

SUMMARY OF THE CITY OF TORONTO MEETING ON SIGN BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING:

In early 2024, the City Council of Toronto adopted amendments to the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 694, concerning signs. The main objectives of the meeting on July 03, 2024, was to discuss these amendments, their impacts, and the changes to the application processes.

KEY AMENDMENTS DISCUSSED:

- 1. Processing of Applications:**
 - The provisions for processing applications for amendments and variances to the Sign By-law were modified. This aims to streamline the application process and make it more efficient.
- 2. Delegation of Authority:**
 - Authority was delegated to the Chief Building Official and Executive Director of Toronto Building to implement amendments to sign district designations contained in Schedule A, Maps, and related matters. This delegation is intended to facilitate quicker and more effective decision-making.
- 3. Deletion of Criteria:**
 - The criteria listed at Subsection 694-30A (2) were deleted. This subsection previously required third-party signs to be of a type permitted in the sign district where the premises are located. The section was renumbered accordingly.

CHANGES AND IMPACTS:

- 1. Aligning Sign Maps with the City's official Plan or application Zoning By-law that was authorized:**
 - If there is a discrepancy between a Sign Map designation and the City's official Plan and/or the Zoning By-law applicants may contact City Wide Priorities to verify a premises would be entitle to a sign district re-designation.
 - Re-designations will be reviewed systematically, and the bulls are subject to final approval from City Council.
 - This does not include minor variances to the zoning by-law.
 - Upon the adoption of the bull by City Council, the updated district-specific first or third-party sign regulations will apply.
- 2. Referral to Appropriate Decision Makers:**
 - Clarification on how applications will be referred to the appropriate decision-makers under the new amendments, emphasizing efficiency and accuracy.
 - The Chief Building Official is authorized to determine and refer an application for a site-specific amendment to this chapter made under Subsection A(2), in whole or in

part, to the Sign Variance Committee, where the subject matter of that application is substantially within the authority of the Sign Variance Committee.

- Example Scenario: A site-specific amendment application seeking to modify the Open Space Sign District designation of a premises to Employment Sign District to allow for the rection of a third-party electronic ground sign; however the premises is designated in the Official Plan as Parks.

In this scenario, the CBO, according to 694-29D (3) has the authority to refuse to process the application as:

- The proposed change conflicts with the Official Plan, which sets out the broader goals for the development of City
- The Sign By-law should not be used to lead changes, or to circumvent or undermine programs, policies, or by-laws.
- The proposal should start with an application to redesignate the property's land use, with City Planning.

3. Deletion of Subsection 694-30. A (2) and renumbering 694-30A:

- This section of the Sign-Bylaw lists the criteria that an applicant must establish when an application for a variance is submitted. Changes were made so the section now reads as follows:

- An application for variance from the provisions of this chapter may be granted where it is established that the proposed sign or signs will:
 1. Belong to a sign class permitted in the sign district where the premises is located;
 2. Be compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area;
 3. Support the Official Plan objectives for the subject premises and Surrounding area;
 4. Not adversely affect adjacent premises;
 5. Not adversely affect public safety, including traffic and pedestrian safety;
 6. Not be a sign prohibited by 694-15B;
 7. Not alter the character of the premises or surrounding area; and
 8. Not be, in the opinion of the decision maker, contrary to the public interest.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Last day to submit Amendment Applications for 2024: July 31, 2024.
- If you have any inquiries, please contact the signbylawunit@toronto.ca

The meeting concluded with an agreement to monitor the implementation of these amendments closely and to make further adjustments as necessary to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Toronto Sign By-law.