

Project Update for Sign Regulation Review

ISSUE

Signs are regulated through Appendix A (Sign Regulations) contained in Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009 (Zoning Bylaw) for the purpose of allowing businesses and other organizations to advertise and promote, while ensuring standards of public safety and community aesthetics are maintained. In order to ensure the regulations stay relevant to current issues and expectations, remain consistent with other sections in the Zoning Bylaw, a review of sign regulations is required. The review process allows community stakeholders to have a meaningful opportunity to provide input to the regulations.

This review has been delayed for a number of reasons and this interim report is intended to provide an update on the current status of the review, as well as an estimated timeline for completion.

BACKGROUND

The last significant update to the Sign Regulations were in 2010, and with changing technologies and community expectations, a full review of the regulations is appropriate. In addition, a number of Council motions address questions related to sign regulations as follows:

The following inquiry was made by Councillor Z. Jeffries at City Council's regular business meeting held on April 25, 2016:

"Can the Administration please report back on the following items related to digital billboards:

- Do digital billboards comply with dark sky principles and if not, what can be done to improve billboard performance?; and
- What can be done to regulate the intensity of the light given off by digital billboards?"

At its meeting on March 8, 2021, the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services resolved:

"That The Cannabis Retail Bylaw, No. 9525 be referred to the planned signage review".

The sign regulation review project will address these inquiries and resolution, ensure the regulations remain relevant and respond to current needs and address other aspects of the regulations and review processes identified by stakeholders.

CURRENT STATUS

The Zoning Bylaw regulates all sign types on private property including portable, wall, freestanding, banner, logo, canopy, digital and electronic message centres. Sign regulations are classified in five different signs groups, based on the zoning district

Project Update for Sign Regulation Review

within which a sign is located. Depending on the type of sign, and applicable sign group, a sign permit may be required.

In addition to the general sign regulations in the Zoning Bylaw which apply to all businesses, further regulation of signs for cannabis related businesses are outlined in Bylaw No. 9525, Cannabis Business License Bylaw, 2018. The bylaw allows signs and advertisements visible from outside the cannabis business to include only the business name in alpha-numeric characters.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The sign regulation review was initiated in April 2016 but delayed a number of times in order to address other time sensitive projects falling under the responsibility of the Licensing and Permitting Section. This included the need to develop regulations and permitting process to accommodate rideshare companies, as well as to accommodate federal legalization of cannabis and provision of cannabis retail stores and production facilities, updating licensing requirements for short-term accommodations and reviewing licensing options for rental properties.

In order to address the enquiries, resolution and administrative items, an extensive engagement process will be undertaken with affected stakeholders. The first phase of engagement was completed in 2019. Further phases of engagement were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are tentatively planned for Q3 2021. Following the completion of this step, Administration will undertake additional reporting to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services outlining the findings of the engagement, technical research, regulations in other municipalities and making recommendations for amendments to applicable bylaws.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At this time, the sign review project is not anticipated to have any financial implications. The engagement work will be completed by the Licensing and Permitting staff in the Community Standards Department, which is not supported by the mill rate and operates on a cost-recovery basis through business license fees.

Implementation of the sign regulations, including permitting and enforcement is conducted by the Bylaw Compliance staff in the Community Standards Department. Proposed options for amendments provided in future reporting will include the financial implications related to ongoing operation of the program.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications at this time. Any other implications related to the review will be provided in future reports.

NEXT STEPS

Further reporting will be provided outlining results of the engagement, technical research, regulations in other cities and proposed recommendations for bylaw

Project Update for Sign Regulation Review

amendments. At this time, additional reporting is expected to be provided in Q4 2021, subject to input received through stakeholder engagement.

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Mark Wilson, Licensing and Permitting Manager, Community Standards
Reviewed by: Jo-Anne Richter, Director of Community Standards
Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

SP/2021/CS/PDCS/Project Update on Sign Regulation Review/pg