

<b>To:</b>	Warden Milne and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	June 27, 2024
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	EDTC-CW-04-24
<b>Title:</b>	Grey Roots Museum & Archives Theatre Sponsorship
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Doug Cleverley, Events Coordinator Jill Paterson, Manager of Museum & Archives
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Savanna Myers, Director, EDTC
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	All

## Recommendation

1. That report EDTC-CW-04-24 regarding the Grey Roots Museum & Archives Theatre Sponsorship be received; and
2. That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to sign a sponsorship agreement with Wheildon Investments Inc. subject to the approval of the Deputy CAO and Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; and
3. That the Theatre be named the Thomas Wheildon Theatre for the agreement period of 2024 to 2034.

## Executive Summary

This report seeks Council's support to enter into a sponsorship agreement with Wheildon Investments Inc. in the amount of \$50,000. With the theatre at Grey Roots seeing increased demand over the past 2 years, there is opportunity for improvements to be made to the theatre space and the money received through the sponsorship will assist with future phases of upgrades to the theatre at Grey Roots.

## Background and Discussion

The theatre at Grey Roots Museum & Archives has seen increased demand since 2022 for both programming and rentals. As utilization has increased, certain deficiencies and opportunities have become apparent. One of the most urgent concerns is that parts for the current, original equipment, are no longer available posing a risk to operations.

Thinking of present need and future opportunity, staff gathered technical advice from a consultant, Chevalier Thurling Inc. and identified several options to modernize the theatre and enhance the viewing experience and live stream capabilities. As per the 2024 budget, staff plan to utilize theatre reserve funds to complete necessary upgrades.

Grey Roots maintains a standing call for sponsorship on the website, along with calls for sponsorship through annual publications and social media. Earlier this year, staff were approached by Mr. Thomas Wheildon, owner and Chief Executive Officer of Wheildon Investments Inc., offering a sponsorship to support the broader theatre improvement plan. A sponsorship agreement of \$50,000 over five years, with theatre naming rights was proposed.

## Theatre Improvement Plan

The approved 2024 capital budget includes \$25,000 for theatre upgrades to deal with the most critical improvements, including the obsolete projector (phases one to three below). To identify and quantify fulsome technical needs and opportunities, staff contracted Chevalier Thurling Inc. to prepare a report, including appropriate phasing.

The below chart outlines the potential upgrades, using a phased approach to minimize disruptions and manage resources appropriately:

Phase	Description	Proposed timing
1	New projector + Blu-ray player	Spring 2024
2	Control Booth Improvements: Fan Noise Mitigation	Spring 2024
3	Lighting fixtures (4) + control	Summer 2024
4	Control Booth Improvements - Raising the Desk and Window Replacement	Winter 2024-2025
5	Audio Equipment + Wireless Communications	Winter-Spring 2025
6	Video and Livestreaming	Summer 2025
7	Lighting Equipment: side wall lighting bars and fixtures	Winter-Spring 2026

Phases 1 to 3 are included in the 2024 capital plan as per the budget. The remaining phases can be completed with an additional \$50,000 and will be included in the 2025 and 2026 capital budgets.

Once complete, the theatre upgrades will result in improved stage lighting, wider applications for audio and lighting control, crisper and brighter projections, and interactive video conferencing and event capability, among other improvements.

As per the EDTC Master Plan, staff have focused on programming and better use of existing assets, which is seeing increased demand on the theatre. These upgrades will better enable programs, events and exhibit extensions at Grey Roots, in addition to public and corporate events that require such capabilities. Staff expect the upgrades will also lead to increased use and revenue.

## Sponsorship

Grey Roots maintains a standing call for sponsorship on the website, along with calls for sponsorship through annual publications and social media.

As a long-time supporter of Grey Roots, Mr. Thomas Wheildon informed staff of his interest in making the theatre the next project for his investment in Grey Roots. With the consultant's report completed, staff met with Mr. Wheildon to review the possibilities. A \$50,000 sponsorship over five years, with 10-year naming rights was proposed.

For the duration of the proposed agreement, the sponsorship of the Theatre will be recognized through a new lettered sign, stating *Thomas Wheildon Theatre*, to replace the Theatre sign at the north end of the foyer. The new name will be added to Grey Roots' website and all promotional materials where the theatre is referenced. Staff recommend the name be maintained for a period of 10 years, beginning in 2024.

In accordance with the Corporate Asset Naming Policy, County Council approval is required in the naming/renaming of Grey County assets, including, buildings and rooms or features therein. The naming of a County asset may be considered when providing recognition of donations, sponsorships and joint ventures.

Pending Council approval, a sponsorship agreement will be completed between Mr. Wheildon and Grey County to formalize the sponsorship arrangements. This proposal aligns to the newly adopted Corporate Sponsorship Policy.

## Financial and Resource Implications

Wheildon Investments Inc. agrees to make a cash contribution to Grey Roots Museum & Archives in the amount of \$50,000. The contributions will be made according to the following schedule. Wheildon Investments Inc. may add to or accelerate the completion of this pledge at their discretion:

Installments	Payment Amount	Due Date
Initial Contribution	\$10,000	Upon signing of this Sponsorship Agreement (2024)
Four (4) subsequent contributions	\$10,000	Annually on anniversary of the Initial Contribution (2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	

Any expenses incurred before the County receives all instalments from Wheildon Investments Inc. will be covered by Grey Roots Museum & Archives capital reserves, which will be replenished as instalments are received.

## Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: Grey Roots, Clerks, IT, Communications
  - ☒ AODA Compliance: signage will comply with AODA requirements
  - ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets
- ☒ External: Wheildon Investments Inc.; Chevalier Thurling Inc.

## Appendices and Attachments

[Corporate Asset Naming Policy](#)

## Corporate Sponsorship Policy

Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Master Plan strategic priority alignment:

1.2 Establish relationships with the business and arts communities to enable public-private partnerships that support enhanced delivery of service.

2.3 Enhance community cultural programming and use of the site by community partners.

5.1 Prioritize programming over new construction to increase visitation and revenue, fully utilizing the assets already at Grey Roots.

5.3 Perform an annual operations review to understand trends, refine the business model, explore new revenue generation tools and plan for sustainable growth

5.4 Explore methods of improved access and inclusion across product and service offerings.