STEWIACKE
RIVERS OF OPPORTUNITY
HALF WAY BETWEEN THE EQUATOR & THE NORTH POLE

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

Bylaw Note:

First Reading - July 23, 2026

Second Reading - September, 24, 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.