



Municipality of Meaford Corporate Policy

Policy: Municipally Significant Event Policy

Division: Legislative Services

Last Revision: March 2026

[Policy Statement](#)

[Purpose](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Scope](#)

[Policy Requirements](#)

[Review](#)

[Monitoring](#)

[Authority](#)

[Contact](#)

[Change History](#)

Policy Statement

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to a streamlined and clear process for responding to requests for designation as a Municipally Significant Event, as is required by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario for the issuance of a Special Occasion Permit authorizing the sale and service of alcohol at an event located in the Municipality of Meaford.



Purpose

This policy provides guidance to clearly define and standardize the criteria for designating a Municipally Significant Event in the Municipality of Meaford. This policy provides a process for necessary engagement between the applicant and the Municipality in connection with their event while ensuring the Applicants are unequivocally informed that they remain solely responsible for the event, including compliance with any other requirements of the Municipality or other agencies and stakeholders that may apply.

Definitions

AGCO – means the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

Applicant – means the party applying to the Municipality for designation of an event as a Municipally Significant Event who is planning to conduct an event within the Municipality of Meaford at which alcohol will be sold and served. Unless otherwise directed by AGCO or Event Services, the Applicant must be same party who applies for a Special Occasion Permit from the AGCO.

Business day – means any day of the week, other than any Saturday, Sunday, a statutory holiday, or any other holiday or observance on which the Municipal Office at 21 Trowbridge Street West is closed.

Clerk – means the person appointed by Council as clerk pursuant to Section 228 of the Municipal Act, 2001, or his or her designate.

Municipality – shall mean the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford.

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:

- a) Is expected to bring people to the area; and
- b) Expected to promote the area regionally, provincially, nationally or internationally.



Special Occasion Permit – means a permit issued by the AGCO which allows for the sale and service of alcohol on special occasions.

Scope

This policy applies to all requests received by the Municipality for designation of an event as a Municipally Significant Event for the purpose of obtaining a Special Occasion Permit issued by the AGCO in order for alcohol to be sold and served in public settings in the Municipality of Meaford.

Only the AGCO determines if designation as a Municipally Significant Event is required, and this policy applies to any event held in the Municipality, whether on municipal property or otherwise, for which the AGCO has determined that designation as a Municipally Significant Event is required. This policy does not apply to any other application or interpretation of the term “municipal significance/municipally significant,” or any other permit issued by the AGCO pertaining to alcohol.

Policy Requirements

General

The Municipality is not obligated to designate any event as a Municipally Significant Event. Designation as a Municipally Significant Event is strictly limited to events that meet the criteria in the definition in this policy in connection with applications for a Special Occasion Permit.

Designation as a Municipally Significant Event does not constitute any other form of endorsement, approval, or authorization of the event by the Municipality and its Officers or Staff. Conducting the event in a manner that is safe, legal, and in compliance with all relevant legislation, laws, by-laws, policies, and any other obligations remains the sole responsibility of the Applicant and any other parties undertaking to conduct the event. Only the AGCO has the authority to grant the right to sell and serve alcohol, and designation as a Municipally Significant Event does not, in and of itself, confer any authorization to sell and serve alcohol.



All requests for the designation of a Municipally Significant Event will comply with this policy and it is the sole responsibility of the Applicant to comply with the policy. An Applicant is required to provide honest, true and fully complete and accurate information in a timely manner. Applicants are also solely responsible for answering any questions, addressing any concerns, and complying with any request for further information by the Clerk, any department or division, or any other party that is circulated on applications for designation of a Municipally Significant Event.

Subject to any limitations and requirements of this policy, and the approval of the applicable approval parties, the Clerk is delegated the authority to designate an event as a Municipally Significant Event.

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 for events expecting fewer than 5,000 people, or 60 days for events expecting more than 5,000.

Application Requirements

All requests for designation as a Municipally Significant Event must be completed on the prescribed form (the "application") and must include:

- The name and contact information of the Applicant
- The date(s), start time(s), finish time(s), and location of the event
- Objectives of the Organization
- A description of the event and how it satisfies the definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy by clearly identifying:
 - Estimated number of attendees
 - Plan to promote the area regionally, provincially, nationally or international
- Detailed map of the event including

- Area of the entire event
- Location of the area to be licenced for the sale and service of alcohol
- All entry and exists to the event and licenced area
- Location of all fire access points
- Washroom locations (if not at a municipal facility)
- A declaration that the Applicant will, independent of the application for designation as a Municipally Significant Event, conduct their event in a manner that is safe, legal, and in compliance with all legislation, policies, and other obligations that may apply, including, but not limited to, AGCO permit/licensing requirements, Municipal Alcohol Policy, Noise By-Law, Building Permits and the Liquor Licence and Control Act, 2019.

Accompanying the request must be the application fee as per the Municipality's Fees & Charges By-law.

Incomplete applications shall be returned to the organizer for completion. Once completed and returned to the Clerk, or their written designate, the review period shall re-commence upon receipt of the fully completed application. The review period shall be no more than 15 business days once a fully completed application is submitted.

Circulation

The Clerk will receive all applications for designation as a Municipally Significant Event and circulate them to the following for comments:

1. Municipality of Meaford's Community Services Division
2. Municipality of Meaford's Chief Building Official
3. Municipality of Meaford's Fire Department / Inter Township Fire Department
4. Ontario Provincial Police (Grey Bruce Detachment)
5. Grey Bruce Public Health

6. Other parties at the Clerk's discretion

The interested parties noted above shall be provided five business days to provide any concerns regarding the application for designation as a municipally significant event. Following the commenting period, 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:

- The event as described meets the definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy:
 - Does the event bring people to the area
 - Does the event promote the area regionally, provincially, nationally or internationally
- The Applicant has declared that they will conduct the event in a manner that is safe, legal, and in compliance with all legislation, policies, and other obligations that may apply
- The event does not appear to be contrary to any provision of this policy or any other Municipality of Meaford by-law or policy

If all of the above Criteria are satisfied and the designation as a Municipally Significant Event is approved, the Clerk will provide a letter confirming the designation to the Applicant.

If any of the Criteria are not satisfied, the Clerk will either notify the Applicant that the designation cannot be approved or, if appropriate, coordinate further engagement between the Applicant and the Municipality.

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 insurance per the requirements in the agreement. The permit holder shall be required to indemnify and save the Municipality of Meaford 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. The designation is contingent on the organization providing insurance a minimum of ten (10) days in advance of the event date. Should an organization fail to provide the appropriate insurance, the designation will be revoked and the Municipality will contact the AGCO to advise them of the action. Any and all additional conditions will be listed in the agreement and must be satisfied before finalization.

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.

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 Fire and Building Codes, AODA, Municipal Alcohol Policy, Noise By-law and Sign By-law.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed once during the term of Council.



Monitoring

The Chief Administrative Officer shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy.

Authority

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

Contact

Clerk
Telephone: 519-538-1060 ext. 1100
Email: clerk@meaford.ca

Change History

Policy Name	Effective Date	Significant Changes	By-law No.
Municipally Significant Event Policy	March 23, 2026	New Policy	2026-27