

Background and Previous Council Direction

Background

What is a Community Entrance Sign?

While they display a wide variety of materials, design, and scale, they are features or structures that mark the primary entrance into a community. These signs are either built by the original developers of the community or installed by Community Associations or other community-led parties later on.

Developer-installed Community Entrance Signs

Community entrance signs and features are usually installed at the development stage of new subdivisions. The entrance feature is often the first thing people notice, making it an essential piece in creating an inviting and positive first impression. For property developers, community entrance signs act as a visual representation of their brand and vision. In competitive real estate markets, distinguishing one's development from others is crucial. Distinctive entrance signs and features promote a level of quality, detail, and style that developers hope will attract more potential buyers to their area. Memorable entrances also become landmarks that serve a practical purpose by providing wayfinding information to residents and visitors. Administration did reach out to the Building Industry and Land Development Association of the Calgary Region (BILD) for their local perspective on the reasons to build community entrance signage in new developments, however they declined the offer to submit information for this report.

These sign features are approved as an "Optional Subdivision Amenity" (OSA) within The City of Calgary's standard Development Agreements. They may be installed on parcels of private property or on lands that will become part of The City's public rights-of-way or park spaces. OSA's on private property are to be maintained by the developer in accordance with the established time-periods of the agreement, and then the responsibility is assumed by the property owner or transferred via an agreement with a Resident's Association (RA) or Homeowner's Association (HOA), if one exists. When entrance signs or other features on private property require maintenance, repair, or removal it is the property owner who is responsible.

The City has two types of agreements for non-standard amenities placed on public land. Where the amenity is located on parks land, the developer and The City enter into an Optional Amenities Agreement (OAA). This commits the developer to maintain the amenity for a period of five (5) years after The City has approved the Final Acceptance Certificate (FAC) for the development. In general terms, an OAA is a legal agreement that allows for non-standard infrastructure to be placed on public parks or road rights-of-way if parks are part of the overall plan. It includes more than just entrance signage, as The City has agreements for items such as ornamental fencing, gazebos, decorative fixtures, sculptures, etc. The OAA requires payment to The City for the estimated costs of the eventual removal of the amenity and the anticipated landscape rehabilitation needs. These funds are linked to the specific amenities listed in the OAA and are held by The City in a separate account until needed. Prior to the expiration of the OAA, if there has been an association established, the developer shall make reasonable efforts to have the association assume the ongoing maintenance responsibilities of the signage by facilitating a new OAA between the association and the City. Of the over 500 community signs identified, 18 have associated OAAs.

However, for optional amenities on public lands where there is no association available or interested to enter into an agreement with The City, the amenities become the responsibility of The City once the developer's five-year maintenance period has ended. Once this occurs, The City's practice is to remove any features that become damaged or have reached the end of their functional "life span". The City does not refresh or replace these community entrance features.

Community-initiated Community Entrance Signs

Community Associations or other interested groups in established communities may also apply to build entrance signs and features on public lands. These features often incorporate the local history, heritage, or natural surroundings of the area in the design. They strive to celebrate the community's character and hope to create a lasting impression and sense of connection that resonates with residents. The application process can go through several City channels, depending on the applicant and type of land they wish to use, including Real Estate and Development, Partnerships, Mobility and Law.

Community Associations that wish to add an identification sign or feature on the lands they already lease from The City can do so with approval. A second agreement is not needed, as the new infrastructure would be added to the existing lease conditions. Community Entrance or Identification signs with a LOC are typically for a term of 15 years. The Community Associations are responsible for all maintenance and repairs and must carry general liability insurance of \$5 million for the term of the LOC.

Currently, there are fifteen Community Associations with either an OAA or a License of Occupation (LOC) for such signs or features: Bonavista Downs, Bridgeland Riverside, Capitol Hill, Cliff Bungalow Mission, Deer Run, Douglas Quarry, Edgemont, Haysboro, Kingsland, Lake Bonavista, Millican Ogden, Northern Hills (Country Hills Estates), Queensland, Varsity, and Woodcreek. Two other community groups – Bowness Historical Society and the Prestwick Residents Association – also have LOCs with The City for similar features.

Background Research Links

City of Edmonton, AB. Developer Installed Neighbourhood Entrance Signs

Urban Planning and Economy (UPE00449)

Date: 2021 May 25

Purpose of Report

Review the design regulations during initial construction of these entrance feature signs, which are designed and constructed by the developer typically during the early stages of the overall neighbourhood development. Review options to restore or remove signs that are in disrepair. [City of Edmonton Report Link](#)

City of Markham, ON. Subdivision Entrance Features

Development Services

Date: 2020 May 19

Purpose of Report

Provide an inventory of the city of Markham's existing subdivision entrance features. Identify condition, operating, and lifecycle costs, and future servicing impacts of existing subdivision entrance features. Identify community sentiments obtained through "Your Voice Markham" survey of Markham residents and recommend next steps for the future programs. [City of Markham Report Link](#)

Bylaws, Regulations, Council Policies

Enhanced Maintenance Agreement and Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS 007)

Business Unit: Parks Effective Date: 2004 September 13, amended 2009 February 10

BACKGROUND

In 2002, The City recognized a need to review and develop consistent corporate policies and procedures and templates for the use of Enhanced Maintenance Agreement and Infrastructure Agreements and Optional Amenities Agreements. This was due to a proliferation of requests from the public and development industry.

PURPOSE

This policy is a tool used for the development industry (landscape architects, engineers, and consultants), and Resident and Community Associations for the management and administration of enhanced park features and amenities. More specifically addresses the issues of lifecycle, ongoing maintenance, financial concerns, and legal implications. <https://www.calgary.ca/council/policies/os.html>

Previous Council Direction

DATE	REPORT NUMBER	DIRECTION/DESCRIPTION
2023 June 01	EC2023-0643	Notice of Motion - Community Sign Repair Concern raised that community name signs are in various states of disrepair in communities throughout the city. Administration directed to return in Q2 2024 with assessment of signs, estimated costs, and current approval processes.



Report Number: EC2023-0643

Meeting: Executive Committee

Meeting Date: 2023 June 01

Item # 8.2.1

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Community Sign Repair

Sponsoring Member(s) of Council: Councillor Jasmine Mian

WHEREAS community name signs are in various states of disrepair in communities throughout the city;

AND WHEREAS community sign upkeep is the responsibility of a variety of entities (including, homeowners, community associations and others), many of whom do not have the financial means to repair them;

AND WHEREAS community signs give a sense of place and pride to community residents, and their degradation and neglect may tarnish those sentiments;

AND WHEREAS under-maintained or vandalized signs exist in all quadrants of the city;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council direct Administration to:

- 1) conduct an assessment of the number and location of community signs and features, and the entity responsible for upkeep and maintenance of each;
- 2) identify the community signs that require repair, the estimated cost including ongoing maintenance, and a proposal to address the issue;
- 3) assess the current legislative tools governing community sign maintenance and identify any gaps and proposed solutions to reduce vandalism and disrepair in the future;
- 4) Assess the process of creating or approving signage through the planning approvals and construction process;
- 5) and report back to the Community Development Committee by Q2 2024.

Attachment

1. Notice of Motion Checklist