

	Title:	Corporate Partnership Policy		
	Date of Approval: May 6, 2025	Policy Number: SER-008-0010		
	Revision Date:	N/A	Approved by:	City Council
	Revision Number:	N/A	Area:	Community Services
	Document Type:	Policy	Department:	All

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Corporate Partnership Policy is to:

- Establish a corporate standard and transparent guide and process of facilitating and supporting opportunities for partnerships; and
- Create a system for the identification, selection, acquisition and management of partnerships for the City of Welland ensuring that the impact and community benefit is clear and documented.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of staff, Council and our community partners

Note: Property Naming is outlined in a separate policy, see Municipal Naming/Renaming Policy (SER-008-0006).

Guiding Principles

The following principles will govern the City's approach to partnerships, sponsorships, and donations:

Public Interest First

- All partnerships, sponsorships, and donations must prioritize the public good, aligning with the City's objectives to serve the community.

Transparency and Accountability

- The City will operate in a transparent and accountable manner, ensuring that all activities are properly documented, reported, and assessed.

Ethical Conduct

- All partners, sponsors, and donors will be expected to uphold the City's ethical standards, ensuring no conflicts of interest, undue influence, or bias in decision-making.

Fairness and Inclusivity

- The City will ensure equitable access to opportunities for all potential partners, sponsors, and donors, with a focus on fostering inclusivity and diversity.

Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

- Partnerships and donations should contribute to the long-term sustainability and resilience of City initiatives, services, and infrastructure.

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2.0 Policy Statement

The City of Welland values partnerships and collaboration with individuals, organizations, service clubs and businesses that contribute to the enhancement of public spaces, services, and the overall well-being of the community. This document provides the framework for the City's approach to partnerships, sponsorships, and donations. The partnership policy aligns with the principles of transparency, fairness, accountability, and public interest, ensuring these activities support the City's mission and vision for an active, resilient and sustainable community delivering the best quality of life for all.

3.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Advertising

- A form of communication to promote services, ideas or causes with a goal of reaching the target audience to increase awareness, generate interest and persuade action.

Donation

- Donations involve gifts, monetary or in-kind, made by individuals, organizations, service clubs or businesses to support the City's programs, services, or infrastructure. Depending on the scale of the donation and terms, a donation agreement may be required and may be shared with Council for awareness. Examples of donations include a Service Club donation for park amenities or individual donations for the Wellness for All program.

Formal Partnership

- A formal partnership is a legally binding agreement between the City and a 3rd party approved by Council. These formal partnerships often have costs or political implications that must be approved and legally documented including agreements to build, operate, lease land, etc. Examples of formal partnerships include the land lease for the Ontario Road Emergency Shelter, support for the YMCA of Niagara and the operation of the Youngs Sportsplex.

Informal Partnership

- An informal partnership is not legally binding nor approved by Council. These agreements are part of regular city operations and approved by staff. These informal partnerships are in-kind, do not cost the City money and are established

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to meet mutually beneficial goals for the corporation and the 3rd party. Examples of informal partnerships include a local dance group hosting a performance as part of a city event or economic development partnering with the Niagara Catholic School Board to promote the trades and apprenticeships.

Partnership

- Partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between the City and a 3rd party. Partnerships can be formal or informal but will include a documentation. In the case of a formal partnership, agreements are referred to as a Partnership Agreements.

Partnership Agreement

- Partnership agreements are formal, collaborative agreements between the City of Welland and external organizations, service clubs and businesses to achieve mutual goals. Partnership agreements are legally binding and approved by Council.

Service Club

- A voluntary organization made up of individuals who come together to provide community service, support charitable causes, and engage in social and civic activities. Service clubs often raise funds through events, donations, or membership dues to support their initiatives. Examples include the Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Optimist Club and Rotary Club.

Sponsorship

- Sponsorships refer to financial contributions made by external organizations or individuals to support City programs, events, or initiatives in exchange for recognition or promotional benefits. Sponsors benefits may include featuring the sponsor's logo or sponsor name on posters, t-shirts, webpage, social media or other communications material. Examples include a local business sponsoring a city event or program.

4.0 Partnerships

Partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between the City and a 3rd party. Partnerships can be formal or informal. Definitions and examples for each can be found in Section 3.0 of the policy. Partnership opportunities are an integral part of responding to local issues and will leverage the strengths and goals of the partner to achieve more for the community. Partners may represent institutions, other levels of government, organizations, businesses, or service clubs.

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Eligibility Criteria

- Partnerships will be considered with institutions, other levels of government, organizations, businesses, or service clubs that align with the City's mission, vision, and strategic objectives.
- Potential partners must be in good standing with the City and demonstrate a commitment to positive community outcomes.
- The City will not enter partnerships with organizations whose values or activities conflict with the public interest, municipal policies, or ethical standards.

Approval Process

- All informal partnerships must be approved by the applicable department director or delegate.
- All formal partnerships must be approved by Council.
- A formal partnership agreement will be offered and accepted with details of the roles, responsibilities, deliverables, timelines, and financial considerations of each party. Depending on the partnership, these agreements may vary in length and complexity.

Review & Evaluation

- Partnerships will be reviewed by staff periodically to assess their effectiveness, outcomes, and alignment with City goals.
- The City reserves the right to terminate a partnership agreement if it no longer serves the public interest or if the terms of the agreement are not being met.

5.0 Sponsorships

Sponsorships refer to financial contributions made by external organizations or individuals to support City programs, events, or initiatives in exchange for recognition or promotional benefits. Sponsors benefits may include featuring the sponsor's logo or sponsor name on posters, t-shirts, webpage, social media or other communications material.

Eligibility Criteria

- Sponsors must have a reputation for ethical business practices and be aligned with the City's values, including sustainability, inclusivity, and community service.
- Sponsorship agreements must not conflict with the City's regulatory or ethical standards and must be free from any commercial influence over City decision-making.

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Types of Sponsorships

- Event Sponsorships: Businesses or organizations may sponsor City-led events. Examples of this include Canada Day, the Annual Mayor's Breakfast and the Economic Development Golf Tournament.
- Program Sponsorships: Contributions for specific City programs, such as youth initiatives, environmental programs, or cultural projects.
- Facility Sponsorships: Businesses, organizations or individuals may apply to sponsor City-owned facilities or spaces, subject to the Municipal Naming/Renaming Policy, for marketing opportunities. Examples of this include arena advertising and rink boards.

Approval Process

- All sponsorships must be approved by the applicable department director or delegate.

Recognition

- Sponsors will receive recognition in accordance with the terms of the sponsorship agreement. This could include signage, promotional materials, digital recognition, and more.
- The level of recognition will depend on the nature and value of the sponsorship, as outlined in the agreement.

Conflict of Interest

- Sponsorship agreements will be assessed for any potential conflicts of interest, ensuring that no undue influence is exerted over City decisions.

6.0 Donations

Donations involve gifts, monetary or in-kind, made by individuals, organizations, service clubs or businesses to support the City's programs, services, or infrastructure. Depending on the scale of the donation and terms, a donation agreement may be required and may be shared with Council for awareness.

Eligibility for Donation

- Donations may be accepted from individuals, businesses, service clubs or organizations that align with the City's values and objectives.
- Donations that may create conflicts of interest, violate ethical standards, or be seen as attempting to unduly influence City decisions will not be accepted.

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Types of Donations

- Monetary Donations: Cash contributions to support City programs or capital projects.
- In-Kind Donations: Non-monetary contributions, such as equipment, materials, or services.
- Legacy Gifts: Donations made as part of planned giving or bequests to support long-term initiatives.

Acceptance Process

- Donations are reviewed by City staff for alignment with the City's goals, strategic priorities, and ethical standards.
- All donations or donation programs must be approved by the applicable department director or delegate.
- A formal acknowledgment will be issued for all donations over \$5,000, and larger contributions may be accompanied by a public recognition plan (e.g., plaques, mentions at events, online recognition)

Use of Donations

- Donations will be directed to the intended purpose as outlined by the donor, or in cases where no specific designation is provided, will be allocated to areas of greatest need and strategic impact as determined by the City. Examples of uses include tree planting, park amenity improvements, and the "Wellness for All" program.

Tax Receipts

- Donations that meet criteria under the Income Tax Act will be issued a charitable tax receipt.

7.0 Reporting

City staff will provide an annual report to Council detailing all formal partnership agreements approved by Council, as well as any sponsorships, and donations over \$1,000. This report will include information on how these activities benefited the community and aligned with the City's strategic goals. In the case of donations, donors may remain anonymous if requested.

8.0 Responsibilities

The management of partnerships is detailed yet clear for all parties including the partner, sponsor or donor, staff and Council.

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Council

Council will be responsible to:

- Approve the Corporate Partnership policy.
- Approve all formal partnership agreements.
- Ensure that all approved formal partnership agreements align with the City's strategic goals, values and long-term vision.

Applicable Director

The applicable director for the partnership, sponsorship or donation is responsible to:

- Support negotiations as required with the relevant partner, sponsor or donor
- Depending on the size and scope of the partnership, may be expected to act as lead facilitator on formal partnership agreements and screen for eligibility
- Ensure formal partnership agreements are approved by Council, signed by both parties.
- Provide partner, sponsor and donor information for the annual report as required
- Approve all informal partnerships, sponsorships and donations or assign delegation for approval.

Director of Community Services

The Director of Community Services is responsible to:

- Ensure an annual report is submitted to Council as per the requirements of the policy

Staff Lead

The staff lead for the partnership, sponsorship or donation is responsible to:

- Depending on the size and scope of the partnership, may be expected to act as lead facilitator on the agreement and screen for eligibility
- Develop Council reports as required for approval of partnership agreements.
- Lead discussions, negotiations and agreements as required for all sponsorships and donations.
- Support operational needs of applicable partners, sponsors & donors once the agreement is signed
- Ensure all requirements are met as indicated in the agreement.

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- Develop sponsorship packages to attract sponsors and make the sponsorship process easier to navigate for interested parties.
- Promote and advertise donation and sponsorship opportunities as they are available.

Partner, Donor or Sponsor

The partner, sponsor or donor is responsible to:

- Work with City staff to confirm the requirements of this policy
- Review and sign any related formal or informal agreement for partnership, sponsorship or donation
- Ensure all requirements are met as indicated in the agreement
- Connect with the applicable staff lead to address any needs or questions

9.0 Attachments

Appendix 1 – [Municipal Naming/Renaming Policy](#)

Revision History

Date	Description of Change	Initials