

Municipal Alcohol Policies:

Options for Nova Scotia Municipalities

Version 1.1



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Capital Health
Public Health Services



Municipal Alcohol Policies **Options for Nova Scotia Municipalities**

Version 1.1

Understanding Communities Unit
Capital Health, Public Health Services

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A letter from Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed

Alcohol-related harm in our communities matters to all of us. It impacts our relationships, our families, our economy, our stability as a community and our health and well-being.

Fortunately, there is much that can be done to reduce these impacts. Municipalities across Canada, the United States and around the world are taking action to change the culture of alcohol in their communities. This report highlights those actions and provides a range of policy options for consideration by municipalities here in Nova Scotia.

Our report is not prescriptive – we haven't named what should be done. Rather, we outline several options available to municipalities – what could be done – within a comprehensive framework for municipal alcohol policies. Our goal is to contribute to conversations about making positive and sustainable changes in our communities.

Equipped with this resource, and given your knowledge of the local context, data, talent and creativity of your own communities, you may develop even more exciting and sensitive policy directions than those described here. Kudos to those of you who do – and our ask of you will be to share your successes so that we can, collectively, continue to learn about what can be done to reduce harm from alcohol.

Public Health has a provincial mandate in Nova Scotia to “work with others to understand the health of our communities, and act together to improve health.” We are pleased, along with our colleagues in Addictions Prevention and Treatment Services, to provide you with this information that may guide your first steps to develop a municipal alcohol policy – or support your current work. We remain committed to partnering with you to improve the health and safety of our communities through the reduction of harm associated with alcohol. None of us can tackle this issue in isolation – but together, we can!

Thank you for taking the time to review our report. Please feel free to contact us with questions, success stories from your community or lessons you've learned. We would love to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Watson-Creed'.

Gaynor Watson-Creed, MSc, MD, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health, Capital Health

Public Health provincial mandate as described in the 2010 “The Six Stakes” document:
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/yourmove/yourmove-movingforward.pdf>

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I. Executive Summary

Report overview

This report is intended to be a resource for, primarily, municipal leaders and staff who want to make a difference in their communities by changing the culture of alcohol through local municipal policy.

By highlighting municipal alcohol policy efforts locally and abroad, this report can be used to spark conversation, to brainstorm ideas and to connect local efforts with those taking place in other parts of the world.

This report outlines a model depicting four policy pillars for the effective reduction of alcohol-related harm: advertisement, availability, enforcement and liability. It provides a preliminary review of policy options available to municipalities in Nova Scotia based on a scan of available literature and of approaches used by communities around the world.

Identifying the Issues

Alcohol is an important issue in Nova Scotia because its use is embedded in virtually all aspects of Canadian society. It plays a role in our culture, economy, politics, health status and relationships. In Nova Scotia, the average age of first consumption of alcohol is 12.9. One of the primary concerns in Nova Scotia is not simply that we drink, but how we drink. Statistics and self-reported data paint a concerning picture of heavy and binge drinking in the province.

Some of the immediate impacts of alcohol misuse reported in Nova Scotia include impaired driving, hospital admissions, preventable injuries and death, physical and sexual assaults and family and partner violence. The misuse of alcohol can also result in a pervasive and chronic burden on our health, communities and economy.

International data suggests there is a link between exposure to alcohol advertising and the age of first drink. Information collected in Nova Scotia suggests that the “good times” often depicted in alcohol advertising influences people (including youth) to consume alcohol.

What’s possible

Although there is no single approach to reducing alcohol-related harm, research supports the positive changes that stem from the development and implementation of a Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP). MAPs that focus on population interventions, along with targeted strategies that include harm reduction, are considered to be the most effective methods to reduce alcohol-related harm.

Role of Provincial and Federal Jurisdictions

The control of alcohol production, alcohol consumption and the minimization of alcohol-related harm fall primarily under provincial and federal jurisdictions. There are, however, many opportunities for municipalities to reduce alcohol-related harm.

Municipal Policy Options

Municipalities in Canada, the United States and Europe have taken steps to reduce alcohol-related harm in their communities through the use of various bylaws and innovative community partnerships. This section outlines a number of these examples, citing early anecdotes and outcomes where possible.

Community collaboration

Community collaboration is vital to long-term success in creating healthy communities. Municipalities, universities, community colleges, health and addictions workers, local businesses, community organizations and the broader community create more effective and sustainable actions when they consult each other and work together.

Conclusion

Reductions in alcohol-related harm can be achieved by adopting a collaborative and multi-sector action plan to create supportive policies for healthier communities. Multiple policies, created by the best thinking of a variety of local stakeholders, will have to be employed at different levels of government in order to shift the culture of alcohol in Nova Scotia. Municipalities play a pivotal role in drawing attention to the issue and making it a priority, for the purpose of improving overall community health.

II. Overview

Intended Use

With this report, we have begun to document information-based tools, policy options and approaches available to municipalities to reduce alcohol-related harm. We have highlighted examples demonstrating that positive change led by municipal governments is possible. It is hoped that, with the resources described in this report, you can make connections with others engaged in this work and take concrete steps toward the creation of municipal alcohol policies, reducing alcohol-related harm and promoting greater community, economic and social well-being.

Methodology

The information in this report is based on a review of academic literature, peer-reviewed journals, grey literature, case study examples, and consultations with stakeholders including municipal and provincial government representatives. The case studies chosen for this report are those that illustrate the use of policy options that are available to municipalities in Nova Scotia. Key informants were chosen for their understanding of the nature of alcohol-related harm, and for their expertise in policy development.

Databases used: PubMed; Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL); Google Scholar; Science Direct; Cochrane Library; Canadian Public Policy; and Health Research Collections. Primary search terms used: municipal alcohol policies AND best practice; community-based initiatives; alcohol AND communities; alcohol AND density AND location; bar AND lounge hour restrictions; municipal AND bylaw; development agreements AND separation distance.

Acronyms

Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring survey
CADUMS

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
CAMH

Liquor Control Act
LCA

Municipal Alcohol Policies
MAPs

Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness
NSDHW

Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation
NSLC

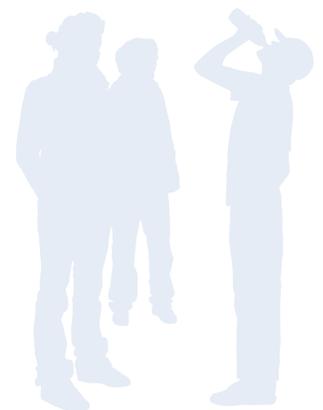
Residential Rental Housing Licensing
RRHL

Residential Tenancies Act
RTA

Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
UNSM

Utility and Review Board
UARB

World Health Organization
WHO



III. Identifying the Issues

Alcohol use is embedded in virtually all aspects of Canadian society. It plays a role in our culture, economy, politics, health status and relationships. Given that recent statistics suggest that 77 per cent of adult Canadians report consuming alcohol (Canadian Public Health Association [CPHA], 2011), it is important to understand the different ways alcohol can impact communities and how municipalities can lead the way in supporting healthy outcomes.

Who is drinking may surprise you.

- In Nova Scotia, the average age of first consumption of alcohol is 12.9 (Poulin & McDonald, 2007).
- According to the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Monitoring Survey, 73.8 per cent of Nova Scotians aged 15 and older reported drinking alcohol in the past 12 months (Health Canada, 2011).
- One out of every two Grade 12 students in Nova Scotia who reported consuming alcohol also reported drinking heavily at least once a month (Poulin & McDonald, 2007).
- Young females in high school are drinking at the same rate as young males (Poulin & McDonald, 2007).

One of the primary concerns in Nova Scotia is not *what* we drink, but *how* we drink:

- In 2011, the percentage of Canadians who reported binge drinking (having more than five drinks on one occasion) at least once per month was 19 per cent while in Nova Scotia it was 20.3 per cent (Statistics Canada, 2012).
- Meanwhile 21.6 per cent of Nova Scotians report heavy drinking (Statistics Canada, 2011)

Measuring the impact of alcohol in our communities is a daunting and often complex process that requires a review of the harmful impacts over both the short-and long-term.

Consider some of the immediate impacts of alcohol misuse reported in Nova Scotia:

- The Halifax Regional Police report that nearly 600 arrests are made each year for impaired driving (Halifax Regional Police, 2012).

- The 2007 Nova Scotia alcohol strategy reports an average of 3,100 hospital admissions (42,000 hospital days) in Nova Scotia that can be attributed to alcohol, with 230 alcohol-related deaths occurring annually (Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection, 2007). Given that per capita alcohol consumption is steadily increasing in Canada it is likely that these numbers are higher today.
- Other undesirable outcomes linked to alcohol include physical and sexual assaults, and family and intimate partner violence (World Health Organization [WHO], 2011).

While the negative short-term consequences of alcohol consumption are well-known, it is also crucial to acknowledge how alcohol can create a lasting legacy of harm. For example, the misuse of alcohol can result in a pervasive and chronic burden on our health, communities and economy:

- Many chronic diseases (such as gastrointestinal diseases, eight types of cancer, and heart disease) are linked to either alcohol use or alcohol dependence (WHO, 2011).
- The negative effects of alcohol can be felt at the community level. In Nova Scotia, the towns of Antigonish, Bridgewater, Wolfville and Truro have recently documented some of these effects (Beaton & Co., 2011, 2012). These included increased use of hospital beds, property damage, noise disturbances, child neglect and family harm. These community stories provide compelling accounts of just how pervasive and harmful the misuse of alcohol has become in our communities.
- Alcohol is also a burden to the economy. A preliminary cost-benefit analysis presented by Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health indicated that while the 2006 provincial revenue (net income and provincial HST) from alcohol sales was \$224 million, the documented health, justice and other costs associated with alcohol harm totalled \$242.9 million (Strang, 2011).

1. The Culture of Alcohol in Nova Scotia

Alcohol is a popular, increasingly ubiquitous substance in society. The consumption of alcohol in moderate quantities provides a valued complement to meals and many social occasions. Further, alcohol production and retailing involve many occupations, produce many jobs, and generate substantial income for individuals, businesses, and governments (CPHA, 2011).

Its presence and its availability are well promoted, typically with very accessible and visible placements of advertisements – on street signs, buses, shopping malls, in public newspapers, on local television and radio. Consider your next drive home, walk to the local grocery store or visit to a recreation facility. Think about where you notice alcohol advertising, notice alcohol showing up or promoted. Many community events are held at locations where alcohol can be purchased and consumed and/or are sponsored by alcohol companies.

Information collected in Nova Scotia suggests that the “good times” often depicted in alcohol advertising influences people (including youth) to consume alcohol (Poulin & McDonald, 2007). International data suggests there is a link between exposure to alcohol advertising and the age of first drink (Poulin & McDonald, 2007). However, the various forms of harm caused by alcohol are rarely depicted in advertisements.

It is true that local economies may be boosted by alcohol sales, and municipalities may earn property tax revenue from businesses that sell alcohol. Nova Scotia’s economy has been supported by an expanding wine industry and the increasing popularity of micro-pub breweries. However, municipalities can be negatively impacted by alcohol as well. Policing requirements may increase due to problems that stem from late-night binge drinking at bars, taverns, cabarets and house parties. The resulting damages are often left to the municipality and the establishment owner to bear. In the Town of Antigonish, an estimated 70 to 80 per cent of police-attended calls between September and November were related to alcohol (Beaton & Co., 2011).



IV. What's possible

This report provides a preliminary review of policy options available to municipalities in Nova Scotia based on a scan of available literature and of approaches used by communities around the world.

The role that municipal government can play has received increased focus as a potential best practice approach to mediating many of the harmful influences of alcohol (Shults et al., 2009). Policies that address the availability, price and marketing of alcohol have shown to be effective in reducing harm at the population level (Babor et al., 2010). Municipalities can also play a role in developing policies and legislation aimed at reducing impaired driving and enforcing responsible beverage service programs.

Many interventions presented in this report fall under the jurisdiction of provincial and federal levels of government. For instance, alcohol pricing is determined by the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation (NSLC). The regulation of licensed facilities, such as bars and lounges, is prescribed by the Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act (2009) and its regulations, and is the jurisdiction of the Alcohol and Gaming Division of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

Regulation of alcohol product marketing is a federal responsibility. In December 2008, the Alcohol and Gaming Division introduced minimum drink prices for drinks sold in liquor-licensed establishments. NSLC licenses manufacturers, including breweries and microbreweries. Some of those facilities sell directly to the public for consumption on premises. NSLC also licenses events such as wine-tasting, scotch-tasting and cocktail-tasting shows. These events and breweries are not subject to provincial minimum drink prices (Province of Nova Scotia, 2009).

What can municipalities do?

There are many opportunities for municipalities to reduce alcohol-related harm. For instance, municipalities can control the kind of advertising and sponsorship they permit on municipally owned properties and at events sponsored by municipalities.

Municipalities can also determine where licensed establishments are located as a way to limit outlet density and reduce exposure to children and youth. Municipalities can incorporate into their community design plans spaces for youth and young adults to gather that are not focused on alcohol consumption. Municipalities can provide leadership and facilitate collaboration among community members, agencies, business interests and other stakeholders to develop community responses to alcohol issues that hinder overall community well-being. Effective policies are needed to regulate access and overall consumption, and in turn can help reduce high-risk drinking linked to trauma, social problems and chronic diseases (Babor et al., 2010).

Although there is no single approach to reducing alcohol-related harm, research supports the positive changes that stem from the development and implementation of a Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP). MAPs that focus on population interventions, along with targeted strategies that include harm reduction, are considered to be the most effective methods to reduce alcohol-related harm (Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection, 2007). MAPs encourage individuals to create cultural shifts in alcohol-related behaviours as well as environmental shifts that limit access to alcohol (Shults et al., 2009). MAPs are described as essential in attempts to reduce alcohol-related harm, as they support attempts to influence the actions of all levels of government (Babor et al., 2010).

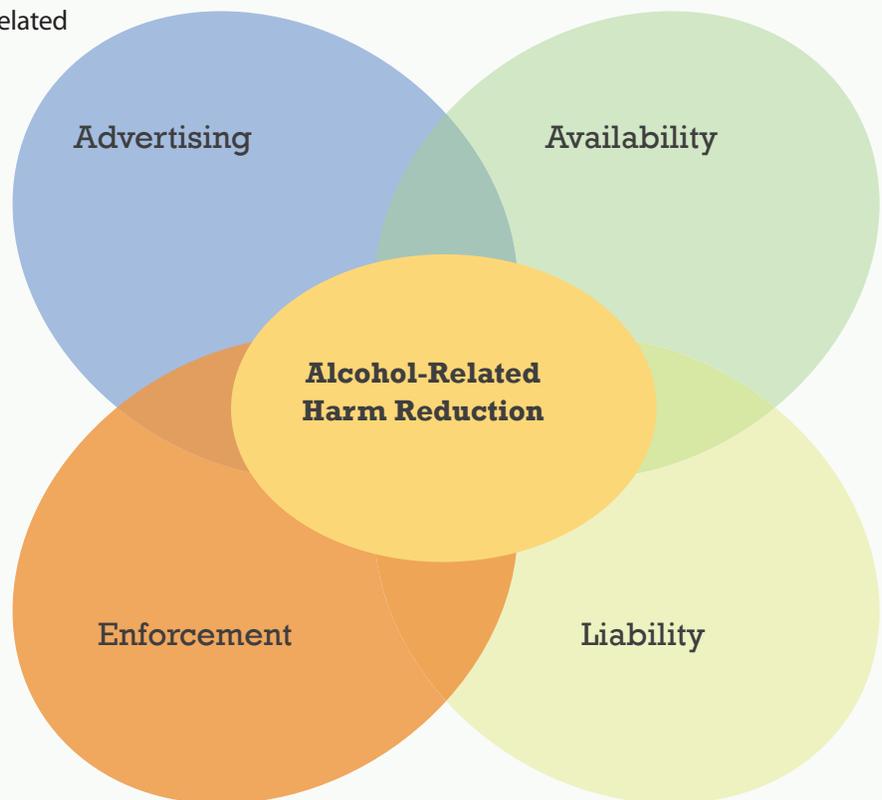
What's possible (cont.)

This paper (see Figure 1 below) depicts four policy pillars which, when working together, combine for the effective reduction of alcohol-related harm: advertising, availability, enforcement and liability. Although education is an element found within many policies, discussions with our stakeholders and partners identified the aforementioned pillars as a starting place for Nova Scotian municipalities that require further exploration.

Municipal alcohol policy requires collaboration in these four areas among many community stakeholders (municipal leaders, police, business leaders, young people, health service providers), and can provide a platform for both short-term and long-term successes.

Figure 1 >

Policy Pillars of Effective Alcohol-Related Harm Reduction for Nova Scotian Municipalities



V. The Role of Provincial & Federal Jurisdictions

The control of alcohol production, alcohol consumption and the minimization of alcohol-related harm fall primarily under provincial and federal jurisdictions. The following are examples of legislation that address issues related to alcohol:

Federal

- ◆ **The Canadian Code of Advertising Standards** regulates how alcohol industries can market their products and sets guidelines for acceptable advertising in Canada (Advertising Standards Canada, 2012).

Provincial

- ◆ **The Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act** regulates the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission, availability, advertising and sponsorship, penalties and prohibitions, etc.
- ◆ **The Municipal Government Act** (Government of Nova Scotia, 1998) and the **Halifax Regional Municipality Charter** (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2008) stipulate what municipalities are permitted to control and allow them to pass bylaws that impact the health, well-being, safety and protection of citizens.
- ◆ **The Liquor Control Act** (2009) designates the Alcohol and Gaming Division of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations as the licensing and regulatory entity for the public consumption of alcohol.

Municipalities have the authority to implement effective alcohol-related policies. By demonstrating leadership, raising community awareness, appealing to other levels of government and engaging in supportive initiatives targeting change at provincial and federal levels, municipalities can align themselves with provincial, national and international strategies (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health & Public Health Ontario, 2012).



VI. Municipal Policy Options

This section outlines the municipal policy options that exist for each pillar of the effective alcohol-related harm reduction model: advertising, availability, enforcement and liability. Each pillar describes key issues and examples of municipal strategies and community actions.

1. Advertising

1.1 Industry Sponsorship of Sporting, Cultural and Other Community Events

In community settings, alcohol industry advertising and sponsorship has been linked to harmful consumption (Heung, Rempel, & Krank, 2012). Those most influenced are children, youth and young adults. In Canada, children and youth are exposed to more than 300,000 alcohol advertisements each year through venues such as popular sporting/community events, billboards, Internet sites, magazines, television and radio (Heung et al., 2012). Exposure to alcohol advertising reinforces positive attitudes about alcohol, increases consumption and is associated with greater intention to drink later in life (Rosenbloom, 2004). Research supported by Ontario's Alcohol Policy Network (2005) reports that alcohol advertising at concerts, community festivals or sporting events may send the message that alcohol consumption is necessary to enjoy these events (Alcohol Policy Network, 2005). Similar evidence supports the fact that advertising of alcohol products originating from sponsorship campaigns and billboards may contribute to the incidence of alcohol-related harm, and discourage organizations from supporting policies to reduce this harm (Alcohol Policy Network, 2005). Alcohol consumption is almost always associated with success, and excessive alcohol consumption is almost always viewed as hugely entertaining within the young adult population. Heavy or binge drinking is frequently normalized and even encouraged, both in popular media and within a community (Rosenbloom, 2004).

Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Restrict Alcohol Advertising

The **Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act** provides guidelines regarding what constitutes acceptable alcohol advertising for licensed facilities.

According to the Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act, municipalities can exert control over advertising that takes place on their land and at municipally held events. A municipal unit can approve policies that stipulate that an event on their land cannot receive alcohol industry sponsorship, advertise alcohol, and/or serve alcohol. Municipalities can also implement policies and/or rules that state that a municipal event on non-municipally owned land must also follow municipal policies that serve to restrict or prohibit alcohol advertising. Municipalities can also control the location, size and type of signs that are displayed in front of liquor establishments through land-use bylaws.

However, municipalities do not have any jurisdiction over the content of alcohol-related signage. While there may be interest in restricting the signage of establishments to minimize alcohol advertising, caution should be exercised. Such an action could be viewed as anti-competition, and legal issues related to freedom of expression could be raised.

OPTIONS:

- A** Through municipal bylaws and policy development, municipalities can create policies that restrict or prohibit the advertising of alcohol on municipal owned land, facilities and/or at municipal events.
- B** Through sign and land-use bylaws, municipalities can control the location, size and type of signs that are displayed in front of liquor establishments.



EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS RESTRICTING ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

1 Boston

The Allston-Brighton Substance Abuse Task Force Youth Coalition raised awareness of the negative impact of alcohol advertisements on youth in Massachusetts in order to bring about policy changes that would create healthier environments for youth. On July 1, 2012, the City of Boston introduced new legislation banning alcohol advertising on state property after long deliberation with youth coalitions and liquor industries. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority no longer allows alcohol advertising on its property, including in subway cars, trains and buses (Rocheleau, 2012).

The transit agency expects advertisement revenues to decline by approximately \$1.5 million in the first full year of the alcohol ad ban (Rocheleau, 2012). The agency, however, says it will find other advertisers for the available space on MBTA property.



2 Los Angeles

Since August 2011, Los Angeles city councilman Richard Alarcon has been working toward banning alcohol companies from advertising on city-owned and city-controlled properties (Smith, 2012). The ban would forbid alcohol companies from advertising on everything from bus shelters to kiosks at Los Angeles International Airport. Alcohol advertisements would also be banned from Los Angeles Convention Center, a city-owned property looking to build a new football stadium.

The first meeting Alarcon held drew support from approximately a dozen members of the Los Angeles Coalition to Ban Alcohol Advertisements from Public Property. These members included the neighbourhood church, and drug and alcohol treatment groups (Smith, 2012).

Despite the proposed ban facing conflict from advertising companies who asked to have the proposal dropped, members continued to lobby the city to ban alcohol advertisements. The motion to enact the alcohol advertisement ban was declined for discussion at the public safety committee meeting the first time. When Alarcon sent a letter in May 2012 to the committee, stressing the need to reduce outdoor advertising because of evidence showing the harmful effects it was having on youth, the committee reconsidered (Smith, 2012). Alcohol ads were banned from 6,000 bus benches in the City of Los Angeles and continued effort is being made to ban alcohol ads on all public property.



3 Digby, Nova Scotia

In 1989, the Municipality of the District of Digby enacted an alcoholic beverage policy stating that no liquor is to be kept or consumed in the municipal building. Clear and concise, this policy outlines the expectation that alcohol consumption is not a part of the municipal business culture.

2. Availability

2.1 Restricting Licensed Lounge and Bar Hours

Studies in Australia have found increases in motor vehicle incidents and assaults following extensions of operational hours of licensed facilities (Chikritzhs & Stockwell, 2002). In Windsor, Ontario, a study was conducted for four years before and three years after policy change for extended bar hours. After drinking hours were extended, results showed a significant increase in monthly motor vehicle casualties occurring between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. (Vingilis, McLeod, Stoduto, Seeley, & Mann, 2007).

Similarly, in Western Australia, research found that there was a relationship between the extension of hotel closing times from midnight to 1 a.m. and an increase in assaults and impaired driving leading to motor vehicle incidents. Long-term Australian research looking at the relationship between consumption, harm and hours of alcohol purchases for licensed premises in Australia has consistently demonstrated that extended hours of licensed establishments are associated with increased levels of consumption and/or harm (National Drug Research Institute, 2007).

According to Babor et. al. (2010), restricting the availability of alcohol limits opportunities to purchase it, thereby contributing to reductions in high-risk or heavy consumption. A number of studies have indicated that changing either the hours or the days of alcohol sales can redistribute the times at which many alcohol-related crashes and other alcohol-related violent events occur.

Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Restrict Bar Hours

Regulating the hours of operation of licensed facilities is a provincial responsibility under the Liquor Control Act. In Nova Scotia, most licensed facilities must close at 2 a.m. and facilities with a cabaret license must close at 3:30 a.m. Hours of operation can exceed provincially regulated hours of operation through special application. The Alcohol and Gaming Division, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, can extend the hours of operation for a liquor licensed premises for special events.

The most effective way to reduce lounge hours is to change provincial regulations to ensure that all licensed establishments in Nova Scotia that hold the same type of license close earlier.

Municipalities can, and do, use development agreements as a way to set bar/lounge hours. A development agreement acts as a contract between the municipal unit and a business or developer. In the agreement, the municipal unit sets out the conditions for operation of the business or facility. One condition might be, for example, that if it is a licensed facility, it closes by 1 a.m. (as is the case in the Town of Wolfville, Nova Scotia).

The Alcohol and Gaming Division, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, oversees the regulations under the Liquor Control Act and defers to development agreements that dictate earlier closures for licensed facilities. The division also has a policy that directs all requests for temporary extensions of the hours of operation for permanent licenses to be made to the municipality and local police officials (Alcohol and Gaming, 2012) to determine if they have issues with the extension.

Using development agreements to control bar hours carries with it a number of challenges. For example, the rules only apply to new developments, so existing establishments would not have the same restrictions on opening hours and would therefore have an advantage in a very competitive market. In a similar way, differences in opening hours between municipal units could result in an unequal playing field in a very competitive market.

Another approach is to work with owners of licensed facilities to voluntarily close their premises earlier and find other ways to increase their business revenues, while at the same time contributing to reducing community alcohol harm. Business engagement and collaboration by municipalities, bar owners, enforcement officials and other stakeholders could increase the likelihood of success.

OPTIONS:

- A** Municipalities can have development agreements that establish hours of operation for a business that serves alcohol.
- B** Towns can collaborate and support licensed establishments to reduce hours of operation

EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS RESTRICTING BAR HOURS

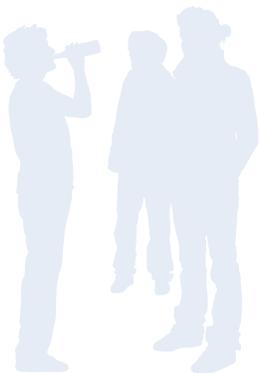
1 Wolfville, Nova Scotia

The Town of Wolfville sets hours of operation for licensed establishments in the Municipal Planning Strategy and restricts the closing time to 1 a.m. rather than the provincial regulation of 2 a.m. This requirement is also included in a development agreement for a lounge. Council had considered extending the lounge hours beyond the current 1 a.m. closing time; however, Council decided to table the motion. The town is engaged in a collaborative process with the local university, the business community and other stakeholders to identify potential opportunities to enhance community health and safety (Strang, 2011).

2 Norway

Norway has implemented minor restrictions in closing hours for on-premise alcohol sales to curb nighttime assaults in inner city areas (Rossow & Norström, 2012).

In Norway, operational hours for both on-premise and off-premise alcohol sales are decided at the municipal level; however, they must be within the national maximum business hours regulation. The national “normal closing hours” for on-premise sales are midnight for spirits (e.g. vodka, rum, etc.) and 1 a.m. for beer/wine (Rossow & Norström, 2012). The maximum closing hours are 3 a.m. for all types of alcoholic beverages. By national law, patrons are allowed to consume alcohol 30 minutes after the closing hours for sales. Municipalities may decide to extend or restrict closing hours as long as they are within the national maximum closing hours. Over the past decade, many Norwegian municipalities have changed, extended or restricted the closing hours for on-premise sales (Rossow & Norström, 2012).



2.2 Density of Licensed Establishments and Retail Outlets

Alcoholic beverage outlet density refers to the number of physical locations in which alcoholic beverages are available for purchase either per area or per population (e.g. 2.7 outlets per 1,000 population of at least 18 years) (Campbell et al., 2009). Strong evidence supported by geospatial studies shows a link between the density of alcohol establishments and rates of violent crime. Most of the evidence supports that areas with higher alcohol establishment densities are more likely to have a higher rate of violent crime (Toomey, et. al., 2012 A). It is believed that as alcohol becomes more available (i.e. another alcohol establishment is added to a census block, neighbourhood, etc.) alcohol consumption increases, with a subsequent rise in alcohol-related harm. The convenience of purchasing alcohol, mixed with the outlets' strategies to cater to specific types of customers in the neighbourhood (e.g. sports bars, wine bars, bars that play certain music genres, etc.), may encourage individuals to drink (Toomey, Erickson, Carlin, Quick, et al., 2012 B).

Restricting the number of outlets, particularly in close proximity to one another, can affect drinking levels and alcohol-related harm. Lower rates of liver cirrhosis deaths, alcoholic psychoses, drinking and driving fatalities, public drunkenness, fights and domestic violence, in particular, have been shown to occur with decreased alcohol availability (Heung, LeMar, & Rempel, 2011).

Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Regulate Bar Density

Municipalities can impact alcohol retail establishment density through zoning and land-use bylaws that control the location of an establishment. Municipalities can do this by restricting the location of alcohol establishments to certain zones. For example, in an area that is zoned commercially, municipalities can stipulate that there will be no alcohol establishments.

A municipality has authority to regulate the location of all development through zoning. A business that sells alcohol can be restricted to certain zones but cannot be restricted from the municipality entirely. A land-use bylaw cannot regulate business density in a straightforward way.

One way to keep tighter control over bar locations is to apply a special zone to them and place strict rezoning criteria in the municipal planning strategy to limit where the zone can be applied. The restrictions, however, cannot be so severe as to prohibit this kind of development.

Issues of non-conforming use may make it difficult to create certain zones where alcohol establishments cannot operate. Non-conforming use refers to a use which was legal when it was created, but no longer conforms to updated regulations. Non-conforming use of land is lawfully permitted at the date of the first publication of the notice of intention to adopt or amend a land-use bylaw.

Within Nova Scotia, a variety of business licenses is available, which makes it challenging to limit density by license type. Many licensed establishments in Nova Scotia, like restaurants, have more than one license type. They may have a license to run a family restaurant during the day and a lounge license that caters to those of legal drinking age at night. In rural areas, placing restrictions on one type of license may make it difficult for the business owner to earn sufficient revenue from operating with just one license.

OPTIONS:

A municipality has the authority to regulate the location of all development through zoning. A business that sells alcohol can be restricted to certain zones but cannot be prohibited from the municipality entirely. One way to improve control over bar locations is through strict, although not fully prohibitive, rezoning criteria in the municipal planning strategy.





EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS REGULATING BAR DENSITY

1 California

A community-based intervention trial in three communities in Northern California and Southern California between 1992 and 1996 highlighted the role for public policy to mitigate the impacts of alcohol outlet density (Reynolds, Holder, & Gruenewald, 1997).

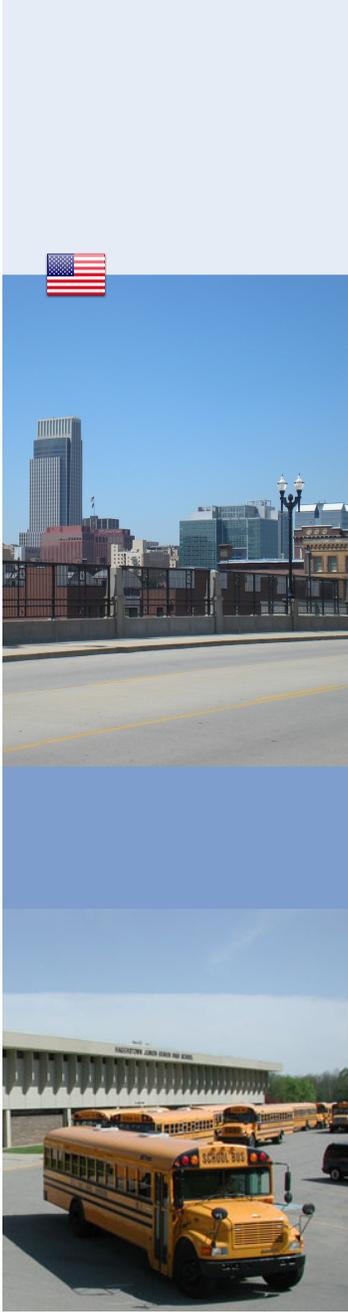
Community members in cities across Northern California were becoming increasingly concerned about gang violence, particularly the deaths and disability that resulted from youth shooting youth. The concern centered on a neighbourhood with the highest population density, alcohol outlets and gun violence (Reynolds et al., 1997). A project coalition to end alcohol-related violence connected to alcohol outlet density was developed to address the problem.

Members of the coalition included elected officials, public and private sector agency administrators, business owners and citizens. Local ordinances and policies from other California cities that addressed issues of alcohol access were reviewed. The coalition decided to maintain a region-wide perspective and allow alcohol access policies to apply evenly across all communities, helping to avoid criticism that it was discriminatory in its recommendations. Their actions led to the City Council adopting new restrictions and operating conditions on alcohol availability.

A similar approach was used in the Southern California communities. One city was among the first in the state to use its land-use and justice powers to reduce the density of alcohol outlets, and to impose business practice standards on alcohol outlets (Reynolds et al., 1997). A coalition was formed to address existing policies around new alcohol outlets and it carefully developed a comprehensive alcohol access policy with downtown redevelopment being the major concern. The group concentrated on educating business groups and community service clubs concerning the needs, content and impacts of the proposed policy (Reynolds et al., 1997).

By the time these policies were implemented and the density of alcohol establishments reduced, the downtown area had shown a significantly lower rate of alcohol-related harm. The changes brought forward to council included mandatory responsible beverage service training for staff and managers of alcohol outlets as a requirement of their business permit.





EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS REGULATING BAR DENSITY (cont.)

2 Omaha, Nebraska

With the leadership of two councilmen, the city of Omaha has proposed an ordinance called the LOCAL Campaign to address alcohol outlet-related problems. The proposal has three main components:

- (1) Adopt city-wide operational standards for businesses that sell alcohol to prevent public nuisances such as noise, property damage, etc.
- (2) Impose a modest \$75/year alcohol fee (20 cents/day) for all businesses selling alcohol within the city to help pay for enforcement.
- (3) Allow for the establishment to address more specific problems (The LOCAL Campaign, 2011).

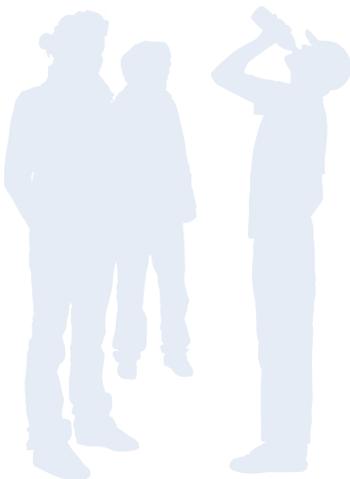
The LOCAL campaign would encourage the adoption of a local zoning ordinance and create a “level playing field” whereby the Omaha City Council and Omaha residents have a voice in the placement and nature of new liquor licenses (The LOCAL Campaign, 2011).

On a 6-1 vote, the Omaha City Council passed an amended alcohol ordinance in October, 2012.

2.3 Location of Retail Establishments and Alcohol Retail Outlets to child/youth facilities

The location of licensed alcohol establishments and other alcohol retail outlets is often a topic of debate, especially when these establishments are found in proximity to universities, places of worship, schools and/or playgrounds. Having alcohol establishments close to areas that are frequented by children and youth exposes them to high-risk environments, normalizing and encouraging them to consume alcohol. Where alcohol establishments are close to schools or homes, students may be exposed to public drunkenness, harassment of passers-by and criminal activities such as gambling, prostitution and drug dealing – all of which may contribute to an environment of social disorder around many liquor stores (Pacific Institute, 2009).

In San Pablo, California, a study looked at the risks associated with the number of alcohol establishments within walking distance of the homes and schools of children and youth (Pacific Institute, 2009). Results demonstrated an impact on the public health, safety and quality of life for children and youth in this area. It also demonstrated an increased risk that the children and youth would adopt high-risk drinking behaviours.



Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Regulate Bar Location

Municipalities can determine that no establishment that serves or sells alcohol be within a certain distance of an area frequented by children and youth, such as a school, day care, community facility or other such venue. The primary tool used to regulate this is called a separation distance, which falls under a land-use bylaw. A separation distance is a legal requirement for certain activities to be conducted at minimum distances from other listed activities or sites.

OPTIONS:

Municipalities can determine that licensed establishments be prohibited from operating within a certain distance of an area frequented by children and youth (such as a school, day care, community facility or other such venue).

The use of separation distance as a requirement in land-use bylaws can be challenging for small communities. Small communities may have limited commercial districts, where a separation distance (outlining the required distance between an establishment that sells alcohol and facilities frequented by children and youth) could be so geographically large it would become impossible to set up an establishment that sells alcohol.

Another challenge is that if alcohol establishments are located farther away from schools, they may end up in residential areas where residents may object to the establishment's location.

EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS REGULATING BAR LOCATION

1 Alberta, Canada:

Some Alberta municipalities have a land-use bylaw called the Major or Minor Alcohol Sales Use. This bylaw stipulates that no alcohol establishment shall be located closer than 500 metres from any Major or Minor Alcohol Sales Use (City of Edmonton, 2012). Major Alcohol Sales Use is the sale of any type of alcoholic beverages to the public where the floor area for the business premise is greater than 275 square metres. Minor Alcohol Sales Use is the sale of any and all types of alcoholic beverages to the public where the Floor Area for the business premise is no more than 275 square metres (City of Edmonton, 2012).

The 500-metre separation distance is measured from the closest point of the Major or Minor Alcohol Sales Use to the closest point of any other existing or approved Major or Minor Alcohol Sales Use. If two or more Major or Minor Alcohol Sales Uses lawfully operate within 500 metres of each other as of the date of the enactment, they shall be considered legal non-conforming uses (City of Edmonton, 2012).





2 City of Spruce Grove, Alberta

Each municipality in Alberta can regulate alcohol sales through its land-use bylaw. Municipal regulations can establish zoning districts where liquor stores can operate, separation distances between liquor stores and other uses (schools, parks), or regulate maximum size of stores in certain areas (City of Spruce Grove Planning and Development Department, 2011). Municipal regulations in Alberta can also provide specific direction around safety and security measures to incorporate into liquor store developments.

The City of Spruce Grove, Alberta, has an existing land-use bylaw that regulates where minor and major alcohol sales are permitted. It requires a separation of 100 metres between a proposed major alcohol establishment and community or recreation activities. This includes public parks and public or private education facilities (City of Spruce Grove, 2011). The city’s land-use bylaw also allows the development officer to require additional lighting, signage or screening, including landscaping, to make the development compatible with adjacent uses (City of Spruce Grove, 2011).



3 Boulder City, Colorado

Boulder City, Colorado, proposed that businesses that serve alcohol downtown, and on University Hill, renew their use permits every few years, and that no new liquor licenses would be issued within 500 feet of the University of Colorado (Meltzer, 2012).

City Council looked at how the city’s land-use policy could be used in conjunction with enforcement and education to reduce rates of binge drinking, especially among University of Colorado students (Meltzer, 2012). Officials recommended adding new zoning definitions for bars, restaurants and taverns; regulations would vary depending on the level of risk. This would make it more difficult to open an establishment and would encourage restrictions on location. Officials also recommended implementing three-year renewals for businesses serving alcohol in the general business districts near homes (Meltzer, 2012).

The recommendations are based on the simplest possible code changes with the greatest immediate impact. Any changes would be monitored and evaluated after two years to determine the impact. Existing businesses would be grandfathered (Meltzer, 2012).



3. Enforcement

3.1 Role and Impact of Enforcement in Determining Success of Various Policy Changes

The enforcement of municipal and provincial regulations is an important indicator in reducing alcohol-related harm. Research supports that compliance with regulations by licensed establishments requires effective enforcement for the desired impact on alcohol-related harm to take place (McKnight & Streff, 1994). For example, checking for patron ID is viewed as highly effective for reducing alcohol sales to minors (Heung et al., 2012). Training of staff in responsible beverage service can reduce over-service and heavy drinking (Babor et al., 2010). Enforcement of these rules, regulations and practices can be an effective approach in reducing underage drinking and high-risk drinking patterns that lead to harm.

Research on university environments, for example, shows that students in colleges with strong alcohol policy enforcement are less likely to binge drink than those in colleges without strong alcohol policy enforcement (Paek & Hove, 2012).



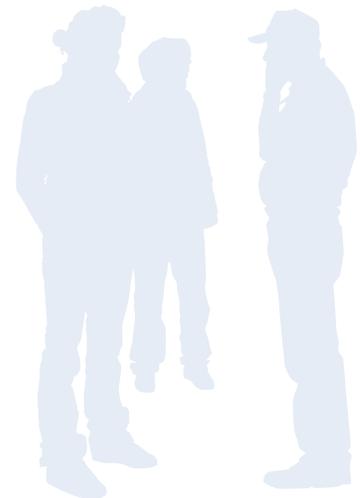
Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Increase Enforcement

There are many levels of enforcement that play a role in supporting alcohol policies. In Nova Scotia, the RCMP, municipal police, bylaw officers and LCA inspectors all have different jurisdiction in ensuring peace and reducing harm. Enforcement officials can help to reduce drinking and driving, liquor smuggling, or selling alcohol to minors by monitoring compliance with federal, provincial and municipal regulations (Bondy, 2003).

Municipalities can work with enforcement officials to determine how they can focus more time on monitoring and enforcing laws in the community relating to alcohol. This should be done in close collaboration with enforcement agencies to ensure they have the required human and financial resources to achieve the desired impact and that such focus does not negatively impact other areas of enforcement.

OPTIONS:

- A** Municipalities can work closely with enforcement officials to identify priority areas for reducing alcohol harm.
.....
- B** Municipalities can partner with universities to create and enforce effective alcohol policies.





EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS TO INCREASE ENFORCEMENT

1 Town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada:

The Town of Antigonish reports that alcohol-related harm and disturbances are most often seen during the months of September through April when the school year is in session and university students reside in the town.

The town has had success in reducing noise, property damage and other disturbances resulting from alcohol use through a number of enforcement measures. For example, they have invested in two bylaw officers to do routine enforcement checks throughout the community, the costs of which are primarily paid for in the additional fines imposed by the bylaw officers. The Town of Antigonish has also invested in an increased level of enforcement by RCMP. Town officials cited several cases where bylaw fines were imposed and challenged in court (by the individuals charged), and rulings favoured the town and RCMP.



2 Highland Park, Texas

In Highland Park, Texas, a strategy was developed in various communities to break up underage drinking parties (Prevention Research Center, 2012).

The Chief of Police in this community formed a supportive relationship with other enforcement agencies in the area to address this issue. Despite negative community pressure, the Chief of Police worked with the schools to enforce sanctions against the organizers and attendees of parties where underage drinking took place (Prevention Research Center, 2012).



3 Ventura County, California

In this California county, the Monitoring and Enforcement Activities (MEA) program was developed to monitor businesses that sell alcoholic beverages. The program is comprised of a city attorney, a city planner, a neighbourhood services liaison from the City Manager's Office, a Code Inspection Officer and a police officer (Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2007). Each member's responsibilities correspond to his or her authority and expertise. The program works cooperatively with other city departments to ensure that all alcoholic beverage sales activities comply with regulations (Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2007).



EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS TO INCREASE ENFORCEMENT (cont.)

4 Halifax, Nova Scotia

Each fall, Halifax Regional Police (HRP) launches “Operation Fallback,” a dedicated police cruiser that travels through university neighbourhoods on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings during September, responding to calls from students and community members. Dalhousie University provides financial support to continue the program through October and on key dates during the second semester. It is a concentrated enforcement effort to reduce noise complaints, property damage and public intoxication in the residential areas surrounding local universities.

The campaign was created several years ago in response to concerns raised by citizens. HRP continues to work closely with community groups, university officials and student representatives to help prevent problems through education and enforcement. Police have increased high-visibility patrols and directed enforcement in known complaint areas.

The partnership between the police and the university has evolved into a dedicated patrol program beginning in October when Operation Fallback concludes. HRP provides the cruiser and Dalhousie pays the staffing costs for two officers to patrol designated neighbourhoods around Dalhousie campuses at peak times on selected dates throughout the year.



4. Liability

4.1 Regulations Regarding Housing Rental and Impact

There is evidence to suggest that some housing environments, particularly those that house groups of unrelated individuals, have the potential to create community problems related to alcohol use. When there are multiple occupants in one dwelling, there is an increased risk of high-risk drinking, and controlling private house parties is more difficult (Doumani, 2011). Many problems such as property damage, public displays of drunkenness, noise, violence, etc., are more prevalent with increased numbers of tenants per dwelling (Doumani, 2011).

“Studentification” is a term often used to describe a concentration of private sector, multiple occupancy student housing that forms in an established neighbourhood close to post-secondary institutions (Doumani, 2011). From an economic perspective, studentification has many positive benefits such as: preventing serious depopulation in many inner-city areas, the renovation of older properties to extend their useful lives, higher/rising property values and the creation of a flexible part-time labour pool. Conversely, studentification presents many negative impacts such as: noise, irresponsible behaviour, increased population density and overall increased rates of alcohol-related harm due to excessive drinking at parties, in bars, etc. (Doumani, 2011).



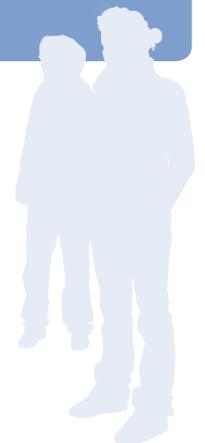
Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to Regulate Housing Rental

A private landlord cannot be held criminally responsible for the behaviour of his/her tenants, and municipalities cannot control to whom landlords rent. The Town of Antigonish is testing new ground by developing an informed landlord bylaw that will hold landlords accountable for their tenants’ behaviour (see examples below).

A land-use bylaw cannot control the number of bedrooms in a dwelling. However, municipalities can create different definitions for different types of dwellings. For example, a municipality can define a single detached dwelling as having up to a specified number of bedrooms. A dwelling with more than that number of bedrooms is defined as something else, perhaps a rooming house, a residence or a dormitory. A municipal minimum standards bylaw can limit the number of people in a dwelling; this is usually used to prevent issues of overcrowding and sanitation.

OPTIONS:

- A** Municipalities can define a single detached dwelling as having a specified number of bedrooms. Dwellings that exceed the specified number receive a different definition. A municipal minimum standards bylaw can limit the number of people in the dwelling.
- B** Municipalities may be able to follow The Town of Antigonish’s example and develop an informed landlord bylaw that holds landlords accountable for their tenants’ behaviour.





EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS REGULATING HOUSING RENTAL

1 Town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia

The Town of Antigonish recently put a noise bylaw in place that prohibits partying after 11 p.m. Noise after 11 p.m. must not exceed 65 decibels.

The town is also in the process of developing an informed landlord bylaw. This bylaw will stipulate that if a complaint about a tenant(s) requires a visit from a bylaw officer, the landlord will be required to issue a letter warning the tenant(s) to change their behaviour. If the behaviour continues and another complaint call is issued – requiring a second visit from a bylaw officer – the landlord will be charged. This bylaw is currently being reviewed by lawyers and is anticipated to be implemented in 2013.

2 Oshawa, Ontario

The “studentification” of some neighbourhoods in Oshawa that led to high-risk drinking behaviours forced the municipality to take action with their land-use and zoning bylaws. For example, the city and a local landowner submitted an application to stop approximately 30 single-detached dwellings on lands zoned as low-density from being used as “lodging houses” (houses that contain three to 10 units and typically house students – a boarding house, fraternity or sorority, etc.) (Doumani, 2011).

Based on these efforts, Oshawa has since been able to develop a Residential Rental Housing Licensing bylaw. Residential rental properties located in the vicinity of Durham College and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology must be licensed under the bylaw. This means that landlords are required to keep rental houses in R1 zones as single housekeeping establishments and not as lodging houses. The total number of bedrooms in a rental unit must not exceed four, and no more than 40 per cent of the gross floor area of any basement or cellar may be comprised of bedrooms. The bylaw limits the number of rental bedrooms to four bedrooms on all streets in the rental area. It also requires that these rental houses comply with various standards and bylaws, including the Fire Code, Electrical Code, Building Code and the City’s Zoning and Property Standards bylaw(s) (Doumani, 2011). By having the bylaw in place, the City of Oshawa is able to control the number of students renting in a given area, which helps to reduce partying leading to excessive alcohol consumption and harm.



4.2 – Ability to License Landlords

There is a misperception that high-risk or binge drinking behaviours occur mainly in alcohol establishments such as bars, lounges, taverns, etc. Recent studies suggest that high-risk or binge drinking behaviours are occurring more often in private dwellings, usually where house parties are taking place. College and university students are most likely to drink in private dwellings because it is convenient, less expensive, and those who are drinking underage are less likely to be caught. A study conducted in Boston showed that binge drinking varies according to the level of supervision in the living environment (H Wechsler & Nelson, 2008; Henry Wechsler et al., 2001). Underage students living at home with their parents had the lowest rates of binge drinking of all college students. Those living away from their parents and in off-campus residences showed the highest rates of binge drinking (Wechsler, et. al., 2002).

Although provincial legislation sets guidelines for landlords to follow when regulating and controlling tenant behaviour, municipalities have other ways of working with landlords to address similar issues. Municipalities can hold community conversations about alcohol norms and related harm with landlords and neighbours. Conversations can increase knowledge of the issue and create a greater understanding of neighbours' needs and concerns. This approach can also encourage landlords to implement new lease agreements that would work toward addressing this issue while following provincial regulations. Tenants have rights to use their unit so long as they do not interfere with the possession or occupancy of the landlord or other tenants [Subsection 9 (1) Statutory Condition 3, RTA].

In most places across North America, landlords are required to obtain a Residential Rental Unit License that encourages them to enforce certain provincial or state bylaws as part of their lease agreements with tenants. In Nova Scotia, the equivalent is a reference in leases to the provincial Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). Most "tenant conduct" matters, including the over-consumption of alcohol, are covered by several areas of the RTA, including statutory conditions enforcing good behaviour and obligations of the tenant (e.g. noise control, nuisance behaviour, etc.). Beyond this, landlords rely on enforcement by policing authorities and charges being laid under the Criminal Code of Canada to help control poor behaviours resulting from high-risk drinking.

Policy Options Available to NS Municipalities to License Landlords

Municipalities can charge individual tenants with breaking noise control bylaws and public nuisance bylaws to reduce the harm that may come from drinking alcohol in private dwellings. Landlords cannot, however, be held criminally responsible for tenant behaviour.

Eviction notifications must adhere to the RTA and regulations. In November 2012, changes to the RTA balance the needs of tenants and landlords, and improve the process to resolve issues while protecting the rights of both parties. One of these regulations enables landlords to give only two weeks' notice of ending a lease but with a new onus to show cause for eviction. If a notice for eviction is not followed, it must be addressed through the RTA dispute resolution process. Tenants can also dispute the notice for eviction through the dispute resolution process.

OPTIONS:

A municipality can work closely with its landlords and encourage them to proactively inform their tenants that the misuse of alcohol that harms neighbours and other tenants will not be accepted and is grounds for eviction. If financial and human resources are available, a landlord licensing system could be explored.

If municipalities had the authority to require a landlord to comply with a bylaw, that bylaw would not take precedence over the RTA. For example, if a municipality had a bylaw that required a landlord to state that a tenant must abide by a municipal noise disturbance regulation, it does not mean that if the tenant did not obey, they would be automatically evicted. The landlord would still have to give proper notice to their tenant under the RTA, and the tenant would still have the protections, if any in the circumstance, under the RTA.



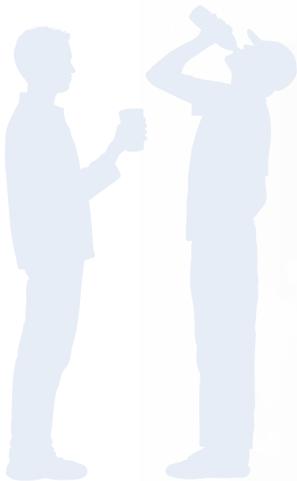
EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL ACTIONS LICENSING LANDLORDS

1 Oshawa, Ontario

In Oshawa, potential landlords must submit a maintenance plan as part of their application for a Rental Unit license. This maintenance plan must identify measures that the landlord will implement for the purpose of complying with Oshawa's Lot Maintenance bylaw (Doumani, 2011). Municipalities may enact property standard bylaws that require the exterior of properties to be kept in a neat and tidy condition, for example, with yards and balconies kept clear of undesirable material (Doumani, 2011). House parties and excessive alcohol consumption leading to property damage and harm is likely to occur in residences occupied by multiple tenants. By requiring landlords to implement and enforce these standard maintenance bylaws, tenants either comply or face eviction. This may discourage partying that leads to high-risk drinking and alcohol-related harm.

2 Kingston, Ontario

Kingston's property standards bylaw addressed alcohol-related concerns that arose from student occupancy use. Section 4.42 of the bylaw states "any furniture that is manufactured for interior use shall not be placed outside of a dwelling" (Doumani, 2011). By encouraging landlords to prohibit indoor furniture from being used outside, the City of Kingston can control the environment that influences high-risk drinking leading to poor behaviours and harm. This bylaw will discourage tenants from turning the property into a "party house," and therefore discourage the nuisance behaviour partying creates (e.g. public display of drunkenness, noise, violence, etc.).



VII. Community Collaboration

Community collaboration is vital to long-term success in creating healthy communities (Adlaf, Demers, & Gliksman, 2005; Beaton & Co., 2011; Wechsler & Nelson, 2008).

The issue of reducing alcohol-related harm among university students, for example, is increasingly being addressed through a comprehensive and collaborative approach. A comprehensive approach uses a variety of interventions aimed at supporting the individual to make healthy decisions, changing the environment both on and off campuses to support healthy decision-making, and making policy and legislative changes at the municipal, provincial and federal levels (Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, 2012).

The literature on reducing alcohol harm among the university population suggests that universities (administration, faculty and students) are most successful when they collaborate with the broader community when seeking to reduce alcohol-related harm both on and off-campus (H Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). This is because communities may both reflect and support the drinking culture on campus. Similarly, the culture of alcohol availability, accessibility, and use in a community can undermine university alcohol policies. A Harvard University study, for example, found that the prevalence of heavy drinking on campus was associated with the density of alcohol outlets, as well as laws and their enforcement, in the communities surrounding the colleges (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). Community members in turn benefit from working with universities to reduce heavy student drinking since they are impacted by resulting harm such as noise disturbances, property damage, assaults, impaired driving, etc. (Adlaf et al., 2005; Beaton & Co., 2011; Wechsler & Nelson, 2008).

There are several documented examples in the United States that illustrate this approach. The NU Directions project is a long-standing collaboration between the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the city of Lincoln (Newman et al., 2006). The project has a campus community coalition with diverse stakeholders and part of their goal is to address the alcohol environment in the community to support a healthy campus culture.

Another example of a collaboration between a community and campus is the Common Ground initiative between the University of Rhode Island and the town of Narragansett. The initiative is coalition-led. Western Washington University and the University of Massachusetts are also taking a collaborative approach (Linowski & DiFulvio, 2012; Saltz & Welker, 2009; Wood et al., 2009).

Closer to home, the Town of Wolfville in Nova Scotia continues to collaborate with Acadia University, as well as with municipal leaders, police, addictions prevention and treatment services staff, students and citizens. They value a high level of student and citizen engagement in the planning and implementation of actions. Their intent is to develop and implement a community action plan that reduces excessive alcohol consumption within the context of enhancing community health more broadly.

Residents from the Town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and surrounding areas came together to discuss concerns about the impact of alcohol on their communities, and developed a municipal alcohol report, *In Our Words: What Alcohol Use Looks Like in Our Towns*, presented at the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) Fall 2011 Conference. The Town of Antigonish continues to work in partnership with Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority Addictions Services and Public Health. The Antigonish Alcohol Forum Rethinking Our Drinking, held February 1, 2013, continued the community's conversation about alcohol-related harm and explored opportunities for changing the culture of alcohol use at the local level.

The Cape Breton Regional Municipality is partnering with their local Addictions Services to hold community consultations around the issue of alcohol use. These consultations include reaching out and working with students and the broader university community (Cape Breton University), as well as with the police and community members.

VIII. Conclusion

This report provides an overview of options available to municipalities and communities to reduce alcohol-related harm, and to promote healthy alcohol consumption. It is not an exhaustive scan; rather, it is a contribution to the ongoing dialogue regarding alcohol consumption in our communities.

One area that has not been exclusively reviewed in this report is the role of community design in shaping healthy consumption of alcohol. Given that people have a natural need to come together and to socialize, there may well be opportunities to create more gathering spaces in our community where the primary focus is on something other than alcohol consumption.

Governments, public health agencies and other community stakeholders need to take proactive and comprehensive approaches in order to build community support for an effective public health response (CPHA, 2011).

Any initiatives undertaken as part of a comprehensive municipal alcohol policy will require monitoring and ongoing evaluation of their impacts, so that adjustments can be made to them to improve their effectiveness.

Reductions in alcohol-related harm can be achieved by adopting a collaborative and multi-sector action plan to create supportive policies for healthier communities. Multiple policies, created by the best thinking of a variety of local stakeholders, will have to be employed at different levels of government in order to shift the culture of alcohol in Nova Scotia. Municipalities play a pivotal role in drawing attention to the issue and making it a priority, for the purpose of improving overall community health.



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Appendix A: Summary NS Municipal Policy Options

Indicators	Policy Options	Actions for Change	Examples of Municipal Action
ADVERTISING Industry sponsorship of sporting, cultural and other community events	(a) Municipal By-laws and Policy Development; (b) Sign and Land Use By-laws.	Municipalities can create policies that restrict or prohibit the advertising of alcohol on municipal owned land, facilities and/or at municipal events Municipalities can control the location, size and type of signs that are displayed in front of liquor establishments.	Boston Los Angeles Digby, Nova Scotia
AVAILABILITY Restricting licensed lounge and bar hours Density of Licensed Establishments, Retail Outlets and Impact from One Another Location of Retail Establishments and Alcohol Retail Outlets to Child/ Youth Facilities	(1a) Development Agreements (1b) Establishments set own hours of operation. (2a) Land Use By-law (2b) Separation Distance (3) Land Use By-laws (Separation Distance Requirement).	(1a) Municipalities can have development agreements that establish hours of operation for a business that serves alcohol. (1b) Towns can collaborate and support licensed establishments to reduce hours of operation without losing business revenue. (2a) Municipalities can create a by-law that indicates that no business establishment that sells alcohol is permitted in a certain area. (2b) Municipalities can set limits on the number of licensed establishments allowed in a certain geographic area. 3) Municipalities can define a single detached dwelling as having a specified number of bedrooms. Dwellings that exceeded the specified number receive a different definition. A municipal standards bylaw can limit the number of people in the dwelling.	Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Norway California Omaha Alberta City of Spruce Grove, Alberta Boulder City, Colorado
ENFORCEMENT Role and Impact of Enforcement in Determining Success of Various Policy Changes.	Work together and identify priority areas Partner with universities	(a) Municipalities can work closely with enforcement officials to identify priority areas for reducing alcohol harms. (b) Partner with universities to create and enforce effective alcohol policies.	Town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia Highland Park, Texas Ventura County, California Halifax, Nova Scotia
LIABILITY Regulations around housing rental and its impact Ability to License Landlords	1a) Land-use By-laws and zoning. (2a) Set up a landlord licensing program	(1a) Municipalities can define a single detached dwelling as having a set number of bedrooms. (1b) Municipalities may be able to follow the Town of Antigonish's example and develop an informed landlord by-law. (2a) Municipalities can charge tenants with breaking noise control by-laws and public nuisance by-laws. (2b) A municipality can encourage landlords to proactively develop a lease that indicates which behaviours will not be accepted and that will result in an eviction.	Town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia Oshawa, Ontario Oshawa, Ontario Kingston, Ontario



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