

Public Right-of-Way Billboards

ISSUE

As part of the 2024/2025 Budget Process, City Council directed Administration to pursue additional billboard leases along Circle Drive right-of-way. To proceed with this direction rescinding previously provided direction is required.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council that the direction provided at the March 26, 2018 regular meeting of City Council which resolved, “That additional billboards on public right-of-way not be installed due to public safety reasons” be rescinded.

BACKGROUND

At the March 26, 2018 regular meeting of City Council, when considering the [Commercial Billboards on Public Right-of-Way](#) report, City Council resolved:

“That additional billboards on public right-of-way not be installed due to public safety reasons.”

During November 28, 2023 Budget Deliberations when considering the [Land Development 2024 - 2025 Business Plan and Budget](#) City Council approved:

“Option 3 – Additional Billboard Locations – 2024”

This option included the following overview in the budget report.

“Currently, the City of Saskatoon (City) limits the amount of billboards on right-of-way (along Circle Drive, etc.). Many of the billboards erected around the city are on private land. Since many of the City’s right-of-way are on high traffic/volume roadways, it is anticipated these locations would be in high demand for digital billboard advertisers.

To allow for billboards along rights-of-way, several bylaw and policy amendments would be required including changes to the zoning bylaw. It is estimated the City could receive upwards of \$25,000 per digital board. As the scope and magnitude of this program is yet to be determined, an estimated \$200,000 in additional revenue is assumed at this point, pending further direction. If selected by City Council as a viable option, future reporting would be required to determine maintenance, traffic safety impacts, and potential locations. This option is not being recommended at this point due to the fact it has been reported on as an option in the past but abandoned due to traffic safety/distracted driving concerns.”

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Following the approval of the 2024/2025 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget while reviewing the direction provided, the Administration identified a previous resolution that

would require rescission to implement the Billboards on City Right-of-Way direction that was provided during Budget Deliberations.

In consultation with the City Clerk's office it has been determined that a rescinding motion is required for this direction to proceed. The March 26, 2018 direction was a result of reporting requested by City Council on this topic, and the motion is viewed as a policy decision, providing future direction on the ability to place billboards on City right-of-way. This is in contrast to other budget decisions such as rates, service levels and staffing which are often fluid and change from year to year and do not require the same change in policy direction. The Administration has concluded that no other direction from the 2024/2025 Budget Deliberations require rescission of previous resolutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of this option have already been reflected in the 2024 budget as \$200,000 in revenue. The Administration will continue with the required bylaw and policy changes to establish these leases as quickly as possible to meet the budgeted targets.

NEXT STEPS

The Administration will proceed with the bylaw and policy amendments which are required to establish these billboard leases including changes to the Zoning Bylaw. These changes will be the focus of future reports to allow for commercial billboard use in the right-of-way.

If the recommendation is approved today, future reporting will provide options and seek approval for locations where appropriate public right-of-way exists as opposed to seeking a blanket allowance on public right-of-way.

REPORT APPROVAL

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