

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: November 16, 2023
To: Community Services Sub-committee
From: Emily Robson, Corporate Initiatives Lead
Report Number: COM23-012
Attachments: Amended Policy - P.3.9 Advertising on City Property

Title: Amendment to Policy P.3.9 - Advertising on City Property

Objective: To revise Policy P.3.9 – Advertising on City Property to clarify the definition of specific terms to ensure the policy is applied the way in which it was intended. This clarification will support City staff and Council in both applying the policy and related decision-making.

Background: At the July 24, 2023, Regular Council meeting, Council adopted the following resolution: “That a review of the Advertising on City Property Policy P.3.9, be referred to staff to investigate an exemption to the policy for service clubs.”

This resolution responded to a request from the Rotary Club of Stratford for an exemption from Policy P.3.9 – Advertising on City Property to install a dragon boat in Market Square to promote the Dragon Boat Festival. The motion adopted by Council granted the exemption from the policy and further clarified that decals and logos associated with Rotary, club projects, statistics about the boat, contact information and event sponsorship were permitted.

Policy P.3.9 - Advertising on City Property was adopted on March 14, 2022. This policy was initiated to address the expansion of City-owned advertising space through the installation of digital screens on City busses and advertising space on transit stop benches. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all advertising and sponsorships comply with applicable legislation; are consistent with the City’s corporate values and code of conduct; and that advertisements do not adversely affect public safety or municipal assets.

Staff have undertaken a review of Policy P.3.9 – Advertising on City Property in response to Council’s direction, the recent exemption for the Rotary Club, and consultation with City staff tasked with applying the policy.

Analysis:

Purpose of Policy P.3.9 Advertising on City Property

Management Report COM22-005 Draft Policy – Advertising on City Property recommended the adoption of Policy P.3.9 Advertising on City Property for application to all third-party advertisers wishing to advertise on City Property, including City busses, arena boards and digital screens, special events signage and programs, and transit stop benches. With the adoption of the policy, the report indicates that all advertising contracts between the City and the advertiser will be subject to the conditions outlined in the policy. Further, advertising on City property is positioned as revenue generating, offering an opportunity to offset the cost of municipal service delivery.

Intent & Scope of the Policy

The policy statement notes that the City of Stratford permits commercial advertising on City property, at City events and in City publications. The policy aims to maintain control over the planning and delivery of advertising activities through the administration of contracts between the City and advertisers. This implies that the policy governs the direct relationship between the City and those wishing to advertise on City property.

Definitions

While the policy defines “advertisement(s)” as “any paid or in-kind communication that is designed to influence, educate, or inform the public”, the intent of the policy is to address materials which promote or market a trade or business, service, facility, or product and which contain sufficient information to induce the purchase of the advertiser’s service, facility, or product.

The definitions section further articulates that “advertisers” are those purchasing advertising space on City of Stratford property, and that advertising space will be sold to advertisers at rates determined by the City.

Policy Application

The policy is intended to apply to direct commercial advertising and sponsorship relationships between the City and a third-party. This policy does not extend to the relationship between organizations delivering programming on City property and their advertisers and/or sponsors.

Recommended Policy Amendments

Given the analysis of the scope and intent of the policy, staff propose amending the policy to provide clarification on the definition of “advertisement(s)”. The proposed amendment will specify that “advertisement(s)” are purchased by external companies, organizations, associations, or individuals. Appendix 2 includes the Policy, and proposed changes highlighted in yellow.

Further, based on the analysis above, materials promoting community-based events and initiatives undertaken by non-profit organizations, including logos of businesses and

organizations sponsoring these endeavours, are not subject to Policy P.3.9 – Advertising on City Property. However, such materials are subject to other relevant policies, such as P.3.8 – Market Square Terms of Use.

With the adoption of the municipal cultural plan, sports tourism strategy and municipal partnership program, Community Services anticipates reviewing several programs and policies related to recreation facilities, including the Market Square Terms of Use in 2024.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable:

There are no financial implications as a result of the recommended policy amendment.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Widening our Economic Opportunities

Strengthening Stratford's economy by developing, attracting, and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities, and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Advertising on City Property Policy P.3.9 be amended to revise the definition of the term "advertisement(s)" to:

- **"advertisement(s)" The content presented on a City of Stratford asset for the purpose of influencing, educating, or informing the public, and purchased by an external company, organization, association or individual and which contains sufficient information to induce the purchase of the advertiser's service, facility, or product.**

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