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London
CANADA

January 2, 2015

Chair and Members
Corporate Services Committee

I would like to request that the Civic Administration be directed to report back to the Corporate Services Committee with a business case regarding how the City of London's inventory of City-owned billboards and the Municipal Council's current policy related to the rental of City-owned lands for billboards could be enhanced, in order to maximize revenues and outreach opportunities. My rationale would be as follows:

1. It has been some time since the Council's policy regarding rental of City-owned lands for billboards has been reviewed, so there could be an opportunity to increase the City's revenue stream from third parties in the area of billboard advertising. This is important because generating income through user fees is a way to solve the dilemma of needing more revenue while needing to keep tax increases lower.
2. Expanding the inventory of City-owned billboards could:
 - a) provide an additional means for public outreach for municipal programs and services;
 - b) provide a low-cost opportunity to conduct City of London advocacy campaigns, noting that some of the problems that the City needs to tackle in London will require engaging the public because the City lacks the resources to go it alone; and
 - c) enable the City to advertise certain locally-based arts events at no charge, which could greatly assist the arts community's financial sustainability.

I would also like to request staff to address how they might be able to reuse materials to minimize the cost of expanding the inventory of City-owned billboards (e.g. use of old hydro poles for the support structure).

Thanks for your consideration,

Michael van Holst
Councillor, Ward 1