



TO:	GENERAL COMMITTEE
SUBJECT:	SIGN BY-LAW REVISION - RAIL CORRIDOR SIGNAGE
PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:	D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES, EXT. 4421
SUBMITTED BY:	D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES
GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:	D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:	M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the City's Sign By-law 2018-029 be amended by adding section 12.1.1.2.0 to allow poster panel signs to be permitted on the City-owned lands along the Barrie Collingwood Railway corridor:

"12.1.1.2.0 In addition to section 12.1.1.1.0 and notwithstanding section 11.1.5.0.0, poster panel signs shall be permitted on all City owned lands along the Barrie Collingwood Railway corridor in accordance with all other provisions of this by-law."

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

2. The purpose of this staff report is to revise the wording of the City's Sign By-law to legalize grandfathered poster panel/billboard signs located along the Barrie Collingwood Railway corridor and allow for a potential expansion in the number of locations for such signage along the corridor.

Background

5. In the mid-1990s, deregulation of the rail sector permitted the Canadian National Railway to abandon freight rail service to communities across Canada. To support the vital industries in the Barrie and Collingwood area and to ensure continued access to efficient and effective rail service, the City of Barrie, the Town of Collingwood and CANDO Rail Services Ltd. entered into an innovative Public-Private partnership to form and operate a short line rail operation called the Barrie Collingwood Railway (BCRY).
6. In 1998, the Allandale Community Development Corporation (ACDC) was created by the City of Barrie to purchase and hold title to the Canadian National Railway line lands located around Kempenfelt Bay and the Barrie to Bradford rail line.
7. In addition to the revenues from commodities shipped on the rail line, a source of revenue for the ACDC included an advertising contract for billboards/poster panel signage located along the rail corridor.
8. In 2009 a decision was made to wind up ACDC as a separate entity and incorporate its operations within The Corporation of the City of Barrie. Title to the rail lands was subsequently transferred to the City.

ANALYSIS

9. Section 11.1.5.0.0. of the City of Barrie Sign By-law 2018-029 prohibits signs on or over municipal lands other than City official signs. The purpose of this prohibition is to avoid situations where advertising devices impact safety of pedestrians or drivers by distracting attention from traffic or blocking sightlines along boulevards and sight triangles. It is also intended to avoid the commercialization of City parkland with advertising devices.
10. Due to the transfer of the title to the Barrie Collingwood Railway lands to the City, the rail corridor is now deemed to be municipal lands. However, the billboards/poster panel signage along the Barrie Collingwood Railway corridor was pre-existing prior to the transfer of title, and as such these signs are considered “grandfathered” and permitted to remain in place as constructed.
11. The advertising contract along the rail corridor has expired and a new procurement process will be undertaken related to advertising signs. Bidders on any new procurement may wish to install different infrastructure to allow for digital billboards/poster panel signs instead of the traditional billboard or change. The current contractor owns the structure, and would remove it, if it decided not to bid on a new advertising contract or was the unsuccessful bidder.
12. To allow for different structures in the existing locations and as well as advertising in new locations, staff are proposing that the Sign By-law be revised to identify that billboards/poster panel signs are permitted on municipal lands along the rail corridor.
13. While the corridor lands are municipal property, signage along the rail corridor is not deemed to present the same type of risk for pedestrian or vehicular traffic as signage placed along a boulevard or other sight line. Rail corridors have often been used for billboard/poster panel signs and staff are not aware of any concerns with respect to continuing this practice.
14. Should the recommended revision be approved, any new signage locations would be reviewed by City staff and the rail operator CANDO Contracting Ltd., to ensure that it would not impact rail operations negatively, block sight lines for pedestrians or vehicles, or other concerns.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

15. There are no environmental or climate change matters directly related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

16. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could recommend that no change be made to the existing wording in the City’s Sign By-law.

This alternative is not recommended. The existing signs are considered grandfathered. However, this does not provide for the replacement of the existing signage or new signage locations along the rail corridor to be considered.

Alternative #2

General Committee could recommend that any replacement or new signage along the rail corridor be considered on a site by site basis.

While this option is available, it is not recommended. This is anticipated to limit interest from potential bidders on the existing sign locations or new locations as it would not provide certainty and would delay the implementation of any signage.

FINANCIAL

17. There are no direct financial implications related to the recommendation to revise the City of Barrie Sign By-law provision.
18. Indirectly, revising the wording to continue to permit poster panel/billboard signage along the rail corridor provides a revenue source for the City of Barrie to offset the costs associated with freight rail operations.

LINKAGE TO 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

19. The recommendations included in this Staff Report are not specifically related to the goals contained in 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.