

Liquor Establishments and Restaurants Regulatory Review Council Presentation

Development, Buildings & Licensing
July 22, 2025



Liquor Licensing Overview

	Province	City of Vancouver
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquor Control and Licensing Act Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vancouver Charter Licence By-law Business Premises Regulation of Hours By-law
Licence Types	Provincial Liquor Licence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquor Primary Licence Food Primary Licence 	Municipal Business Licence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquor Establishment Restaurant with Liquor Service
Maximum Service Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am to 4am 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am to 3am (Liquor Establishments) 9am to 2am (Restaurants)

Provincial & City Roles in Liquor Licensing



- The liquor licensing process is primarily administered by the Province who oversees application intake, review, public consultation, and final approval.
- Municipalities may provide input but do not control the overall timeline or outcome.

Processes	Province (LCRB)	Local Government
Liquor licence application intake & review	Primary lead	Provides input
Community consultation	Sets requirements	May coordinate
Final inspection & approval	Conducted by LCRB	Not involved
Liquor licence decision	Final authority	Not involved



Land Use

Zoning & permits for liquor locations



Business Licensing

Sets operational requirements including for safety and community impact mitigation



Operating Hours

Sets operating and liquor service hours within provincial limits



Local Government Input

Provide resolution to Province on new and amended Provincial liquor licences

Recent Updates to Liquor Regulations

December 2023

- Removed distance requirements
- Removed moratorium in GED and five DTES sub areas
- Expanded 3am closing to more areas Downtown
- Increased maximum capacity next to residential from 150 to 200 persons
- Enabled dual-licence restaurants to transition into a bar starting at 9pm
- Enabled non-traditional liquor-serving establishments (i.e. barbershops)
- Council delegated authority to CLI to provide recommendations to LCRB

Process Improvements

Liquor Primary Establishments and Dual Liquor Licence

Integrated Liquor and Development
Permit review

Saving up to 10 weeks

Occupancy Load Permit

Concurrent application review for
occupancy load permits and
Development Permits

Saving up to 4 weeks

Non-Traditional Liquor Licence

No Development Permit required

Saving up to 4 weeks

Application Review

Streamlined internal review process

Saving up to 3 weeks

Liquor Establishments and Restaurants Regulatory Review

- Liquor Establishment (i.e., bars, nightclubs) operating hours
- Restaurant alcohol service hours
- Licence requirements
- Temporary extension of hours policy for special events
- Procedural policies for brand new operators
- Consolidating business hours into one by-law

Objectives

- To support businesses, local economies, and neighbourhood vibrancy while considering neighbourhood livability, public health and safety
- To update and modernize liquor regulations
- To respond to feedback from the Hospitality Sector Working Group and industry

- Hospitality Sector Working Group
- Industry (business owners, associations, consultants)
- Vancouver Police Department
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Business Improvement Associations
- Service and Support Organizations
- TransLink
- Transportation-Service Companies
- Shape Your City survey (3,700 responses)

Significant support to expand operating and service hours citywide among public and stakeholders with differing opinions on how the hours should be set.

What we heard:

- Some desire for 4am closure
- Same set of latest closing hours Citywide
- Later hours Downtown than outside Downtown

Industry supported the proposed changes to streamline and update City licensing requirements.

Public Safety

- Some risk of late-night disorder, violence, over-consumption
- Risk of impact on late night resources, Police can monitor impacts & consider resourcing based on service calls
- If a substantial rise in calls occurs, resource allocation may need to be reconsidered

Public Health

- Expanding liquor service hours will lead to increased consumption and related health harms, including additional burden on the healthcare system

Proposed Operating Hour Changes

- Downtown
 - **3am closing time for all establishments**
 - Extends closing hours for 41% of establishments
- Outside Downtown, including DTES Oppenheimer District
 - **2am weeknight/3am weekend closing times for all establishments**
 - Extends closing hours for 97% of establishments
- City-wide
 - **9am opening time for all establishments**
 - Extends opening hour for 42% of establishments

Requires additional VPD resources and funding

- At minimum, LIMA units extended by one hour in GED
- Additional costs may be incurred if calls for service increase after 3am

Increases risks associated with longer liquor service hours

- Late-night street disorder including property crime and vandalism
- Increased violence
- Over-consumption of liquor
- Increased hospitalizations and burden on emergency services
- Noise and nuisance

Vancouver already has the latest operating hours

- Most neighbouring municipalities have 2am closing
- Liquor service must end by 2am in Toronto and Calgary; 3am in Montreal

Supporting New Businesses from Day One

- New businesses can operate at full hours right away, no waiting period.
- *Outcomes:* Enables full business operation, especially during the first months of operation which are important for long-term success.

Cutting overlapping requirements

- City licensing requirements that duplicate provincial rules are being removed.
- *Outcomes:* Makes it simpler and easier to do business.

Updated Safety Standards

- Businesses get more autonomy in how they meet safety and security requirements.
- *Outcomes:* Provides flexibility to businesses in how they operate while maintaining public safety.

Later Closing Times for a More Vibrant Downtown

- All Downtown bars and nightclubs will be able to stay open until 3am.
- *Outcomes:* Supports businesses, tourism and nightlife vibrancy.

Late Weekend Hours for All Neighbourhoods

- Bars outside Downtown will be able to stay open until 3am on weekends and 2am on weeknights.
- *Outcomes:* Enables later hours on weekends, while protecting neighbourhood livability on weekdays. Supports more late-night options closer to home.

Same opening times citywide

- All Liquor Establishments will be able to open at 9am regardless of licence type.
- *Outcomes:* Provides flexibility to operate for early events such as live televised sports that often occur during morning hours; eliminating the need to apply for earlier hours.

More Flexibility for Temporary Extensions

- Businesses can stay open until 4am for up to six special events per year with a wider selection of eligible events.
- *Outcomes:* Increases revenue opportunities for businesses to participate in local festivals, concerts, and major celebrations.

Thank you

