

Implementation of the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program Extension

Date: November 1, 2023

To: City Council

From: Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Wards: All

SUMMARY

At its meeting on October 11, 2023 ([2023.MM11.22](#)), City Council approved an extension of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program until March 31, 2024 in the current 27 pilot parks and with the current safety restrictions.

In response to City Council direction and based on consultations with City Councillors who are part of the current pilot program, there are no changes to the pilot parks included in the program for the duration of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program extension.

Further, in response to City Council direction to review additional safety restrictions for winter, this report recommends that the consumption of alcohol be prohibited within two metres around artificial and natural ice rinks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. City Council prohibit alcohol consumption within two metres around artificial and natural ice rinks, as outlined in this report.
2. City Council amend Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608, Parks, as detailed in Attachment 1 to prohibit alcohol consumption within two metres around artificial and natural ice rinks, for the Alcohol in Parks pilot extension, subject to such stylistic or minor substantive changes as are deemed necessary or appropriate by the City Solicitor.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on October 11, 2023, City Council (1) approved an extension of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program; (2) amended Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608, Parks to allow the extension; (3) directed the Interim General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to consult with Councillors who are part of the current pilot program on their interest in opting out of the extended pilot; and (4) directed the Interim General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to City Council at its November 2023 meeting on amendments to Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608, Parks, to implement an updated pilot park list based on consultations conducted and additional safety restrictions for winter.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM11.22>

At its meeting on July 19, 2023, City Council (1) approved a time-limited Alcohol in Parks pilot program, from August 2, 2023 to October 9, 2023 in 27 parks; (2) amended Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608 Parks to allow the pilot program; (3) requested the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to prepare a "no alcohol" sign, to be deployed upon request of a local Councillor; and (4) directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to the Economic and Community Development Committee on the evaluation results of the pilot program in the first quarter of 2024.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EC5.1>

COMMENTS

Pilot Park Sites

In response to City Council direction ([2023.MM11.22](https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM11.22)), staff consulted City Councillors who are part of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program on their interest to opt out of the pilot extension. Based on these consultations, there are no changes to the pilot parks included in the program for the duration of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program extension.

Winter Season Considerations

In response to City Council direction staff considered any additional restrictions needed for the winter season based on safety and sensitive uses as well as consistency with existing pilot program restrictions. Based on this assessment, staff propose the following additional restriction:

- No alcohol consumption within two metres around artificial and natural ice rinks.

All park visitors enjoy activities in City parks during winter at their own discretion and risk. The City provides safety guidance for winter activities on its website and on signs posted in locations where winter activities commonly take place. Existing safety restrictions for winter activities will remain; for example, park visitors are prohibited from skating on open bodies of water or tobogganing in areas of parks, as identified by on-site signage.

Next Steps

If City Council approves the update the pilot program outlined in this report staff will update the City's website and park signage. As directed by City Council, staff will be reporting back with the results of the summer pilot program evaluation in Q1 2024.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Proposed Amendment to City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608,
Parks

Attached separately.