

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: Lakyn Barton and Scott McGovern
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.

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.

The categorizing of Significant in this policy is only to distinguish which festivals and events are to access applicable by-law exemptions (Section 3.0). Community festivals and events that do not need by-law exemptions may not be deemed 'Significant' in terms of this policy, however that does not diminish their importance to the community.

PURPOSE:

This policy seeks to streamline recurring and common by-law exemption needs for affiliated community-led festivals and events by defining selection criteria.

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.

Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*: No

Policy Administration Team, Review Date February 16, 2023

Corporate Management Team, Review Date February 23, 2023

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:

- Waterloo Regional Police Services
- Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario
- City of Waterloo Communications (Corporate Services)
- City of Waterloo Community & Neighbourhood Services (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Fire Rescue Services (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Fleet & Procurement Services (Corporate Services)
- City of Waterloo Municipal Enforcement Services (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Parks, Forestry and Cemetery Services (Community Services)
- City of Waterloo Transportation Services (Integrated Planning and Public Works)
- City of Waterloo Planning (Integrated Planning and Public Works)

SCOPE:

This policy applies to festivals and events managed by Affiliated Organizations which meet the criteria outlined in section 1.0 and are supported by City staff.

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

This policy is not related to the Letters of Significance required for events by the Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario. Festivals and events without the designation of Significant in terms of this policy, may still apply for a Letter of Significance from the City of Waterloo for an application to the Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario.

This policy does not apply to festivals and events delivered by the City of Waterloo. The City is exempt from its own by-laws.

POLICY COMMUNICATION:

This policy will be posted on the City of Waterloo intranet. Staff will be advised of the adoption of this updated 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 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
 - 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.
- 1.3 Community Involvement: Festivals and events should be primarily organized and operated by volunteers.
- 1.4 Location: Activities must be planned to occur in the City of Waterloo.
- 1.5 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 elements of significance or uniqueness to offer to the community.
- 1.7 Cultural: Festivals and events must have an arts and/or culture focus. 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: Festivals and events 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: Festivals and events must demonstrate reasonable measures to make their events inclusive and open to all members of the public.
- 1.11 Accessibility: 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 events 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 2.5 below.
- 2.5 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.
- 3.4 The designation of Significant Festival and Event status does not allow for exemption from Open Air Fire By-law 2011-124. However, the Open Air Fire By-law 2011-124 does not cover ceremonial fires, which are permitted and can be addressed by a staff liaison.

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 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.