

	City Council Policy Manual
Subject:	Sponsorship and Advertising
Policy Number:	GOV-010
Revision:	01
Approved by Council:	September 3, 2015
Amended:	June 4, 2026

Purpose

This policy establishes direction and guidelines regarding the sponsorship and advertising of City assets.

Policy Statement

The City of Woodstock welcomes and encourages sponsorships and advertising undertaken to assist in the provision of City services and projects. All sponsorships and advertising shall be consistent with the City's vision, mission and values and will not compromise or contradict any by-law, policy, mandate or objective of the City or reflect negatively on the City's public image. All sponsorship and advertising must comply with federal and provincial statutes, and the standards set out by the Canadian Advertising Standards Council.

The placement of any advertising on City assets, at City programs or events, or in City media/publications does not represent or imply any partnership with the City, the City's endorsement of any product, service, person, company, organization, beliefs, views, or any content contained in the advertisement, and does not constitute information or communication by or on behalf of the City.

The contributing party shall consent to reasonable inquiries by the City to ensure that the proposal is consistent with the City's vision, mission and values and will not reflect negatively on the City's public image. The City of Woodstock retains the right to reject or terminate any sponsorship or advertising proposal or agreement in whole or in part.

Scope

This policy applies to all relationships between The Corporation of the City of Woodstock and businesses, organizations, and individuals that contribute either financially or in-kind to assets in exchange for recognition, public acknowledgement, or other promotional considerations.

Exclusions: This policy does not apply in the following situations:

- a) Gifts, unsolicited donations, or advice to the City where no business relationship is required and no reciprocal consideration is sought.
- b) Funding obtained from other levels of government through grant programs.
- c) Business partnerships between the City and the Downtown Woodstock Business Improvement Area (BIA).
- d) Service clubs or non-profit community organizations that provide continuous support and leadership to City programs, services, facilities, or assets.

This policy does not apply to the Woodstock Art Gallery. All such policies for the Art Gallery are prepared, reviewed, and approved by the Art Gallery Advisory Board.

Procedures for the commemorative naming of City assets without financial contribution are outlined in Policy GA019 – Properties, Buildings and Assets Naming.

Definitions

Advertising: the sale or lease of space on corporate materials (both printed and electronic), and signage on assets owned by the City.

Asset: any physical or non-physical element, material, equipment, facility, building, structure, event, media, or publication owned by the City that holds value for sponsors or advertisers to achieve their business objectives. Examples include, but are not limited to, programs, services, playgrounds, arenas, parks, pools, advertisement placements, special events, publications, and speaking engagements.

City: refers to The Corporation of the City of Woodstock.

Donation(s): a cash and/or in-kind contribution made to the City without expecting any commercial benefit in return. Donations do not establish a business relationship and differ from sponsorship and/or advertising initiatives.

Sponsorship: a marketing-oriented, contractual arrangement where an organization or entity pays a fee or makes a payment in-kind for the rights to publicly associate with a specific asset for commercial benefit. Sponsorships can take the form of financial support, non-cash goods, naming rights, or contributions of skills or resources.

Criteria for Sponsorship and Advertising Relationships

Without limiting the generality of the Policy Statement, before entering a sponsorship and advertising relationship with the City, the following criteria must be met:

- Costs to the City associated with the relationship must be within an approved budget.
- All public acknowledgments, advertisements, recognition, and publicity of the sponsorship or advertising by the City or the sponsor must adhere to all federal and provincial statutes and municipal by-laws.
- The value of the proposed sponsorship or advertising must be consistent with the expected recognition or acknowledgment.
- The relationship must not result in a City employee or agent receiving any product, service, or assets for personal gain or use and in accordance with the City's Employee Code of Conduct.
- Does not breach or conflict with any existing City obligations, advertising agreements and/or contracts.
- There are no adverse effects on public safety.
- Advertising devices must not compromise the quality or safety of the City's assets or pose any added risk.
- Does not present demeaning or derogatory portrayals of individuals or groups.
- Does not promote tobacco or nicotine products or tobacco use.
- Does not promote alcohol at events geared to children or youth.
- Does not promote the sale, distribution or promotion of illegal substances, weapons or pornographic materials.
- Does not represent political endorsement of a party, elected representative or candidate from any level of government (excluding public service announcements);
- Does not incite violence or hatred.
- Does not convey a negative religious message that might be deemed prejudicial to religious groups.
- Considering generally prevailing community standards, is not likely to cause deep or widespread offence.

Sponsorship and Advertising Agreements

The advertiser is entitled only to the rights outlined in the agreement, with no additional benefits. Advertising involves a simple transaction based on pre-established base rates for a defined period.

All sponsorship and advertising relationships shall be through a written agreement. Such agreements must clearly detail:

1. The sponsor's contribution and its value.
2. The identity of all parties in the arrangement.
3. The obligations of both the sponsor and the City.
4. Disposal and ownership of any assets resulting from sponsorship or advertising.
5. Maintenance for all associated assets, if required.
6. The duration of the sponsorship or advertising.
7. Licensing and use of the City's and sponsor's names, trademarks, and other intellectual property, including any payment for such licensing and use.
8. Insurance coverage/indemnification clauses.
9. Termination provisions and remedies available to both parties upon termination.

Sourcing Authority

Sponsorship and advertising will be offered by the City or its agent first to a continuing sponsor, and then on a first-come, first-served basis, reflecting fair market value, in accordance with industry standards and valuation criteria. The City reserves the right to reject unsolicited sponsorship or advertising proposals and any open solicitations.

Guiding Principles

The decision-making and operational processes related to sponsorship and/or advertising relationships with external parties will be guided by the following principles:

- The relationship must be mutually beneficial to the City, community, and sponsor or advertiser.
- The sponsorship or advertising should enhance the development, delivery, awareness, or continuation of one or more assets and align with City plans and priorities.
- Opportunities should suit the target audience.
- Agreements must not invoke future considerations or influence City operations.
- Sponsorships and advertising must reflect fair market value, adhering to industry standards and valuation models.
- Agreement terms should not exceed ten years, unless authorized by City Council.
- If the Sponsor closes their business or otherwise ceases operations before the Agreement is complete, the City may, by agreement, reserve the right to immediately revoke and remove any sponsorship benefits provided under the Agreement, including recognition, advertising, signage, and related promotional opportunities, without further obligation to the Sponsor.

Restrictions

Without limiting the generality of the Policy Statement, all sponsorship and advertising is subject to the following restrictions:

1. The City retains the right to limit sponsorship and advertising to certain services and to exclude specific products and industries at its discretion.
2. Sponsorships and advertising will not be accepted from any entity that portrays, promotes, or condones the stereotyping of any group or discrimination as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code or contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
3. Sponsorships and advertisements will not be accepted if they promote unnecessary commercialization of public spaces.
4. Sponsors are prohibited from implying that their product, service or ideas are sanctioned by the City

Approval Authority

All sponsorship and advertising opportunities shall be reviewed in accordance with this Policy. The City may enter into contractual agreements for sponsorship and advertising where all policy requirements are satisfied.

Delegated Authority

Department Heads or their designate(s) are authorized to approve and execute sponsorship and advertising agreements with a value of up to \$75,000, provided that:

- The agreement complies with all provisions of this Policy; and
- The value of the sponsorship or advertising (cash or in-kind) is consistent with Municipal Code Chapter 330 – Fees and Charges, where applicable.

Council Approval

Council approval is required for:

- All sponsorship and advertising agreements with a value exceeding \$75,000, giving the Mayor and Clerk authorization to sign the necessary agreement; and
- Any agreement that does not fully comply with this Policy or falls outside delegated authority.

Revision Date	Rev #	Particulars
June 4, 2026	01	Reorganization and clarification of policy