

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 15, 2025

TO: Alcohol License and Review Committee (ALRC)

FROM: Julia Olsen, Supervisor, Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Unit

SUBJECT: **Geographic limitations on “Class A” and Class “A” license applications**

Public Health Madison and Dane County supports efforts to reduce youth access to alcohol and lower the burden of alcohol in Dane County.

With the introduced amendments to Section 38.05(9)(a) and creating 38.05(b) and (c) of City of Madison ordinance to limit alcohol retail outlets by geographic proximity, the City of Madison is taking a proactive stance backed by evidence-based research, to reduce the burden of alcohol.

Increased Class A off-premises alcohol outlet density is associated with increased underage drinking, increased assaults, street violence, domestic (and intimate partner) violence, motor vehicle crashes, and other forms of injury. <sup>i</sup>

According to the Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project, multiple studies have shown that the more alcohol is available in a neighborhood, the more adolescents consume alcohol. <sup>ii</sup> A key study showed that for every 10% increase in overall alcohol outlet density there was a 17% increase in the odds that a teenager would drink alcohol the next year. <sup>iii</sup> In other words, the more alcohol outlets there are in a community, the more teens drink. One effective way to keep the number of alcohol outlets low and allow reduction by attrition is to not grant licenses for new alcohol outlets. The proposed ordinance would effectively prohibit new Class A licenses for liquor stores and gas station/convenience stores in areas within 1,320 feet of facilities that provide services for unhoused individuals, facilities that provide mental health or substance use treatment, and public parks.

Public Health believes that this extension of geographic limitations from the already established 300ft of schools, churches, hospitals, and libraries benefits Public Health and reduces the burden of alcohol in Dane County.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192844484.001.0001>, accessed 6 May 2023.

<sup>i</sup> Babor, et al., p. 134; Johnson, T. H., & Snowden, A. J. (2023). Neighborhood Ecological Models of Alcohol Outlet Density and Male-on-Female Domestic Violence: Accounting for Adjacent Place and Neighborhood Characteristics. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 0(0)

<sup>ii</sup> Babor, et al., p. 134.

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iii Rowland, B., Evans-Whipp, T., Hemphill, S. A., Leung, R., Livingston, M., & Toumbourou, J. W. (2016). The density of alcohol outlets and adolescent alcohol consumption: An Australian longitudinal analysis. *Health & Place*, 37, 43-49.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2015.11.00>