

Report to Council

Report Title: Declaration of a Significant Event – Ribfest July 17- July 19, 2026

Prepared By: Lisa Fagan, Recreation Programming Supervisor

Department: Recreation

Date: November 25, 2025

Report Number: REC2025-23

File Number: C11REC

Attachments: Request for Municipal Significance from Gonzalez BBQ

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby accept Report Number REC2025-23 - Declaration of a Significant Event- Ribfest July 17- July 19, 2026, submitted by Lisa Fagan, Recreation Programming Supervisor for information purposes and further approves declaring Ribfest a municipally significant event in Brockton, occurring on Friday July 17, 2026, through to July 19, 2026 at Centennial Park in Walkerton.

Report:

Background:

“Go Gonzalez BBQ” is a well-known and highly regarded event organizer with an established track record of hosting successful community festivals across Ontario. The organization has successfully managed *Ribfest* events in numerous locations, including Wiarton, Sauble Beach, Manitoulin Island, London, and several other communities throughout the province. Each event has drawn significant attendance and contributed positively to local tourism and economic activity. The organizer has indicated that many attendees travel from community to community following the Go Gonzalez BBQ Ribfest tour, which presents an opportunity to attract visitors to Brockton and showcase what the municipality has to offer.

As stated on their official website, *“What began as a humble gathering has blossomed into an unforgettable celebration of culture, community, and culinary delights. Join us as we showcase an incredible lineup of top-notch vendors and thrilling entertainment that will tantalize your taste buds and lift your spirits! We are immensely proud of our vibrant community and excited to invite you to be part of this delicious journey.”*

Go Gonzalez BBQ’s reputation for organizing high-quality, family-friendly events highlights their ability to deliver a well-coordinated and engaging experience for attendees. Their proven success in other municipalities demonstrates their commitment to promoting community spirit and supporting local business engagement through large-scale public events such as Ribfest.

Analysis:

The proposed *Ribfest* event, organized by Go Gonzalez BBQ, offers an opportunity to enhance Brockton’s community programming and promote local economic activity. The organizer intends to include as many local food vendors as possible, along with local breweries to support a licensed beverage area. The event will feature live music and family-friendly entertainment, appealing to a broad audience and encouraging community engagement.

Go Gonzalez BBQ has proposed to open the event to the public on Friday, July 17, 2026, later in the afternoon, following the conclusion of Brockton’s *Summer Streetfest*. Coordinating these two events may generate mutual benefits by extending visitor stays, increasing downtown traffic, and enhancing overall participation in both celebrations.

In order for the organizer to obtain a Liquor Sales Permit from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), the municipality must declare the event a municipally significant event. This designation would allow the event to proceed with licensed beverage service in accordance with AGCO requirements.

Staff are seeking approval for declaration to provide event organizer with a letter indicating the event is a municipally significant event.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment N/A
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance N/A

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

There are no direct funding implications or impacts to the municipal budget, as the *Ribfest* event is being organized and operated by a third party. Brockton will receive rental revenue for use of Centennial Park, including the pavilion, in accordance with the Municipality’s current Fees and Charges By-law. The organizer will be responsible for all associated event costs and for coordinating vendor applications, as well as liaising directly with Public Health regarding food safety and related requirements.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lisa Fagan

Lisa Fagan, Recreation Programming Supervisor

Reviewed By:

Sonya Watson

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer