

New pilot recommended for Licensed Beverage Consumption at the Aurora's Concerts in the Park nights

A new pilot initiative allowing licensed beverages to be sold for the August 23 and August 30 Aurora's Concert in the Park will gather feedback from the public to help determine the possibility for future implementation.

Once the report is reviewed, Council will decide at the Committee level on June 20 whether the Licensed Beverage Consumption pilot initiative will be approved.

Summarizing the recommended pilot project, the report notes that Aurora's Concerts in the Park is a Festivals and Events Ontario Top 100 event. The event has been an annual summer tradition in July and August and is entering its 26th year.

A different band performs each week and community representatives emcee weekly on Wednesday nights from 7 to 9 p.m. The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair sets up a sample market of 3 to 4 food vendors and 3 to 4 artisans. The Armoury also offers patio service by reservation and take out service.

An average of 1,000 attendees have attended weekly, the report said, with hundreds more enjoying on site amenities such as the splash pad, playground or taking in a baseball game onsite.

To date, there has never been alcohol available during the concert series. The only other licensed Town of Aurora events include the Dance in the Park and Aurora's Ribfest, both using the Rotary Club of Aurora for selling of licensed beverages.

Based on previous Requests for Proposals, only the Rotary Club of Aurora has expressed interest and has been able to meet the requirements of the Town.

Staff investigated a variety of logistics in order to operate the pilot project safely. They considered compliance with the Alcohol Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) and Town of Aurora Municipal Alcohol Policy, development of a safety plan for ensuring alcohol doesn't enter or leave the Town Park, and the amenities and family-focused activities ongoing at Town Park during the concerts, which includes an active splash pad and recreational softball games.

Given the short timeframe at each pilot Concert, staff are not recommending setting up fencing but to enhance the security plan to ensure all users of the space feel comfortable.

The pilot for August 23 and August 30 entails licensed beverages to be sold between 6 and 8.15 p.m., an insured third-party service provider would need to be retained for the selling of licensed beverages in compliance with the AGCO and Town of Aurora requirements, and the security plan would include two paid duty York Regional Police officers and three Bylaw officers to be on site to ensure that alcohol is not coming in or leaving Town Park.

During the pilot feedback will be gathered from the public, community partners, and Town staff, along with parallel focused methods in the form of surveys and in-depth briefings.

In creating the plan for this pilot, the report noted that adding a licensed component to this event will increase the Town's responsibilities, risk and liability associated with the potential behaviors of attendees and may make some concert attendees and playground participants concerned.

The financial implication of operating costs to support the security plan for both concerts include paid duty police officers and dedicated bylaw staff (overtime) for a total of \$2,200.

If a licensed vendor is not secured by August 1, 2023, the pilot will not proceed and will be postponed until the summer concert

series in 2024.

Staff will advertise for potential providers on the Town Notice Board and social media platforms, attend alike events, and reach out to local service clubs to ensure they are aware of the opportunity.

By Elisa Nguyen