



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: May 28, 2013

SUBJECT: 2012 Summer Sign By-law Enforcement Update Report
PREPARED BY: W. Wiles, Manager, By-law Enforcement & Licensing, x4851

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) THAT the report entitled “2012 Summer Sign By-law Enforcement Update Report” be received; and,
- 2) THAT staff be directed to continue with the sign enforcement program as outlined in the Report; and further,
- 3) THAT staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

To provide an update on the results of Legislative Services’ 2012 Summer Sign By-law Enforcement Program as requested at the May 7, 2012, General Committee Meeting.

BACKGROUND:

At the March 20, 2012 Council Meeting, a motion was brought forward concerning illegal signs on municipal boulevards (see Attachment “A” for the Council extract). At the conclusion of Council’s deliberation on this motion, staff was directed to prepare an information memo for a future General Committee meeting outlining the following:

1. Legislative Services’ planned summer Sign By-law Enforcement Program; and
2. Potential Enhancements to the planned Sign By-law Enforcement of By-law regulations.

The above noted information memo was provided by staff at the May 7, 2012, General Committee Meeting. As requested, the memo provided the following overview of Markham’s planned 2012 Summer Sign Enforcement Program:

- 4 Summer Sign Students to be employed to work 35 hours a week (Monday to Friday) from May through to the end of August. These students also enforced the City’s shopping cart regulations.
- 1 part-time Sign Removal Student to be employed to work on Saturdays and Sundays.
- 1 part-time Sign Enforcement Officer to be employed to work 24 hours per week to primarily address permanent and mobile signs.
- 4 coordinated City-wide sign blitzes to be undertaken (involving Markham By-law Enforcement and Operations staff as well as York Region staff). During each blitz, resources were deployed to provide sign removal in all areas of the City.

The information memo also identified the following Program enhancements:

- Increased sign enforcement activity of an additional 576 hours to cover the six month period of February through April and September through November.
- Placement of reoccurring ads in the local newspaper and on Markham's Portal to educate residents on municipal Sign By-law regulations.
- Distribution of written notices to all of Markham's licensed businesses to remind and educate them on the City's sign regulations.
- Review of sign enforcement best practices to identify successful enforcement approaches used by other municipalities.
- Review of all possible prosecutorial tools available to address illegal signs.

At the conclusion of the meeting, General Committee received the information memo and directed staff to bring back a subsequent report on the results of the 2012 Summer Sign By-law Enforcement program.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

2012 Summer Sign Enforcement Program Results

Included as Attachment "B" is a Table listing the 2012 Program enhancements and a corresponding comment from staff as to outcomes and current status.

As can be seen in the Table below, the 2012 Summer Sign Enforcement Program was a success, and significantly reduced the amount of illegal signage in Markham

Activity	#	Change from 2011 Stats
Number of Sign Enforcement Files	1,001	+142%
Number of Lawn/ Poster Signs Removed	23,152	+6%
Number of Real Estate Signs Removed	676	+2,250%
Number of Lawn/ Poster Signs Charges	31	N/A*

It is also important to note that 2012 was the first time charges were laid for the illegal placement of lawn and/or poster signs. In total, 38 sign violation charges were laid, resulting in 38 convictions and fine revenue totalling approximately \$2,800.00.

2013 Sign Management Program

To-date in 2013, staff has removed over 3,200 signs and has laid 18 charges, resulting in 18 convictions and \$3,550.00 in fine revenue.

Staff has also already participated in several successful sign blitzes this year including the following:

- A real estate open house sign blitz held the weekend of May 25, 2013 which targeted real estate open house signs. During this blitz, staff removed 68 “A” Frame signs and 70 Lawn signs for “Open Houses” that were illegally left in place overnight (the requirement is to have Open House signs removed after the Open House has concluded, or by end of day).
- An “A” frame sign blitz on Main St Unionville on May 24, where 3 signs placed on the sidewalk and City property were impounded.

While there has been significant success in reducing the proliferation of illegal signs in Markham, staff has identified a number of enhancements to the 2013 Sign Management Program which are noted on the following Table:

SIGN TYPE	INITIATIVE
Mobile	Elimination of the 14 day mobile sign permit
A-Frame	Maintain current enforcement practices
Banner	Maintain current enforcement practices
Window	Address illegal 100% window signage coverage
Real Estate	Maintain current enforcement practices
Open House	Require address to be shown on signage
Lawn/Bag /Poster/Pole	Investigate cost recovery for removal of signs & charges for same
Heritage	Audit of Heritage District signage with local B.I.A. *
Ground /Wall	Audit signage on arterial roads by area

* Main Street Markham will not be audited in 2013 due to the ongoing road construction

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:

Sign Management Program

Revenues \$81,900

Expenses

Sign Administration Officer	27,650
Weekend Removals	14,800
Summer Students	<u>24,650</u>
	\$67,100

Net Revenue \$14,800

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

None

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Environment- Protection of the environment and maintain quality of public realm
Municipal Services- Cost effective and responsive sign management program

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not Applicable

RECOMMENDED BY:

10/06/2013

06/06/2013

X



Kimberley Kitteringham
City Clerk

X



Trinela Cane
Commissioner, Corporate Services

[Attachment "A" – March 20, 2012 Council Meeting Extract](#)
[Attachment "B" – 2012 Sign Enforcement Program Enhancements](#)