

FOR: COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: April 20, 2026

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: LIQUOR LICENCE APPLICATION NO. LA000167 – 25 FRONT STREET



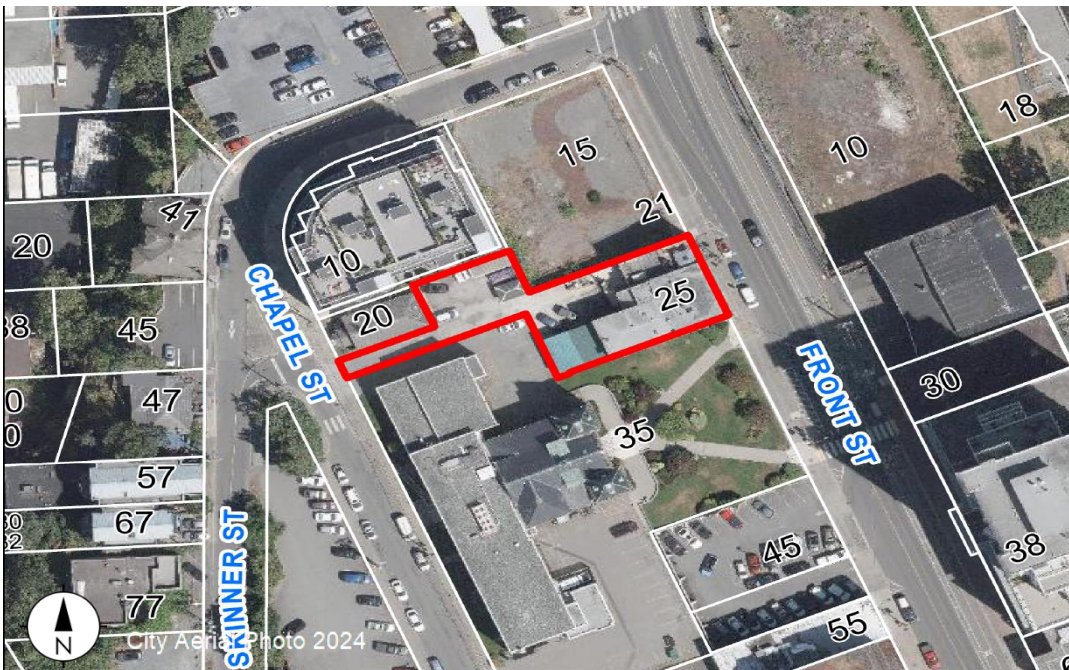
Proposal:
Consideration of a new liquor licence application



Zoning:
DT5 – Chapel

City Plan Land Use Designation:
Primary Urban Centre

Lot Area:
902.59m²



OVERVIEW**Purpose of Report**

To present for Council's consideration a new liquor primary licence application for an entertainment use in an existing building at 25 Front Street. |

Recommendation

That Council recommend that the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch approve the application for a liquor primary licence at 25 Front Street. |

BACKGROUND

A notice of application was received from The Globe Live Studio Ltd., on behalf of Richard Scott Enterprises Ltd. requesting a local government resolution in support of their application to the Provincial Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) to permit liquor to be served for an entertainment use (which can include nightclubs, cabarets, cinemas, theatres, and the like) within the existing building located at 25 Front Street. A local government resolution is required before the LCRB will further consider this application.

The history of licenced uses in the space subject to application include:

- Pub (The Globe Bar and Grill) 1997-2011;
- Neighbourhood Pub (The Courts) 2011-2013;
- Pub (25 Front Street Bar and Grill) 2013-2016;
- Limited-service restaurant/café with private club premises (The Joint) 2017-2018;
- Limited-service restaurant (The Globe Grill) 2018-2019;
- Limited-service restaurant, delivery and take out only (The Kebap Food Services) 2022-2025; and,
- Limited-service restaurant (The Globe Live Studio) 2025-present.

The subject property was rezoned to allow 'Cannabis Retail Store' as a site-specific use in August 2020. The LCRB gave Approval in Principle in October 2020, pending a final inspection. The applicant did not pursue the cannabis retail store application with the LCRB and the file was terminated in July 2024. Recently, the establishment has been operating with special event permits from the LCRB for each event and show to provide liquor service.

The Globe Live Studio operates primarily as an event, rehearsal, and creative production venue (for example live music and comedy performances, rehearsals, recording sessions, and video and media production). Food and liquor services are provided as complimentary ancillary services, based on the nature of the event or booking, rather than as the primary use of the venue.

The applicant is proposing to operate under a liquor primary licence with a family food service endorsement, using a hybrid operating model that allows different modes of operation depending on the type of event, rehearsal, or rental. The family food service endorsement allows minors, accompanied by a parent or guardian, in all liquor service areas until 10:00 p.m. when meal service is available, in accordance with provincial regulations. For youth-focused programming, community

events, matinees, and school or family-oriented shows the liquor licence will be temporarily suspended and liquor service will not be available.]

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the City of Nanaimo's Liquor Licence Review Policy and the *Liquor Control and Licensing Act*, liquor licence applications are reviewed against the following criteria:

- The location of the establishment;
- The person capacity;
- The hours of liquor service;
- The impact of noise; and,
- The impact on the community.

Public Consultation

The following summarizes the opportunities for public consultation and information sharing:

- In accordance with the Liquor Licence Review Policy, public notification was mailed and delivered in February 2026 to owners and occupants of buildings within 100m of the subject property at 25 Front Street.
- Public comments from nearby residents and business owners were gathered for a period of 30 days, concluding on 2026-MAR-15.
- A total of 73 submissions were received by the City, of which 24 indicated support of the application and 49 did not support the application. The public comments received are included as Attachment C. Public concerns include noise, location in proximity to residential dwellings, increased traffic, lack of parking, and the number of liquor establishments in the area. Public support highlights supporting live music events, local youth musicians, and arts and entertainment downtown.
- The liquor licence application was referred to City departments for review and comments, and the responses are discussed in the sections below.

Location of the Establishment

The subject property contains an existing commercial building and is located within the Downtown/Old City neighbourhood. The surrounding area includes apartment buildings, commercial, and institutional uses. City Plan designates the property as 'Primary Urban Centre', which is the distinct cultural, economic, tourism, and mobility hub with the highest density and mix of land uses and a destination for all residents and visitors. The property is zoned DT5 (Chapel), which is intended to provide for higher density residential developments and some compatible office, retail, cultural, recreational, service, and institutional uses.

The DT5 (Chapel) zone allows several uses including, but not limited to, the following:

- Assembly Hall;
- Cultural Facility;
- Entertainment Use;
- Hotel;
- Lounge;
- Micro Brewery;

- Neighbourhood Pub;
- Production Studio;
- Restaurant; and,
- Theatre.

The proposal aligns with these permitted uses and encourages gathering and activation of the downtown.

Person Capacity and Hours of Service

The proposed operating hours will vary depending on the type of event, rehearsal, or rental. The proposed hours of liquor service will also vary depending on the type of event, rehearsal, or rental, but will fall within the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 a.m. seven days a week. During the week, activity at the venue is generally limited to rehearsals and recording, with live events primarily taking place from Thursday through Saturday.

The consumption of alcohol is proposed within the existing building and patio, which supports a maximum occupant load of 200 persons (staff and patrons). The applicant has indicated that the patio is intended to be a secondary amenity for guests and not an entertainment area. No performances, amplified music, or projected sound will occur on the patio or outside of the building.

Noise and Community Impact

The application was referred to several City departments for comment. Through this process the following concerns were raised about the history of the subject property:

- 16 noise complaints were received by the City between 2011 and 2025 regarding loud music and disturbances affecting neighbouring businesses and properties;
- Business licence and zoning contraventions; and,
- Other operational and daytime disturbances in relation to the previous private club use.

It was noted that the pattern of disturbances is not limited to a single business model or operator.

The application was referred to the RCMP for comment. The RCMP has indicated that they do not expect the proposed licence to unduly impact police resources. They add that this establishment previously had a liquor primary licence and has recently been operating with special event permits for each event.

Given the proximity to multiple-family dwellings, there is potential that nearby residents will be impacted by noise. However, the applicant has indicated that since taking over operations in 2018, they have made efforts to reduce sound transmission from the building, including:

- The addition of soundproofing materials throughout the main stage area, including on doors, walls, and ceilings, to help contain music within the premises; and,
- Implementation of an entry policy under which patrons may leave an event, but re-entry is not permitted, to reduce the frequency of doors opening during shows and to discourage patrons from gathering outside and contributing to noise on the street.

To support their intention to operate in a way that is orderly, respectful, and compatible with the surrounding downtown area, the applicant has indicated that staff expectations and procedures are set out through internal policies, staff training, Serving It Right–certified service, supervision, signage, capacity controls, and enforcement of licence conditions.

The applicant would like to continue operating as a live music venue that can also serve food and beverages in a lawful and structured manner. The applicant has applied for the liquor licence with the family food service endorsement so that they do not need to apply for special event permits each time they wish to have liquor service at a show or event.

CONCLUSION

City Plan and the Zoning Bylaw support entertainment uses in the ‘Primary Urban Centre’ and DT5 zone. The proposal is similar to other establishments downtown. Given the proximity to multiple-family dwellings, there is potential that nearby residents will be impacted by noise. However, there are bylaws in place to address those concerns, and the applicant has indicated that they will have measures in place to mitigate disturbances. Staff recommend support of the application.

KEY MESSAGES

- The application, if approved, will allow liquor to be served within an existing commercial building and patio.
- Public comments from nearby residents and business owners were gathered for a period of 30 days, concluding on 2026-MAR-15.
- 73 public responses were received, 24 in support and 49 in opposition to the application.
- Staff recommend support of the application.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Subject Property Map
ATTACHMENT B: Site and Floor Plans
ATTACHMENT C: Public Comment Sheets

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