

Municipal Significant Event Policy

Policy type: Corporate Policy (Approved by Council)

Date approved: December 5, 2023

Department: Legislative Services

This policy is intended to clarify and streamline the process for organizers of public events who wish to have the Municipality of West Grey designate their event as a “municipally significant event” so that they may apply to acquire a Special Occasion Permit (SOP) under the Liquor License Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.L.19, as amended, for the sale and service of alcohol at their public event.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines, criteria, and conditions for events to be designated as events of municipal significance. A SOP is required any time alcohol is offered for sale, served, or consumed anywhere other than in a licensed establishment or a private place. SOPs are issued for occasional special events and not for an ongoing business. The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (“AGCO”) is the authority that issues SOPs.

Applicability

This policy shall apply to public event organizers seeking designation of the public event as a “municipally significant event” for the purpose of applying to acquire a Special Occasion Permit under the Liquor License Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.L.19, as amended.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy,

Business day – shall mean any of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, excluding any of those days that fall on a statutory holiday.

Municipality – shall mean the Corporation of the Municipality of West Grey.

Municipally significant event – shall mean a one-time, annual, or infrequently occurring event that is open to the public, has a predetermined opening and closing date and time, and which:

- Advertises to the general public;
- Enhances or promotes a local community asset (e.g. heritage feature, local park, local community group); and
- Has direct local community significance and promotes West Grey’s social, cultural, and economic development attributes while adhering to municipal bylaws and ensuring public safety at all times.

Delegated Authority

The clerk, or their written designate, is delegated authority to issue a letter designating a public event as a municipally significant event, on behalf of the municipality.

Guidelines and Information

Applicants who wish to request the municipality designate their event to be of municipal significance must submit the request in writing to the clerk including the following information:

- Organization name;
- Contact person;
- Contact information;
- Objectives of the organization;
- Reason(s) the organization believe their event should be deemed “municipally significant”;
- Date of the event;
- Anticipated attendance; and
- The request must be submitted with the required application fee as per the municipality’s fees and charges bylaw.

Applicants must submit their request for designation as a municipally significant event on the prescribed application form no less than 30 days before requiring a response from the clerk, or their written designate. Applicants are encouraged to submit their request to the municipality prior to applying for a Special Occasion Permit with the AGCO where possible.

Incomplete applications shall be returned to the organizer for completion. Once completed and returned to the clerk, or their written designate, the 30 day review period shall re-commence upon receipt of the fully completed application.

Circulation

The clerk, or their written designate, shall circulate all applications for designation as a municipally significant event to the following interested parties for comment:

- West Grey Community Services division
- West Grey Fire Services;
- West Grey Police Services;
- West Grey Chief Building Official.

The interested parties noted above shall be given five business days to provide any concerns regarding the application for designation as a municipally significant event, after which the clerk, or their written designate, will proceed to evaluate the request for designation as a municipally significant event based upon any concerns received within the given time frame.

Criteria

In terms of reviewing the event to determine if the event is of “municipal significance”, the municipality will consider the following:

Does the event benefit the community?

Does the event have a significant community profile?

Is it a community celebration of special importance that will benefit the community?

Is the event a public gathering to participate in athletic, social, religious, cultural, recreation, educational programs, or one with other community objectives?

The municipality is not obligated to designate any event as municipally significant. The decision of the clerk, or their written designate, to designate, or not, a public event as a municipally significant event shall be final.

Conditions

Applicants must obtain a minimum of FIVE MILLION (\$5,000,000) DOLLARS liability insurance, naming the municipality as an additional insured, at least 10 business days prior to the event. The permit holder shall be required to indemnify and save the Municipality of West Grey harmless from all claims arising from the permit or event. Each event would be considered on its own merit, noting that the actual insurance limits required may be increased at the discretion of the municipality.

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While the municipality may designate an event, the Registrar for the AGCO ultimately has the final decision of whether or not to issue a SOP for a public event. In other words, even with a designation by the municipality, the Registrar may decide not to issue a Public Event SOP.

Tradeshows and other for-profit commercial events will not be designated a municipally significant event and these proponents would be encouraged to partner with a non-profit charitable organization or third party to obtain a Public Event SOP.

The municipal alcohol policy will also apply.

Events designated as municipally significant must continue to assume all responsibility for compliance with regulations regarding SOPs and with other applicable legislation, including but not limited to the rules with respect to the Fire and Building Codes, Noise Bylaws, Street Closures, etc.