



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

A Trusted Partner in Community Safety
Un partenaire fiable de la sécurité communautaire

P.O. Box 9634, Station T
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 6H5
Tel.: 613-236-1222
Fax: 613-236-9360

C.P. 9634, Succursale T
Ottawa (Ontario) K1G 6H5
Tél.: 613-236-1222
Télééc.: 613-236-9360

ottawapolice.ca
@OttawaPolice

January 16, 2025

Attn: Daniel Chenier
General Manager of Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services

RE: Supplementary Research Analysis, Alcohol in Parks: OPS Submissions on Considerations

Dear Mr. Chenier:

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents of Ottawa through proactive policing, community engagement, and effective resource optimization. Our vision is to be a trusted partner in building an inclusive, equitable, and safe Ottawa. In line with our mission to serve and protect, we remain dedicated to supporting initiatives that enhance community safety while prioritizing police resources for the most critical needs.

Regarding the City of Ottawa's ongoing review of its Parks and Facilities By-law and the potential allowance for alcohol consumption in public parks, the OPS has significant concerns about the implications of this policy, which may undermine public safety. Based on our operational experience, we outline the following points:

The OPS does not support the initiative to allow alcohol consumption in City parks. While we understand that municipalities in Ontario are exploring this possibility, we believe such a change presents risks to public safety.

Key Considerations

Public Safety Risks: We regularly receive feedback from the public regarding safety concerns in various public spaces. Citizens are particularly worried about open-air drug use, the presence of individuals experiencing homelessness, and general disturbances in these areas. Allowing alcohol consumption in public parks could further these concerns and heighten their sense of insecurity.

Some of these risks could include alcohol-induced unsafe behavior and additional hazards such as broken glass and discarded alcohol containers. Vulnerable populations, including children and individuals with mobility challenges, would be at higher risk of injury.



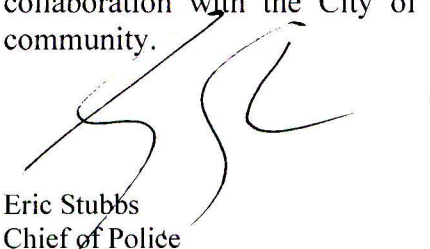
Increased Calls for Service: Calls for service relating to disturbances, physical altercations, or disturbing the peace can be and are often the result of alcohol consumption. While Ottawa By-law would oversee enforcement, OPS would likely be called to address incidents of aggression, violence, or criminal behavior. Ottawa's parks already experience frequent calls related to loitering, drug use, public intoxication, and violent altercations, often requiring police intervention. Legalized alcohol consumption in these spaces would likely increase such incidents, further burdening our ability to respond to priority calls.

Resource Constraints: OPS resources are already under significant pressure. Taking into account the above comments related to our increased calls for service, additional alcohol-related incidents could further stretch our ability to respond to priority calls. Parks near LCBO locations already experience alcohol-related issues, compounded by homelessness, mental health challenges, and substance abuse. The introduction of alcohol would likely intensify these issues, increasing the need for police intervention in an already strained environment.

Should the City proceed with this policy despite our concerns, we would need to discuss specific implementation measures to mitigate the identified risks. However, given current resource constraints, OPS support for such an initiative would be limited. Adequate By-law Enforcement presence and clear guidelines for managing alcohol consumption would be essential.

While OPS is committed to supporting initiatives that enhance the quality of life in our community, permitting alcohol consumption in public parks presents risks that could compromise public safety and strain our resources. We urge the City of Ottawa to carefully consider these issues before making changes to the Parks and Facilities By-law.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective and look forward to continued collaboration with the City of Ottawa to ensure the safety and well-being of our community.



Eric Stubbs
Chief of Police