



Policy

Policy Name:	Municipally Significant Event Designation Policy
Policy Owner:	Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk
Approved by:	Council
Effective Date:	[Date]
Date of Last Revision:	Initial policy
Review Date:	As needed
Policy Status:	New policy

Purpose

To establish a policy and process for responding to requests for designation of a Municipally Significant Event in the City of Richmond Hill, 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 City of Richmond Hill.

Policy Principles

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

Definitions

In this policy, and any other procedures:

“AGCO”	means the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.
“Applicant”	means the party applying to the City for designation of an event as a Municipally Significant Event who is planning to conduct an event within Richmond Hill 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 City’s Municipal Offices at 225 East Beaver Creek are closed.
“City”	means the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill.

“City Clerk”	means the person appointed by Council as clerk pursuant to Section 228 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> , or his or her designate.
“City-led Event”	means an event that is planned and delivered by Event Services, and generally has a broad community or celebratory focus. Funding for the event comes from the municipal operating budget. This does not include an event planned by or for Members of Council under the Member of Council Events Policy.
“Community Standards Division”	means the City division responsible for by-law and licensing enforcement.
“Council”	means the Council of the City of Richmond Hill.
“Event Services”	means the group or team of City Staff reporting directly, or through a Director, to the Commissioner of Community Services, whose mandate is to provide and/or support festivals and events taking place in the City.
“Fire and Emergency Services”	means the City division, Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services, reporting to the Fire Chief appointed by the City pursuant to the <i>Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997</i> .
“Members of Council”	means, individually, the persons elected or appointed to any Office on Council.
“Member of Council Events Policy”	means the Member of Council Events Policy, approved by Council on May 5, 2021 to establish rules for all Council-led Events, as may be amended, or any successor policy.
“Municipal Alcohol Policy”	means the Municipal Alcohol Policy, approved by Council on August 1, 2015 to promote health and safety of participants, the public and staff through the responsible and managed consumption of alcoholic beverages at City properties and at City-led Events.
“Municipally Significant Event”	<p>means a one-time, annual, or infrequently occurring event with a pre-determined opening and closing time which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has local, regional, national, or international historical or cultural significance; b) builds awareness of diverse cultures; c) promotes the social, cultural, or economic development of the City; or d) benefits the community at large; <p>and may include the following, or similar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a community event or festival;

- b) concert, theatre show, art gallery / book store / or similar opening or gala event;
- c) pop-up promotion / product launch / customer appreciation event;
- d) professional / networking or club / members event;
- e) private, invite-only or members-only event taking place in a public space and therefore requiring a Special Occasion Permit (for example, invitation-only launch / anniversary parties / client / members / professional / workplace events);
- f) charitable fundraiser; or
- g) sports event in an unlicensed venue.

“Special Occasion Permit”

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

“Ward Councillor”

means the Member of Council elected to represent the particular Ward in which the event for which an Applicant is requesting designation as a Municipally Significant Event will be held.

Scope

This policy applies to all requests received by the City 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 City of Richmond Hill. Only the AGCO determines if designation as a Municipally Significant Event is required, and this policy applies to any event held in Richmond Hill, whether on City 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

1. General Policy

- (a) The City 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 City 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.

- (b) All requests for the designation of a Municipally Significant Event will comply with this policy. 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 City Clerk, any City department or City division, any Member of Council, or any other party that is circulated on applications for designation of a Municipally Significant Event.
- (c) City departments, City divisions and Members of Council to whom applications for designation of a Municipally Significant Event are circulated are required to either approve the designation, or provide reasons that they are unable to approve the designation. City departments, City divisions, Members of Council, or any other applicable person or party are not obligated to approve an event's designation as a Municipally Significant Event.
- (d) Subject to any limitations and requirements of this policy, and the approval of the applicable City departments, City divisions and Members of Council, the City Clerk is delegated the authority to designate an event as a Municipally Significant Event.

2. Application Requirements

- (a) All requests for designation as a Municipally Significant Event must be completed on the prescribed form (the "application") and must include:
 - i) The name and contact information of the Applicant
 - ii) The date(s), start time(s), finish time(s), and location of the event
 - iii) Start time(s) and finish time(s) of alcohol service
 - iv) A detailed map of the event, including:
 - (1) Area of the entire event
 - (2) Location of the area to be licensed for the sale and service of alcohol
 - (3) All entry and exits to the event and licensed area
 - (4) Location of all fire connections in the event and licensed area
 - (5) Washroom locations
 - v) The estimated number of attendees
 - vi) A description of the event and how it satisfies the definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy
 - vii) 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, City of Richmond Hill Noise By-Law 43-20, City of Richmond Hill Building Permits, the City of Richmond Hill Municipal Alcohol Policy, and the *Liquor Licence and Control Act*, 2019.

- (b) Applicants must submit their application for designation as a Municipally Significant Event at least twenty-five (25) Business Days before the event.
- (c) Applicants for events occurring on City properties must consult with Event Services, and/or any other City staff responsible for special event permit requests, and comply with all relevant requirements applicable to their event under the guidance of Event Services. Designation as a Municipally Significant Event on City property will be contingent on the approval of Event Services and subject to all other requirements of this policy.
- (d) The City Clerk will receive all applications for designation as a Municipally Significant Event and circulate them to the Ward Councillor, the Regional and Local Councillors, the Mayor, Fire and Emergency Services, and Community Standards Division. The City Clerk or anyone to whom the application has been circulated may forward the application to additional City departments, City divisions, agencies, or other parties at their discretion.
- (e) The City Clerk will designate an event as a Municipally Significant Event if the City Clerk is satisfied, at his or her sole discretion, that:
 - i) The event as described meets the definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy;
 - ii) 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;
 - iii) If the event will take place on City property, Event Services has provided their approval;
 - iv) The event does not appear to be contrary to any provision of this policy or any other City of Richmond Hill policy or by-law; and
 - v) The City Clerk has received the approval of the Ward Councillor, the Regional and Local Councillors, the Mayor, Fire and Emergency Services, and Community Standards Division to designate the event as a Municipally Significant Event.
- (f) If all of the above criteria in paragraph 2(e) are satisfied and the designation as a Municipally Significant Event is approved, the City Clerk will provide a letter confirming the designation to the Applicant. The form of this letter is at the discretion of the City Clerk and can be modified according to the needs of the Applicant and the AGCO.
- (g) If any of the criteria in paragraph 2(e) are not satisfied, the City Clerk will either notify the Applicant that the designation cannot be approved or, if appropriate, coordinate further engagement between the Applicant and the City. In cases where the City Clerk is not able to approve the designation, the Applicant will be provided the opportunity to request Council's approval to designate the event as a Municipally Significant Event. Applicants wishing to request Council's approval must notify the City Clerk in writing within five (5) business days of the date of the City Clerk's notice. The Applicant's written request must set out for Council's consideration all the reasons why they believe that the designation should be approved.

3. Member of Council Events

- (a) If an event is subject to the Member of Council Events Policy, the City Clerk will forward the request for designation as a Municipally Significant Event to Council for consideration. Should Council choose to approve the designation as a Municipally Significant Event, it may do so through a resolution and the City Clerk will provide the Applicant with a record of the proceedings of Council verifying the designation according to AGCO's requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Applicant

The Applicant is required to submit their request for designation as a Municipally Significant Event in accordance with the requirements of this policy, including timely and complete submission of the application. Completion of the process outlined in this policy does not satisfy any other responsibilities that the Applicant may have. Applicants are, separate from this policy, responsible for complying with all applicable legislation, policies, and other obligations that may apply, including, but not limited to, AGCO permit/licensing requirements, City of Richmond Hill Noise By-Law 43-20 exemptions, City of Richmond Hill Building Permits, the City of Richmond Hill Municipal Alcohol Policy, and the *Liquor Licence and Control Act*, 2019.

City Clerk

The City Clerk shall create and prescribe the form required by Section 2(a) of this policy. The City Clerk is delegated the authority to designate events as Municipally Significant Events in connection with applications to the AGCO for Special Occasion Permits if the conditions of this policy are satisfied. The City Clerk shall receive all applications, review them for completeness, and evaluate whether the event meets the basic definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy and appears to be compatible with other relevant City of Richmond Hill policies and by-laws. For all complete applications meeting the basic criteria, the City Clerk shall circulate them to the parties described in this policy and receive the approval or objection of those parties. In cases where the designation as a Municipally Significant Event can be approved in accordance with this policy, the City Clerk will provide a letter to the Applicant confirming that the event is designated as a Municipally Significant Event. In cases where the designation cannot be approved, the City Clerk will notify the Applicant that the request cannot be approved, and will forward the request to Council for further consideration if requested by the Applicant to do so, or coordinate further engagement between the Applicant and the City, as appropriate.

Event Services

Event Services will advise the City Clerk as to whether an Applicant for an event on City property has completed or initiated the necessary processes to conduct their event in compliance with all applicable City requirements and if, in the judgment of Event Services, the Applicant's request for designation as a Municipally Significant Event can be approved.

Community Standards Division

The Community Standards Division will review applications to determine if any by-law compliance issues may apply and communicate their approval of or objection (with reasons) to the designation of the event to the City Clerk.

Fire and Emergency Services

Fire and Emergency Services will review applications to determine if there are any hazards, obstructions to emergency access, or other concerns that need to be addressed, and communicate their approval of or objection (with reasons) to the designation of the event to the City Clerk.

Members of Council

Members of Council to whom applications are circulated will review applications to determine if, in their judgment, the event meets the definition of a Municipally Significant Event as defined in this policy or if any other considerations apply, and to communicate their approval of or objection (with reasons) to the designation to the City Clerk.

Related Documents

Municipal Alcohol Policy

Member of Council Events Policy

Request for Designation as a Municipally Significant Event Form