



Graham Recreation and Parks Department Sponsorship Policy and Procedures

Statement of Policy

The City of Graham Recreation and Parks Department (GRPD) will actively pursue sponsorships from for-profit entities for department events, special projects, programs and sites in order to enhance and sustain Graham's recreation and parks system in a manner that respects the noncommercial nature of public places. All sponsorships must comply with the guidelines and procedures set forth in this policy.

The City of Graham recognizes that the public trust and perception of its impartiality may be damaged by sponsorships that are aesthetically displeasing, politically oriented or offensive to segments of its citizenry. When the City loses public trust and public perception of impartiality, its ability to govern effectively in the interest of its citizens is impaired. Therefore, the City permits private sponsorship of department events, special projects, programs and sites in limited circumstances as a means to generate funds for improving or expanding those programs and facilities.

The City of Graham maintains its sponsorship program as a nonpublic forum and exercises sole discretion over who is eligible to become a sponsor according to the terms of this policy.

Whenever possible, sponsorships should be linked to specific department events, special projects, programs and sites. The City of Graham will neither seek, nor accept sponsors that manufacture products or take positions inconsistent with local, state or federal law or with City of Graham policies, positions or resolutions. The establishment of a sponsorship agreement does not constitute an endorsement of the sponsor's organization, products, or services by the City of Graham.

1.0 Purpose

This policy and its guidelines and procedures is intended to guide the GRPD Director, staff and any associated Friends groups or similar organizations responsible for sponsorship business agreements and to help potential sponsors understand the opportunities and constraints of a recreation and parks sponsorship.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Sponsorship – a financial or in-kind support from a for-profit entity for a specific program, special event or facility in exchange for tangible and intangible benefits to the sponsor. For the sponsor, that can include but is not limited to:

- a. Marketing opportunities on City property;
- b. Name association with an event or program;
- c. Authorization by the department for the business to promote its relationship with the department and its association with department programs;

Sponsorship is a negotiated business agreement between the sponsor and the department.

2.2 Gifts – a freely given donation of goods, cash or real property to the department with no expectation of return. Gifts may be designated for a specific purpose or general in nature. Recognition for donors and donations will be determined by the City

2.3 Advertising – the signage created by the for-profit entity to promote a product. Advertising is to only be placed in designated, purchased space and/or in the department's printed and online materials. The permanent placement of a corporate logo, brand or product placement in a public facility or park is considered advertising and not allowed

2.4 Temporary Advertising – the temporary display of corporate logos, branding or advertising at a department event, facility or promotional materials (print or digital)

2.5 Event – a continuous, one-time public activity organized by the department and held on City property, usually lasting one day but may extend over two weeks or more

2.6 Project – one-time departmental effort with an end product

2.7 Program – on-going, organized activities led by the department for the public which generally involve staff supervision

2.8 Site – specific place including but not limited to community centers, gymnasiums, athletic fields, neighborhood park or entire park

2.9 Marketing Benefits – opportunities given to the for-profit sponsor to have their branding, products, name and logo temporarily displayed on City property or materials (print or digital). Details of marketing opportunities are specific to each sponsorship, detailed in each agreement and must meet City laws and departmental policies.

3.0 Authority

Under section 14-21 of the City of Graham Code of Ordinances, the GRPD “shall have complete supervision of the structures, areas and all activities conducted on or connected with the parks, playgrounds, water areas, athletic fields, recreation centers and other recreation facilities which are provided.” Any agreement for a sponsorship from a for-profit entity for department programs, special events, and/or facilities will require approval of the GRPD Director as authorized by section 14-23(6) of the City of Graham Code of Ordinances.

The City of Graham possesses sole and final decision-making authority for determining the appropriateness of a sponsorship relationship and reserves the right to refuse any offer of sponsorship.

Sponsorship agreement proposals will be reviewed according to the following procedures and guidelines:

- a. All sponsorships shall be approved in consultation with the City of Graham’s attorney.
- b. Sponsorship agreements projected to generate \$50,000 or more shall require the written approval of the City of Graham manager, who shall inform the city council.
- c. Sponsorship agreements projected to generate less than \$50,000 shall require the written approval of the Recreation and Parks Director.
- d. A division head may approve sponsorship agreements of less than \$5,000, in consultation with the Recreation and Parks Director.

At the discretion of the City of Graham manager, any proposed sponsorship agreement may be referred to the city council for approval.

4.0 Sponsorship Categories

4.1 Sponsorships are available in four department activities and places:

4.1.1 Event Sponsorship – the financial or in-kind support for a department organized event.

Depending on the sponsorship agreement, the sponsor’s name may be directly associated with the event and the sponsor may have a variety of temporary advertising and marketing opportunities. Opportunities are listed in the *Event Sponsorship Inventory*.

4.1.2 Project Sponsorship – a financial or in-kind support of a specific department project which is usually a one-time effort. Opportunities are listed in the *Project Sponsorship Inventory*.

4.1.3 Program Sponsorship – a financial support of a department led program. A program includes a series of ongoing activities organized by the department. Recognition of the sponsor may continue throughout the program’s duration. Depending upon the details of the agreement, a sponsor’s name may be associated directly with the program with other marketing opportunities available. Opportunities are listed in the *Program Sponsorship Inventory*.

4.1.4 Site Sponsorship – a financial or in-kind support of a specific place or feature in the department. Sponsor support may be used at the discretion of the department for capital projects, general operation, repair, etc. Marketing opportunities and sponsor recognition are negotiated in the sponsorship agreement. Opportunities are listed in the *Site Sponsorship Inventory*.

4.2 This policy also impacts other associated sponsorships:

4.2.1 Recreation Organizations – The department partners with other recreation organizations on several events, special projects, programs and sites. Any sponsorship agreement entered into by the partnering organizations will, at a minimum, be held to the standards of this policy.

4.2.2 Community Sports Teams – This policy shall govern any individual sponsorship agreement entered into by a team entered in a GRPD athletic league. For any individual team not entered in a GRPD athletic league but participating at a GRPD facility, all sponsorship agreement benefits being carried out by the team must be approved by the GRPD Director or designee.

- 4.2.3 Cultural Institutions** – The department partners with cultural organizations on several events, special projects, programs and sites. Any sponsorship agreement entered into by the partnering organizations will, at a minimum, be held to the standards of this policy.
- 4.2.4 Associated Friends Groups and Foundations** – Each friends group or foundation associated with any aspect of the department’s events, projects, programs or sites shall have an individual agreement with the department regarding roles and responsibilities. With respect to sponsorships, unless otherwise stated and agreed upon, these groups will follow this policy when considering sponsorships and/or gifts.

5.0 Procedures

- 5.1** Sponsorships are arranged primarily through two processes:
- a. self-initiated by the potential sponsor
 - b. initiated by the department through a formal or informal solicitation process.
- 5.2** Interested sponsors are encouraged to contact the department at any time to discuss a potential sponsorship. The procedure will be:
- a. Meeting with assigned department staff
 - b. Memorandum of Understanding drafted with levels of sponsorship, benefits to the department and event, project, program or site details evaluated.
 - c. Sponsorship draft evaluated against established guidelines.
 - d. Approval / Disapproval
 - e. Binding MOU executed

6.0 Guidelines for accepting sponsorships

- 6.1** The department welcomes sponsorships as an opportunity to enhance services as long as the sponsorships are consistent with City policies and regulations, respect the physical beauty of public spaces, and reaffirm the department’s mission and core services. In considering any proposal for sponsorship of a department event, project, program, or site by a for-profit entity, each of the following qualities and questions shall be considered:
- 6.1.1 Qualities for Consideration**
- 6.1.1.1** Corporate Citizenship – Entities with innovative charitable programs with a particular emphasis on programs promoting quality recreation, healthful living, education and environmental, historical and cultural awareness
 - 6.1.1.2** High-Quality Recreation – Entities that promote, support, or help create and preserve opportunities for high-quality recreation
 - 6.1.1.3** Healthful Living – Entities that promote, support, or help preserve opportunities for healthful living through health and fitness
 - 6.1.1.4** Environment – Entities that show respect for the natural environment and have programs that support or promote preservation and conservation efforts
 - 6.1.1.5** Diversity – Entities that show respect for cultural resources and have programs that support or promote diverse cultures
 - 6.1.1.6** Safe and Useful Products – Entities and companies that provide high-quality products and are industry leaders in the research and development
- 6.1.2 Questions for Consideration**
- 6.1.2.1** Are the entities’ products, services and marketing goals compatible with the department’s mission, values and policies and/or the policies and laws of the City?
 - 6.1.2.2** Does the proposed sponsorship enhance the priorities, programs and core services of the department?
 - 6.1.2.3** Does the sponsorship commit the department or other City departments to additional operating and maintenance responsibilities and costs?
 - 6.1.2.4** Do the marketing and temporary advertising conditions of the sponsorship compromise the design standards or visual integrity of the department’s sites or experience of users?
 - 6.1.2.5** Are the tangible and in-tangible benefits equal for both the sponsor and the department?

- 6.1.2.6 Would the sponsorship create a conflict of interest for the department or City?
- 6.1.2.7 What is the entity's past record on community involvement with City projects and agencies?
- 6.1.2.8 Would the sponsorship saturate the number of similar entities sponsoring an event, project, program or site?

6.2 Sponsorship from an organization that is engaged in any of the following activities; that has a mission supporting any of the following subject matters; or that, in the sole discretion and judgment of the authorized representative of the City, is deemed to be unsuitable for and contrary to community standards of appropriateness for government publications, shall be prohibited on any City of Graham property:

- a. Promotion of the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages, or promotion of establishments that are licensed to sell and primarily do sell alcoholic beverages, including bars; provided, however, that food service establishments or places of lodging may be authorized only when the sale of alcohol is incidental to providing food service or lodging and/or the establishments' involvement in the event is appropriate. (ie: bar located in downtown business district may sponsor a concert series)
- b. Promotion of the sale or consumption of tobacco products
- c. Promotion of the sale of birth control products or services
- d. Commentary, advocacy or promotion of issues, candidates and campaigns pertaining to political elections
- e. Depiction in any form of profanity or obscenity, or promotion of sexually oriented products, activities or materials
- f. Promotion of the sale or use of firearms, explosives or other weapons, or glorification of violent acts
- g. Promotion or depiction of illegal products, or glorification of illegal products, activities or materials

6.3 The City reserves the right to deny a sponsorship based on any factors that may undermine public confidence in the City's impartiality or interfere with the efficient delivery of City services or operations, including, but not limited to, current or potential conflicts of interest between the sponsor and City employees, officials or affiliates; and the potential for the sponsorship to tarnish the City's standing among its citizens or otherwise impair the ability of the City of Graham to govern its citizens.

7.0 Memorandum of Understanding Governing the Sponsorship

A memorandum of understanding shall be created for each sponsorship relationship. At a minimum, it shall detail the following information:

- a. Activities, products, and services of the private entity and its subsidiaries
- b. Benefits to be given to the proposed sponsor by the City of Graham and the estimated monetary value of those benefits
- c. Benefits to be given to the City of Graham by the proposed sponsor and the estimated monetary value of those benefits
- d. Prominence of the proposed public recognition of support
- e. Content of the proposed public recognition of support
- f. Duration of the proposed public recognition of support
- g. Conditions under which the sponsorship agreement will be terminated

The City of Graham recognizes that entering into a sponsorship agreement with an external entity does not constitute an endorsement of the entity or its services and products but does imply an affiliation. Such affiliation can affect the reputation of the City of Graham among its citizens and its ability to govern effectively. Therefore, any proposal for sponsorship of a City of Graham event, project, program, or site in which the involvement of an outside entity compromises the public's perception of the City's neutrality or its ability to act in the public interest will be rejected.

8.0 Marketing Benefits and Recognition Guidelines

- 8.1** Marketing benefits for the sponsor are negotiated and detailed in each specific Sponsorship MOU. When applicable, the GRPD will offer a choice of sponsorship levels with appropriate benefits associated with each level. Guidelines include:

- 8.1.1** All sponsorship marketing materials must be approved by the department, including but not limited to:
 - a.** Printed banners, signs, brochures, cards, posters, newsletters, product labels
 - b.** Digital imprints on websites and social media
- 8.1.2** Specific outdoor park facilities and indoor recreation centers will have established areas for temporary advertising and sponsorship recognition. Visual impact will be considered.
- 8.1.3** An unlimited number of corporate sponsorship recognition and logos printed on “walk-away” products (ie. T-shirts, water bottles) is acceptable. Visual impact will be considered.
- 8.1.4** The City Manager, GRPD Director or designee must approve the use of City’s or department’s logo by the sponsor in their own business publications. All logo use must be associated with the specific program or sponsorship.

8.2 Permissible Sponsors and Message Content

Sponsorships on City of Graham property are maintained as a nonpublic forum. The City of Graham intends to preserve its rights and discretion to exercise full editorial control over the placement, content, appearance, and wording of sponsorship affiliations and messages. The City of Graham may make distinctions on the appropriateness of sponsors on the basis of subject matter of a potential sponsorship recognition message.

8.3 Permissible Recognition Messages

Sponsorship recognition messages may identify the sponsor but should not (or limit) promote or endorse the organization or its products or services. Statements that advocate, contain price information or an indication of associated savings or value, request a response, or contain comparative or qualitative descriptions of products, services, or organizations will not be accepted. Only the following content will be deemed appropriate:

- a.** The legally recognized name of the advertising organization
- b.** The advertiser’s organizational slogan if it identifies rather than promotes the organization or its products or services
- c.** The advertiser’s product or service line, described in brief, generic, objective terms. Generally, only one product or service line may be identified.
- d.** Brief contact information for the advertiser’s organization, such as phone number, address or website. Contact information must be stated in a manner that avoids an implication of urging the viewer to action.

9.0 Terms of Agreement

- 9.1** The GRPD will use current market research data to calculate the value for each tangible and intangible asset offered by the department or the City to the sponsor. Costs related to the sponsorship incurred by the department will be incorporated into the sponsorship costs.
- 9.2** Determining the sponsorship costs and values will be a mixture of “value-based” system based upon the value of marketing and brand benefits to the sponsor and a “cost-based” system where the goal is to recover at least the costs of an event, project, program and site operations.
- 9.3** Agreements should include the following at a minimum:
 - a.** Clear statement of how the department is improving services through this funding and how the sponsorship supports the mission and vision of the department;
 - b.** The financial value, benefits associated, costs of the sponsorship, including any exclusivity or other hierarchy of benefits;
 - c.** Type and time limit for each sponsorship;
 - d.** Clear statement of the department’s and the sponsor’s responsibilities and roles;
 - e.** Specific plan for marketing and branding opportunities; display, type, location, size, design, content and duration;
 - f.** Term and termination provisions.

10.0 Implementation Procedures

This policy becomes effective upon approval by the Graham City Council. The GRPD shall subsequently develop and maintain procedures for the availability and acceptance of sponsorships and donations related to the

events, special projects, programs, and sites provided by each GRPD Division. These procedures shall in no way conflict or supersede any terms or provisions of this policy.

The City of Graham is not obligated to make any statements that directly or indirectly advocate or endorse a sponsor's organization, products, or services.

No materials or communications, including, but not limited to, print, video, Internet, broadcast, or display items developed to promote or communicate the sponsorship using the City of Graham's or the Graham Recreation and Parks Department's name, marks, or logo, may be issued without written approval from the Graham City Manager and/or Attorney.

Questions or comments regarding this policy should be referred to the Office of the Recreation and Parks Director @ 336.513.5510.