



Report to: General Committee

Date Report: May 30, 2016

SUBJECT: New Park Signage System and Implementation Strategy
PREPARED BY: Barb Rabicki, Director, Operations
Linda Irvine, Manager, Parks and Open Space Development

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That Council approve a standard park sign (Option #2, Alupanel Panel with 3.25" x 3.25" aluminum posts) as the standard for all park name signs across City parks; and.
- 2) That approval be granted for implementation of a 4 year program to install parks signage; and.
- 3) That the 2016 costs for this program be funded from projects 5289 Park Signage – Design & Implementation in the amount of \$13,387, 15226 Parks Name & Bylaw Signage in the amount of \$66,000 and 16037 Park Signage Implementation Program in the amount of \$113,800, totaling \$193,187; and
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval on the design and technical specifications for a City-wide new park signage system, and on the multi-year implementation strategy.

BACKGROUND:

In December 2013, staff made a presentation to the Lands, Building, and Park Construction Sub-Committee of General Committee on "Development of a Parks Signage System" for the municipality. The purpose of this initiative is to develop a coordinated parks signage system for all newly built and older, existing parks, in Markham. At that time, Council approved, in principle, the design direction for City-wide park signage, and a generalized, multi-year funding approach to park signage implementation.

New Park Signage System:

The new signage system is a "City-wide standard" appropriate for all classifications, types and sizes of municipal parks across the City. The theme, look, colour and shape for the park sign is based on the City motto: "Leading While Remembering" and is modern in character, with a nod to the traditional. The park signage design favoured by Council features three Bur Oak leaves (as the official City tree is the Bur Oak) on a heritage green background. The chosen font is modern with traditional accents which is easily readable and timeless.

Previous Direction:

Staff was directed to proceed with next steps which included the following, and to report back:

- confirming the technical and material specifications for the sign;
- confirming supplier(s) and cost of production and installation;
- confirming the number of park signs to be installed in new and existing parks;
- developing a multi-year sign installation and sign replacement program and funding strategy;
- seeking input from Heritage Markham Committee, and;
- preparing and installing full size prototypes for evaluation.

Staff met with the Heritage Markham Committee on May 14, 2014. Heritage Markham indicated that they had no objection to the design of the park sign to be produced and installed in non-heritage districts and recommended that staff continue to work with Heritage Markham to develop a “heritage sign” as a member of the family of signs, suitable for the heritage districts. To date, Council has not authorized staff to work on a different park signage standard for heritage areas. A consistent approach to sign design provides an easily-recognized way-finding marker for the community, as well as Emergency Services staff.

Park signage is proposed to have the City logo, as well as the Civic address prominently displayed on both sides of the sign, for ease of identification and emergency response. It is recommended that pertinent park by-laws, as well interpretive signage be located separately, at pedestrian entrance locations where they will be more visible. By-law signs have not been included in this project. Emergency & Fire Services has been consulted & supports park addressing as an improvement to facilitate emergency response.

Parks signage will be prominently displayed near key park entrances. Parks fronting on more than one street, and larger parks may have multiple signs. Parks with entrances on more than one street will have the key civic address noted on the primary sign, while secondary signs will note the secondary street entrances to facilitate emergency response.

Park Naming Approved:

At the March 2, 2014, Council Meeting, Council approved the report entitled “Naming of City of Markham Parks” which included the naming of approximately 90 City parks as outlined in this report and as amended at the February 24, 2014 General Committee meeting. Providing park name signs is an important next step in community recognition and stewardship of Markham’s parks. Markham parks are becoming increasingly more popular for both active and passive recreation use, and also serves as a meeting place where residents & children of all ethnic groups and generations join together. In addition, as most of these parks have been built in the new growth areas of the municipality, it is critical that they be signed for community information and safety reasons.

Among the resolutions, Council directed staff to:

- Erect park signs for each park once the sign design is approved by Council and, as per the Council approved Naming Policy, an interpretative sign be installed as well to explain the significance of the individual that the park is named after; and,
- Develop, for Council approval, a multiyear sign installation/replacement program, including all costs and funding sources related to production and installation for submission during the 2015 Capital budget process for all existing and newly named parks.

It is important to note that this project will initially capture costs of park name signs only.

Options for Consideration:

Three options are presented for Council consideration, one which is aircraft- grade T6 aluminum construction, and two are options favoured by local municipalities. Manufacturing & installation is recommended to be contracted out, due to the tight staff resources, manufacturing processes, and the project efficiencies of hiring outside contractors to undertake the extensive work to deliver this project. Manufacturing of signs in-house would negatively impact core business as a result of limited sign shop capacity for this project. Project management of this extensive project is needed to ensure timely delivery with the required contractor supervision and documentation.

The **current temporary park signs constructed of Intecel on wood posts are not recommended** due to short lifecycle of 7-10 years; additional maintenance required on wood posts to extend lifecycle. There is also a tendency of the posts to crack, twist or decay; posts require additional maintenance such as repainting during its lifecycle. Parks that have received “temporary signs” include Felix Opatowski Park; Gord Weeden Park; Susannah McLaren Park, plus several others. These signs are comprised of a 60” x 36” sign panel manufactured out of Intecel and mounted on 6” x 6” wooden posts, stained black.

Option #1: High Pressure Laminate (HPL)

Composition: solid high pressure laminate (HPL)

Lifespan: 10-12 years minimum

HPL is a material known for strength, durability, UV resistance & ease of graffiti removal. HPL is one of the panels recommended by sign manufacturing companies, and has been used by the Municipality of Vaughan for over a decade.

Operations staff testing of potential vandalism included scratching, burning, breakage and tagging with graffiti. The HPL signs showed good graffiti removal, as well as good resistance to the other abuse tests.

The cost to manufacture & install a two-sided park name sign of dimensions 28"x48" (3.25" x 3.25" posts) is \$1,400 (Inclusive of HST).

Option #2: Alupanel – Recommended Option
Composition: aluminum sheathing on composite
Lifespan: 12-15 years minimum

This option also provides an attractive panel with good durability, strength and UV degradation resistance. This product is used by the City of Toronto, and has proven to perform well from a durability and vandalism perspective. Operations staff testing of potential vandalism included scratching, burning, breakage and tagging with graffiti. The Alupanel signs showed good graffiti removal, as well as good resistance to the other abuse tests.

Costs to manufacture & install a two-sided park name sign of dimensions 28"x48" (3.25" x 3.25" posts) is \$1,200 (Inclusive of HST).

Option #3: Aluminum 28" x 48" baked enamel panel
Composition: hollow aircraft-grade T6 aluminum
Lifespan: 12 - 15 years minimum

A full size prototype was manufactured out of aircraft grade T6 aluminum with a baked on enamel coating. The aluminum, baked enamel, modular signage system is common within the sign manufacturing industry, and has a 10 year warranty. There are a number of manufacturers who use similar techniques. Enamel panels stand the test of time, and do not delaminate, rot, crack, scratch, or warp. This sign posts include a ground key mounting system with vandal resistant hardware and a break-away safety feature. Typically, in the event of a collision, the sign panel remains intact, and only the posts require replacement. Operations staff tested potential vandalism including scratching, burning, breakage and tagging with graffiti. The aluminum signs showed good graffiti removal, as well as good resistance to the other abuse tests.

Costs to manufacture & install a two-sided park name sign of dimensions 28"x48" (3.25" x 3.25" posts) is \$1,900 (Inclusive of HST).

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Staff have reviewed and evaluated the three signage options based on the cost of supply, installation, maintenance, durability and lifecycle. City Sign Shop has the technology to produce Options #1 or #2, but cannot produce Option #3. However, current staff workload necessitates contracted assistance in project planning & management, site selection, and contractor supervision. In-house production of this significant project will compromise Operations ability to respond in a timely manner to meet service standards. Cost comparisons were developed to provide comparison of contracted vs. in-house costs. Internal staff costs to manufacture and install the Alupanel signs are higher than contracted costs, at \$1,450 for a 28"x48" sign, and \$1,435 for a 36"x60" sign. For all reasons including cost effectiveness, staff recommend that this project be contracted out. Total program cost to be spent over a 4 year period are as below, and include manufacturing, project management and installation costs.

	Option 1		Option 2 - Recommended		Option 3	
Sign Panel	HPL High Pressure Laminate		Alupanel - Aluminum Sheathing / Composite Core		Enamel on Aluminum	
Lifecycle (years)	10-12		15		15	
	Panel Size		Panel Size		Panel Size	
	28 x 48	36 x 60	28 x 48	36 x 60	28 x 48	36 x 60
Capital Cost (\$) incl. Install	\$1,400	\$1,900	\$1,200	\$1,400	\$1,900	\$2,200
Aluminum Post 3.25" x 3.25"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
No. of Signs	410	25	410	25	410	25
Sub-total (\$)	\$574,000	\$47,500	\$492,000	\$35,000	\$779,000	\$55,000
Total Cost (\$)	\$621,500		\$527,000		\$834,000	
Contingency (\$ (10%))	\$62,150		\$52,700		\$83,400	
Total Cost incl. Contingency (\$)	\$683,650		\$579,700		\$917,400	

Recommended Specification:

Staff recommend that Prototype #2, Alupanel be selected as the standard for all park signage. From a cost of lifecycle perspective this option represents the best long term

value to the municipality with an attractive appearance which is cohesive across the City and facilitates emergency response.

Staff also notes that the in-house signage production option can be used in instances where a few park signs are needed quickly. Given the ability of staff to produce in-house either Option #1, or Option #2, further reinforces the decision to recommend Option #2 as the preferred option.

Recommended Park Signage Implementation Strategy:

Early implementation will focus on placing name signs in newer parks that do not currently have signs, and are primarily funded through Development Charges. Later rollout will focus on older parks, as sign replacements. Contracted project management staff will be retained to plan & deliver this project in a phased approach, spanning a 4 year period. Project Manager will collaborate with staff to determine prioritization of parks across the City. Park visits will be conducted to determine location and orientation of signs and number of signs per park. Cost estimates will be refined prior to the issuance of a tender. Updated costs will be presented for 2017 budget consideration of further rollout of park signage program. The contracted project manager will be hired as a part-time staff funded from the park signage capital projects.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

Below is a breakdown of the number of signs being placed in parks with no signs and parks with existing signs.

	# of Parks	# of Signs			Cost (\$)			Funding
		28 x 48	36 x 60	total	Cost Incl. Contingency	Funding Available	Funding to be Requested in Future	
Parks (no signs)	140	230	15	245	\$ 326,700	\$ 193,187	\$ 133,513	DCA/Operating Non-LC
Parks (with signs)	130	180	10	190	\$ 253,000	\$ -	\$ 253,000	LC
Total	270	410	25	435	\$ 579,700	\$ 193,187	\$ 386,513	

The above number of signs is estimated and will be confirmed through an inventory count to be undertaken.

Installation of new signs at existing parks that currently do not have signs will be funded 90% Development Charge (DC) and 10% operating non-life cycle. Replacement of signs at existing parks can only be funded from the Life Cycle Replacement and Capital Reserve Fund. Since this is a new program, the replacement of these assets will be included as part of the 2016 Life Cycle Study.

Based on the above estimates, \$326,700 will be required to fund installation of new signs at existing parks that currently do not have signs (90% DC and 10% operating non-life cycle funded), and \$253,000 will be required to fund replacement of signs at existing

parks (Life Cycle Replacement and Capital Reserve Fund) , totaling \$579,700 over the 4 year period.

Staff recommends the 2016 park signage implementation costs be funded from projects 5289 Park Signage – Design & Implementation in the amount of \$13,387, 15226 Parks Name & Bylaw Signage in the amount of \$66,000 and 16037 Park Signage Implementation Program in the amount of \$113,800, totaling \$193,187. These projects are funded from 90% DC and 10% non-life cycle and as such could fund approximately 161 smaller park signs at existing parks that do not currently have signs (\$193,187/\$1,200 per sign).

The remaining funding requirement of \$386,513 for future phases to the program will be requested as part of the annual capital budget process. The breakdown of the future funding requirement will be as follows:

- \$133,513 for installation of new signs at existing parks that currently do not have signs (90% DC and 10% non-life cycle funded);
- \$253,000 for the replacement of signs at existing parks (Life Cycle Replacement and Capital Reserve Fund).

Based on the estimated life of 15 years, the replacement of the 435 signs will have a life cycle impact of \$966,167 over 25 years (\$579,700/15 year life cycle x 25 years). This will be updated in the 2016 Life Cycle Study.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Project management is included in the costs and will be provided by temporary, part-time staff member.

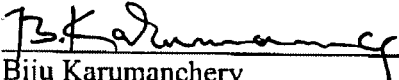
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

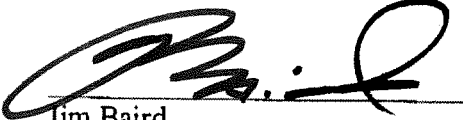
This project supports the Integrated Leisure and Master Plan (2010) goals of “Placemaking” and “Align Leisure Services with the Growth Management Strategy”. This project also aligns with the Public Realm Strategy (2015) of “Animate Our Neighbourhoods and Districts – Informing Design and Wayfinding”.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

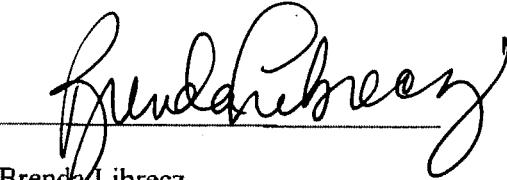
Fire & Emergency Services, and Finance have been consulted.

RECOMMENDED BY:


Biju Karumanchery
Director, Planning & Urban Design


Jim Baird,
Commissioner, Development Services


Barb Rabicki, Director Operations


Brenda Librecz,
Commissioner, Fire & Community
Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Photo of recommended Park Sign