



Liquor Consumption at Picnic Sites - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are you considering allowing liquor in parks?

During the engagement for the Parks & Pathway Bylaw, a significant number of comments reflected a desire to be able to consume liquor in parks (which is allowed by the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Act at picnic sites). We are conducting further engagement and research to see if this something many Calgarians want, and researching potential impacts of allowing liquor in parks.

If the pilot goes ahead, how will you manage unruly behavior?

We would plan to keep a mindful eye on our park sites, and if problems begin to arise we would discontinue the pilot project. It is important to note that the Alberta Liquor Act allows for liquor consumption only within the confines of picnic sites, and only while consuming food. The emphasis would be on low consumption and responsible drinking. Other Bylaws such as the Parks and Pathway Bylaw, the Community Standards Bylaw, and our drinking and driving laws, still apply. Disorderly behavior and public intoxication is not, and will not, be permitted in our parks.

Where and when with the pilot be?

Where the pilots could be will depend on the results of the public engagement. It could be all picnic tables in parks, or perhaps only a couple of our larger parks that will allow it, or possibly even select picnic tables within a park. It's up to Calgarians. If a pilot program does occur, we would schedule it in the warmer months of July and August. The Engage survey will ask for postal codes, which will help us identify potential sites. For example, if we find the majority of responses are against liquor in parks in one postal code, then we would avoid designating any sites in that area.

What restrictions will there be?

The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Act is very clear that consumption of liquor may only happen at picnic sites, not throughout the park, and is only allowed when consuming food. That means consumption would only be allowed at a designated picnic table, with a full meal – not just a snack of potato chips. In addition Calgary Parks may impose other restrictions such as restricting consumption to certain hours.

Will Calgary Parks sell liquor?

No. Sale of liquor involves licensing and restrictions separate to the initiative that we are considering today.

Do you have to book a picnic site in order to consume liquor?

Restricting consumption to bookable picnic sites would depend on the results of public engagement. According to the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Act, consumption of liquor at a picnic site is not restricted to bookable sites. However, we could potentially include that restriction if public engagement indicated that was preferred.

Are there any parks that Calgary Parks will not allow consumption of liquor?

That will depend on public engagement. Ideally we would like to avoid potential safety hazards such as nearby wading pools, skateparks, river access sites, etc. However we are open to what Calgarians tell us through our engagement efforts.

Will this cost The City money?

We anticipate allowing liquor at picnic sites would only have minor costs associated with signage, but a pilot program would allow us to do a full assessment. If we found operational costs increased due to the need for additional enforcement, or additional clean up of picnic sites, then we would consider costs before allowing consumption on a long-term basis.

How will Calgary Parks obtain citizen input?

Calgarians can share their opinions about liquor in park picnic sites by completing the online survey found at engage.calgary.ca