first storey of a building. Since the Proposed Signs are sought to be erected on the 4th and 6th storeys respectively, variances are required to allow for the issuance of a permit to authorize the erection and display of the Proposed Signs in the proposed locations.

COMMENTS

Criteria Established by §694-30A of The Sign By-law

The Sign By-law contains specific criteria used in evaluating Sign Variance applications. Specifically, §694-30A states that variances may only be granted where it has been determined that proposed signs related to variances sought meets each of the established criteria. When a decision regarding a First Party Sign Variance application is appealed, the Sign Variance Committee conducts an appeal de novo, meaning that they are required to conduct an evaluation to determine whether the party seeking the variance has demonstrated that the Proposed Sign(s) which are the subject of the application meet(s) all eight criteria, on the basis of the information presented to the Sign Variance Committee. The SVC has the authority to either approve or deny the variances requested by the Applicant. Additionally, the SVC can approve different variances or impose conditions not included in the Applicant's proposal.

Applying the Criteria Established by §694-30A of The Sign By-law

Section 694-30A(1): The Proposed Signs belong to a sign class permitted in the Sign District where the premises is located

The Applicant identifies the Proposed Signs as first party signs and the Subject Premises as an E Sign District (Attachment 4, p 19). Staff confirms that, as per the Applicant's submission, the Proposed Signs belong to the first party sign class, which is a class permitted in E Sign Districts.

As a result, the CBO is of the opinion that this criterion has been established.

Section 694-30A(2): The Proposed Signs are compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area

The Applicant submits that the Subject Premises contains a new self storage facility and that it is located within an employment area (Attachment 4, pp. 19-20). The submission acknowledges Earls court Park as a potentially sensitive adjacent use to the west and explains that the Proposed Signs' locations on the north and south elevations are to address concerns regarding visibility from the park (Attachment 4, p. 19).

The Applicant asserts the Proposed Signs are compatible with the existing elevated signage on nearby properties, and that the upper-level locations improve visibility and wayfinding while minimizing impacts on sensitive land uses (Attachment 4, p. 19).

Staff's review identified one active residential development application located approximately 200 metres northwest of the Subject Premises. Based on the proposed location and orientation of Proposed Sign #1 on the north elevation, staff determined that the sign would not be visible from those lands. Proposed Sign #2, located on the south elevation, would face away from the development site and would therefore have no direct visual relationship with that property

Based on the Applicant's submissions and staff's review of the surrounding context, including the location of nearby employment, open space, residential, and active development applications, the CBO determined that sufficient information was provided to demonstrate that the Proposed Signs would be compatible with the development of the Subject Premises and surrounding area.

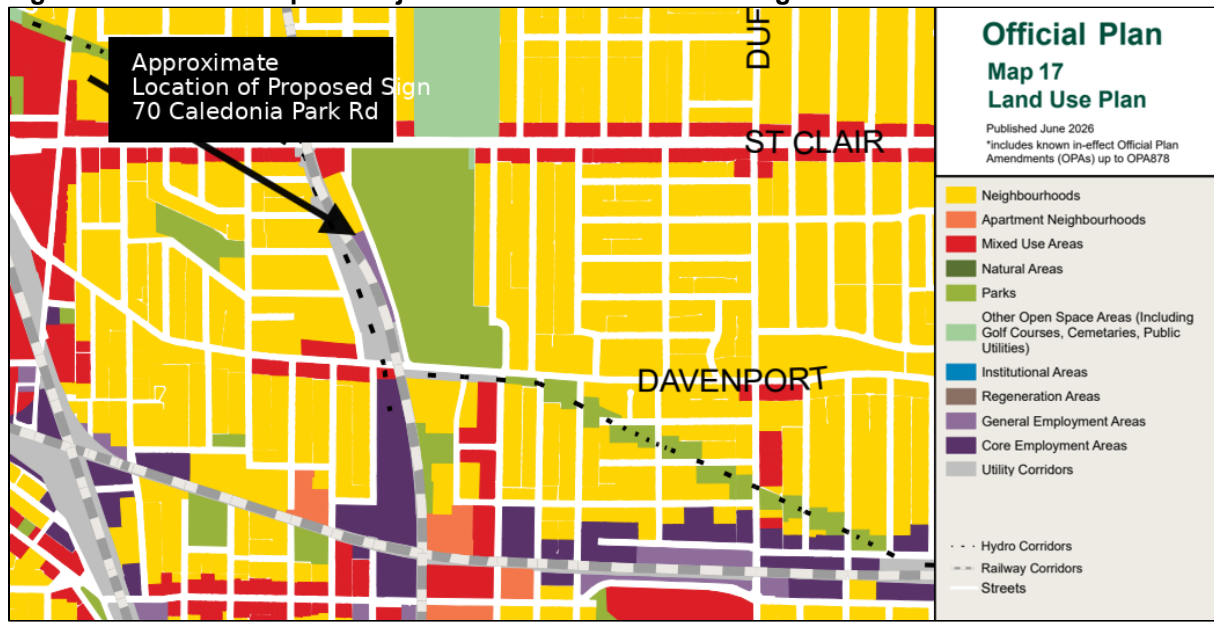
Accordingly, the CBO is of the view that this criterion has been met for the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance and for the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section 694-30A(3): The Proposed Signs support Official Plan objectives for the Subject Premises and surrounding area

The Applicant identifies that the Subject Premises is designated as a General Employment Areas under the Official Plan and notes the area is not subject to a secondary plan. Employment Areas are areas within the city that accommodate a range of employment-generating uses, including offices, manufacturing, warehousing, processing, repairing, research and development facilities, storage, distribution, and ancillary commercial uses intended to support employment functions.

The Applicant asserts that the Proposed Signs support the objectives of the General Employment Area by improving business visibility and wayfinding for permitted employment use, thereby contributing to the functionality and economic vitality of the area (Attachment 4, p. 20).

Figure 3: Land Use Map of Subject Premises and Surrounding Area



Staff acknowledges that signage serving the identification and wayfinding needs of a permitted employment use contributes to the functionality of Employment Areas. While signs not requiring variances could also contribute to these objectives in a similar, if not identical, fashion, the Proposed Signs, by enhancing the visibility and identification of a permitted employment use within a General Employment Area would be consistent with the Official Plan objectives.

As such, the CBO concludes that this criterion has been established for both the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance and the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section 694-30A(4): The Proposed Signs do not adversely affect adjacent premises

In their submissions, the Applicant states that the Proposed Signs would be positioned on the north and south elevations, facing away from nearby Earls court Park. It further notes that the Proposed Signs would display static copy are static rather than animated, use subdued illumination with a halo-lit and softly front-lit design (Attachment 4, pp.18-20). To minimize any potential impacts on neighbouring properties, the Applicant proposes as a condition of variances being granted that the Proposed Signs be equipped with an automatic timer that turns the illumination off between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. (Attachment 4, p. 20).

Two parties to the hearing raised concerns regarding the potential impacts of illumination associated with the Proposed Signs. Upon reviewing the Applicant's submissions and the concerns raised by other parties, the in the view of the CBO determined that the information submitted did not adequately address the potential illumination impacts associated with Proposed Sign #1.

Staff concluded that the potential impacts associated with Proposed Sign #1 could be appropriately mitigated through a condition prohibiting illumination of that sign. Accordingly, the CBO-Designed Variance incorporated a condition requiring Proposed Sign #1 to remain non-illuminated at all times.

Based on the materials submitted, the CBO determined that the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance did not meet this criterion. However, subject to a modified condition requiring Proposed Sign #1 to remain non-illuminated, the CBO determined that this criterion would be established for the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section 694-30A(5): The Proposed Signs do not adversely affect public safety, including traffic and pedestrian safety

The City's Sign By-law regulations are designed to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on public safety for signs which meet the requirements. The criterion is intended to ensure that variances are not granted where they would result in signs that would have adverse impacts on public safety.

The Applicant states that the signs display static copy, are mounted flush to the building, do not project into the public realm, and are located well above motorists' and pedestrians' sightlines, minimizing visual interference with traffic and pedestrian movement. It also notes that the signs will be installed in accordance with applicable structural and electrical safety standards (Attachment 4, p. 21).

Based on the available information with respect to the Proposed Signs and staff's review and additional investigation, including the requested deviations from the mandatory requirements of the Sign By-law, the CBO has determined that there is no reasonable basis for concerns related to public safety arising from the Proposed Signs.

As such, this criterion has been met for both the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance and for the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section 694-30A(6): The Proposed Signs are not a sign prohibited by §694-15B

Applicant's documents and drawings contain sufficient information to confirm that Proposed Signs do not meet the description of any of the signs which are specifically prohibited by §694-15B (Attachment 4, p 21).

As such, the CBO is of the opinion that this criterion has been established for the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance and for the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section 694-30A(7): The Proposed Signs do not alter the character of the premises or surrounding area

The Applicant submits that the Proposed Signs are compatible with and reinforce the built form and visual character of the Subject Premises (Attachment 4, p. 21). The Applicant also points to the presence of elevated signage on nearby properties as one element contributing to the character of the surrounding area. Further, the Applicant submits that the self-storage facility is one of the tallest buildings in the area and that the proposed sign locations are proportionate to the scale of the building (Attachment 4, pp. 19 and 21).

Staff acknowledges that the building on the Subject Premises differs from many surrounding employment buildings due to its height and scale. As a result, there are limited opportunities to directly compare the Proposed Signs to signage on other buildings in the immediate area. Staff review determined that the Proposed Signs are proportionate to the scale of the building and serve an identification function appropriate to the use operating on the premises.

Given the distinctive height of the building and the employment context in which it is situated, the CBO determined that the requested variances respecting sign location would not materially alter the existing character of the Subject Premises or the surrounding area.

Accordingly, the CBO determined that this criterion has been met for the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance and for the CBO-Designed Variance.

Section: 694-30A(8): The Proposed Signs are not contrary to the public interest

The Applicant submits that the Proposed Signs are not contrary to the public interest because they provide building identification and wayfinding while limiting impacts on nearby sensitive land uses through their location, design and proposed illumination controls (Attachment 4, p. 21).

However, staff determined that the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance does not adequately address potential illumination impacts associated with Proposed Sign #1. As a result, the CBO was not satisfied that the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance appropriately balances the benefits of the Proposed Signs with the interests of surrounding properties.

Staff concluded that requiring Proposed Sign #1 to remain non-illuminated would appropriately mitigate those concerns while still allowing both signs to perform their intended identification function. In staff's view, the CBO-Designed Variance better balances the objectives of business identification and the broader public interest.

Accordingly, the CBO determined that this criterion has not been established for the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance but would be established for the CBO-Designed Variance, subject to the proposed conditions.

CONCLUSION

The CBO is of the opinion that the materials presented are insufficient to establish that all eight criteria set out in §694-30A of the Sign By-law have been met with respect to the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance, and the requested variances as contained in Attachment 1 should not be granted.

However, the CBO notes that there may be sufficient information to establish that a different proposal, consisting of the similar Proposed Sign #1 and Proposed Sign #2, at correspondent locations, but each of the Proposed Signs subject to a specific condition concerning illumination, proposed in the CBO-Designed Sign Variance, would meet the eight criteria. As a result, the CBO is of the opinion that the SVC should grant the variances subject to the specified conditions as contained in Attachment 2.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Description of the Applicant-Proposed Sign Variance
Attachment 2 – Description of the CBO-Designed Variance
Attachment 3 – Appellant's Submission Package
Attachment 4 – Applicant's Submission Package
Attachment 5 – Submissions from other Parties to the hearing
Attachment 6 – Notice of Decision