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# Haldimand County



## Report CEC-04-2025 Public Entertainment Licence and Designation of Municipally Significant Event for Caledonia Ribfest

For Consideration by Council on June 23, 2025

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This Report was referred to Staff at the Council in Committee meeting of June 17, 2025.

### Objective:

To seek approval to issue a Public Entertainment Event Licence for the Caledonia Ribfest occurring July 4 to July 6, 2025, at the Caledonia Fairgrounds, 151 Caithness Street East, Caledonia. Secondly, to obtain Council authorization to deem this event as “Municipally Significant” to allow the event to qualify for a Special Occasion Permit by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

### Recommendations:

1. THAT Report CEC-04-2025 Public Entertainment Licence and Designation of Municipally Significant Event for Caledonia Ribfest be received;
2. AND THAT in accordance with By-law 1915/18, a Public Entertainment Event Licence be issued to Northern Heat Rib Series Inc., 2968 5<sup>th</sup> Line, Ohsweken, ON, N0A 1M0, to hold Caledonia Ribfest July 4 to July 6, 2025 at 151 Caithness Street East, Caledonia, subject to the following conditions:
  - a. THAT the maximum allowable sound level from amplified music or musical performances be limited to 85 dBA at 30m distance from the opening of the sound stage;
  - b. THAT no amplified music or musical performances be permitted prior to 9:00am or after 11:00pm;
  - c. THAT amplified music or musical performances are restricted to the sound stage and no other amplified music or musical performances shall occur anywhere else on the property;
  - d. THAT the rear (north side) of the stage be equipped with sound dampening material approved by an independent licensed engineer specializing in acoustics;
3. AND THAT the Caledonia Ribfest be deemed a ‘municipally significant’ event for its perceived community benefit, and to fulfill the requirement for liquor sales as prescribed by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

**Prepared by:** Kyra Hayes, Supervisor, Customer Experience & Communications

**Reviewed by:** Trish Cardwell, Manager, Customer Experience & Communications

**Respectfully submitted:** Megan Jamieson, CHRL, General Manager, Corporate & Social Services

**Approved:** Cathy Case, Chief Administrative Officer

## **Executive Summary:**

Northern Heat Rib Series Inc. has submitted an application for a Public Entertainment Licence to hold Caledonia Ribfest, a 3-day outdoor event featuring food vendors, live musical entertainment, artisan vendors, and a Kid Zone. Based on the parameters for this event, a licence must be procured under Haldimand County's Public Entertainment Event Licensing By-law 1915/18, specifically through Council approval. This report lays out the by-law requirements related to a Public Entertainment Event and suggests a conditional framework for licence approval. This report also addresses the applicant's request to be deemed as 'municipally significant' to fulfill the requirement for liquor sales as prescribed by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

The event is being recommended by staff for license approval with numerous conditions. Staff are also recommending the declaration of municipal significance, based on the benefit to tourism and the comprehensive safety plan provided.

The applicant will be in attendance at the June 17, 2025, Council in Committee meeting to provide an overview of the event and to answer questions from Council.

## **Background:**

Haldimand County has a process in place for licensing Public Entertainment Events, as outlined in By-law No. 1915/18. These events include outdoor concerts, festivals, or other performances – live or recorded – for public entertainment. A valid licence, including Council approval, must be obtained in order to hold or conduct such event.

Haldimand County has received an application from Northern Heat Rib Series Inc., based in Ohsweken, Ontario, requesting licensing for a 3-day event in Caledonia on July 4-6, 2025.

All Public Entertainment Event licence applications are subjected to rigorous review by staff and brought forward to Council for approval only if all requirements of the by-law can be met.

## **Analysis:**

### **Public Entertainment Licence Application**

Caledonia Ribfest is described by the applicants as a family-friendly, multi-day event featuring food vendors from different cultures, live musical entertainment, artisan vendors and a Kid Zone with rides. Organizers are committed to providing a safe, fun, family-focused event and providing local bands, small businesses and artisans with an opportunity to market their products & services. Northern Heat Ribfest Inc. has successfully run the event in several other locations across Ontario. Over the 3-day event, 14,000 attendees are expected.

A letter from the property owner at 151 Caithness Street East, Caledonia (the Caledonia Fairgrounds), along with the provided rental agreement, acknowledges that Northern Heat Ribfest Inc. is permitted to utilize the property for Caledonia Ribfest. The proposed site plan for the event is included as Attachment 1 for reference. As required by By-law No. 1915/18, event organizers intend to notify neighbouring properties about the festival, in advance.

The complete application has been evaluated by related divisions, agencies and individuals, as required under Public Entertainment Event By-law No. 1915/18. The following provides specific comments garnered through that consultation.

## **Emergency Services**

The Manager, Emergency Services/Fire Chief has reviewed the proposed event plans and supports issuing a Public Entertainment Event licence based on the emergency plan provided. Private security has also been contracted. As a condition of the licence, a site inspection by the Fire Chief (or designate) will occur the day prior to the event to ensure requirements are being met. This includes, but is not restricted to, inspections of food vendors, tents, structures and any other inspections deemed necessary under the Ontario Fire Code.

## **Building & Municipal Enforcement Services**

Staff have advised the applicant that a building permit is needed to set up the proposed stage, as well as for any tents larger than 60 square metres. As a condition of the licence, a site inspection by the Manager, Building & Municipal Enforcement Services will occur the day prior to the event to ensure requirements are met.

The Building & Municipal Enforcement Services division expressed some concerns with the event given the location's proximity to residential dwellings. Staff note that 151 Caithness Street East, Caledonia is regularly utilized for public events and exhibitions, therefore support the licensing application provided that all the following noise-related conditions form part of the licence and are strictly complied with:

- a. THAT the maximum allowable sound level from amplified music or musical performances be limited to 85 dBA at 30m distance from the opening of the sound stage;
- b. THAT no amplified music or musical performances be permitted prior to 9:00am or after 11:00pm;
- c. THAT amplified music or musical performances are restricted to the sound stage and no other amplified music or musical performances shall occur anywhere else on the property;
- d. THAT the rear (north side) of the stage be equipped with sound dampening material approved by an independent licensed engineer specializing in acoustics; and

## **Planning & Development**

Staff have confirmed that 151 Caithness Street East, Caledonia, is zoned for Public Entertainment Events, thus the event is permitted to be held on that property.

## **Legal & Support Services**

Insurance for Public Entertainment Events, as outlined in By-law No. 1915/18, requires: a Commercial General Liability Policy with an insurer licensed to do business in the Province of Ontario and acceptable to the Issuer. Such policy shall provide coverage for bodily injury and property damage in an amount not less than \$2M per occurrence or such greater amount as the Issuer may determine, and shall name Haldimand County as an additional insured. The coverage shall be written on an occurrence basis, contain a cross liability/severability of interest clause and shall provide for 30 days written notice of cancellation. Upon review of the organizers' Certificate of Insurance (COI), Legal & Support Services has indicated that coverage submitted by event organizers satisfies insurance requirements, and organizers must obtain insurance information from all vendors participating.

## **Roads Operations**

The Roads Operations division has been made aware of the event and related traffic control measures and have no concerns.

## **Grand Erie Public Health**

The applicant has submitted a Special Event Organizer application to Grand Erie Public Health who will review their qualifications in advance and complete any inspections once the providers are set up on site. The applicant is aware that all vendors must supply their own water. In addition, portable toilets,

handwashing stations and waste receptacles will be required, with quantities based on the projected volume of attendees.

### **Ontario Provincial Police**

The Ontario Provincial Police have been notified of the event and have been provided a site plan by the applicant as required of By-law No. 1915/18.

### **Neighbouring Properties**

The applicant indicates that they will notify neighbouring properties and will document the date and time of delivery of these notifications.

### **Request to Deem Event “Municipally Significant” for Special Occasion Permit**

In addition to the licensing application, Caledonia Ribfest organizers have requested that Haldimand County deem their event as ‘municipally significant’, either through Council resolution, or a letter. This municipal designation will allow the event organizers to apply for a Special Occasion Permit from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) in order to serve alcohol, which would otherwise be strictly prohibited.

Haldimand County Festival and Event Policy No. 2015/02 outlines a framework for deeming events as ‘municipally significant,’ but applies only to events held on municipal property. Currently, there is no policy guiding the assessment of festivals and events on private property for this designation. As such, staff recommend using the same criteria outlined in the existing policy to evaluate Caledonia Ribfest’s request for municipal significance.

The Festival and Event Policy suggests that events on public property be considered for municipal significance status if they provide a clear community benefit, such as enhancing Haldimand’s profile and driving tourism. The policy also requires organizers to submit a detailed alcohol management plan outlining the size and layout of the alcohol service area (e.g., tents, fencing, or barricades), as well as the qualifications of individuals serving alcohol. In the application, Caledonia Ribfest organizers have indicated vendor opportunities for local businesses, musicians and artisans.

Staff have assessed Caledonia Ribfest’s application with a focus on compliance, health & safety, and community impact including tourism opportunities. Based on this assessment, staff recommend that the Caledonia Ribfest be deemed ‘municipally significant’. Council may approve this recommendation alongside the conditional Public Entertainment Event Licence, or it may choose to deny it. If denied, organizers will be ineligible for a Special Occasion Permit through the AGCO, and alcohol will be strictly prohibited at the event.

### **Financial/Legal Implications:**

The Public Entertainment Event licensing fee of \$1,358 has been paid in full by the applicant. All licensing fees are non-refundable as their purpose is to recover staff time related to reviewing and assessing an application. If the event is approved, a \$5,000 security deposit will be required prior to licence issuance.

### **Stakeholder Impacts:**

Neighbouring properties may be impacted from the event by increase in local traffic and/or noise attributed to the event. There may be a positive economic impact to local businesses.

## **Report Impacts:**

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

## **References:**

1. [Public Entertainment Event Licensing By-Law No. 1915/18](#)
2. [Festival and Event Policy No. 2015/02](#)

## **Attachments:**

1. Caledonia Ribfest Site Plan