

City Council Report

REPORT NUMBER 112-2026-Community Services-Recreation & Culture

DATE

PREPARED

February 13, 2026

FILE

CITY COUNCIL
MEETING DATE

March 3, 2026

SUBJECT

Municipal Alcohol Proposed Updates

RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

WITH RESPECT to Report 112-2026-Community Services-Recreation & Culture, we recommend that Schedule A of the Municipal Alcohol Policy be amended to add the following venues to the list of designated Municipal Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces for Alcohol Use:

- o Waverley Park
- o Tbaytel Multiplex;

AND THAT the amended Municipal Alcohol Policy be approved and adopted into the Corporate Policy Manual.

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends that Waverly Park and the Tbaytel Multiplex be added to the list of designated Municipal Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces where the service of alcohol is allowed through the Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP).

The MAP guides decisions and provides direction on the use and management of alcohol in City-owned or leased facilities, open spaces, and at public events. It reduces the risk of legal liability to the City from alcohol-related problems that may arise from the consumption of alcohol in City facilities and spaces. Council approval is required to change the designation of a site under the policy.

These sites are recommended to be added to the list of designated sites to address exception requests and anticipated future demand.

DISCUSSION

The Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP) guides decisions and provides direction on the use and management of alcohol in City-owned or leased facilities, open spaces, and at public events. It reduces the risk of legal liability to the City from alcohol-related problems that may arise from the consumption of alcohol in City facilities and spaces.

Waverley Park:

Waverley Park is not currently included in the MAP's list of designated municipal facilities, parks and open spaces as an approved venue for alcohol sales. City Council granted a policy exception to allow alcohol to be served at Waverley Park during "Festival Bonjour" hosted in June 2025 by the Centre Francophone de Thunder Bay. The Centre Francophone de Thunder Bay has requested the ability to serve alcohol once again at their 2026 event.

Festival Bonjour demonstrated that Waverley Park can be a suitable venue for an event serving alcohol. Neither Parks & Open Spaces or Recreation & Culture have concerns about the appropriateness of alcohol sales in Waverley Park for Festival Bonjour or other suitable events and recommend that the venue be added to the list of sites where alcohol can be served.

All MAP requirements will apply and event hosts will be required to obtain a Special Occasion Permit from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

Tbaytel Multiplex:

The new Tbaytel Multiplex indoor turf facility is scheduled to open in the fall of 2026. Amending the Policy to allow for the option of service of alcohol in this facility is recommended as a potential mode of revenue generation and a service to the public that is anticipated to be requested for certain activities and events. Allowing for alcohol service during selected activities or events at the Tbaytel Multiplex would be consistent with the application of the MAP at the Fort William Gardens.

It is important to note that the MAP does not allow for alcohol sales at events or activities where participants are primarily children and youth. Times of service and events where service is permitted at the Tbaytel Multiplex will be required to follow this restriction. Therefore, alcohol sales will not be provided or allowed on a regular daily basis, i.e. during user group practices and youth sport games or tournaments. It has not yet been determined if alcohol sales will be provided on an ongoing basis by City of Thunder Bay Concessions or limited to relevant events through their organizers securing a Special Occasion Permit from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. This will be evaluated as actual facility bookings and requests from users and spectators are better understood.

CONSULTATION

Corporate Report 056-2026 Community Services – Recreation & Culture was presented to the Finance and Administration Standing Committee on February 10, 2026 to seek endorsement to provide a recommendation to City Council to amend the MAP to allow for the service of alcohol at Waverley Park and at the Tbaytel Multiplex. The recommendation was endorsed by the Finance and Administration Standing Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no financial implications to allowing alcohol sales during appropriate events held at Waverley Park. The City does not host events at Waverley Park that involve the sale of alcohol. Community organizations renting a park for an event approved for alcohol sales are responsible for all related costs and retain all the revenues from sales.

The sale of alcohol at the Tbaytel Multiplex is a potential source of revenue to the City if this service is provided by the City. Any financial implications will be included in annual operating budget submissions for Council's consideration as they are understood, based on actual operations and demand. There are no financial implications to allowing alcohol sales through event organizers under Special Occasion Permits.

BACKGROUND

The Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP) was first approved by City Council in 2000 and updated in 2021 (Report R37/2021 – Recreation & Culture). The MAP guides decisions and provides direction on the use and management of alcohol in City-owned or leased facilities, open spaces, and at public events. It reduces the risk of legal liability to the City from alcohol-related problems that may arise from the consumption of alcohol in City facilities and spaces.

At the May 5, 2025 City Council meeting, a policy exception was granted to allow alcohol to be served at Waverley Park during "Festival Bonjour" hosted in June 2025 by the Centre Francophone de Thunder Bay, as outlined in the Memorandum dated April 15, 2025.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Attachment A – Amended Municipal Alcohol Policy

REPORT PREPARED BY

Paul Burke, Sport & Community Development Supervisor – Community Services Department

REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

Kelly Robertson, Commissioner, Community Services

Date (02/22/2026)