

	<b>City of Maricopa COUNCIL POLICY</b>	Effective Date: 6/4/2026
		Prior Revision Date: n/a
<b>Special Community Designation Requests Policy</b>		

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent and transparent process for community members or organizations seeking official City of Maricopa recognition of a special community designation (e.g., Purple Heart City, Dementia Friendly Community, Autism Friendly Community, Tree City USA).

This policy ensures proposed designations:

- Align with the City’s values and strategic priorities
- Provide meaningful community benefit
- Do not create unfunded City obligations
- Demonstrate sustained community leadership

## Scope

This policy applies to any request for the City of Maricopa to adopt, recognize, or promote a special designation, certification, or recognition program initiated by an external individual, nonprofit, civic group, or coalition.

## Policy Statement

The City of Maricopa supports community-driven initiatives that enhance quality of life and civic pride.

Special designations must be community-initiated, community-led, and community-funded. The City may provide recognition when a designation:

1. Demonstrates clear community benefit
2. Meets recognized external standards
3. Aligns with City priorities and values
4. Does not create ongoing fiscal or operational obligations
5. Has sustainable local leadership

Final approval of any special designation rests with the City Council.

## Definitions

### Special Community Designation

A recognition or certification granted by an external organization acknowledging a community’s commitment to a defined cause, population, or standard.

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**Sponsoring Organization**

The community member, nonprofit, or coalition leading the designation effort.

**Community Standards for Eligibility**

To be considered for City recognition, a designation must demonstrate:

1. **Recognized Framework**  
Administered by a credible national, state, or widely recognized organization with established criteria.
2. **Meaningful Community Impact**  
Provides tangible benefit such as awareness, services, engagement, or quality-of-life improvements.
3. **Achievable and Sustainable Requirements**  
Standards are clearly defined and maintainable by the sponsoring organization.
4. **Community Support**  
Evidence of support from stakeholders such as affected populations, nonprofits, civic groups, businesses, or residents.
5. **Alignment with City Values**  
Consistent with Maricopa’s commitment to being a welcoming, safe, and thriving community.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Sponsoring Organization**

The sponsoring organization shall:

- Lead all designation activities and community engagement
- Meet and maintain program requirements
  
- Fund all fees, materials, signage, and related costs
- Provide ongoing leadership and status updates as requested

The City is not responsible for securing or providing funding.

**City Staff**

City staff may:

- Provide procedural guidance

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- Evaluate alignment with this policy
- Assess fiscal, operational, or branding impacts
- Coordinate Council consideration
- Promote the designation as deemed appropriate by staff

Staff are not responsible for implementing designation requirements.

### **City Council**

City Council may:

- Formally recognize or adopt a designation
- Authorize use of the City name or logo
- Decline requests

### **Request Process**

#### **Step 1 – Community Initiation**

The sponsoring organization submits a designation request including:

- Program description and administering organization
- Required standards and commitments
- Community benefit statement
- Evidence of community support
- Funding, implementation and sustainability plan

#### **Step 2 – Staff Review**

- City staff evaluate alignment with policy standards, City impacts, and potential overlap with existing initiatives. Additional information may be requested.

#### **Step 3 – Council Consideration**

- If standards are met, staff may present the request to City Council for formal recognition. Council approval is required for official City designation.

### **Funding**

All costs associated with obtaining and maintaining a designation are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization, including fees, materials, signage, outreach, and renewals. Any City financial support must follow standard budget processes.

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## **Branding and Representation**

Use of the City of Maricopa name, logo, or identity in connection with a designation requires:

- Council approval of the designation
- Compliance with City branding standards
- Staff approval prior to public use

Unauthorized representation of City endorsement is prohibited.

## **City Recognition and Promotion**

Upon Council approval, the City may acknowledge the designation to recognize community leadership and increase public awareness. Recognition may include:

### **City Website**

Listing on the City website with designation name, description, sponsoring organization, and recognition date.

### **City Hall Recognition**

Standardized signage or display at or within City Hall, as determined by the City.

### **City Communications**

Acknowledgment through official channels such as press releases, social media, newsletters, or proclamations.

Recognition is contingent upon the designation remaining active and compliant with program standards. The City may remove references if a designation lapses or standards are no longer met.

## **Ongoing Accountability**

The sponsoring organization shall notify the City of designation status changes or lapse. The City may withdraw recognition if standards are no longer maintained.

## **Non-Endorsement**

City recognition of a designation does not constitute endorsement of all positions or activities of the administering organization or sponsoring group.