

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: August 23, 2019

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Ian Wells, General Manager of Planning & Development

SUBJECT: Liquor License Application No. LL100162

Applicant: Steven Leach on behalf of Treasure Cove Casino Inc., Inc. No. 86274
Location: 2003 Highway 97 S

ATTACHMENT(S):

- Location and Existing Zoning Map
- Appendix "A" Resolution for LL100162
- Exhibit "A" to LL100162
- Letter of Intent from the Applicant
- Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch Application

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council APPROVE the resolution attached as Appendix "A" to the report dated August 23, 2019 from the General Manager of Planning and Development titled "Liquor License Application No. LL100162"

PURPOSE:

The applicant has applied to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) for Liquor Primary and Structural Change Application for the Treasure Cove Casino to increase the occupancy load by 800 patrons and expand the licensed area for alcohol service. The increase in occupancy load and expansion to the licensed area is to accommodate the 1152 m² addition to the Treasure Cove Show Lounge. The Treasure Cove Casino is currently operating under a Liquor Primary License with an occupancy load of 1216 patrons (i.e. Casino floor, Show Lounge and café), the proposed occupancy expansion to the show lounge would increase the occupancy to 2016 patrons and expand the licenses area for alcohol service for the entire Casino.

The LCRB is the authority for liquor licensing, and must therefore approve liquor licenses. The LCRB requires that the local government reviews the application, gathers the views of residents that will be affected by the proposal and passes a resolution on the application. Once Council reviews this application, the resolution will be forwarded to the LCRB.

Background

Site Characteristics

Location	2003 Highway 97 S
Legal Description	Block F, District Lot 913, Cariboo District
Site Area	3.3 ha (8.16 acre)
Current Use	Treasure Cove Casino
Zoning	Z6: Casino and Accommodation; P1: Parks and Recreation and AG: Greenbelt

Liquor License Information

Type of License	Liquor Primary License No. 304261
Current Occupant Load	1216 patrons- Casino (941 patrons), Show Lounge (200 patrons) and Café (75 patrons)
Proposed Occupant Load	2016 patrons- Casino (941 patrons), Show Lounge (1000 patrons) and Café (75 patrons)

Surrounding Land Uses

North	Highway 97 and Residential
South	Greenbelt and Residential
East	Prestige Hotel, Upland Street and Residential
West	Highway 16, Prince George Playhouse, Pomeroy Hotel and Montana's BBQ & Bar Restaurant

Relevant Applications:

Liquor License Application No. LL100102: On July 16, 2012, Council approved the amendment to the Treasure Cove Casino Liquor Primary License to increase the licensed area to include the casino gaming area and increase the occupancy load from 257 to 1216 patrons.

POLICY/REGULATORY ANALYSIS:

Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB)

The LCRB is the provincial authority for liquor licensing and is regulated by the *Liquor Control and Licensing Act* and the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation. All liquor licenses and changes to existing licenses are approved and issued by the LCRB. The applicant has concurrently submitted an application to the LCRB for a Liquor Primary License.

City of Prince George Liquor and Cannabis License Policy

The City of Prince George Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Policy (LCLP) establishes guidelines for the operation of licensed liquor establishments within the City. The LCLP provides guidelines on hours of liquor service, occupant load, and location of Liquor Primary Establishments. The LCLP provides direction to permit Liquor Primary Establishments outside of the downtown. Staff have evaluated the criteria outlined in the LCLP and have considered their relevance to this application. Please see below:

Purpose of the Establishment

The purposed changes to the applicant's liquor license will not change the intent of the establishment. The primary intent of the Treasure Cove Casino will remain as an establishment for casino gaming (i.e. slot machines), gaming tables, bingo and occasional spectator entertainment (i.e. live music, stage performances and comedy shows) in the show lounge. The proposed increase to the patron occupancy load and licensed area would facilitate consumption of liquor for patrons within the expanded license area for the Casino and show lounge.

Location of Establishment

The Treasure Cove Casino is located at 2003 Highway 97 S (subject property). As indicated previously, the Treasure Cove Casino is a gaming facility (i.e. slot machines, gaming tables and bingo) with occasional spectator entertainment. The nearest liquor primary establishment is the Prince George Playhouse, the playhouse is located on the west side of Highway 16, which provides a physical separation of uses. Therefore, Administration does not anticipate significant impacts from an expanded licensed area.

Occupant Load

The LCLP guidelines suggest liquor primary licenses outside of the downtown should have a maximum occupancy of 125 seats with the occupant load calculation to be determined by a Qualified Professional, as defined in the City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw. The applicant's increase in occupancy from 200 to 1000 patrons within the Show Lounge was determined by a Qualified Professional as shown on Exhibit "A" to LL100162.

Currently, the Treasure Cove Casino has a liquor primary license that permits 1216 patrons (i.e. Casino Floor, Show Lounge and café), which exceeds the suggestion provided in the LCLP but was previously supported by Council on July 16, 2012. The change to the liquor license would allow for the show lounge expansion to be licensed for liquor. The new occupant load for the entire Casino would be 2016 patrons.

Administration supports the increase in occupancy load recognizing it is over the maximum amount noted in the LCLP. The intent of the expanded licensed area is not to increase the number of patrons to the facility, but will allow patrons to consume liquor within the Casino floor, Show Lounge and café.

Hours of Liquor Service

The hours of liquor service are not proposed to be changed with the application and will remain as follows:
Sunday to Thursday 9am – 2am, and Friday to Saturday 9am – 4am.

Community Impacts

The proposed liquor primary license is not expected to have significant impacts on the surrounding properties. Administration has considered the following potential community impacts:

Noise

The subject property is located at the intersection of Highway 97 and Highway 16, which is a major controlled access highway that sees a high volume of traffic throughout the day. The location of existing buildings located near the rear of the property line and increased buffering with landscaping and vegetated berm reduces the impact of the site use and highway noise on the nearest residential area. Administration does not anticipate significant concerns with noise with this proposal.

Parking and Traffic

The increase in the patron occupancy is not anticipated to impact parking and traffic to and from the site. The Casino and Prestige Hotel have a shared parking agreement under title charge no. BW19787 and BW197886, the required parking under Section 7 of the Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007 for the entire site is 500 parking stalls. The site has provided a total of 706 parking spaces including nine (9) accessible spaces which exceeds the parking stall requirements.

Administration supports this application as the increase in occupancy is consistent with LCLP direction and is not expected to significantly impact the surrounding uses.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Referrals

This application was referred to internal City divisions and external agencies for comments. There are no outstanding comments or concerns with this application.

ALTERNATIVES:


1. Approve the resolution
2. Approve the resolution as amended
3. Refuse the resolution
4. Defer or otherwise deal with the resolution

Administration recommends that Council approve the resolution attached as Appendix “A”.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This application would facilitate increasing the occupancy load from 1216 to 2016 patrons and expansion of the licensed area of the Treasure Cove Casino allowing alcohol to be permitted in the new addition to the Show Lounge. Administration recommends that Council approve the resolution attached as Appendix “A”, and forward that resolution to the LCRB as the application is consistent with the LCLP.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Ian Wells, General Manager of Planning and Development/
Acting City Manager

PREPARED BY:

Melissa Nitz, Planner

Meeting date: September 9, 2019