

February 11, 2020



Dear Mayor Anne Eadie

Re: Municipal Alcohol Policy Options to Mitigate Alcohol Harms

Recent provincial regulatory changes regarding the sale, service, and consumption of alcohol will impact the health and safety of local communities. These changes include that:

- Special Occasion Permit (SOP) events will have extended hours for alcohol sales, will not be required to serve food, and areas of alcohol service will not have to be separated from the rest of the event;
- Municipalities now have the authority to designate public spaces, such as parks and beaches, for the consumption of alcohol through a local by-law.

Greater access to alcohol is known to increase alcohol consumption and its associated harms. It is anticipated these changes will create direct costs to municipalities, including: police, EMS, fire services, and property damage. These changes are also anticipated to increase municipal exposure to liability – particularly if drinking in public spaces is permitted.

Grey Bruce Health Unit and the Ontario Public Health Association recommend that municipalities adopt, at a minimum, the following provisions to their Municipal Alcohol Policy in order to mitigate the harms of the recent provincial regulatory changes:

- Specify the times permitted for alcohol service and retain previous permissible times.
- Maintain existing minimum pricing requirements.
- Require that food be made available (i.e. do not permit alcohol-only events).
- Require that designated alcohol service and consumption areas be physically separated from non-designated areas.

In the coming months, public health staff will engage directly with municipalities to support Municipal Alcohol Policy updates in accordance with the above recommendations. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Susan Shular, Interim Director of Operations & Program Development at S.Shular@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Working with you to create healthy and safe communities for all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitch Twolan".

Mitch Twolan
Chair, Board of Health

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Arra".

Dr. Ian Arra
Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Enclosed: Managing Alcohol at Events on Municipal Property, OPHA (2019)
Grey Bruce Municipal Alcohol Policy Template, GBHU (2020)

CC: Sharon Chambers, CAO
Donna MacDougall, Clerk

Working together for a healthier future for all..

101 17th Street East, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 0A5 www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca