



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: **Consumption of Liquor in Parks and Public Facilities**

File #: 0110.00

Doc #: 187381

From: Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: April 13, 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council bring forward an amendment bylaw to the Parks and Public Facilities Regulations Bylaw, 2018, No. 3048 as follows:
 - a. Amend s. 11 vii. – consume or have in their possession any Liquor or Controlled Substance in a Park or Public Facility unless the Liquor or Controlled Substance is consumed or possessed pursuant to and in compliance with a license issued under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act S.B.C 2015, c. 19 or the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, S.C. 1996, c. 19, except under Part 3 – General Regulations, Consumption of Liquor at Selected Parks and Public Facilities;
 - b. Add subsection Consumption of Liquor at Selected Parks and Public Facilities under Part 3 – General Regulations:
 21. Consumption of liquor is permitted every Thursday to Saturday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm, and every Sunday from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm from June 1st to October 31st each year at the following locations:
 - McBurney Plaza;
 - Designated area in Douglas Park; and
 - Picnic shelters at City Park.
2. THAT, upon adoption of the amendment bylaw, City Council allocate \$1,500.00 from the Enterprise Fund to prepare signage to notify the public of the liquor consumption area and permitted consumption hours.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to amend the Parks and Public Facilities Regulations Bylaw, 2018, No. 3048 to permit consumption of liquor in selected parks and public facilities.

POLICY:

Parks and Public Facilities Regulations Bylaw, 2018, No. 3048.

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

The City approved a pilot program in 2021 and 2022 to permit liquor consumption in selected parks and public facilities. The pilot program ran from July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021, every Friday and Saturday only, from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The selected sites included:

- McBurney Plaza;
- Designated area in Douglas Park; and
- Picnic shelters at City Park.

The City provided additional resources for Bylaw Enforcement, security guards, collection of garbage, recycling, organic waste, litter pickup, portable toilets, and signage to support the pilot program. Staff observed that the public did not generally use the portable toilets; however, staff had to call for maintenance on a regular basis due to vandalism or the toilets being pushed over on its side.

Based on the feedback from the on-line survey conducted during the pilot program, the pilot program was generally successful and supported by the public as it allowed people to host family events such as wedding anniversaries and children's birthdays at a safe outdoor gathering place. Some respondents want expanded hours and days to fit all schedules (add Thursday and Sunday or add any night up to 8pm). There were still concerns raised by some respondents that stated liquor consumption should not take place in parks and public spaces due to drunkenness, dangerous behaviour, crude language, smoking marijuana, and vaping. The majority of the complaints received were not related to unruly behaviour due to drinking, but for smoking, off-leash dogs, loitering, drug dealing, overnight camping, and after-dark loud partying.

The 2022 pilot program was expanded to run every Friday and Saturday from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm, and every Sunday from 1:00pm to 6:00pm for the period of July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022.

Another on-line survey was conducted during the 2022 pilot program to receive public input. There were only four (4) respondents and all of them strongly supported

allowing the consumption of liquor in designated parks and public spaces. In regard to expanding permitted liquor consumption to other parks/public spaces, three respondents strongly supported it and one respondent somewhat supported it.

The City's Bylaw Enforcement Officers noted that there is no need to provide security if consumption of liquor at the parks and public facilities is to be continued on a temporary or permanent basis. Furthermore, Bylaw Enforcement Officers patrol the downtown core in the evenings during the summer and they can patrol other parks and public facilities where consumption of liquor is permitted.

The City's Parks Operations staff noted that there were no additional costs associated with garbage and recycling collection during the pilot program in 2021 and 2022.

Based on the experience and public feedback from the 2021 and 2022 consumption of liquor pilot program at selected parks and public facilities, it is recommended that consumption of liquor be permitted every Thursday to Saturday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm, and every Sunday from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm from June 1st to October 31st each year at the following locations:

- McBurney Plaza;
- Selected area in Douglas Park; and
- Picnic shelters at City Park.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

A budget of \$1,500.00 is required for signage to notify the public of the liquor consumption areas and permitted consumption hours. It is recommended that \$1,500.00 be allocated from the Enterprise Fund for this purpose.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That Council continues the permit liquor consumption pilot program at selected parks and public facilities.
2. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at all parks and public facilities at any time.
3. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at all parks and public facilities for certain period of the year.
4. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at all parks and public facilities with specific time restrictions.
5. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at selected parks and public facilities at any time.
6. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at selected parks and public facilities for certain period of the year.

7. That Council permits the consumption of liquor at selected parks and public facilities with specific time restrictions.

Respectfully Submitted,



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment:

1. Maps of Selected Parks and Facilities, Consumption of Liquor Pilot Program
(2022 for reference)