



To: Stewiacke Town Council

From: Jacob Macpherson, Planner

Re: Land Use Bylaw Text Amendment Application for 670 Highway 2, Stewiacke NS

Date: July 23, 2026

Submitted On: July 16, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend to Council that:

1. the Town of Stewiacke Land Use By-law be amended as per Schedule 1; and
2. Council adopts the Outdoor Event Permit By-law as per Schedule 2.

BACKGROUND

On March 9, 2026, zzap consulting submitted a request on behalf of the applicant to amend the Town's Land Use Bylaw to permit an assembly use in the R4 Zone. The applicant has submitted this request so that catered events can be allowed on their property, 670 Highway 2, which is in the R-4 Zone. A rationale was also provided by zzap to explain the purpose and potential benefit of making the amendment.

On March 18, 2026, the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) considered the application to permit a 'Place of Assembly' as a permitted use in the R-4 zone. PAC directed Staff to create a new draft of the regulations that more closely consider:

- The impact of noise in residential parts of Town, especially in residential neighborhoods that are zoned R-4.
- The traffic impact of an event space on local roads (i.e. roads that are not Highway 2).
- Parking requirements.
- The movement of vehicles in and out of the event site.



On April 22, 2026 Staff presented updated regulations based on the Planning Advisory Committee's direction. In addition to permitting the Place of Assembly use, as the applicant requested, the updated regulations consider the potential impacts of:

- Traffic congestion issues on local roads.
- Noise caused by outdoor event spaces.
- Parking required to properly host events.

PAC recommended that Council adopt the proposed regulations as they are presented in this report.

On May 28, 2026 this project was brought to the Committee of the Whole, who recommended that Council adopt the proposed Land Use By-law amendments and new by-law.

The regulations are attached as:

- Schedule 1 (Land Use By-law amendments); and
- Schedule 2 (Outdoor Event Permit By-law).

DISCUSSION

The proposed Land Use By-law amendments would define the Place of Assembly use and permit the use in the R-4 zone with added requirements to reflect the direction of PAC. To be eligible as a Place of Assembly, the property would need to be along Highway 2, have multiple access points, and meet the parking requirements of the Land Use By-law. These requirements are intended to reduce the potential for congestion in Town, improve the ability of event attendees to evacuate during an emergency, and distance event spaces from more established neighbourhoods in Town that are zoned R-4 such as the Southern end of St Andrews St.

While the Town's existing Noise By-law already considers what levels of noise are acceptable in the Town at different times, PAC has identified the need for regulations that take a more proactive approach by considering the impact of noise before the event location has been chosen. To reduce the potential for noise disturbance from outdoor event spaces, outdoor concert venues have been removed from the proposed definition of 'Place of Assembly'. In addition, any events using outdoor speakers would need to apply for an Outdoor Event Permit through the proposed Outdoor Event Permit By-law.

The Outdoor Event Permit by-law requires that outdoor events using speakers are located away from neighboring homes and limits the times when speakers can be used to the hours listed in the Town of Stewiacke Noise By-law. By licensing an event through a permit, the event would be considered



exempt from the Noise By-law which would normally prohibit any event space in Town from being able to operate without the potential of being fined.

POLICIES/LEGISLATION

Policy RP-13 It is a policy of Council to establish the Rural Residential (R-4) Zone and to allow uses which are suitable for a rural area, such as agricultural uses, forestry uses, and golf courses. The R-4 Zone shall apply to the area designated Rural Residential. Existing R-4 uses located outside of the designation will also be zoned R-4.	Policy RP-13 establishes the Rural Residential Zone and gives examples of the kind of uses that are suited for rural parts of town. The uses listed, and more, are included as permitted uses for the R-4 Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. Uses such as a building to host catered events or a wedding venue are a good fit for rural spaces. The larger lot size of R-4 properties makes it easier for an event organizer to account for noise, parking space, and space for large crowds, all of which could cause be land use conflicts in other parts of Town.
Policy GP-2 It shall be the intention of Council to allow a range of compatible uses in each designation, subject to the policies of this document.	Permitting the Place of Assembly use increases the range of compatible uses in conformance with Policy RP-13.
Policy GP-3 It shall be the intention of Council to encourage the majority of future development to locate in the serviced areas of the Town.	Permitting Place of Assembly in rural areas would not encourage specific kinds of future development to locate in serviced areas of Town.
GP-4 It shall be the intention of Council to support the unserved areas of the Town as a rural and agricultural area.	Allowing for a greater flexibility in permitted uses in the R-4 zone would support new and existing businesses in the rural areas of Stewiacke.
Policy IM-3 In considering amendments to the Town of Stewiacke Land Use By-law, in addition to the criteria set out in various policies of this Strategy, Council shall consider: a) whether the proposal is considered premature or inappropriate in terms of:	

i. the adequacy of sewer and water services; ii. the adequacy of school facilities; iii. the adequacy of fire protection; iv. the adequacy of road networks adjacent to, or leading to the development; and v. the financial capacity of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the development. b) the suitability with any aspect relative to the movement of auto, rail and pedestrian traffic; c) the adequacy of the dimensions and shape of the lot for the intended use; d) the pattern of development which the proposal might create; e) the suitability of the area in terms of steepness of grade, soil and geological conditions, location of water courses, marshes or bogs and susceptibility of flooding; f) whether the proposal meets the requirements of the appropriate provincial or federal agencies as well as whether it conforms to all other relevant municipal by-laws and regulations; g) the impact of not only the use being proposed but all uses permitted in the zone; h) the site meets all of the zone requirements for the zone sought; i) the impact of the proposed development on adjacent uses; and j) any other matter required by relevant policies of this Strategy.	(a)(iii) The applicant has already considered fire protection and evacuation as part of an application for a temporary event permit. Fire protection will continue to be considered as a part of the permitting process. (b) Hosting events has the potential to increase traffic in the rural areas of Town as people travel to and leave the event space. Only properties located along Highway 2 would be eligible. i) The impact of the proposed development is minimized by the size and location of the property.
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MOTION

Staff recommend to Council that:

1. the Town of Stewiacke Land Use By-law be amended as per Schedule 1; and
2. Council adopts the Outdoor Event Permit By-law as per Schedule 2.



Approved by:

Marc Seguin
Chief Administrative Officer



Schedule 1 – Proposed Land Use By-law Amendments

(1) Under “Definitions”, add a new definition:

“Place of Assembly means a building, facility, or outdoor space where people gather for cultural events, festivals, celebrations, or similar purposes but does not include restaurants or outdoor concert venues.”

(2) Under “8.6.2 Permitted Uses”, add “Place of Assembly, subject to Section 8.6.3” as a new permitted use

(3) Add a new section after “8.6.2 Lot Specifications” with the following text:

“8.6.3 – Assembly Use

The Assembly Use may be permitted in the R4 Zone provided:

- The proposed event is within 250 meters (820.2 feet) of Highway 2 and has more than one legal access point;
- Adequate parking is provided, subject to Section 6.1; and
- For any event that involves the outdoor amplification of sound, a valid Outdoor Event Permit has been issued.”



Schedule 2 – Proposed Outdoor Event Permit By-law

TOWN OF STEWIACKÉ

BY-LAW #2026 – __

Date of first reading:

Date of advertisement of Notice of Intent to Consider:

Date of Second Reading:

Date of advertisement of Passage of By-Law:

Date of mailing to Minister a certified copy of By-law:

1. Title

This by-law may be cited as the “Outdoor Event Permit By-law”

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this By-law, the following words shall have the meanings hereby assigned to them:

- “Development Officer” means a development officer of the Town of Stewiacke
- “Non-participant Household” means a dwelling that is not associated with the hosting of an event
- “The Town” means the Town of Stewiacke

3. Purpose

- 3.1. This By-law is to provide for the requirements and issuance of Outdoor Event Permits where such a permit is required by the Land Use By-law.
- 3.2. An event that receives an Outdoor Event Permit shall be considered as an event that is licensed by the Town.
- 3.3. An Outdoor Event Permit shall not exempt the need to obtain a building or development permit.

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4. Requirements

A Development Officer may, at their sole discretion, issue an Outdoor Event Permit provided:

- a) The Place of Assembly use is a permitted or legally existing use on the property;
- b) The outdoor amplification of music will only occur outside of the hours proscribed in Part 2 of the Town of Stewiacke Noise By-law, as amended;
- c) The location of the event is 200 ft away, or more, from non-participant households; and
- d) The event is not open to the general public.

5. Application

5.1. An Outdoor Event Permit application shall be submitted by the property owner or a representative of the property owner to the Development Officer and shall contain any information required for the proper administration of this by-law, including but not limited to:

- a) The address and proposed location of the event on the property;
- b) A general description of the event(s) to take place; and
- c) The planned date of the event, or events in the case of multiple events.

5.2. An Outdoor Event Permit shall be valid for twelve months after the permit is issued.

5.2.1. A valid Outdoor Event Permit may be used for multiple events provided that the proposed location and timings remain the same.

6. Penalties

6.1. No person shall host an event where an Outdoor Event permit is required without an Outdoor Event Permit.

6.2. Any person who contravenes any provision of this By-law is punishable by:

- 6.2.1. The revocation of the Outdoor Event Permit; and
- 6.2.2. A fine, as per the Town of Stewiacke Noise By-law, as amended.

APPLICATION FOR OUTDOOR EVENT PERMIT

Please note: Outdoor Event Permits may only be issued where required by the Town of Stewiacke Land Use By-law.

Name of Applicant(s):	
Telephone:	Cell: Home: Work:
Event Address:	
Event(s) description and dates:	

I certify that:

- ☐ The event(s) will not be open to the general public.
- ☐ The outdoor event space is 200 feet away or more from any non-participating households.
- ☐ That no outdoor amplification of music will occur during the quiet hours set out in Part 2 of the Town of Stewiacke Noise By-law.

X

Applicant(s) Signature

Date

For Office Use Only
☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved
Valid until:
Approval Number:
Date of approval by Development Officer:
Comments: