



The Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: October 10, 2023

Subject: SRECDEV.2023.02 Municipal Identifier Signage

Report from: Jessica Pridham, Economic Development Coordinator

Appendices: Appendix A - Municipal Identifier Signs
Appendix B - Community Gateway Signs
Appendix C - Smaller Community Signs
Appendix D - Proposed locations for Municipal Identifier Signs

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby,

1. Support staff to develop a design concept for municipal boundary identifier signage, in compliance with the Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RT07) Signage Manual;
2. Request staff to report back as part of the 2024 budget process on the design concept and estimated funding required for the placement of eight (8) identifier signs; and
3. Request that opportunities for grant funding also be identified as part of the overall 2024 funding strategy for the proposed signage.

Report Summary

On June 12, 2023, Council passed a resolution requesting that municipal staff prepare a report to address the potential of erecting municipal gateway signage at the four corners of the municipality.

During the Council meeting other types of signage such as community gateway signs were also discussed. Staff have prepared this report defining signage types, and the current landscape of signage in the municipality so that an informed decision can be made before moving forward on this project.

Staff have provided the following:

- defined the difference between Municipal Identifier Signage and Community Gateway Signage,
- provided a background on the municipal brand,
- have described the current landscape of signage in the municipality,
- identified grant programs that may assist with the development of signage, and in the case of municipal identifier signage, provided costing estimates, timeline and quotes for the project.

Suppliers, cost, available grants, and design are all dependent on the type of signage selected.

Background

On June 12, 2023, Council passed the following resolution:

“Whereas it has been identified that there are no gateway signs at the four corners of the Municipality to acknowledge to visitors that they have entered the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie;

Whereas gateway signage on municipal boundaries will support the Economic Development Strategic Plan to effectively attract and retain investment and demonstrate the Municipality’s’ value proposition;

Whereas gateway signage that reflects the style and character of the community will help to build the municipal brand;

Whereas gateway signage will position Arran-Elderslie as the home of Allenford, Paisley, Chesley, Tara, the various hamlets, and surrounding areas and will unify communities under the municipal umbrella as well as developing a sense of place and welcome visitors and residents alike to the community;

Whereas the attached draft concepts be forwarded to Bruce County for their review and consideration; and

Therefore Council directs staff to prepare a report which will address the final design concept, placement of gateway signage at the four corners of the Municipality, outline permits and application costs, and timing of the installation of the signs”.

At the meeting Council requested that Municipal Staff prepare a report that would address the final design concept, placement of municipal signage at the four corners of the Municipality, outline permits and application costs, and timing of the installation of the new signs.

Council also requested that staff review the municipal brand, and address whether communities can have signs that identify them as a “Community of Arran-Elderslie”.

Municipal Identifier vs Gateway Signage

Municipal Identifier Signage can be described as signage that marks the main entry points to the Municipality. These signs are comparable to the identifier signage erected by neighbouring municipalities of South Bruce Peninsula, Georgian Bluffs, and Grey Highlands (see Appendix A).

Gateway Signage is commonly used to mark the entry point into a particular community. These signs usually feature branding and character of the community. Allenford, and Paisley have recently developed community gateway signage (see Appendix B).

Background of the Municipal Brand

There are two logos commonly used for The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie;

- 1) The Crest: The crest was developed in 1999 upon amalgamation. This logo is the official logo for the Municipality and is the logo present on official documentation.
- 2) The Text Logo: The text logo was developed during the design of the municipal website in 2019. Staff support the logo being used in cases where the crest logo is less opportune. Staff have used the text logo on the wall in the Municipal Office, and on digital representations like the website, a corporate email signature, etc.

Analysis

The Municipality currently does not have municipal identifier signage erected at the four corners of the municipal boundary.

The communities of Chesley, Paisley, Tara and Allenford have gateway signage positioned at the prime entry points of their communities as in Appendix B.

In some cases, there are highway roadside signage for communities that include symbols for the variety of services offered. These communities (aside from Allenford) additionally have highway signage that identifies the village as a “Community of Arran-Elderslie”, as is the case for smaller communities such as Dobbinton. Smaller historic settlement areas are identified by their name only, like Williscroft. Appendix C provides an example for smaller community signage.

Proposed Municipal Identifier Signs

Municipal Identifier signage for Arran-Elderslie could be positioned in eight (8) locations in the four corners of the Municipality as per Appendix D. A Sign Permit Application would be required from Bruce County, and it would be anticipated that no permit fees would be necessary.

Funding Opportunities

Staff have identified two (2) potential funding options.

1. Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7) Partnership Program

The RTO7 Partnership Program matches costs dollar for dollar. The signage must comply with the RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standards & Specifications Manual. The initial proposal to include "Welcome to the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, A proud part of Bruce County" on the municipal identification signage was considered too long of a message to include on the sign considering the required design specifications for the application. It is suggested that the Municipality work with a design manufacturer to outline appropriate wording, that would meet the requirements of the RTO7 Signage Manual.

Funding available for the RTO7 Partnership Program will depend on the approval of the 2024 RTO7 Budget. Provided this occurs, their application process opens in March 2024, with projects for execution in summer 2024 depending on material availability. This funding would also be available if Community Gateway Signage was of interest.

2. Spruce the Bruce Community Signage Grant

Bruce County Spruce the Bruce program will support signs that use the RTO7 parameters and guidelines, as it builds a consistent, cohesive approach to signage and improves visitor experience through that consistency. Maximum funding for this project through Spruce the Bruce is up to \$5,000, for all eight signs. Availability of Spruce the Bruce funding will depend on approval of the 2024 Bruce County Budget. Provided this occurs, the application process would open in early 2024, with projects available for execution in summer 2024 but is dependent on material availability.

Sourcing Suppliers

Bruce County confirmed that their sign shop is closed, they no longer provide the service of fabricating roadside signage externally.

RTO7 provided a selection of Ontario based aluminum sign fabricators that have worked on projects like this in the past. Many small variables can affect the sign cost, including materials, size, colour(s) etc. In speaking to some of the possible suppliers the following information was provided:

Potential Suppliers Cost Estimates

- Supplier A - Suggested costs of approximately \$60,000.00 plus tax (single pole metal design or double pole wood designs) for eight signs done as one batch. This includes installation.
- Supplier B – Suggested costs of approximately \$45,700.00 plus tax (two wood posts and concrete footings) to supply and install eight (8) identifier signs.
- Supplier C – Suggested costs of approximately \$30,400-\$33,000 (does not include excavation, delivery and/or installation) for the sign face, framing and post/baseplate.
 - For the Pre-Cast Concrete Foundation, including installation materials, the approximate cost would be \$38,080-\$40,680.

Costs could decrease depending on if the municipality undertook the site preparation and installation.

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.2 Supporting Businesses and the Local Economy

6.3 Facilitating Community Growth

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

As noted, the price for signage varies greatly depending on the quantity, style, materials used, and labour involved.

As part of the 2024 Budget Process staff will identify funds required for the installation of eight (8) identifier signs. Should Council approve the budget request, staff will prepare a request for proposal to determine a supplier and final approval and installation will be subject to grant funding from either or both RTO7 and Spruce the Bruce to help offset the costs associated with the project.

Provided funding becomes available through the RTO7 Partnership Program, the Municipality would move through procurement process according to procedures and then contract a designer and installer. The successful contractor would invoice RTO7, and the Municipality would pay our portion of the cost directly to RTO7.

Approved by: Sylvia Kirkwood, Chief Administrative Officer

