

Section: Council

Title: Naming Rights Policy for the Township of Wilmot

Policy Number:

Approved by: Council, By-Law 2026-30

Administered by: Corporate Services Department

Effective: April 27, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

The Township welcomes mutually beneficial naming rights agreements that enhance community assets and experiences while offsetting costs to residents and businesses. Each naming right agreement will promote fairness, transparency, and align with the Township's vision, mission, and values while supporting Council priorities, bylaws and policies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent corporate policy for granting naming rights to Township-owned approved assets. It ensures alignment with the Township's programs and services, the strategic priorities of Council, and overall community benefit. It will establish the framework for entering into agreements for naming rights partnerships and alliances with individuals, groups and businesses. At the same time, it will create an open and competitive process through which to capitalize on opportunities for non-tax revenue streams to help fund municipal priorities and offset municipal costs by leveraging Township assets. The policy is intended to recognize and honour significant community or financial contributions that help advance municipal services, while safeguarding against undue commercialization of the public realm and preserving the integrity and character of public spaces.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the naming of buildings, substantial parts of buildings (pools, arenas, halls, meeting rooms etc.) properties, facilities or other assets. This policy does not apply to philanthropic contributions and donations in which no benefits are granted to an external party and where no business relationship exists.

LIMITATIONS

The Township will not solicit or accept naming rights whose reputation could prove detrimental to the Township's public image, or its financial, legal, or moral integrity or adversely impact upon the Municipality's standing and reputation in the community. This policy does not apply to the following:

- Recognition of contributions by the placing of plaques or other memorials where such recognition does not involve the naming of an entity as indicated below.
- Contributions that are governed by the Township's Donation Policy or Memorial Bench/Tree Program.

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- Arena Rink Board advertising covered under Fees and Charges By-law.
- Projects where the Township provides funds to an outside organization.
- Memorandum of Understanding with community groups, service clubs, not-for-profit organizations, or agencies that provide continuous support and leadership to Township assets.
- Agreements that predate this policy; recognizing that renewal opportunities shall be subject to this policy.

DEFINITIONS

CAO: Chief Administrative Officer of the Township of Wilmot or designate

Department Head: Member of the Corporate Leadership Team or designate.

Honorific or Commemorative Naming: Naming of Township property or assets without consideration (financial or otherwise) from the Township. The Township recognizes the service, commitment, or other type of on-going contribution by an individual, group, or organization for outstanding community involvement.

Municipal Asset: Township-owned property, facilities, parks, and physical or intellectual features. This includes, but is not limited to, community centres, pools, arenas, halls, meeting rooms, ice pads, playgrounds, splash pads, pedestrian bridges, trails, and other amenities.

Individual Naming Rights: Naming of Township property in return for financial or value-in-kind contribution from an individual or their estate. Typically, such support is given to enhance the community and to help sustain the property or asset in question for a specified period of time.

Market Value Assessment: A professional assessment to determine the value of the proposed naming rights in the marketplace.

Naming Rights Agreement: An agreement with an individual, external company, organization, enterprise, or association that purchases the revokable license to name or re-name a Township property or asset as evidenced in a written contract that contains terms acceptable to the Township particularly with respect to a specified period of time, termination, and exchange of financial and other benefits.

Naming Rights Sponsor: An individual, external company, organization, enterprise, or association that provides significant financial and/or in-kind support to the Township in exchange for the exclusive right to name a Township-owned property, facility, or asset for a specified period of time, as outlined in a formal naming rights agreement.

Sponsorship: A marketing-oriented, mutually beneficial contractual agreement between the Township and a third party, where the Township leverages a municipal asset to receive financial support in exchange for recognition, exposure, and/or some form of other marketing benefits for the third party. Sponsorships can take the form of financial assistance, non-cash value in-kind such as goods or a contribution of skills or resources, publicity, promotional considerations, or merchandising opportunities.

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Township: The Corporation of the Township of Wilmot.

Value In-Kind: A sponsorship is received in the form of good and/or service rather than a financial contribution.

PRINCIPLES

Following are the fundamental principles that shape the Township's Naming Rights Policy:

Guidelines for Assessment and Approval of Naming Rights

- The Township will not approve, or will discontinue, any Naming Right that may compromise the integrity, image, or reputation of the Township. All naming rights agreements are subject to the approval of Council, including both the initiation and potential termination of naming.
- Naming rights shall not interfere with the Township's ability to deliver services impartially, nor shall they be interpreted as the Township's endorsement of a political, religious or ideological position, or of any commercial product or service. This does not preclude naming in recognition of individuals who have held public office or entities such as individuals, foundations, companies, or organizations that produce or distribute commercial products or services.
- Naming Rights opportunities will be evaluated based on both tangible and intangible value to the Township and the potential naming rights sponsor. Considerations may include the uniqueness of the opportunity, alignment with the Township's values, community impact, audience reach, number of impressions or visitors, and the reputation of both the Township and the Naming Sponsor.

Individual Naming Rights

- All individual naming right must be for a specified time period, not exceeding the useful life of the asset, and subject to the conditions of the policy.
- Every such agreement shall include a sunset clause specifying the duration of the naming opportunity.
- Individual naming rights may be subject to renewal on mutual agreement and with Council's approval.

Corporate Naming Rights

- All corporate naming rights must be for a specified time period, not exceeding the useful life of the asset.
- Such agreements may be subject to renewal on mutual agreement and with Council's approval.
- Parties that are disqualified from doing business with the Township are not eligible for naming rights opportunities.

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- The benefits to the naming rights holder are limited to those expressly stated in the naming rights agreement.
- The Township will not provide an indemnification to the naming rights holder.
- Naming Rights holders are prohibited from representing that their products, services or ideas are sanctioned by the Township, and the Township will not be obligated under the naming rights agreement to purchase the products or services of the naming rights holder.

Honorific or Commemorative Naming

Honorific or commemorative naming may be considered by Council based on the contribution the group or individual has made to the public life and well-being of the Township of Wilmot. Honorific or commemorative naming arrangements will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

CONDITIONS

- All assets under consideration will undergo a market value assessment.
- Properties or assets with names of historic or community significance would be considered for renaming only in exceptional circumstances and only after consultation with and Council approval.
- The cost and impact of changing signage, rebuilding community recognition and updating records must be considered before a property is renamed.
- The Township will retain ownership, management and operational control over any named asset.
- The Township will consider all naming rights proposals but does not have an obligation to accept any and has the right to refuse any proposal, particularly those submitted by external parties whose activities are perceived to be incompatible with the Township's priorities, goals, values and mission.
- All naming rights agreements shall be confirmed by written contract containing terms and conditions satisfactory to the Township. All agreements are subject to Council approval.
- Every naming rights agreement shall conform to all applicable federal and provincial statutes, and to all Township by-laws, policies, contracts, and practices.
- While the physical display of the naming right shall be negotiated or decided upon on an individual basis, such recognition must not unduly detract from the character, integrity, aesthetic quality or safety of the property or unreasonably interfere with its operation, enjoyment, or use.
- The naming rights opportunity must not confer or appear to confer any personal benefit, influence, or preferential access to Township staff, officials, programs, services or decisions. Naming Rights do not constitute a partnership with the Township, and no aspect of such agreements implies a transfer of land, influence over Township affairs, or endorsement by the Township.

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- The Township does not endorse the product, services, viewpoints or ideas of any Naming Rights Sponsor.
- The Township reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to terminate any Naming Rights agreement prior to its scheduled end date without refund or compensation if it determines that continuation of the agreement may bring the Township into disrepute. Grounds for termination may include, but are not limited to:
 - A change in the Naming Rights Holder's reputation that could negatively reflect on the Township.
 - The Holder's involvement in legal, ethical, or criminal matters that may damage the Township's integrity or public trust;
 - A breach of the terms of conditions outlined in the agreement; or
 - A determination by Council that discontinuing the naming is the best interests of the public.
- The Naming Right must not result in incremental net costs to the Township.
- All proposed naming rights must go through an ethical scan and may be subject to obtaining a vulnerable sector check or police record check that is satisfactory to the Township.

SOLICITED AND UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

Considering the Township's available opportunities, funding requirements, and other considerations, the Township will apply processes that are fair, transparent, and consistent with the Township's Procurement By-law where applicable. Naming Rights opportunities are generally revenue/benefit arrangements. However, where a proposal includes the provision of goods, services or construction to the Township (including in-kind contributions), procurement requirements and/or competitive processes will apply.

The Township is open to receiving unsolicited Naming Rights proposals. Naming Rights opportunities and the process for submission shall be made available on the Township's website. Unsolicited naming rights proposals received by the Township will be evaluated by Community Services and if applicable any relevant business units.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council:

- Approval of assets and naming rights.
- Approval of inventory of assets and valuation.
- Approval of agreements beyond the aggregated amount of \$25,000 or agreements over 3 years.

Community Services:

- Reporting to Council regarding naming rights activities and necessary approvals.

Naming Rights Policy

- Maintain the Naming Rights Policy and related standard operating procedures.
- Act as the primary liaison with advertisers, sponsors and commercial naming rights holders.
- Negotiate and manage agreements, or oversee if done by a third party, ensuring alignment with the Township's best interests and this policy.
- Obtain approvals from Directors who oversee or are responsible for the Township asset as necessary.
- Ensure financial oversight and reconciliation of accounts.
- Maintain inventory, track documents and provide accurate records and reporting as required.
- Ensure all activities, agreements, and related contractual terms comply with applicable by-laws, policies, and standard operating procedures.

AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Agreements must include the following:

- A description of the Naming Rights.
- Any contribution by the Naming Entity and the value of the contribution, including any in-kind provided without charge to the Township, and the outline of a payment schedule.
- The obligations and responsibilities of both the Naming Entity and the Township.
- The duration of the agreement, and renewal options if any.
- The dispositions and ownership of any assets resulting from the naming rights.
- The licensing and use of both parties', name, trade, service marks, and other intellectual property, and any costs associated with such licensing or use.
- Details of the exchange of marketing benefits, including both what the Township will receive from the Naming Entity, and what benefits are to be provided to the Naming Entity.
- Insurance coverage/indemnification clauses.
- A termination provision and the remedies available to both parties upon termination.
- Other commercially reasonable terms deemed necessary by the Township, in its sole discretion.

If the naming right and/or advertising program is outsourced to a third party, where the third party is responsible for securing naming entities on behalf of the Township, all relevant agreements shall be reviewed and approved per contracted terms.

EVALUATION

Naming Rights Policy

This policy shall be reviewed once per term of Council or more often as required.

DOCUMENTATION/REFERENCES

- Sponsorship Policy
- Donations Policy
- Procurement By-law #2021-43
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Municipal Act, 2001
- Canadian Code of Advertising Standards