

Committee of the Whole Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 04, 2019

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: CORPORATE PROMOTIONAL ITEMS POLICY 02.C.03

FROM:

Tim Simmonds, Interim City Manager

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval on a new policy for the acquisition, management and distribution of corporate promotional merchandise as set out in Corporate Promotional Items Policy (02.C.03).

Report Highlights

- Corporate promotional items play a role in raising awareness of a city's brand, enhances public relations efforts and fosters community pride at all levels, from dignitary presentations to sports and cultural exchanges.
- Adoption of a corporate promotional items policy supports a culture of excellence in governance.

Recommendations

1. That Corporate Promotional Items Policy 02.C.03 (Attachment 1) be approved.

Background

Corporate promotional merchandise is an important element in a city's marketing mix. In addition to raising awareness of a city's brand, corporate promotional merchandise contribute to economic development, enhances public relations efforts, foster a spirit of community and enhances pride among citizens, visitors and business audiences.

Corporate promotional merchandise may include general merchandise (e.g. apparel, stationery, toys, pins, etc.), souvenirs or custom, one-of-a-kind items. They may be branded with logos, wordmarks and other symbols; or generic in nature. These items are used by Council and staff as dignitary gifts, tokens given at business and professional interactions, public relations and event giveaways. External organizations also request items for sports and cultural exchanges.

The acquisition of this merchandise is handled primarily by the Economic and Cultural Development Department. The value of merchandise on hand ranges from items of nominal value to a couple of hundreds of dollars; and are funded by the department's operating budget.

Although the City has an informal procedure in place, adopting a corporate policy and procedure would provide improved accountability, fairness and transparency in the acquisition, distribution and management of corporate promotional items.

Previous Reports/Authority

Not applicable

Analysis and Options

Economic and Cultural Development undertook a jurisdictional scan among GTA municipalities: Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Markham, Richmond Hill and Newmarket. Overall, staff found a varied approach to management of corporate promotional items. With very few exceptions, many municipalities lacked formalized policies and procedures with respect to corporate promotional items.

Strengthening understanding of corporate promotional items distribution practices

The Economic and Cultural Development Department has been the primary point of contact for promotional items related to the City of Vaughan. Historically, the role has fallen to ECD due to its work with incoming and outgoing delegations, corporate marketing and promotion. Working with Procurement Services and the Interim City Manager's Office, the Department sources an assortment of corporate promotional items for City use. From time to time, internal departments have purchased items from this inventory for distribution at professional events, staff retirements, etc. As well, external organizations such as school, cultural, sports and other not-for-profit organizations have approached the Department for items to exchange.

The Corporate Promotional Items Policy aligns with the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan priority of Good Governance

Although staff have had an informal procedure for the acquisition, stock keeping, distribution and decommissioning of items, it was felt that a more formalized policy and procedure would be beneficial to the entire organization providing greater clarity and transparency in availability of items, distribution criteria, inventory controls and presentation protocols. With approval of the Policy, staff will finalize a Corporate Procedures document designed to manage and operationalize the Policy.

Next Steps:

Upon approval of the Policy, staff will post the Policy, related Corporate Procedures, and the requisition forms to the VOL and City's website.

Financial Impact

There are no associated financial impacts with the adoption of this report.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Not applicable

Conclusion

The development and adoption of the attached Policy provides guidance on the value of gifts from dignitary levels, to business and community presentations. Furthermore, it articulates a level of service that reflects mindfulness and respect for taxpayer dollars.

For more information, please contact: Dennis Cutajar, Director of Economic and Cultural Development at ext. 8274.

Attachment

1. Corporate Promotional Items Policy 02C.03

Prepared by

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