



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
905-468-3266 www.notl.com

REPORT #: CAO-25-002

COMMITTEE DATE: 2025-02-11

REPORT TO: COTW-General

DUE IN COUNCIL: 2025-02-25

SUBJECT: Extension of Licences to Occupy Town Land (LOTLA) for Caleche Business

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 The Town's existing five (5) Licences to Occupy Town Land (LOTLA) be extended to December 31, 2026 (2025 and 2026 seasons) for the two current licence holders and be allocated as follows:
 - Sentineal Carriages Inc. – Four (4) licences;
 - Vineyard to Village Horse and Carriage Co. – One (1) licence.
- 1.2 The LOTLA fee be payable on April 1 of each year in recognition of exclusive space allocation, lost parking revenue, and administrative costs in accordance with the fee schedule approved by Council and amended from time to time;
- 1.3 Staff complete a study of the Caleche service and report back to Council with proposed criteria and an application process to allocate LOTLA prior to Q2 2026; and,
- 1.4 Staff be authorized to prepare agreements and any other actions necessary to give effect hereto.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order for a caleche business to operate on-demand/walk-up business operations from land owned by the Town, a caleche business must obtain a LOTLA granted by the Town.

Feedback from the current licenced businesses with LOTLAs indicates that the uncertainty associated with an annual licensing process impacts their ability to plan for required investments such as veterinarian care and certifications, insurance, and other business licensing requirements. They have requested that the Town consider a multi-year arrangement.

Staff recommend that the Town provide a two-year rather than a one-year LOTLA agreement under the current terms and that these agreements be reviewed as part of a broader review prior to the end of this Council term.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain the necessary Council approval to extend LOTLAs to the existing licence holders for the 2025 and 2026 seasons.

4. BACKGROUND

- At the Committee of the Whole – General Meeting on March 19, 2024, Council considered report CAO-24-013, which provided recommendations on the 2024 Caleche Renewal Agreements.
- In 2024, the five (5) available LOTLA were allocated four (4) to Sentineal Carriages Inc. and one (1) to Vineyard to Village Horse and Carriage Co.
- With resources dedicated to priorities in the Strategic Plan and challenges in obtaining data on Caleche operations, Staff have not completed the study of Caleche services requested by Council, including proposed criteria and an application process to allocate LOTLA. Staff is recommending that the study be deferred with a report back to Council prior to Q2 2026.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

The licencing framework for a Caleche business is multilayered. Niagara Region's Business Licencing Department requires that the owner of a Caleche business obtain a licence to operate as per the Niagara Region Business Licencing By-law No. 2021-58 (as amended). The Regional By-law requires a Caleche operation to obtain:

1. a Caleche Business Licence,
2. a Carriage Licence for each carriage,
3. a Caleche Operator Licence for each carriage operator, and
4. a Horse Licence for each horse to be used in the operation.

The licences require specific documentation for each licence category, including Commercial General Liability insurance, Criminal Record and Judicial Matters, police checks and veterinarian assessments. Licences issued by the Region are for the entire Regional Municipality of Niagara.

In addition to the above-noted requirements, in order for a Caleche business to operate from land owned by the Town, the Caleche business must also separately obtain a License of Occupation of Town Land Agreement (LOTLA) from the Town. This licence allows the Caleche business to occupy the land and conduct on-demand/walk-up business operations. The Town only grants five (5) LOTLA to Caleche business to operate from the King and Queen Street locations. In 2024, the LOTLA were allocated as follows:

- Sentineal Carriages Inc. – Four (4) licences
- Vineyard to Village Horse and Carriage Co. – One (1) licence

The business model for each of these businesses depends upon holding one or more LOTLAs. Therefore, multi-year certainty is highly desirable to permit the business to plan the appropriate investments and to operate efficiently and sustainably.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

1. Vibrant & Complete Community

Priority

1.2 Economic Development & Community Partnerships

Action

1.2 b) Community Partnership

7. OPTIONS

- 7.1 Option 1: The LOTLA allocation remain as is with the current licence holders and be extended for a two-year term as detailed in this Report. **(Recommended)**
- 7.2 Option 2: The LOTLA allocation remain as is with the current licence holders and be extended for 2025 only. (Not Recommended)
- 7.3 Option 3: Council provide direction to staff to alter the allocation. (Not Recommended)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current LOTLA fee is \$500.00 per licence, which generates annual revenue of \$2,500.00.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications to this report.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Upon Council's approval, Staff will meet with the licence holders to finalize the requirements of the LOTLA. Town Staff will also forward for information the decision of Council to the Niagara Region Business Licensing Department.

11. CONCLUSION

Feedback from the current Caleche businesses who hold LOTLA licences indicates that uncertainty associated with an annual licensing process impacts their ability to plan for required investments such as veterinarian care and certifications, insurance, and other business licensing. They have requested that the Town consider a multi-year arrangement.

Town staff agree with providing a two-year rather than a one-year LOTLA under the current terms and that these arrangements be part of a broader review prior to the end of this Council term.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

- OPS-22-022 – Caleche – Licence to Operate
- OPS-23-032 – Caleche – Annual Renewal Agreements and Expansion Request
- CAO-23-058 – Caleche Operations – Response to May 16, 2023, Motion
- CAO-24-013 – Caleche Renewal Agreements

13. APPENDICES

There are no appendices.

Recommended/Submitted by:



Bruce Zvaniga
Chief Administrative Officer (Interim)