



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Epidemiology, Wellness, and Communicable Disease Control**  
**Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members Board of Health
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	November 12, 2019
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Municipal Actions to Reduce Harms Associated with Alcohol Use (BOH19032) (City Wide) <b>(Outstanding Business List Item)</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Madi McNitt (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7177
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Michelle Baird Director, Epidemiology, Wellness and Communicable Disease Control Division Public Health Services
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- (a) That the Board of Health approve the initiation of a review of the Municipal Alcohol Policy, including the formation of a Workgroup made up of relevant municipal departments;
- (b) That Public Health Services report back to the Board of Health with recommended updates to the Municipal Alcohol Policy by Q3 2020; and,
- (c) That item 2019-N, "Correspondence from Hastings Prince Edward Public Health respecting Concerns with Announces Expansion of the Sale of Alcohol Beverages in Ontario" be removed from the Outstanding Business List.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Alcohol is one of the leading causes of disease and disability in Canada.<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> At the Board of Health Meeting on June 17, 2019, correspondence was received from Prince Edward Hastings Public Health identifying concerns with the expansion and sale of

---

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

alcohol within Ontario. Staff were directed to report back to the Board of Health by December 2019, on municipal actions to reduce harms from alcohol use.

One strategy with respect to promoting safer use and sale of alcohol is a Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP). The City of Hamilton Public Health Services (PHS) is recommending that the Medical Officer of Health work with relevant municipal departments to form a Workgroup to review and update (as required) the City of Hamilton's MAP. The MAP reduces alcohol-related risks and promotes the health and safety of people at events on City owned and operated property by outlining the requirements for a responsible, managed approach to alcohol service.

The last update of this policy occurred in January 2011 and it is appropriate after nearly a decade to review the policy to ensure it reflects:

- Current evidence on reducing alcohol-related harms;
- Legislative changes since 2011 and current proposed changes; and,
- Alcohol sector growth and changes to alcohol retail landscape.

The Workgroup would complete a comprehensive review of the MAP, including consultations with relevant stakeholders. Based on these findings, as well as a review of MAPs in other jurisdictions, the Workgroup will report back to the Board of Health by Q3 2020 with recommended updates to the MAP.

It is anticipated that updates may include enhancements to the existing MAP to ensure increasing convenience does not lead to increased social and healthcare harms/costs. Some measures that may be considered include:

- Regulation of retail density, location, hours of sale, and access restrictions;
- Suitability of tailgating at professional, semi-professional, and post-secondary sporting events; and,
- Consumption of alcohol in public areas, such as parks.

### **Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable**

### **FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: Not Applicable.

Staffing: The review will be completed by staff within existing complement using representatives from city departments as indicated.

Legal: Not Applicable.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

See Appendix “A” to BOH19032.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

This report recommends the review of the City of Hamilton Municipal Alcohol Policy, with any recommendations that result from the review being brought forward to the Board of Health in Q3 2020.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The review of the MAP will include consultation with relevant stakeholders to inform the recommendations that will be brought forward to Council in Q3 2020. Key considerations from municipal departments will provide context to the full scope of this issue, including the social and economic significance of alcohol in our society.

Following approval from the Board of Health to review and update the City of Hamilton’s MAP, consultation will be done with stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- City of Hamilton Municipal Departments, including but not limited to: City Manager’s Office, Finance and Corporate Services, Planning and Economic Development, and Healthy and Safe Communities;
- Relevant Public Health Units; and,
- Relevant external stakeholders including community partners and users of City of Hamilton facilities.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

### **Introduction**

Alcohol is one of the leading causes of disease and disability in Canada.<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> It is widely consumed and enjoyed in moderation by many Canadians. However, when consumed in excess quantities it can facilitate high risk behaviours, contribute to socially deviant acts and lead to injuries, violence and crime.<sup>1,2</sup> The most common impacts of excessive alcohol consumption are increased risks of individual injury, motor vehicle crashes, and death.<sup>1,2</sup>

There is evidence showing that alcohol-related harms can be modified substantially by focusing on healthy public policy that discourages excessive alcohol consumption.<sup>5</sup> A

MAP is an important tool for municipalities to ensure that the potential harms from alcohol consumption on municipal properties are prevented or reduced. See Appendix “B” to Report BOH19032 for more information about the purpose of a MAP.

### **Local Context**

In the City of Hamilton, 43% of residents age 19 and older report drinking above the Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines (LRADG) in the previous year.<sup>6,7</sup> These rates are not statistically different from reported provincial alcohol use (42.7%) but are still concerning. Young adults (age 19-29) are more likely to engage in high-risk binge drinking than any other age group.<sup>5</sup>

The City has 666 onsite licensed alcohol establishments (as of April 2016) making alcohol widely and readily available to residents. In Hamilton, approximately 900 hospitalizations and 100 deaths per year are attributable to alcohol.<sup>6</sup>

### **Health and Social Harms**

The normalization of alcohol has prevented alcohol from receiving the same attention as other addictive substances but concern and commitment towards alcohol-related harms and alcohol-control policy is growing amongst municipalities. Despite existing efforts to promote better knowledge dissemination to health professionals and the public on the chronic risks of heavy drinking, the focus is often limited to the immediate impacts, including dependence on alcohol or addiction, drinking and driving or public disturbance. This has discounted the wide range of social problems, trauma, chronic disease, and violence associated with alcohol consumption that impact drinkers and others.<sup>7</sup>

Alcohol is related to more than 65 different medical conditions, ranging from injuries to long-term health conditions such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and a number of mental illnesses. Research in Canada and abroad suggests that rates of chronic disease rise in the population as overall alcohol consumption rates increase.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, adverse alcohol consumption carries a significant price tag. In 2014, alcohol related harm cost \$14.6 billion, or 38.1 percent of the total costs of substance use in Canada. This represents a cost more than four times that of opioids and cannabis.<sup>9</sup>

### **Policy Context**

The province of Ontario has liberalized the sale of alcohol products through a series of policy and regulatory changes since 2011. These changes include:

- Reductions to the minimum retail price of beer to \$1;
- Halting the automatic increase in provincial beer tax;
- Extending the hours of sale for alcohol retail outlets; and,
- Introduction of alcohol sales in grocery stores.

Further, in May 2019 the provincial budget announcement included several proposed changes to provincial alcohol legislation.<sup>10</sup> These proposed changes include:

- Amended advertising restrictions to allow terms such as “Happy Hour” and “Cheap Drinks”;
- Removing the limit on serving size for by-the-glass licenses;
- Expanding where beer and wine can be purchased to include additional grocery stores as well as big box stores and corner stores;
- Allowing municipalities to designate public areas, such as parks, for the consumption of alcohol; and,
- Permitting alcohol sale and consumption at tailgate events.

### **Alcohol Sector Growth**

Over the past decade, there has been a shift in the alcohol sector across the province including the emergence and growth of the craft market and other specialty alcohol retailers. Consumers have more choice than ever before, alcohol is more accessible and less expensive, and the normalization of alcohol promotion has resulted in an increase in consumption amongst previously low consumers (e.g. women).

Events that serve alcohol are marketed to target a wide variety of consumers including millennials, parents, athletes, artists, musicians, adults and older adults, and so forth. With alcohol being more available and socially acceptable, it has increasingly become a part of our everyday lives.<sup>11</sup>

### **Alcohol Availability and Harms**

Many studies have shown a relationship between alcohol availability and harms:

- Decreasing hours of sale or decreasing availability of alcohol results in less consumption of alcohol and a significant decrease in alcohol-related harms;
- Raising alcohol taxes or prices reduces alcohol-related harms such as violence, crimes, vehicle crashes, chronic diseases, and suicide;
- Restricting evening hours of alcohol sale was linked to less consumption of alcohol;
- Increasing access to alcohol was found to be related to a range of alcohol-related harms such as pedestrian injuries, child maltreatment, and sexually transmitted infection transmission; and,
- Alcohol pricing and availability measures were found to impact both men and women, and all age groups.<sup>12</sup>

### **Conclusion**

As alcohol availability and sales continue to increase across the province, it is imperative to consider how our residents’ health and well-being will be impacted. With these considerations in mind, the Workgroup will report back to the Board of Health with recommendations to update the MAP, as required. Recommendations will be grounded

in an evidence-based approach to alcohol policy and will balance the health and social costs of alcohol with economic benefits, while prioritizing public health and safety and the mitigation of harms.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Not Applicable.

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Healthy and Safe Communities**

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

### **Economic Prosperity and Growth**

Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

## **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix “A” to Report BOH19032:	History of the Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP)
Appendix “B” to Report BOH19032:	Overview of the Purpose and Benefits of a Municipal Alcohol Policy

## References

1. World Health Organization. Global status report on alcohol and health 2018. [Internet]. [cited January 3 2019]. Available from: <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274603/9789241565639-eng.pdf?ua=1>
2. Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. Canadian drug summary- alcohol. [Internet]. 2017 [cited January 3 2019]. Available from: <http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Canadian-Drug-Summary-Alcohol-2017-en.pdf>
3. Canadian Institute for Health Information. Alcohol harm in Canada, Examining hospitalizations entirely caused by alcohol and strategies to reduce alcohol harm. Available from: <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/report-alcohol-hospitalizations-en-web.pdf>
4. World Health Organization. Global status report on alcohol and health 2014. [Internet] [cited September 7 2018]. Available from: [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/112736/9789240692763\\_eng.pdf;jsessionid=CDB60AA180366225CCADD20CDCC0B1E9?sequence=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/112736/9789240692763_eng.pdf;jsessionid=CDB60AA180366225CCADD20CDCC0B1E9?sequence=1)
5. CAMH Alcohol Policy Framework. (September 30, 2019). Available from: <http://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---public-policy-submissions/camh-alcoholpolicyframework-2019-pdf.pdf?la=en&hash=6DCD59D94B92BBC148A8D6F6F4A8EAA6D2F6E09B>
6. Canadian Community Health Data. 2014. Available from: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/survey/household/3226>
7. Alcohol, Cancer and other Health Issues: An Action Plan for Prevention [Internet]. 2011 [cited October 2019]. Available from: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-38346.pdf>
8. Reducing Alcohol Related Harms in Canada: Toward a Culture of Moderation. Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. 2007. Available from: <https://www.ccsa.ca/reducing-alcohol-related-harm-canada-toward-culture-moderation>
9. Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms, 2007-2014. [Internet]. 2018 [cited January 3 2019]. Available from: <http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CSUCH-Canadian-Substance-Use-Costs-Harms-Report-2018-en.pdf>
10. Ontario Budget: Improving Choice and Convenience for Alcohol Consumers (April 11, 2019). Available from: <http://budget.ontario.ca/2019/bg-alcohol.html>

**SUBJECT: Municipal Actions to Reduce Harms Associated with Alcohol Use  
(BOH19032) (City Wide) - Page 8 of 8**

---

11. City of Hamilton Public Health Services, Mental Health and Harm Reduction Program Team (2017). City of Hamilton Community Alcohol Report. Hamilton, ON: City of Hamilton Public Health Services. Available from:  
<https://d3fplf1m7bbt3.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/media/browser/2018-09-04/community-alcohol-report-2016.pdf>
12. CAMH Research Snapshot: Raising alcohol prices and decreasing availability reduces alcohol-related harms. (December 2018). Available from:  
[https://www.eenet.ca/sites/default/files/2018/Research%20Snapshot%20-%20Alcohol%20Pricing%20&%20Availability%20Policies\\_0.pdf](https://www.eenet.ca/sites/default/files/2018/Research%20Snapshot%20-%20Alcohol%20Pricing%20&%20Availability%20Policies_0.pdf)