



Memorandum

TO: Krista Power, City Clerk **FILE:**

FROM: Doug Vincent, Manager Licensing & Enforcement Division,
Corporate Services

DATE: 09/05/2023

SUBJECT: Consultation Results on Proposed Sign By-law Amendments from
Corporate Report 173-2023

**MEETING &
DATE:** Committee of the Whole - 09/18/2023

Background Information

At the May 8, 2023 Committee of The Whole meeting, the Licensing and Enforcement Division presented and received approval of Corporate Report 173-2023 (Development & Emergency Services), requesting that the current Sign By-law (135-1992) be amended. The changes strengthen administrative and enforcement tools to encourage greater compliance with the By-law, including increased permit revenue. This Report outlined eight specific areas of the old By-law that required amendments to accomplish the stated intentions of the request.

Additionally, the Report directed that a comprehensive review of the Sign By-law 135-1992 be conducted in 2023 and a draft By-law be presented in late 2024 for consideration. The request for amendments to the current By-law 135-1992 and the direction to conduct industry consultations) for a new Sign By-law to be presented in late 2024), were two separate and distinct process steps that the Committee approved to proceed.

On June 5, 2023, the amending By-law 186-2023, which was presented to the regular meeting of Council. Council then directed that administration seek additional input from industry stakeholders concerning the proposed amendments and to report back to the September 18, 2023 Committee of The Whole meeting.

Administration then contacted fourteen Sign companies known to operate in the Thunder Bay area and requested review and comments on the specific amendments that were being proposed. The cover e-mail explained the purpose of the current amendments, included the Report 173-2023 and proposed the amending By-law. The e-mail also confirmed that a full comprehensive sign by-law process would be started later this fall in line with the Division's September 2021 work plan (R120-2021). Participants were requested to respond within two weeks if they desired to participate; only one response has been received to date.

The sole response received, agreed with the common purpose of Corporate Report 173-2023, that being to ensure revenues are being properly collected and even went on to suggest more revenue ideas. This response however, did not negatively address any of the proposed amendments or suggest they would adversely affect that company's business if proceeded with. The author did propose additional ideas (and comments) about how the City might increase revenues, make obtaining permits timeframes more flexible and engage technologies better (ie. online permits). The author further expressed thoughts that the City consider a review other types of signage fees (on other sign types) that may be a fairer revenue practice within the industry. These types of comments and ideas will be incorporated into the comprehensive review process toward a new Sign By-law. One error (an omission) is now corrected by an additional amendment (now Item 18) which will remove "Schedule A", as to not conflict with annual 'User Fee' schedules.

Administration has concluded that amendments included in By-law 186-2023, which is being re-presented now as By-law 288-2023, will not adversely impact the current sign industry's practices. By following the existing Sign By-law 135-1992 and that these amendments, it will likely result in a corresponding increases in both sign compliance and permit revenues. Administration recommends that Council approve By-law 288-2023.

It is recommended that the following resolution be presented to Committee of the Whole at the September 18, 2023 meeting:

WITH RESPECT to the Memorandum from Doug Vincent, Manager, Licensing & Enforcement, dated September 05, 2023, we recommend Outstanding Item 2023-008DEV be removed from the Outstanding List;.

AND THAT that draft By-law 288-2023 as attached, be presented to City Council for ratification at the September 25, 2023.