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## City Eyes Restrictions On Advertising—Ban on smoking, alcohol ads could affect city-sponsored festivals

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By Kim McConnell

City leaders may be implementing additional steps to control the use of tobacco products on city property, including imposing a restriction on advertising that also could affect city-sponsored festivals.

The proposal surfaced when the City Council was asked to consider a revision to a council policy that sets parameters on non-public commercial advertising on city-owned real or personal properties. That council policy now permits commercial advertising, setting limits only on illegal activities; issues that violate federal, state or local laws; and ads that are false, misleading or deceptive. Ads that contain obscenity also are banned.

Members of the Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma Coalition have suggested the city and council take those restrictions a step further, banning the advertisement of alcohol, tobacco and vapor products in connection with city-sponsored events.

The proposal will have an effect beyond the city, with Community Services Director Richard Rogalski explaining that it would affect some major events that have city sponsorship, including the Arts For All Festival in May and the International Festival in September.

However, the payoff could be bringing in grant funds that could help the city expand recreational opportunities for citizens, because the ad ban is tied into the city's ranking in the Oklahoma Certified Healthy Community program. That program is a public health initiative created to designate and reward communities that promote wellness, encourage adoption of healthy behaviors and establish safe and supportive environments for such behaviors.



Harvi Fisher, left, and her daughter Dalena take advantage of the afternoon sunshine and warm temperatures to get exercise at Elmer Thomas Park. City of Lawton officials are working to enhance recreational opportunities in the park and other locations via its inclusion in the Oklahoma Certified Healthy Communities program, which give cities financial incentives to expand healthy opportunities for residents.