

# At A Glance: The Eight Steps for Developing a Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP)

## 1

### Identify, Describe and Analyze the Problem

*This step builds the foundation for all other steps.*

**Identify:** What is the problem? Who is most affected by the problem?

**Describe:** What is the cause of the problem? What factors in the community affect the problem (e.g., attitudes, values, beliefs, perceptions, social norms, economic, cultural, or political factors)?

**Analyze:** What has been tried to resolve the problem? By whom (e.g., boards of health; municipal decision-makers; community stakeholders; residents; provincial government)? What is the cost of the problem to society? To the municipality? What is the cost of doing nothing about the problem?

Write a narrative, highlighting the impact of the problem. Use this information to:

- Determine whether the problem can be solved by developing and revising a MAP.
- Establish a MAP committee and include a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., municipalities, businesses, organizations, individuals).
- Identify the goals and objectives of the MAP.
- Mobilize community support (e.g., engage the public to learn about and address concerns).

## 2

### Examine MAPs

*This step will inform you of the components of a MAP.*

A MAP is a civic policy tool that aligns with provincial liquor laws and outlines the appropriate use of alcohol on local government owned or managed property.

#### How to search for MAPs:

- Use an internet search engine and type in the problem you would like to address with the words “municipal alcohol policies”. Systematically review the findings to generate a list of potential MAPs.
- Review the MAPs in your own municipality and in neighbouring communities to see if any of them address the problem.
- Review the academic literature.

#### Key MAP components:

- Designation of properties, facilities and events - to clearly state where alcohol may or may not be used.
- Management practices - to help control how alcohol is used.
- Prevention strategies - to reduce harm and minimize liability.
- Enforcement procedures and penalties - enforcement officials need to intervene when rules are broken.
- Signs - to provide authority and information.
- Ongoing policy support - from public health, council, and other stakeholders.

## 3

### Assess Readiness for MAP Development

*This step helps guide, educate and inform community stakeholders of the benefits of MAPs.*

One way to assess community readiness is to create a force field analysis. Consider what forces or factors are driving (i.e., support) or hindering MAP development. This may need to be done separately for each stakeholder.

Examples of sources that can inform your force field analysis include:

- Municipal council and committee minutes and reports
- Local news coverage
- Community surveys

Community stakeholders may be at different stages of readiness. **Community stakeholders** include:

- Municipal decision-makers
- Public health agencies
- Alcohol and addiction services
- Enforcement (e.g., Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, police, security personnel)
- Health care services (e.g., Emergency Medical Services, hospitals)
- Facility users (e.g., sports, recreation and cultural organizations)
- Post-secondary institutions and student unions
- Residents
- Regional, provincial and national organizations and/or governments

## 4

### Identify and Understand Municipal Decision-makers and Influencers

*This step will help you build support for the chosen MAP.*

**There are two types of municipal decision-makers:**

- Elected officials (e.g., municipal council members)
- Civil servants (e.g., municipal staff)

Use the information gathered in step three to identify organizations and individuals that could help you understand your municipal decision-makers. Use this information to generate a list of **influencers** that could help move your MAP development process forward.

**Influencers are:** Anyone else in the community who could influence your municipal decision-makers. For example those working in:

- Government, non-government and not-for-profit organizations
- Sports organizations
- Media outlets
- Faith groups
- Private business
- Parents
- Community volunteers
- Residents

## 5

### Build Support for the MAP

*This step is about leveraging the support of municipal decision-makers and influencers.*

Reach out to community stakeholders to convey knowledge about the problem, present MAP development as a solution, and explore where there is alignment between their work/mandate and MAP development.

#### Strategies to build support:

- Writing a briefing note. A briefing note is a topic-specific short paper (< 2 pages) meant to quickly and effectively inform a decision-maker about an issue.
- Host a 'think tank' discussion about the problem with MAP development as a solution.
- Summarize your findings, share them with community stakeholders, and invite them to further dialogue.
- Request 15 minutes with an existing committee/partnership to discuss the problem, and MAP development as a potential solution.
- Start a dialogue about the importance of MAPs on a listserve and invite community stakeholders to join.

## 6

### Draft the MAP

*This step may involve drafting a new MAP or revising a current MAP.*

There is a prescribed way that MAPs must be written. They must also meet some basic acceptability requirements (e.g., cannot contravene provincial liquor laws, must be feasible).

Conduct an inventory of the skills of your MAP committee to identify those that can help with the writing process.

The MAP committee needs to decide which properties, facilities, and events should be eligible for alcohol service and where alcohol will not be allowed.

#### A MAP should:

- Outline policy, rationale, and enforcement, when required.
- Provide guiding suggestions and principles for municipally-owned facilities to follow, and encourage private establishments to follow.
- Be suitable to your community culture and norms.

#### A MAP should not:

- Be overly detailed.
- Be heavily referenced and overly scientific, but still grounded in evidence.
- Have confusing metrics or instructions to follow.

## 7

### Facilitate Adoption and Implementation of the MAP

*The purpose of this step is to encourage municipal council to enact the MAP.*

There may be many steps for facilitating the adoption of the MAP:

- Deputation to council.
- Build a relationship with the municipal clerk, who is the secretary of the municipality and will have the skills to ensure that procedural processes are followed.
- Create and promote by-laws to allow for enforcement.

**Know the procedural requirements for your municipality as specific steps for approval may vary between municipalities. Questions to consider are:**

- How and when should members of council review a draft MAP?
- What is the process for public notification?
- Is a public meeting required?
- Does there need to be second and third readings of the MAP prior to enactment?

Once the MAP has been adopted, develop a communication plan. This plan should include:

- Educating people about the new MAP.
- Messages on what it is about, how to comply and consequences for non-compliance.
- Strategic key messages to respond to opposition.

## 8

### Monitor and Evaluate the MAP

*This step is about ensuring the MAP is being implemented as intended, and is having the intended impact on the problem that it was designed to address.*

**Develop an evaluation plan to monitor the implementation and enforcement of the MAP.** This plan should include identifying:

- Ways to regularly monitor and annually evaluate the MAP.
- Common indicators across municipalities.
- A mixture of process and outcome indicators.

A **process evaluation** explores the implementation process. Examples of process indicators:

- Number of signs installed within municipal facilities.
- Frequency of police calls from municipal property.

An **outcome evaluation** looks at the impacts of the MAP. Examples of outcome indicators:

- Hospitalization rates attributable to alcohol.
- Violent crime and property crime rates.

Both types of evaluation provide important information.

Consider how you will communicate your findings to your community stakeholders and the larger community to have a desired effect (e.g., report to council, community newsletter, formal research report).

## Authors

Kim Bergeron, Health Promotion Consultant, Health Promotion Capacity Building, Public Health Ontario  
Gobinaa Manoharan, Practicum Student, Health Promotion Capacity Building, Public Health Ontario

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