

# CORPORATE POLICY



Policy Title: **Significant Festivals and Events**  
Policy Category: **Administration Policy**  
Policy No.: A-017  
Department: Chief Administrative Officer  
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Author: Tracy Suerich  
Attachments:  
Related Documents/Legislation:

Key Word(s): Festivals, Events, Noise

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Significant festivals and events are a substantial economic and cultural driver in the City of Waterloo. The City of Waterloo's cultural vision for 2024 as outlined in the current Waterloo Culture Plan is to remain true to our past, build on present strengths and make the most of opportunities. By 2024, Waterloo will be a culturally transforming city, vibrant and resilient.

Supporting significant festivals and events in the City of Waterloo through policy and internal assistance will help to strengthen our existing cultural assets and provide capacity for future festivals and events to develop in Waterloo.

## **PURPOSE:**

This policy seeks to build the capacity for future growth of community driven festivals and events by defining selection criteria for common by-law exemptions and service based support.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**Affiliated Organization:** a community organization that works collaboratively with, and is formally recognized by the City of Waterloo in a manner that is consistent with the Community, Culture and Recreation Services Affiliation Policy (2010).

**Affiliation Service Agreement:** a formal written agreement between the affiliated community organization and the City of Waterloo that specifies the mutual responsibilities and benefits to the respective parties.

**Interdepartmental Events Team:** a team that provides guidance on the planning and delivery of festivals and events led by staff in the City of Waterloo Economic Development Division and including representatives from:

**Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*: No**  
**Policy Administration Team, Review Date: May 22, 2015**  
**Corporate Management Team, Review Date: May 27, 2015**

- Waterloo Regional Police Services
- Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario
- City of Waterloo Transportation Services (Integrated Planning and Public Works)
- City of Waterloo Fire Prevention (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Neighbourhoods Coordinator (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Communications (Corporate Services)
- City of Waterloo Facilities & Fleet (Corporate Services)
- Environment & Parks Services (Integrated Planning and Public Works)
- City of Waterloo Zoning (Integrated Planning and Public Works)
- City of Waterloo Business Services & Programming (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Municipal Enforcement Services (Community Services)

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to festivals and events managed by City staff, as well as those managed by Affiliated Organizations which meet the criteria outlined in section 1.0 and are overseen by City staff.

This policy does not include sporting groups and non-affiliated organizations within its scope or events not designated by council as Significant Festivals and Events.

**POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

This policy will be posted on the City of Waterloo intranet. Staff will be advised of the adoption of this new policy via direct distribution to event delivery and By-law related personnel in all departments.

**POLICY:****1.0 Criteria for Significant Festivals and Events Designation**

The following criteria are to be used by the Interdepartmental Events Team to determine which activities are recommended to council for Significant Festival and Event designation each year.

Significant Festivals and Events must be delivered by the City of Waterloo or by an Affiliated Organization, and conform to the following criteria:

- 1.1 Attendance: Attendance figures indicate the measure of the support the festival or event has within the community.
  - Neighbourhood focused events will have 200 or more attendees.
  - City or Regional focused events will have 1000 or more attendees.
  - Events not meeting these criteria shall be considered on a case-by-case basis in light of their benefit to the community.
- 1.2 Funding model: Cash and in-kind support from the business community and private sector indicates support from the wider community.
  - Festivals and events shall demonstrate financial support from a minimum of two (2) sources.

- 1.1 Community Involvement: Festivals and events should be primarily organized and operated by volunteers.
- 1.4 Location: A majority of the activity must be planned to occur in Waterloo.
- 1.2 Longevity and history: Although not a major factor in determining the significance of a festival or event, sustainability over time is an indication of community support. This factor is of use in rating an existing festival or event seeking to relocate to the City of Waterloo.
  - Organizations must operate successfully for three (3) years before they can be considered for Significant Festival or Event designation.
- 1.6 Celebrations and engaging programs: The programming must have something of significance or uniqueness to offer to the community.
- 1.7 Cultural: To be of significance, a festival or event must have a cultural component. This can range from the inclusion of local artists to the celebration of an aspect of the community of Waterloo.
- 1.8 Quality of Life Benefits: Festivals and events must provide opportunities for community engagement, cultural expression, and celebration.
- 1.9 Economic Impact: To be of significance, a festival or event must demonstrate economic impact through its contribution to community vitality, support of local artists and/or businesses, or attraction of visitors from outside of Waterloo.
- 1.10 Inclusivity: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 requires the City of Waterloo to provide programs and services that are accessible and inclusive. Significant Festivals and Events must demonstrate reasonable measures to make their event accessible for all.

## **2.0 Adding or Removing Designation Status**

- 2.1 Organizations wishing to pursue a new Significant Festival or Event designation should express their interest in writing to their assigned city staff liaison no later than October 1 for a festival or event occurring in the following calendar year.
- 2.2 Economic Development Staff will compile the list of eligible festivals and events for review by the Interdepartmental Events Team and will present the list to Council for approval.
- 2.3 By December 31 of each year, all new applicants will be informed in writing of the Interdepartmental Events Team recommendation and informed of the

scheduled report to council date regarding designated Significant Festivals and Events.

- 2.4 Existing designated Significant Festivals and Events will be reviewed by the Interdepartmental Events Team annually. Events abiding by duties assigned to the responsibility of festival or event organizers (see 4.0 below) shall be carried forward annually or written into Affiliated Service Agreements as per 2.6 below.
- 2.5 Appeals may be brought forward to City Council in writing.
- 2.6 Affiliated Service Agreements will reflect designation status and will be reviewed upon subsequent service agreement renewal.

### **3.0 City Supports**

- 3.1 The designation of Significant Festival and Event status allows for fee exemption from Noise By-law No. 2010-076, as amended: Exemption until 11p.m. on scheduled event dates.
- 3.2 The designation of Significant Festival and Event status allows for fee exemption from Sale and Use of Fireworks By-law No. 06-030, as amended: Exemption from permit fees for designated festivals and events. Organizations, however, must still obtain permit.
- 3.3 The designation of Significant Festival and Event status allows for fee exemption from Comprehensive Business Licensing By-law 2014-085, as amended: Exemption from business license fees for designated festivals and events. Organizations, however, must still obtain a business license.

### **4.0 Responsibility of Festival or Event Organizers**

Presenters (Organizers) of Significant Festivals and Events must:

- 4.1 Maintain accounts in good standing with the City of Waterloo.
- 4.2 Complete and obtain necessary permit and licensing documentation within the timeframe outlined in the applicable By-laws.
- 4.3 Provide the City of Waterloo with estimated attendance numbers following the event each year for our records.
- 4.4 Make all reasonable attempts to avoid public nuisance complaints during their festival or event.
- 4.5 Advise staff of any significant changes in their festival or event format or programming.
- 4.6 Affiliated groups must comply with all requirements of their Service Agreements.

### **COMPLIANCE:**

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.