

To: Economic and Development Services Committee

From: Warren Munro, HBA, RPP, Commissioner,  
Economic and Development Services Department

Report Number: ED-22-220

Date of Report: November 23, 2022

Date of Meeting: November 28, 2022

Subject: Landmark Oshawa Sign Proposal

Ward: Ward 4

File: 03-05

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## **1.0 Purpose**

On June 20, 2022, City Council considered Item CS-22-78 concerning a community funded landmark Oshawa sign and passed the following resolution:

“That the proposal for a Community-Funded Landmark Oshawa Sign be endorsed in principle, with a location on City property to be determined at a future date to the satisfaction of City staff and the approval of City Council, and that the project proponents consult with the Centennial Committee for input at the earliest available time and consult with City staff in order that staff can report back to Committee on the considerations and measures necessary to implement the project”.

The purpose of this Report is to respond to the above-noted council directive.

Attachment 1 to this Report contains the features and minimum requirements of a Landmark Oshawa Sign.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

That the Economic and Development Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That, pursuant to report ED-22-220 dated November 23, 2022, the North Parkette, in the vicinity of the intersection of King Street West and Centre Street South be endorsed as the location of a Landmark Oshawa Sign.
2. That pursuant to Report ED-22-220 dated November 23, 2022, Attachment 1, listing the features and minimum requirements of a Landmark Oshawa Sign, be endorsed for

the purposes of issuing a Request for Quotes following public consultation and in the event the project is funded.

3. That, pursuant to report ED-22-220 dated November 23, 2022, the Economic and Development Services Committee select a funding option as detailed in Section 5.4.

### **3.0 Executive Summary**

Not applicable.

### **4.0 Input From Other Sources**

The following were consulted in the preparation of this Report:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Commissioner, Corporate and Finance Services
- Commissioner, Community and Operations Services
- Centennial Staff Steering Team (C.S.S.T.)
- Community Centennial Committee (C.C.C.)

### **5.0 Analysis**

#### **5.1 Background and Consultation**

The City of Oshawa was incorporated on March 8, 1924. Oshawa will celebrate its centennial year on March 8, 2024.

On February 19, 2019, Oshawa City Council considered Report CS-19-15, a report of the then Commissioner of Community Services regarding Oshawa's centennial year celebrations and approved the formation of the C.C.C.

The C.C.C. was formed in 2020 and includes a variety of community stakeholders, residents and City staff. The C.C.C. has been meeting bi-monthly to plan for the Centennial year including the possibility of the erection of a landmark sign.

On June 20, 2022, Council considered Item CS-22-78 a delegation from Ron Bremner and Greg Milosh to the then Community Services Committee regarding a proposal for a community-funded landmark Oshawa sign and passed the following resolution:

“That the proposal for a Community-Funded Landmark Oshawa Sign be endorsed in principle, with a location on City property to be determined at a future date to the satisfaction of City staff and the approval of City Council, and that the project proponents consult with the Centennial Committee for input at the earliest available time and consult with City staff in order that staff can report back to Committee on the considerations and measures necessary to implement the project.”

Following Council direction in relation to Item CS-22-78, staff from the then Recreation and Culture Services branch met with Ron Bremner and Greg Milosh along with other residents

(hereinafter referred to as the Oshawa Sign Team) interested in a landmark Oshawa sign in July and September to gather further information on the proposal.

Staff from the then Recreation & Culture Services branch also consulted with the C.C.C. and with other City staff to discuss potential locations and other considerations such as ongoing maintenance.

The C.C.C. supports of the proposal and emphasized the importance of selecting a location that maximizes impact and community benefit. The project tied for the top ranked legacy project during the C.C.C. led facilitated planning session.

## **5.2 Comparative Research of Other Municipal Landmark Signs**

Staff from the then Recreation & Culture Services branch contacted sign manufacturers and other municipalities and reviewed information available on their City websites regarding their landmark signs to gather information on cost, funding models, dimensions, features and maintenance models.

**Table 1: Comparative research of four municipal landmark signs**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Cost and Funding Model</b>	<b>Dimension and Features</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
Barrie	\$200,000, installed in June 2022  Community funded with private donations	Red heart height: 3.05 metres (10.0 ft.)  Letter height: 2.44 metres (8.0 ft.) and under (letters are uppercase and lower case)  Includes LED lights that can be changed to recognize special occasions	\$15,000/year added to operation department for maintenance
Ottawa	\$225,000, installed in December 2019  Funded by the City of Ottawa (majority) and Ottawa Tourism	Letters are 2.26 metres (7.4 ft) tall; the sign is 12.95 metres (42.5 ft.) long  LED lights with 25 colour capabilities  The annual cost of remotely programming the lights is estimated at \$10,000 to \$15,000	Annual maintenance is \$1,500 for touch ups, and \$5,000 for replacements
Hamilton	\$350,000 - \$400,000 estimated value  Community funded with private donations	Length: 18.29 metres (60.0 ft.)  Base depth: 1.83 metres (6.0 ft.)  Letter height: 2.29 metres (7.5 ft.)  Letter depth: 0.6 metres (2.0 ft.)  Weight: approx. 4,399 kilos (9,700 lbs)	Regular maintenance to be performed by the facilities staff

Municipality	Cost and Funding Model	Dimension and Features	Maintenance
		Contains 493 running feet of LEDs with a life expectancy of 40,000 hours.	
Toronto	\$490,000, installed in Sept 2020 Municipality funded with reserve funds Note: The removal of the previous sign, installation of the new sign, wraps, a three-year maintenance contract, contingency and optional enhancements cost an additional \$271,842.	Letter height: 3.05 metres (10.0 ft.) (letters are on a weighted plinth) Length: 22.55 metres (74.0 ft.) Weight: 9,207 kilos (20,300 lbs) Each letter is equipped with LED lights and can transition to approx. 228 million different colours Vinyl wraps can be applied to the sides of the letters.	Three-year maintenance contract with company who manufactured the sign

The sign has the potential to become a popular photograph location, creating positive foot traffic and activation of its location.

In 2017, the City of Kingston approved the installation of a landmark sign, between June and October 2017, photographs of people at the sign using the hashtag #inKingston reached more than 377,000 people and received more than 414,000 impressions.

### 5.3 Features of a Landmark Oshawa Sign

Attachment 1 to this Report contains the features and minimum requirements of a Landmark Oshawa Sign.

It is recommended that the Landmark Oshawa Sign contains the following features:

- Letters that are a minimum of 2.26 metres (7.0 ft.) in height;
- Each letter is equipped with programmable waterproof LED lighting that can transition to different colours;
- Each letter and symbol (if applicable) can be programmed individually or in a grouping;
- The letters and symbol (if applicable) are manufactured in a material that vinyl wraps can be applied to; and,

- There is an opportunity for community members to request that the sign is lit in a specific colour to commemorate days of significance. Criteria would be developed by staff.

#### **5.4 Location of a Landmark Oshawa Sign**

The Landmark Oshawa Sign may be installed in a downtown location, subject to Council approval of the location. Staff have begun researching options, including the North Parkette, the Civic Square and the new Bond/Simcoe Urban Park.

The location for the sign should be based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- Prominent, central location;
- Provides an aesthetically pleasing backdrop;
- Connection to businesses;
- Near gathering places for civic events;
- Enough space to ensure safety when taking photographs;
- Access to hydro;
- Security measures available to prevent vandalism;
- Construction requirements to secure sign, for example ability to install concrete footings, if needed; and,
- Ensure the installation site adheres to Oshawa Accessibility Design Standards.

The Civic Square is located above an underground parking garage and would require a review by a Structural Engineer to determine its suitability. The Bond/Simcoe Urban Park is still advancing towards development and a 2024 installation date may not be able to be accommodated in the project schedule.

On balance, given the challenges with timing associated with the new Downtown Urban Park at Bond Street East and Simcoe Street North and the need to engage a structural engineer at the Civic Square, the North Parkette in the vicinity of intersection of King Street West and Centre Street South is recommended. The Recommendation Action section of this Report contains the appropriate language for Council to approve the North Parkette as the location for the Landmark Oshawa Sign.

#### **5.5 Funding Options**

There are three possible approaches for financing the sign.

In all approaches, the City of Oshawa would be responsible for purchasing the sign by issuing a Request for Quotes for the design, construction and installation of the sign consistent with the Purchasing By-Law.

The City of Oshawa will need to fund the annual costs associated with maintenance and activation of the sign through the annual budget process.

### **5.5.1 Option 1: Community Funded Model**

Option 1 is consistent with Item CS-22-78 and contemplates a community funded model. In this model, the resident-led Oshawa Team would solicit donations from businesses, organizations and residents to finance the cost of fabricating and installing the sign. As partners, the City of Oshawa would collect the donations and issue tax receipts to donors. If the total donations received exceed the cost of the sign, the excess funds would be placed in a reserve account and applied to costs for maintenance and programming.

The delegation from the Oshawa Sign Team suggested an upset limit of \$400,000 was needed to fund the project. Following staff's investigation, an upset limit of \$500,000 is considered more appropriate to account for inflation and supply chain issues that may arise.

It is recommended that Council establish that 75% of the \$500,000 target for donations be received by June 1, 2023 and 100% by September 1, 2023 in order to allow for the procurement and installation processes to run efficiently.

This option will not require a 2023 Budget allocation.

If this option is selected, then the Economic and Development Services Committee should adopt the following resolution:

"It is recommended to Council:

1. That, pursuant to Report ED-22-220, dated November 23, 2022, City staff be directed to develop an Agreement with the Oshawa Sign Team, outlining a partnership which enables them to begin soliciting donations to fund a Landmark Oshawa sign with support from the City to receive donations, subject to any conditions considered appropriate by the Commissioner of Economic and Development Services, including roles and responsibilities, financial management processes, minimum requirements for a sign, approval of marketing materials, and deadlines by which at least \$500,000 of funding must be secured for the project to proceed.
2. That the amount of \$85,000 receive pre-budget approval for the 2024 Budget to fund annual costs associated with maintenance and activation of the sign."

### **5.5.2 Option 2: Community Funded and City Funded Model**

Option 2 contemplates a model wherein the costs are shared equally by donations from the community contemplated by Option 1 and augmented by a City contribution. In this model, the Oshawa Sign Team would solicit donations to an upset limit of \$250,000 and the City of Oshawa, as partner, would contribute \$250,000, collect donations and issue tax receipts to donors, as outlined above.

It is recommended that Council establish that 75% of the \$250,000 Oshawa Sign Team target for donations be received by June 1, 2023 and 100% by September 1, 2023 in order to allow for the procurement and installation processes to run efficiently.

This option will require a 2023 Budget allocation to fund the cost sharing arrangement with the Oshawa Sign Team.

If this option is selected, then the Economic and Development Services Committee should adopt the following resolution:

“It is recommended to Council:

1. That, pursuant to Report ED-22-220, dated November 23, 2022, City staff be directed to develop an Agreement with the Oshawa Sign Team, outlining a partnership which enables them to begin soliciting donations to fund a Landmark Oshawa sign with support from the City to receive donations, subject to any conditions considered appropriate by the Commissioner of Economic and Development Services, including roles and responsibilities, financial management processes, minimum requirements for a sign, approval of marketing materials, and deadlines by which at least \$250,000 of funding must be secured for the project to proceed.
2. That Council refer a \$250,000 capital project contribution to fund the purchase of the sign to the 2023 Budget with funds directed from the Downtown Revitalization Reserve.
3. That the amount of \$85,000 receive pre-budget approval for the 2024 Budget to fund annual costs associated with maintenance and activation of the sign.”

### **5.5.3 Option 3: City Funded Model**

Option 3 contemplates that the project is fully funded by the City of Oshawa.

If this option is selected, then the Economic and Development Services Committee should adopt the following resolution:

“It is recommended to Council:

1. That, pursuant to Report ED-22-220, dated November 23, 2022, that Council refer a \$500,000 capital project to fund the purchase of the sign to the 2023 Budget with funds directed from the Downtown Revitalization Reserve.
2. That the amount of \$85,000 receive pre-budget approval for the 2024 Budget to fund annual costs associated with maintenance and activation of the sign.”

### **5.6 Next Steps**

Once a funding model has been selected the planning process will begin, as outlined below:

- work with the Oshawa Sign Team to develop an Agreement (Options 1 and 2 only);
- ensure that the Oshawa Sign Team has started to solicit community donations (Options 1 and 2 only);

- work with and seek input from the C.C.C. and other community members and stakeholders, including the Community Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee;
- undertake public engagement to gain input on concepts, and report back to Committee and Council for Council to select the preferred sign option;
- issue a Request for Quotes (“R.F.Q.”) to secure a company to provide, fabricate and install the landmark sign at the approved location before June 1, 2024; and,
- in the event that the Oshawa Sign Team raises funds under Option 1 or 2 but does not achieve the minimum thresholds established by Council, staff will consult with the Oshawa Sign Team and report to Committee and Council with options.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

The financial implication for the City is dependent on which funding model is endorsed and could range from a low of \$85,000 for ongoing annual maintenance starting in 2024 to a high of \$585,000.00 to account for acquisition (\$500,000.00) in 2023 with maintenance costs to follow in 2024.

Based on research from other municipalities the estimated cost of designing and fabricating a sign with features as outlined in Attachment 1 is estimated at a range of \$400,000 and \$500,000.

Ongoing maintenance for the sign will be required, repairs to letters, replacement of lights, replacement of anti-slip mats, and annual cleaning.

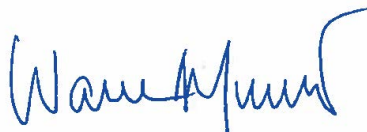
The total annual maintenance and activation costs are estimated at \$85,000/year for 10 years. At the end of the sign’s life cycle there will be an additional cost for removing and disposing of the sign.

## **7.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan**

The Recommendations in this Report advance the Accountable Leadership, Social Equity and Cultural Vitality goals of the Oshawa Strategic Plan.



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Business and Economic Development Services



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Economic and Development Services Department



## Feature of a Landmark Oshawa Sign

Table 1.0 below includes an overview of features that should be used to guide the development of the Landmark Oshawa Sign.

**Table 1.0 Features List**

<b>Features</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Letters that are a minimum of seven feet in height	
Each letter is equipped with programmable waterproof LED lighting that can transition to different colours	
Each letter and symbol (if applicable) can be programmed individually or in a grouping	
The letters and symbol (if applicable) are manufactured in a material that vinyl wraps can be applied to	Required ongoing funding for maintenance for this programming in future years
There is an opportunity for community members to request that the sign is lit in a specific colour to commemorate days of significance. Criteria would be developed by staff.	Process and criteria to be developed at a later date