

Staff Report



Community Services Department

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REPORT TO: Community and Infrastructure Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 14, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Gloria MacNeil, Director of Enforcement, 519-783-8516

PREPARED BY: Gloria MacNeil, Director of Enforcement, 519-783-8516

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 10

DATE OF REPORT: March 31, 2025

REPORT NO.: CSD-2025-136

SUBJECT: Noise Exemption – Songscape Music Festival – Kitchener Auditorium

RECOMMENDATION:

That an exemption to Chapter 450 (Noise) of the City of Kitchener Municipal Code be granted to the Songscape Music Festival that will donate proceeds to Grand River Hospital and the Awesome Music Project on Friday June 20, 2025 and Saturday June 21, 2025, held at the Kitchener Auditorium in the parking lot(s) (Lot F & G) located at 400 East Ave from 5pm – 11pm.

A further noise exemption will be required to allow for sound checks that will take place on June 20 and 21st, 2025 between 11:30am-4pm.

This exemption is subject to the following conditions, which, if not complied with, will render the noise exemption null and void:

- a) The event organizers will ensure that there is an on-site contact person accessible to correspond with City staff at all times during the event(s);
- b) The event organizers agree to respond accordingly to requests from City staff, during the event(s), in order to address community concerns that may arise with regard to the impact of noise heard within adjacent residential areas; and
- c) The event organizer will be responsible for the cost of a pay-duty Noise Officer, to be assigned specifically to these event(s);
- d) All events must end no later than 11pm.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- Songscape Music Festival is hosting an outdoor concert at the Kitchener Auditorium on June 20th and 21st, 2025 with proceeds going to Grand River Hospital Foundation and the Awesome Music Project.
- Sound checks will take place June 20 and June 21, 2025 between 11:30am and 4pm prior to the event.

- The live concert event will be held over the two days on two stages, a main stage with larger bands while the side stage will feature local talent. This will be an all-ages event, that will be licensed and include local food trucks.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

Songscape will transform The Aud's parking lots at East and Stirling Avenues into a vibrant outdoor music event on June 20 – 21, 2025. A similar concert event Rally for Health was held in May 2023, in the Sunlife parking lot with a similar set up which supported Grand River Hospital launching their Care Never Stops Campaign.

REPORT:

Songscape is a provincially incorporated non-profit organization operating in the Waterloo Region and has evolved from the Rally for Health event presented by the Grand River Hospital Foundation in May 2023. This new music festival has partnered with the Grand River Hospital Foundation and the Awesome Music Project. All proceeds from the event will go to these two charities.

The festival will be a ticketed and licensed event featuring a diverse lineup of musical styles. There will be two stages set up in the parking lots at the Kitchener Auditorium (specifically Lots F & G), with six bands on both stages each day - three on the main stage and three on the side stage. The event will begin at 5pm and end no later than 11pm on both days, with organizers expecting approximately eight thousand people in attendance daily.

Sound checks will take place each day - June 20th and 21st between 11:30am and 4pm.

The event will be open to all ages. There will be approximately eight local food trucks on site over the two-day event providing food sales. In addition, the event will be licensed, and alcohol service will be managed by a wrist band process with confirmation of identification.

Headlining on Friday June 20th will be Theory of a Deadman, Headstones, and Finger 11, while Saturday June 21st will feature performances by Mother Mother, Bahamas, and Good Kid. The side stage will showcase local talent.

The sound output will include a PA system which has been designed to concentrate adequate sound pressure levels in the area of the audience, while mitigating levels outside the primary listening area. To accomplish this, the design includes a PA (speaker) height much lower than normal with the addition of delay speakers at the front of house position.

The event organizers will ensure there is an on-site contact person accessible to correspond with City staff at all times during the event(s) and agree to respond accordingly to requests from City staff, to address community concerns that may arise with regard to the impact of noise heard within adjacent residential areas.

The Auditorium parking lots will not be available for public parking during this event, and a portion of Stirling Ave S will be signed emergency no parking to ensure clear access for emergency response vehicles. To minimize disruptions, designated festival parking areas will be in place,

and traffic management plans have been coordinated. Attendees are being encouraged to use public transit or alternative transportation.

Bylaw will have a dedicated officer on duty for this event who will respond to any parking or noise complaints received in the adjacent neighbourhood. The officer will work with the event organizers to monitor sound levels.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Event organizers have already hand delivered letters to surrounding neighbours advising of the event inclusions as well as increased traffic to the area. They will also be notifying the public through a social media campaign, website and traditional media channels.

APPROVED BY: Michael May, DCAO