

Title:	Corporate Advertising Policy
Number:	GOV-07-01
Approved By:	City Council
Administered By:	Corporate Communications
Effective:	January 2007
Revised:	August 2009, September 2010, December 2014, December 2023

1.0 Purpose

The City of Oshawa advertises to inform about its programs, services and initiatives. The purpose of the Corporate Advertising Policy is to provide guidelines and criteria for the development and placement of advertisements based on objectives, scope of the initiative, target audience, approved budget and available funding, and to ensure that City advertising reaches the appropriate audiences in the most effective and efficient manner. Please note that this policy does not apply to Members of Council.

The goals of the Corporate Advertising Policy are to:

1. Ensure a comprehensive advertising mix is used to ensure that City messages and visuals effectively reach target audiences (residents, business, investors, visitors, etc.);
2. Ensure advertising is placed in a manner that is most efficient and cost-effective for the City;
3. Provide accurate, timely and clear information using plain language for target audiences about City programs, services, initiatives, etc.;
4. Provide open and transparent information improving the visibility of local government and encourage greater interest and participation in local affairs;
5. Promote a positive image of the city;
6. Comply with the Corporate Visual Identity Manual;
7. Be ethical in terms of what and where the City advertises; and,
8. Be measurable.

2.0 Definitions

Advertising covers the distribution of City messages through a medium that has a placement cost or would normally have a placement cost. The paid placement of messaging is to educate and inform the general public and target audiences about City services, programs and initiatives.

Advertising Mediums includes but is not limited to:

- Print publications (newspaper, magazine, inserts, etc.);
- Broadcast (television and radio);
- Digital/online (e.g. websites, social media, search engine);
- Consumer and business magazines; and,
- Out of home and transit (e.g. billboards, message boards, transit shelter, bench advertising, etc.).

Bid Document Advertising is advertising of formal bid opportunities with the City of Oshawa, as required by the originating Branch. Bid Document Advertising is placed by the originating Branch in specialized advertising mediums that reach a specific target audience(s).

Corporate Advertising is advertising placed by the City's Corporate Communications Branch to promote overall awareness of the City or on behalf of the Corporation.

Economic Development is advertising placed by the City's Business and Economic Development Services in specialized advertising mediums that reach a specific target audience(s).

Frequency is the number of times the average person in the target audience is exposed to a message during a given period.

Plain Language is effective communication that is clear, concise and easy to understand.

Public Relations materials include flyers, posters, brochures and organization/event program advertisements. Public Relations are not considered advertising.

Reach means the percentage of people in the target audience who are exposed to a communications campaign during a given period.

Recruitment Advertising is placed by the City's Human Resource Services Branch in specialized advertising mediums that reach a specific target audience(s).

Target Audience refers to a particular group or a portion of a market for which a specific message regarding a program, product, service or business opportunity has been designed in the form of advertising.

3.0 Scope / Application

This policy applies to instances when the City places paid placement of advertising messaging that encompasses the following:

- a) Public information regarding programs, services and events;
- b) Bid Document Advertising;
- c) Corporate Advertising;
- d) Economic Development Advertising; and,
- e) Recruitment Advertising.

Public Relations materials and Direct Mail are not considered advertising in the scope and application of this policy.

4.0 Procedure Overview

Advertisement requests, with the exception of recruitment, bid document and economic development advertising, are coordinated through the Corporate Communications Branch to maintain consistent branding, corporate writing style and adherence to accessibility standards. Where applicable, advertisements will include the City's website and phone number.

Individual City departments have approved budgets with advertising envelopes for specific programs and initiatives and place advertisements based on target audiences and available funding. The costs for advertising are funded from the department, branch or program advertising account.

4.1 Accessibility

The City of Oshawa is committed to providing services as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. City placed advertising is to follow the best practices outlined in the Accessible Document and Website Standards document, including but not limited to:

- Using plain language;
- Choosing sans-serif fonts and fonts that are easily readable; and,
- Ensuring a strong contrast between the font colour and background colour.

When space permits, print publication advertisements should include the City's accessibility statement located at the bottom of the advertisement or wherever the City contact information is located (note: the accessibility statement is outlined in the City's Accessible Document and Website Standards document on iConnect).

5.0 Guidelines and Criteria

The decision to place advertisements depends on the scope of the initiative, target audience, approved budget and available funding as determined by the department or branch.

Advertising vendors must meet all criteria listed below for the City of Oshawa to place advertisements.

1. Provide current advertising rate card;
2. Publish on a regular basis for a period of at least six months;
3. Publish in a format consistent with general industry practices;
4. Provide sufficient circulation/frequency/reach to effectively reach the target audience;

5. Be professional, credible and provide return on investment; and,
6. Ensure the editorial content does not:
 - Incite racial hatred;
 - Incite discrimination of any kind; and,
 - Incite the subversion of Canada's democratic system of government.

Please note that compliance with the eligibility criteria does not guarantee that the City of Oshawa will place advertisements.

Additional Requirements

Print Media vendors (Newspaper, Consumer and Business Print Publications) are encouraged to provide:

- the last three consecutive issues of the print publication; and,
- a circulation report certified by a third party auditor (e.g. Canadian Circulations Audit Board, Audit Bureau of Circulations); or
- the original copy of the Publisher's Sworn Statement of Circulation completed and signed by the publisher and sworn before a commissioner for oaths, lawyer, a notary or another authorized official.

Broadcast Media vendors are encouraged to provide:

- a link to their latest news broadcasts; and,
- an audience measurement report (e.g. radio listenership, television viewership, etc.) certified by a third party auditor.

Please note that compliance with the eligibility criteria and/or additional requirements does not guarantee that the City of Oshawa will place advertisements.

8.0 Monitoring and Measurement

A record of all published information shall be maintained by the department including project initiative, date(s) published, advertising media used and cost.

Where possible, the evaluation and measurement of the effectiveness of advertising will be completed using a combination of informal and formal feedback, online monitoring, event/program attendance and/or registration numbers.