

## Portable Sign License – 2021

### Recommendation

That the proposed fee increase for portable sign licensing, effective January 1, 2021, as included in the proposed 2020 and 2021 Preliminary Operating Budget, be approved.

### Issue

This report outlines a proposed fee increase for a portable sign license to facilitate a 100 percent cost recovery objective for sign license applications.

### Background

A portable sign is defined in the Sign Regulations as a portable freestanding sign mounted on a wide-based frame with a single sign face area of not less than 1.9 m<sup>2</sup> or greater than 6 m<sup>2</sup> which can be readily moved or transported to various locations. Such signs are sometimes referred to as mini-billboards.

The placement of portable signs within Saskatoon is regulated by a licensing process. The sign owner is required to purchase an annual license which is affixed to the sign, and to report proposed sign locations to Administration. Proposed sign locations are reviewed by Administration to ensure signs are located on sites with appropriate zoning, are not located in areas required for off-street parking and that minimum separation distances from other portable signs are maintained. Portable signs can be onerous to administer as many signs are moved to multiple locations throughout the year.

In 2012, Administration established a 100 percent cost recovery mandate for sign applications and the fee for an annual portable sign license was set at \$30. The fee has not been adjusted since that time.

### Discussion/Analysis

Administration issues approximately 600 portable sign licenses each year, resulting in revenues of \$18,000. The cost to administer the portable sign licensing program is estimated at \$24,000 per year, which includes staff time and overhead costs.

Administration proposes a \$10 dollar fee increase for portable sign licenses starting in 2021, resulting in a total annual fee of \$40 dollars. This will help ensure Administration achieves the 100 percent cost recovery objective. Delaying the fee increase until 2021 will provide the portable sign industry with ample time to prepare for the increase.

Table 1 outlines the portable sign license fee structure for other Canadian municipalities.

**Table 1 – Fee Comparisons**

<b>City</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Conditions/Length of Permit</b>
Kelowna	\$ 75.00	30 days or less
	\$ 175.00	31 to 60 days
	\$ 350.00	61 to 90 days
Regina	\$ 44.00	Up to 365 days
Edmonton	\$ 94.00	90 days or less
	\$ 282.00	Up to 365 days
Calgary	\$ 55.00	Max of 14 days
	\$ 2,195.00	Annual permit allows unlimited number of signs placed by license holder
Toronto	\$ 153.85	Max of 30 days
Saskatoon	\$ 30.00	Up to 365 days

As outlined in Table 1, the fee structure and approach to regulating portable signs varies significantly between municipalities, with many using a tiered fee structure based on duration of sign placement.

It is the view of Administration that bylaw contraventions, including unlicensed or improperly placed portable signs, has become more prolific in recent years. At this time, enforcement is done primarily on a complaint driven basis. Further review to assess the need for a proactive approach to remedy unlicensed or illegally placed signs will be undertaken in the coming years, and recommendations for a further fee increase to accommodate additional enforcement, may be made at that time.

### **Implications**

Based on the proposed fee and projected volume of portable sign licenses, it is expected the fee increase will result in additional yearly revenues of approximately \$6,000. This will assist in achieving the 100 percent cost recovery mandate in administering the licensing of portable signs.