

 CITY OF ST. CATHARINES	Community, Recreation and Culture Services – Recreation and Culture Programs Division		
	Subject:	Special Events Fee Reduction Policy	Policy #:
Approved by C.R.C.S: Community, Recreation and Culture Services			
Issue Date:	November 14, 2016	Revision Date:	May 26, 2025
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Policy Statement:

The City of St. Catharines recognizes the importance of cultural events and events in that they build civic pride, encourage local engagement and attract people to the community and supporting them has been identified as a goal within the City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

The City welcomes, supports and encourages cultural festivals and events that build civic pride, encourage local engagement and attract people to the community.

The objective of this policy is to ensure that the City's support of festivals and events through the reduction of fees is facilitated in a fair and equitable manner and does not burden the City's annual operating budget.

Purpose:

This policy aims to protect the City's corporate values, assets, interests, goals, facilities, programs and services while also ensuring that festivals and events grow and prosper, positively impacting the quality of life of St. Catharines residents.

Definitions:

City

The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines, including City Council.

City program

Any activity organized and/or operated by the City and supported by a City department or approved by City Council. Includes City events.

City Property

All properties and facilities owned, managed and/or controlled under a lease agreement or license by the City including, but not limited to, parkland, playing fields, arenas, community centres, pools,

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gardens, open space and boulevards, buildings and rooms, furniture, equipment and fixtures; vehicles, fleet vehicles; and bus shelters.

Fees

The cost, as identified in the City’s Rates and Fees document to rent or permit a City owned asset. Fees are subject to change as directed by City Council.

Festival / Event

- A single or multi day activity offering inclusive experiences to a wide range of participants.
- Examples include, but are not limited to: fundraisers, community presentations and carnivals

Non-profit, Not-for-profit, and Charitable Organizations

As defined by the Canada Revenue Agency.

Scope:

The financial scope of this policy is limited. An upset limit for special events reduction of fees annually is set by City Council through the annual operating budget process.

Policy

The City of St. Catharines will reduce fees to eligible applicants to help offset the fee(s) that would have been charged by the City related to the delivery or presentation of a festival or event. Examples of City fees that can be reduced are (but not limited to):

- Park permit
- Rental of City Property
- Staffing costs outside normal operations

1. **The approval of reduced fees does not guarantee the availability of a reservation or equipment.**

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2. City Council reserves the right to limit the total amount of fees reduced annually.

1.0 General Principles:

- 1.1 Applicants must apply using the prescribed application form. The application must show the projected social, cultural, economic and environmental impact that the festival or event will have on the City of St. Catharines and its residents.
- 1.2 Preference will be given to applicants who display community building by creating partnerships with community organizations, arts and cultural organizations, athletic and social clubs, service clubs such as the Rotary Club, Lions Club, Kiwanis Club and Optimist Club and charities.
- 1.3 Festivals or events already funded through any other City of St. Catharines source will not be considered. These include but are not limited to the following:
 - St. Catharines Culture Investment Program (SCCIP)
 - Neighbourhood Micro Grants
 - Amateur Youth Sport Tourism Grant (AYSTG)
 - St. Catharines Outreach & Engagement (SCORE)
 - Council Community and Priority Fund
 - Tourism St. Catharines
 - City Council – Direct Funding
- 1.4 Each year, City Council will approve a budget to be allocated to the reduction of fees.
- 1.5 Insurance fees (and any applicable HST), damage deposits, post-event damage fees and/or park reinstatement fees (and any applicable HST), and events hosted at the Meridian Centre, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, St. Catharines Library and Canada Games Park/Walker Sports & Abilities Centre are all ineligible under this

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policy.

1.6 The Special Events Fee Reduction Task Force will consider applications from for-profit individuals/organizations after all not-for-profit/charitable organizations have been considered, pending available budget. These applications will only be considered if they meet the following conditions.

i) A minimum per centage of net profits must be donated to a recognized registered charity,

Per Centage of Profits Donated	Fee Reduction Eligibility
100%	50%
75%	30%
50%	25%

ii) A confirmation letter of support from the charity and financial statements from the event must be provided post event to have the funds released. Funds must not be used for event management fees or staffing costs.

iii) Fee reduction refunds are conditional based on the organizers meeting the above requirements and will not be processed pre-event.

1.7 A copy of the City permit for the special event which is being applied for must accompany the application. This City issued permit will identify all of the City fees which are requesting to be reduced. Any City services, programs or items added to the permit after approval of the fees to be reduced are deemed ineligible expenses. If the permit fees decrease after approval, then the percentage of fees which was approved will be pro-rated accordingly.

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- 1.8 Audited financial statements, articles of incorporation, Board of Director minutes and proof of not-for-profit or charitable status are not required with the application, however, the City retains the right to request this information if deemed necessary.
- 1.9 For special events whereby a portion or all of the proceeds are being donated to charity, a confirmation letter from that charity must accompany the application.

2.0 Reduction of Fees Procedure:

- 2.1 Applications will be reviewed and prioritized by the Special Event Fee Reduction Task Force (Task Force).
- 2.2 If the Task Force approves fees to be reduced before the date of the special event, then the City permit will be amended accordingly, and only the balance owing would be due. However, if the approval comes post-event, then the organizer would be responsible to pay 100% of the fees upfront and would be refunded accordingly.
- 2.3 The Special Events Fee Reduction Task Force will meet on an as needed basis. No defined intake periods or application deadlines apply.

3.0 Restrictions:

The Special Events Fee Reduction Task Force retains the right to deny applications from events/festivals which promote and/or include activities which are deemed or perceived:

- As being high risk
- As being potentially damaging to the reputation of the City
- As being in contradiction of municipal by-laws
- As not having demonstrated an ability to adhere to existing permit terms and conditions
- As having submitted falsified application information