

Waikato Regional Council Public Transport Advertising Policy

Adopted by Waikato Regional Council/Regional Transport Committee [13/02/2025]

1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out our principles and criteria governing the advertisements permitted to appear on Waikato Regional Council Public Transport (WRC PT) controlled assets, infrastructure and facilities. This policy covers all advertising placement on WRC PT controlled assets, whether paid for or displayed at no cost under Waikato Regional Council community and social wellbeing initiatives.

2. Policy Objectives

We recognise that advertising is an influential method for companies and organisations to communicate with members of the public. In delivering on WRC PT and Waikato Regional Council values, the Advertising Policy ensures advertising on the WRC PT network is appropriate and ethically responsible.

3. Background

The WRC PT brand provides overarching direction for the behaviours of WRC PT, including the nature, products and/or services of the companies and organisations that we partner with to advertise on the WRC PT network.

The WRC PT Advertising Policy will be applied by our media partner to all advertising on the WRC PT network. Both the partner and WRC PT Operations team will carry out audits to ensure the policy is being appropriately applied.

4. Criteria

WRC PT is committed to ensuring that advertising on WRC PT controlled assets is consistent with WRC PT and Waikato Regional Council brand values, does not detract from public transport as a positive transport choice, and adheres to all Codes of Practice by the Advertising Standards Authority and all applicable New Zealand laws and regulations.

In considering alignment with WRC PT and Waikato Regional Council brand values, this policy identifies products and services which WRC PT will exclude, or have the power to exclude from advertising on WRC PT controlled assets. These are outlined in 4.1 Exclusion Policy below.

WRC Public Transport advertising exclusions

Categories of advertising considered for exclusion

4.1 Exclusion Policy

Advertising Standards Authority Codes of Practice

Any advertising is excluded if it breaches the Codes of Practice set by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and/or any applicable New Zealand laws and regulations, including that which is considered not to demonstrate a due sense to social responsibility (Principle 1 ASA).

Bylaws and legality

All advertising that is reasonably likely not to comply with any law, bylaw or regulation or may incite someone to break the law, is excluded.

Conflict of interest

All advertising which relates to products, services or activities that are in conflict with WRC PT branding, safety and community objectives, is excluded.

Alcohol

All advertising of alcoholic beverages that is not in keeping with Principle 3 of the ASA Code for Advertising and Promotion of Alcohol shall be excluded. Event-based advertising is not covered under this exclusion.

Event-based advertising

Event-based advertising may be permitted at the discretion of the WRC PT media partner and/or WRC PT Operations team where:

- an alcohol brand may be a sponsor or co-sponsor of the event
- the event involves the safe and responsible consumption of alcohol in a controlled environment
- a sporting or community event may involve gambling under the Racing Act 2020
- the event or commemoration is sponsored or endorsed by the New Zealand Government, New Zealand Defence Force, Department of Internal Affairs, or features contemporary or historical images featuring firearms use by the legitimate Armed Forces of New Zealand and its defence allies and partners.

Faith-based advertising

All advertising by faith-based organisations, groups and individuals for promotion or membership of their faith shall be excluded. This does not include advertising for faith-based charitable causes.

Faith-based charitable causes

Advertising may be permitted, at media partner and/or WRC PT Operations team discretion, to advertise charitable causes, promotions or activities and events where the intent is to fulfil a charitable purpose other than the promotion of faith.

Gambling

All advertising of gambling, as covered under the Gambling Act 2003 including lotteries, shall be excluded. Event-based advertising is not covered under this exclusion.

Indecency, obscenity and provocative messaging

Advertising is excluded if it refers to indecency or obscenity or uses obscene or distasteful language; is likely to cause widespread or serious offence to members of the public on account of the nature of the product or service being advertised, the wording or design of the advertisement or by way of inference; depicts men, women or children in a sexual manner or displays nude or semi-nude figures in an overtly sexual context; relates to the sex industry, including the provision of related products and services; depicts direct or immediate violence to anyone shown in the advertisement. i.e. inclusion of assault rifle gun images in advertising creatives; or condones or provokes anti-social behaviour.

Occasional food and beverages (HFSS)

All products which are categorised High Fat, Salt & Sugar (HFSS) by the New Zealand Government under the National Nutritional Guidelines are excluded from public transport modes and assets where children are likely to be a significant proportion of the expected average audience.

Products considered harmful to the environment

Products and/or their packaging that are considered by Waikato Regional Council to significantly harm the environment and conservation efforts, shall be excluded.

Political advertising

All advertising by political parties, groups and individuals for political campaigning and electioneering, or containing images or messages which relate to matters of public controversy and sensitivity, shall be excluded.

Smoking and vaping

All advertising shall be excluded if it promotes tobacco or products simulating smoking including electronic cigarette and vaping brands.

Weaponry

All advertising for the sale and/or supply of firearms, projectiles, bladed instruments, and military-style equipment and/or clothing associated with these products, shall be excluded.

The placement of weaponry in entertainment advertising

All advertising of entertainment products shall be excluded if they depict the use or display of firearms. New Zealand Government, including New Zealand Defence Force and Department of Internal Affairs, sponsored or endorsed events or commemorations-based advertising which feature contemporary or historical images featuring firearms is not covered under this exclusion.

The placement of weaponry in advertising by New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police

Any advertising by New Zealand Defence Force or New Zealand Police featuring depictions of firearms may be permitted where that depiction is pursuant to their statutory and constitutional roles, and/or for the purposes of recruitment to those services. Any advertising under this category must be permitted at the discretion of the WRC PT Operations team.

4.2 Placement of advertising

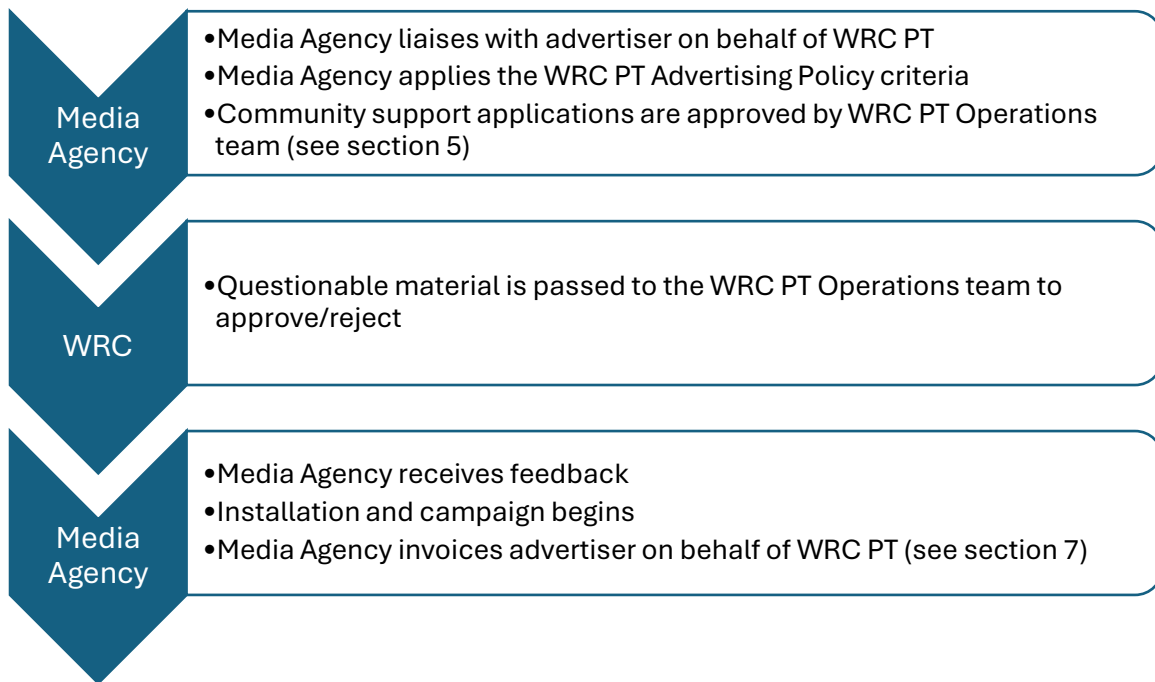
WRC PT advertising can currently be displayed on primary media of static displays on bus back. The WRC PT Advertising Policy will be applied to the media in line with Advertising Standards Authority Codes of Practice and the discretionary provisions in this policy.

All advertisements placed on WRC PT controlled assets must conform with this policy and the associated WRC PT Brand Guidelines. For exceptions, the media partner needs approval from the WRC PT Operations team.

All advertising must include the bus driver courtesy sign. This sign can be built into the advertising template for each vehicle type and its design will be provided to advertisers by the WRC PT Operations team. Alternatively a sticker of the sign can be placed onto the bus back. The stickers will be provided by the WRC PT Operations team.

4.3 Policy Process

The following diagram details the key points for agreeing advertising content.



When questionable material is passed to Waikato Regional Council a process involving four points of escalation will be employed to prevent any objectionable material appearing on WRC PT controlled assets. These four points are:

1. WRC PT Operations team to consider and check against policy.
2. Escalation to Team Manager, Public Transport Operations.
3. Advice from legal team.
4. Recommendation to RTC Director for approval.

4.4 Breach of Policy

If a complaint is received that the WRC PT Advertising Policy has been breached, an investigation will be undertaken by the WRC PT Operations team and decision will be made by RTC Director.

If it is found that the WRC PT Advertising Policy has been breached, the PT Operations team will collaborate with the relevant parties to ensure the advertising is removed with urgency and a review undertaken of the advertising sales process that permitted the advertisement.

5. Community support

WRC PT can support not-for-profit local projects, events or community organisations by providing free media placement across our public transport network. WRC PT can offer media placements on bus back of 10% of bus fleet pre-allocated for WRC advertising across our region, on a limited, first-come first-served basis.

Use of this space will be approved and administered by the WRC PT Operations team. There will be no charge for use of the media space. However, any costs associated with print, installation and removal of media will be charged to the advertiser.

All advertising placements for community support must conform with the policies outlined in Section 4 of this policy document.

6. Required standards

No party may use the WRC PT brand or its name, logos, trademarks or service marks, or refer to the WRC PT brand, name, logos, trademarks or service marks directly or indirectly in any media release, public announcement, advertising or public disclosure without the WRC PT Operation team's prior written approval.

8. Glossary

Media Agency	Preferred contracted supplier as tendered by Waikato Regional Council.
Significant	Something that is deemed to have a material effect as measured by industry standards.
WRC	Waikato Regional Council

Approval and amendment of policy

This policy was approved by Strategy and Policy Committee.

Next Review Date: TBC