

Sponsorship Policy

Approved By: City Council

Approval Date: tbd

Effective Date: tbd

Revision Approved By:

Revision/Review Date:

Note: This policy replaces the previous Corporate Sponsorship and Advertising Policy, which has been separated into two stand-alone policies.

Policy Statement

The City of Ottawa supports sponsorship agreements as a revenue generation strategy as well as a means to enhance the programs or services provided by the City. By supporting a program or community initiative, sponsorships enhance the experience of direct participants and help to improve the overall quality of life in our community.

External parties benefit from City sponsorships by showcasing their brand, receiving greater visibility, broader reach, and fostering a positive impact by serving the community.

Purpose

This policy provides a framework for City staff to explore, execute, administer, and manage sponsorship opportunities and agreements by:

- Identifying and promoting the mutual benefits for external parties partnering with the City of Ottawa.
- Fostering the effective management of sponsorship and naming rights to ensure a positive municipal image, enhanced City programming and services, and competitive, transparent, and accountable processes.

Application

The policy applies to sponsorship relationships between the City and external parties that contribute either financially or in-kind to City programs, events, services, infrastructure or facilities.

Exemptions

The following are exempt from the provisions of this policy:

Elected Officials

- Are governed by the *Code of Conduct for Members of Council* and the [Community, Fundraising and Special Events Policy](#).

Office of Protocol and Intergovernmental Affairs

- In the solicitation and allocation of sponsorship opportunities, notwithstanding the reporting requirements identified in the general policy, acknowledgement of sponsorships for events organized by the Office of Protocol will be documented in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Heritage designated properties as it relates to naming rights

- Will not be considered for sponsorship naming rights. Includes properties listed in the municipal heritage register or designated as having cultural heritage value under the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Public-private partnerships (P3)

- Are governed by the Public Private Partnerships Policy.

State of Emergency

- Enables City staff to enter into procurement agreement(s) or accept donations, sponsorships beyond the limits set out in the *Delegation of Authority By-law*, that may otherwise violate the specific terms and conditions of a sponsorship agreement.

City Parks

- Smaller Neighbourhood parks that are less than 3 hectares in size.
 - For larger Community and District parks, sponsorship opportunities may be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Public Art

- Includes visual artwork in any media created by an artist(s) that has been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in public space and is acquired in compliance with the Public Art Policy.

Sponsorship agreements that pre-date this policy

- All agreements (up to their end of term) that were in place before this policy approval date will be considered exempt and therefore valid under negotiated terms and conditions.

The following organizations are governed by their respective policies and procedures:

- Ottawa Public Health
- Ottawa Public Library
- Ottawa Police Services
- Transit Services Department (with respect to Transit Commission)

Policy requirements

Sponsorship proposals, forms and content

The establishment of all forms of sponsorships:

- Will be consistent with the City of Ottawa's vision and mission, and to safeguard the City's corporate image and assets.

- Should be appropriate to the target audience and venue.
- Will be determined on a case-by-case basis if there is a requirement for a competitive or non-competitive bid process.
 - All competitive opportunities will follow parameters within the *Delegation of Authority* By-law.
- Must not create an ongoing financial obligation for the City beyond the term of the agreement.
- Do not qualify for donation receipts.

Unsolicited sponsorship proposals received by the City:

- Will be evaluated by the manager of the relevant business unit and, if acceptable, completed in accordance with this policy.
- The City reserves the right to reject any unsolicited proposals.
- Communications with the City from a sponsorship proponent may require registration in the City's Lobbyist Registry. Staff will advise proponents when they believe registration is required. Where interpretation is required, staff will consult with the Lobbyist Registrar.

All pouring rights and vending agreements:

- Are encouraged to comply with City Strategy to reduce single-use plastics ([Council Motion, January 25, 2023](#))
- Are encouraged to comply with City of Ottawa Public Health, Healthy Eating guidelines and to offer healthy choices as part of the vending mix.

All content developed as a result of a sponsorship agreement:

- Must follow the City's Accessibility Policy.
- Must follow the City's Bilingualism Policy.
- For digital assets and social media, must comply with all applicable City by-laws and policies.

Sponsorship agreements

Sponsorship agreement between the City of Ottawa and parties will:

- Be in writing and outline the mutual benefits, monetary and in-kind value, terms, and duration of the sponsorship.
- Include responsibilities for all parties at the time they enter into the agreement and outline terms for dissolving or extending the agreement.
- Comply with federal and provincial statutes and applicable standards set out by the *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards Council*.
 - External parties who have entered into a partnership agreement with the City must comply with legislation that ensures that the City of Ottawa's images and official marks are trademark protected pursuant to section 9(1)(n) (iii) of the Federal Trademarks Act and therefore cannot be produced without the prior written consent of the City of Ottawa.
- Be established in a manner that ensures fair market value of the City asset to be sponsored and results in fair value to the City and community.

- Not in any way solicit future consideration or influence or be perceived to influence the day-to-day business of the City.
- Not necessarily represent the City's endorsement of any product, service, person(s), company, organization, belief, view, or any content contained in the advertisement; and does not constitute information or communication by or on behalf of the City.

Naming rights

Sponsorship naming rights for major municipal infrastructure including administrative buildings, recreation complexes, full-services community centres, swimming pools, arenas, gymnasiums, large community halls, theatres, museums, and cultural facilities will require City Council approval.

Sponsorship naming rights for secondary amenities within major municipal infrastructure, including lobbies and common areas, small meeting rooms, kitchens, specialized studios, and patios, can be approved under delegated authority by the General Manager of Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services with concurrence of the Ward Councillor.

Sponsorship Naming rights for small municipal infrastructure serving primarily a local need, including field houses, individual outdoor sports fields and amenities within parks, outdoor sports courts and rinks can be approved under delegated authority by the General Manager of Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services with concurrence of the Ward Councillor.

Any sponsorship agreement that includes naming rights for City owned infrastructure or major asset:

- Should preserve geographical and historical context within the proposed naming of a building or major asset.
- For infrastructure or major asset with a pre-existing historic name, a commercial sponsorship naming right should honor the existing name in coordination with the sponsor.
- If a City asset has a commemorative name, that is also used in other locations (i.e., particular name exists in building, park, hall), then that asset may be eligible to be renamed as part of a sponsorship agreement with Council approval.
- Commemorative naming opportunities remain available for assets within a sponsored building unless exclusionary rights are negotiated in a sponsorship agreement.
- Commemorative naming proposals will be administered in accordance with the City's Commemorative Naming Policy or in consideration of the policy's criteria and process.
- Non-commemorative naming rights for ancillary spaces within facilities may be approved by City employees within the *Delegation of Authority* By-law parameters.

Eligibility and Conditions

Eligibility

External parties may be considered for a sponsorship agreement with the City of Ottawa through a competitive process as long as there is compliance with the provisions of this policy.

Non-competitive sponsorships may be considered for the following opportunities when:

- An unlimited or significant number of similar sponsorship opportunities are available.
- Only one suitable sponsor can be identified.
- A unique, innovative, or experiential opportunity is available.
- The value of the sponsorship or in-kind recognition does not exceed the monetary limits set out in the *Delegation of Authority By-law*.

Conditions

The City will not enter into sponsorship agreements with external parties that:

- Are currently in a legal dispute with the City and/or are otherwise disqualified from doing business with the City.
- Not in good financial standing with the City of Ottawa.
- Either produce distribute, or promote tobacco, vapour, or water-pipe products.

The City may enter into sponsorship agreements with external parties that either produce distribute, or promote alcohol, or cannabis products if:

- The agreement is for a program, service, or event where the advertising is not provided specifically for individuals under the legal age of consumption.
- The company does not promote alcohol or cannabis consumption to individuals under the legal age of consumption.
- The company complies with applicable Federal, Provincial and Municipal legislation and policies.

Responsibilities

Delegation of Authority

City employees are authorized to enter into sponsorship and naming agreements that do not exceed their authority set out within the *Delegation of Authority By-law*.

City Departments

- Are responsible for negotiating, executing, and administering their own agreements within their delegated authority parameters.
- May solicit sponsorships opportunities insofar as they comply with this policy.
- Ensure that when approving sponsorship proposals that all relevant City by-laws and policies are adhered to.
- Ensure that requests for exemptions or scenarios not addressed in this policy are presented to the employee's Director and General Manager, who may bring the matter forward to the City's Sponsorship and Advertising Unit.
- Must submit annual reporting on sponsorship agreements and cash and in-kind benefits to the Partnership Manager, Corporate Advertising, Sponsorship and Donation or delegate.

Partnership Manager, Corporate Advertising, Sponsorship and Donation, or Delegate

- May enter into sponsorship agreements provided they satisfy all provisions of this policy and *Delegation of Authority* By-law.
- Manage relationships with sponsors including support for activation of Sponsorship agreements, maintaining, and renewing sponsor relationships, and assisting in resolution of issues relating to sponsorship agreements.
- Prepare and submit annual reporting as required by the *Delegation of Authority* By-law.
- Inform senior leadership of new sponsorships opportunities that arise.
- Determine when it is appropriate to seek consultations with stakeholders and public as required regarding sponsorship agreements.

General Managers

- Approve all sponsorship agreements within the General Manager's delegated authority limits.
- Identify and seek City Manager approval for sponsorships or any agreements that do not satisfy the conditions of this policy and the City employee Delegation of Authority limits.
- Approve non-commemorative naming rights for ancillary spaces and small community infrastructure serving local needs with the concurrence of the Ward Councillor.
- Determine when it is appropriate to prepare information briefs to members of Council as new sponsorship agreements arise.

City Solicitor

- Provide legal advice regarding agreements arising from sponsorship arrangements and other legal or contractual matters.

City Manager

- Approve all agreements for amounts or set term limits over the General Manager's delegated authority limits.
- Approve contracts up to 10 years and/or not exceeding \$3M.

City Council

- Approve this policy and any substantial amendments.
- Approve sponsorship and naming agreements that do not satisfy the provisions of this policy or when the City Manager has determined Council authority is preferred prior to consideration of an agreement.

Monitoring/Contraventions

The City's Sponsorship and Advertising Unit is responsible for providing guidance and reporting on sponsorship and naming agreements.

For City employees, failure to comply with this policy may result in penalties under the applicable legislation and regulations and/or disciplinary actions under the City of Ottawa Discipline Policy up to and including termination.

For partner organizations, contraventions of this policy may result in termination or penalties as outlined in the agreement.

References

[Accountability and Transparency Policy](#)
[Accessibility Policy](#)
[Advertising Policy](#)
[Bilingualism Policy](#)
[Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Related Policies](#)
[Communications Policy](#)
[Community, Fundraising and Special Events Policy](#)
[Commemorative Naming Policy](#)
[Donation to the City for Community Benefit Policy](#)
[Employee Code of Conduct](#)
[Equity and Diversity Policy](#)
[Lobbyist Code of Conduct](#)
[Lobbyist Registry](#)
[Public-Private Partnerships Policy](#)
[Public Art Policy](#)
[Visual Identity Usage Policy](#)
[Public Health, Healthy Eating](#)

Legislative and Administrative Authorities

Province of Ontario, [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA)
Ad Standards, [Canadian Code of Advertising Standards](#)
City of Ottawa, [Delegation of Authority By-law](#)
City of Ottawa, [Lobbyist Registry By-law](#)
City of Ottawa, [Permanent Signs on Private Property By-law](#)
City of Ottawa, [Procurement By-law](#)
[City of Ottawa, Code of Conduct for Members of Council By-law](#)
Ontario, Heritage Properties [Ontario Heritage Act](#)
Ontario, [Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act](#)
Ontario Human Rights Commission, [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

Recordkeeping requirements

As per the Records Management Policy, Official Business Records generated as a result of the execution of this policy must be declared as such in the appropriate SharePoint site, RMS (Records Management System) or approved business system.

Definitions

Commemorative — Shall refer to the official naming of a municipal street, park, part of a park, facility, or part of a facility, to commemorate a person, persons, family, landmark, cultural icon or tradition.

Donation — A voluntary monetary or property transfer such as securities, gift or, services in-kind that is made without acceptance of any benefit of any kind accruing to the donor or any individual or organization designated by the donor. A donation is eligible for an official charitable donation receipt. It is also referred to as “corporate giving.”

Donations for Community Benefits — Donations for community benefits encompass projects, cash, assets or activities that provide a public good (Donation to the City for Community Benefit Policy).

Heritage Designated Properties — all City of Ottawa historical buildings, districts and landscapes that are protected under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, for example the Aberdeen Pavilion and the Horticulture Building.

In-kind Donation — A gift of goods or property other than cash such as capital property (including depreciable property) and personal-use property. A donation-in-kind does not include a gift of services (Donation to the City for Community Benefit Policy).

Infrastructure — Physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development. Infrastructure includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, stormwater management systems, waste management systems, electricity generation facilities, electricity transmission and distribution systems, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

Lobby — Any communication with a public office holder by an individual who is paid or who represents a business or financial interest with the goal of trying to influence any legislative action including development, introduction, passage, defeat, amendment or repeal of a by-law, motion, resolution or the outcome of a decision on any matter before Council, a Committee of Council, or a Ward Councillor or staff member acting under delegated authority (*City of Ottawa Lobbyist Registry By-law*).

Memorandum of Understanding — A formal agreement between two or more parties that expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. An MOU is not typically a legal commitment and is a less formal document than a binding contract. They are used in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement and are often the first step in moving toward a legal contract.

Naming Rights — A type of sponsorship in which an external partner receives the right to name an asset, or venue (e.g., sports facility or part of a facility; an ice pad within a multi-pad facility) for a fixed term. Commercial naming rights of a City asset or venue, which is the naming right sold or exchanged for significant investment under a set-term arrangement.

Organization — An organized body of people with a purpose, especially a business, society, association, non-profit etc.

Pouring rights — A type of sponsorship in which a corporation, organization, or individual purchases the exclusive right to supply beverages at City facilities in exchange for monetary and/ or other considerations over a set term.

Preferred Supplier Agreements — Multi-year contracts between the City and external firms in which the firms agree to provide value-added support to the City in exchange for preferred status. Examples of value-added support include discounted pricing as well as monetary, and/or goods and services.

Public private partnerships (P3) — Is defined in the Public-Private Partnership Policy as a project where there is a contractual agreement between the City and a private entity for the provision of infrastructure and services in which:

- The private sector participant assumes the responsibility for the long term financing for part or all of the project; and
- The City seeks to transfer risks that it would normally assume, based on the private sector participant's ability to better manage those risks; and
- The arrangement includes an operations or maintenance period that extends beyond the initial capital construction of the project.

P3 agreements are exempt from the provisions of this policy.

Sponsorship — A mutually agreed to arrangement involving the City and a person or organization whereby external resources are provided. The sponsorship can be in the form of monetary, in-kind contributions, event branding, programming, in-market activations, digital assets, advertising or naming rights and may include sponsorship benefits such as brand recognition, public acknowledgement or other promotional considerations.

Examples of sponsorship include:

- Monetary – A sponsorship received in the form of money
- In-kind – Goods or services of value to the City are received rather than cash
- Event – A planned public or community occasion
- Properties – City assets including, but not limited to, events, services, programs, activities, real property, facilities and features (for example, rooms, ice pads, pools, etc.) and other assets.
- In-Market Activation – The execution of a promotional benefit within the City of Ottawa by driving consumer action through brand interaction and experiences
- Digital advertising assets

Sponsorship Agreement — A written, binding agreement between the City of Ottawa and one or more external partners that permits sponsorship for a set term.

May include:

- Program and special event sponsorship
- Naming of City property, buildings, and major assets
- Pouring rights
- Preferred Supplier Status

State of Emergency — Is declared under the authority of the Mayor to provide the ability to City staff to deploy more resources to an emergency situation, including through requests for assistance to other jurisdictions or levels of government.
Responsibility of directing an emergency response belongs to the City of Ottawa's Emergency Operations Centre Control Group (EOCCG), led by the City Manager.
The City of Ottawa's declaration of an emergency does not have a fixed end date but, rather, continues in effect until terminated by the Mayor, City Council or the Premier of Ontario, in accordance with the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

Enquiries

For more information on this policy, contact:

Partnership Manager, Corporate Advertising, Sponsorship and Donation
Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department
Tel: 613-580-2424, ext. 24761
CorporatePartnerships@Ottawa.ca