



## Office of the Mayor

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March 15, 2016

**To:** Members of the Alcohol License Review Committee

**From:** Mayor Paul R. Soglin

**Re:** Draft Policy for a Temporary Food/Drink/Alcohol Moratorium

State Street and the Capitol Square serve as two of the most vibrant public spaces within the entire city. Previously, I have spoken with you about the importance of a healthy mix of business types to ensure that these spaces retain their vibrancy. We know that we need more data, research, and public input to help determine the proper course of action to maintain a healthy downtown. To that end, the City is in the final stage of hiring a consultant to conduct a retail study that will help guide our decision. That retail study process, including more robust public input, will take at least a year.

Without immediate action, I fear that we will continue to lose traditional retail on and around State Street and the Capitol Square. The public has invested tens of millions of dollars in the State Street Mall and I strongly believe that we will lose the vitality of the street that we worked so hard to build if we don't act before the completion of the study.

I appreciate the committee's time to discuss this important issue at your March 16 meeting. To begin our discussion, I am outlining my goals for an interim policy. I ask your support for a moratorium that would cover the following scope:

### **Retail Preservation Overlay District (draft policy)**

- **Purpose:** The Planning Department conducted a review of retail business and retail square footage on State Street and the Capitol Square that demonstrates a significant loss in both business and total square footage of traditional retail over the past 20 years. The Common Council has already directed the City Planning Department to engage a consultant to conduct a retail study on the downtown area. The City's interest is in maintaining the current business mix until the completion of the larger retail study and the consideration of final recommendations based on the study.
- **Geographic area:** Encompassing, at a minimum, an area that extends two blocks in each direction beyond State Street and the Capitol Square.

- **Provisions:**
  - a) No new Class A, B, or C alcohol license shall be issued within the described area.
  - b) No new entertainment license shall be issued within the area.
  - c) No physical expansions of current alcohol licensed establishments shall be allowable within the area.
  - d) No new Food/Drink license shall be issued to establishments that are occupying space not previously licensed through Public Health Madison & Dane County within the area.
  - e) Transfers of alcohol licenses to new locations within the area are not permitted.
  
- **Exceptions:**
  - a) Alcohol licenses will be allowable for new construction involving the replacement of a building(s) within the area for comparable licensed premises that existed on the site previously.
  - b) New alcohol licenses for hotels will be allowable in the overlay area.
  - c) Alterations (not expansions) will be allowable for currently licensed establishments in the overlay area.
  - d) The sale of an existing licensed establishment and subsequent new alcohol license will be permissible within the overlay area at the same location of the existing business for substantially similar licensed premises.
  
- **Sunset:** The Retail Preservation Overlay District shall expire on December 31, 2018 unless extended or replaced by the Common Council prior to the expiration date.