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Town of Aurora

General Committee Report

No. CA023-002

Subject: Town of Aurora Street Banner Program Policy

Prepared by: Daniel Bitonti, Manager of Corporate Communications

Department: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Date: September 19, 2023

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CA023-002 be received; and
2. That the Town of Aurora Street Banner Program Policy be approved; and
3. That the existing 2023 Fees and Charges Bylaw be amended to include the proposed new fees in this report.

Executive Summary

The Town of Aurora owns and maintains several street pole assets consisting of brackets and arms for holding banners (street pole banners). Currently the assets are underutilized and have the potential to provide greater value. Staff have been contemplating new banner branding and themes, and at the same time have been approached by community groups regarding an opportunity to utilize the street pole banner assets. The intent of bringing forward an updated policy is to maximize the use of existing street pole infrastructure across the town, while providing cost-effective, creative and aesthetically appealing promotional opportunities for the Town and community groups. To enable public use, the policy, application, fees and ultimate permitting process went through a review. The result is a Town of Aurora Street Banner Program Policy that reflects the intended use of street pole banner assets while mitigating risk through a permitting process.

- Updating and formalizing a Street Banner Program Policy provides benefits to the Town.
- The Street Banner Program Policy offers an opportunity for public use of the Town's street pole assets.

- Fees associated with community use of street pole assets will cover applicable costs.
- The process to apply for use of the Town's assets will be through an application period and approved through the Corporate Communications Division and Chief Administrative Officer.

Background

The Town's existing Street Banner policy No. 63, was effective as of May 27, 2003 and has not been updated since that time. Currently, the Town utilizes its existing street pole banner hardware and contracted resources to install banners along major corridors and strategic locations across the town. (See Street Pole Banner Locations in Attachment 1, TOA Street Pole Banner Program Policy). The Policy excludes other agreements for use of specific banner assets (i.e. St. Andrew's College agreement.)

Over recent years, there have been several inquiries from various community groups requesting permission and support in utilizing the Town's street pole infrastructure as well as the Town's installation and removal services. The intent of bringing forward a new, updated policy is to maximize the use of existing street banner infrastructure across the town, while providing cost-effective, creative and aesthetically appealing promotional opportunities for the Town and community groups.

Analysis

Updating and formalizing a Street Banner Program Policy provides benefits to the Town.

The Town is in the process of reviewing the existing banner assets for condition, updated branding, and year-round promotional opportunities. This review prompted further benefits of implementing an updated policy that will:

- Support and promote special events, bringing increased attention and awareness to the Town of Aurora, creating an image of an economically vibrant, active, and flourishing town.
- Assist in the promotion of cultural, recreational, and civic events sponsored by various groups throughout the town, united to improve the quality of life and offerings for Aurora residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Complement the aesthetic appearance and/or improvement of the Town's business districts and major corridors.

- Introduce colour and a sense of excitement to various travel routes throughout the Town.

The Street Banner Program Policy offers an opportunity for public use of the Town's street pole assets.

Community groups, sport or special event organizers, etc. would have the opportunity to use the Town's assets as a way to assist in promotion of their events. Below is an example of the year-round uses, priorities and opportunities for the banner assets:

The Town shall reserve the right to honor recognized events, which are held annually, by reserving banner space for Town use as necessary, and at the Town's discretion. Applications are evaluated based on the following priorities:

- a. **First priority:** Banners produced or sponsored by the Town of Aurora or its agencies that promote the Town of Aurora, its events or key areas.
- b. **Second priority:** Banners promoting special events or activities held within Aurora, open to the public, and organized by a community non-profit organization located *within* the town limits.
- c. **Third priority:** Street Pole Banners promoting special events or activities held within the Town of Aurora, open to the public, organized by non-profit organizations or government agencies located *outside* of town limits, or for-profit organizations in town limits.

Preference shall be given to applications that reflect the Town's tourism/sport tourism-related objectives:

- Promotion of major events where the Town of Aurora has participation or representation (i.e. local, regional, provincial, national, international sporting competitions or events, etc.).
- Promotion of arts and culture events held in Aurora that draw visitors from outside of Aurora.

Fees associated with community use of street pole assets will cover applicable costs.

It is the Town's intent to fully recover costs associated with banner application approvals, as well as banner installation and removal. Consequently, the Town will adjust future associated fees accordingly to ensure its continued full cost recovery.

Two cost-recovery fees are proposed relating to the issuance of a Street Pole Banner Permit to community groups. These include:

- Application Fee –\$30 for non-profit organizations, \$50 for for-profit organizations
- Banner installation/removal fee – \$100 per banner (covers both installation and removal)

Advisory Committee Review

None.

Legal Considerations

The proposed policy has been reviewed by the Corporate Management Team and the Executive Leadership Team in accordance with the Town's policy program.

Financial Implications

Should Council approve the proposed policy, it is recommended that the 2023 Fees & Charges bylaw be amended to include the new banner application and installation & removal fees. Upon policy approval, the necessary 2023 Rates & Fees bylaw amendments will be brought to Council for its review and approval at the first opportunity to do so.

Communications Considerations

The Town will inform the public about the information contained in this report by posting it to the Town's website. The Communications Division will maintain an application form that is available both online and in hard copy format. The Communications Division will be responsible for ensuring all banners displayed on Town assets adhere to the Street Pole Banner Program Policy.

Climate Change Considerations

None.

Link to Strategic Plan

The Street Banner Program Policy closely aligns with the Town's Strategic Plan, most notably the goal of "Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all" and Objective #3 of this goal: "Celebrating and promoting our culture."

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council to provide further direction.

Conclusions

An updated Street Banner Program Policy allows both the Town and community groups to leverage existing Town assets to promote cultural, recreational, and civic events that improve the quality of life for Aurora residents, businesses, and visitors. The Policy's detailed application requirements, banner guidelines, as well as eligibility requirements will ensure the use of the Town's street pole banner infrastructure aligns with overall Town priorities, including celebrating and promoting our culture and revitalizing the downtown.

Attachments

1. TOA Street Pole Banner Program Policy

Previous Reports

None.

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on August 31, 2023

Approvals

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer