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Export date: Sat Oct 31 10:02:53 2026 / +0000 GMT

Town of Shelburne maintains current rules on alcohol consumption at public events

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town of Shelburne says it will maintain its current rules surrounding alcohol consumption at outdoor public events, opting not to adopt Ontario's new bring-your-own-beverage (BYOB) framework at this time.

In a statement released by the Town of Shelburne, officials said existing bylaws, policies and Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) regulations will remain in effect for festivals, community gatherings and events held on municipal property.

Under the current rules, alcohol is not permitted in outdoor public spaces, parks or events unless it is being served within a licensed or approved area.

Town officials said the decision is aimed at maintaining public safety, supporting local businesses and ensuring events remain well-managed and family-friendly.

The town added that residents and visitors attending local festivals are encouraged to purchase beverages from licensed areas or nearby restaurants and businesses, noting that local vendors and establishments play an important role in sustaining community events and the local economy.

Event organizers wishing to offer alcohol service at an event must continue following the town's existing approval process and obtain all necessary permits.

The move comes after the Province of Ontario announced earlier this year that municipalities could choose to allow attendees at certain outdoor cultural and community events to bring their own alcohol into designated areas.

The new framework, which takes effect through the AGCO beginning this spring, applies only in municipalities that pass enabling bylaws and approve eligible events.

Provincial officials have said the policy is intended to support tourism, reduce costs for event organizers and provide greater flexibility for community festivals.