



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Staff Report

To: Council
From: Director of Development Services
Subject: Liquor Licence Application No. 2403 – 244 4th Street

File No.: 4530-20-2403/LL000021

Date: March 12, 2025

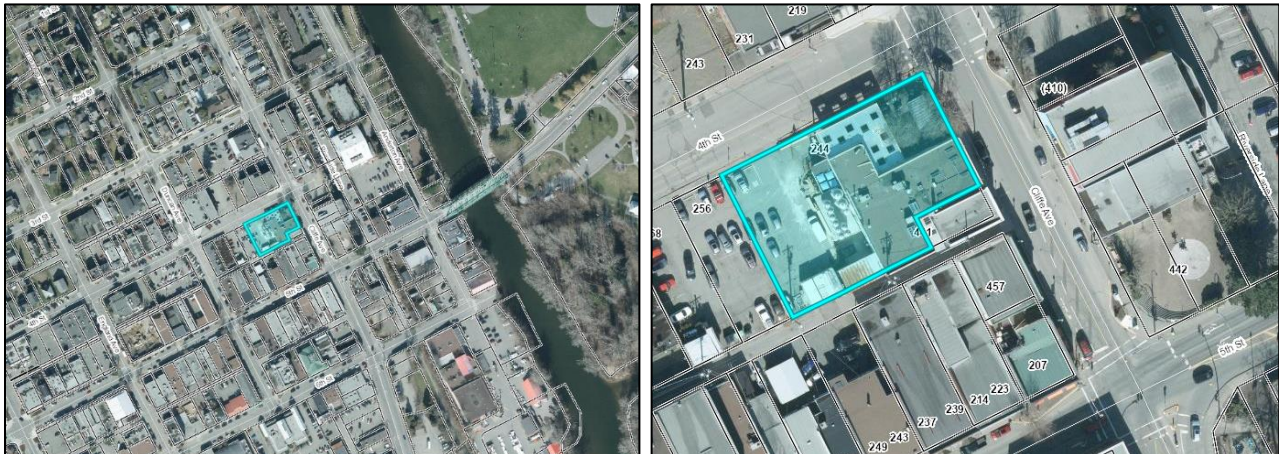
PURPOSE:

For Council to consider a resolution to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) in response to Liquor Licence Application No. 2403.

BACKGROUND:

The owners of Gladstone Brewing Company located at 244 - 4th Street (LOT A SECTION 61 COMOX DISTRICT PLAN EPP111555) as illustrated in Figure 1 below, currently hold a valid manufacturing license allowing them to produce and service liquor products at their facility with a 280-person capacity lounge endorsement.

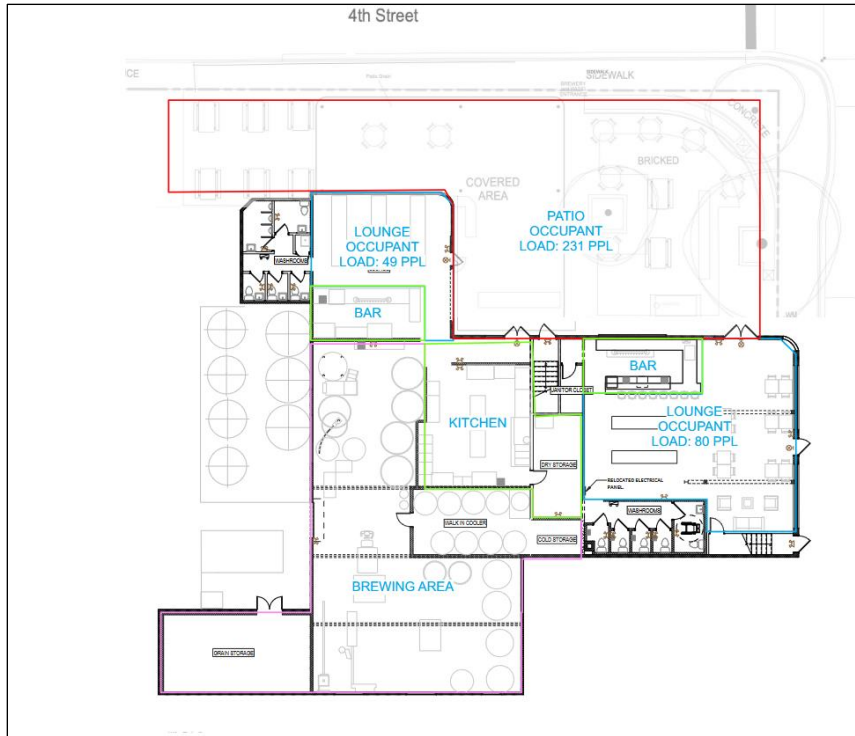
Figure 1: Site location and context



The owners have submitted to the LCRB and the City of Courtenay a liquor licence application to increase the lounge capacity from 280 persons to 360 persons; a difference of 80 people.

If approved by the LCRB, this change will result in the creation of a second lounge area constructed through a concurrent Building Permit with the City's Building Division. A floor plan for the proposed new lounge is in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Floor plan



The proprietor has maintained a manufacturer's liquor licence since 2015 and has obtained multiple amendments to this licence to facilitate the expansion of its service area and business.

The hours of sale for the business's current liquor licence are from 9 am to 12 am, daily, and are not subject to change. Generally, the business's hours of operation are fewer than the licence permits, opening at 11 am, however hours are adjusted seasonally and depending on the day of the week and for events (ex. weekend brunch service).

DISCUSSION:

The subjection location is zoned Commercial One (C-1) which permits *licensed premises, microbrewery and restaurant* uses. The site and its surrounding area are designated as Downtown Town Centre in Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3070, 2022.

To the north of the site across 4th Street is the Courtenay & District Museum (207 4th Street). To the east of the property across Cliffe Avenue is the Sid Williams Theatre (442 Cliffe Ave). To the south, on the other side of the lane are commercially zoned lots occupied by various businesses. And to the west are two undeveloped lots that are also owned by the brewery and are used for the business's off-street parking.

The downtown, commercial location means any increase in noise as a result of the amendment to the licence is not anticipated to have much, if any, negative impact on the community within the immediate vicinity of the establishment.

Based on the location, hours of service, referral comments (to Building Division, Operations Services Department, Fire Department, RCMP, K'ómoks First Nation) and public engagement, it is not anticipated that granting the license will have a negative impact the broader community. Further details on the engagement results are provided later in this report under 'Public Engagement'.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

As indicated in a February 2025 report to Council regarding the liquor licence application for 975 Comox Road (Heritage House Pub), the City currently lacks a formal liquor licence policy to guide such applications. The development of this policy is underway and is anticipated to be presented to Council for consideration before the end of Q2 2025.

Official Community Plan (OCP)

- Courtenay's OCP Social Infrastructure Policy #12 (SI 12) directs the City and its staff to: *"Work regionally to further recommendations of the Comox Valley Substance Use Strategy Phase 1 Report (2021) including identifying an appropriate role for the City."*
- Courtenay's OCP Local Economy Policy #12 (LE 12) directs the City and its staff to: *"Work with the local business community and major employers to focus investment, facility and business development in Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors."*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Processing and proceeding with this liquor licence application has no financial implications to the City's Financial Plan 2024 – 2029. The application fee for all types of liquor licence applications is \$1,500 plus GST.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

Processing Liquor Licence applications is the current responsibility of the Development Services Department. Work to date has primarily been carried out by Development Services staff, although other departments have provided referral comments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Local Economy - Review City processes that may be barriers to economic development
- Local Economy - Identify appropriate roles and responsibilities for the City in the delivery of economic development services in the region

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

As per section 38 (c) of the *Liquor Control and Licensing Act*, the City was required to gather the views of residents before providing a resolution and comments to the LCRB. A two-week comment period was provided from February 14 to February 28, 2025. The City sent mailout notifications to all property owners and occupants within a 30-metre radius of the subject property (25 mailouts) and posted notice of the application on the City's website for two consecutive weeks inviting public comments.

At the time of the writing of this report, the City received zero (0) comments in response to the engagement.

OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council recommend the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) approve the application from Gladstone Brewing, located at 244 4th Street (LOT A SECTION 61 COMOX

DISTRICT PLAN EPP111555) for a structural change and permanent increase to the capacity of the licence's service areas from 280 persons to 360 persons and Council's comments on LCRB prescribed considerations are as follows:

- a. If the application is approved, any increase in noise as a result of the licence is not anticipated to have much, if any, impact on the community within the immediate vicinity and;
 - b. Based on the results of the public input process described in this report and the agencies contacted for comment, including the RCMP, if the application is approved the general impact on the community is not anticipated to be negative.
2. THAT Council requests additional information or alternative conditions before responding to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch.
 3. THAT Council not recommend support to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch for the application from Gladstone Brewing, located at 244 4th Street (LOT A SECTION 61 COMOX DISTRICT PLAN EPP111555) for structural change and permanent increase to the capacity of the license's service areas.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Applicant's Letter of Intent

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Concurrence: Geoff Garbutt, M.PI., MCIP, RPP, City Manager (CAO)