

Decorative Lighting and Event Permit Fees in Downtown Oshawa

That the Finance Committee recommend to City Council:

Whereas the City received a letter, dated March 23, 2022 (Attachment 1) from Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance (DOBA) requesting that the City of Oshawa take immediate action to enhance lighting in the downtown core; and,

Whereas the letter also cites that improved lighting has been shown to reduce criminal activity, as well as create a more inviting environment by adding character and ambiance to main streets; and,

Whereas in late 2021, City staff applied for Main Street Community Activator Grant for a downtown lighting program but the application was unsuccessful; and,

Whereas as part of the grant application process an informal quote was received that estimated the total cost of lighting approximately 180 poles to be in the range of \$250,000 to \$350,000 depending on the type of light selected; and,

Whereas a seasonal lighting program would also further enhance a welcoming environment for visitors to the downtown core; and,

Whereas a lighting program for the downtown core would need to be bid through a competitive process in accordance with the Purchasing By-law 80-2020; and,

Whereas, through FIN-21-98, Council authorized pre-budget approval for project 21-0015 (Downtown Streetscape Redevelopment) in the 2022 capital budget, in the amount of \$700,000 and that staff apply to the Canada Community Revitalization Fund for a possible grant up to \$525,000; and,

Whereas on March 31, 2022 the City received a confirmation that the application was successful and would be receiving approved funding of \$525,000; and,

Whereas the funding that had been set aside for project 21-0015 in the Downtown Revitalization Reserve and the Civic Property Development Reserve is no longer committed due to the receipt of the grant funding and could be repurposed to implement a lighting program in the downtown core; and,

Whereas lighting programs and products have become increasingly sought after as a mode of downtown revitalization; and,

Whereas the enhanced demand for the product will require early engagement with suppliers to ensure the product can be sourced in a timely fashion to execute the program; and,

Whereas the letter from DOBA also included a request to waive event permit fees between May 2022 and December 2022 for events that are being planned in the Urban Growth Centre boundaries; and,

Whereas the City has a formal policy and procedure for requests for Waiving of Fees for registered Oshawa-based not-for-profit community organizations or groups; and,

Whereas the City's Waiving of Fees procedure is currently receiving applications for Intake 2 with a Deadline of June 1, 2022;

Therefore be it resolved, pursuant to FIN-22-48, that:

1. City staff be directed to implement a lighting program for the downtown core with an upset spending limit of \$525,000 (including non-rebateable H.S.T.) from the Civic Property Development Reserve that includes:
 - a. A decorative lighting program that offers an all-year round illumination on approximately 180 street light poles; and,
 - b. A holiday decorative lighting program that would introduce new holiday features to City Hall and Memorial Park; and,
2. City staff advise DOBA regarding the formal process and council-approved criteria for the application to waive fees.

Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance
1J-57 Simcoe Street South
Oshawa, L1H 4G4

Phone 905-725-1621
info@doba.com



Mayor Dan Carter
Corporation of the City of Oshawa
Oshawa City Hall
50 Centre Street S
Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z2

March 23, 2022

Re: Decorative lighting in the Downtown Core

Dear Mayor Carter,

On behalf of the Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance, we are requesting that the City of Oshawa takes immediate action to enhance our lighting in the downtown core.

Decorative lights have quickly become the most popular solution for beautifying downtown City Centres. Improved lighting has been shown to reduce criminal activity, as well as create a more inviting environment by adding character and ambiance to main streets.

Downtown Oshawa lags far behind other municipalities as we do not have any lighting features or updated urban lighting accents. Our downtown appears dull, unattractive, and uninviting. Lighting provides a welcoming environment that attracts people; and more specifically, to our downtown businesses. We feel decorative street lighting is essential in terms of distinguishing Downtown Oshawa as a desirable place to work, dine, shop, and play.

Additionally, in order to bring visitors, culture, and vibrancy through events back to the downtown, we request that the City of Oshawa waive permit fees for events being held in the Urban Growth Centre boundaries between May 2022 and December 2022. This will assist in removing financial barriers to event organizers and highlights the City's interest in supporting a wide range of community events to bring visitors back to the downtown area.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dominic Albis', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dominic Albis
Chair, Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance

cc Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development
City Clerk