

**From:** [Nicholas Davies](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina](#)  
**Subject:** Please refer item 83669 (liquor store location ordinance)  
**Date:** Sunday, September 22, 2024 12:13:40 PM

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Dear alders,

I hope you will refer item 83669 and allow the problematic aspects of it to be worked on further.

While I recognize the problems caused by a concentration of liquor stores in one area, the current text of this item would go much further than that, and prevent the issuance of a license in the vicinity of a hospital, a school, a library, or even a park.

This could have unintended consequences:

- Liquor stores may therefore congregate in areas without these amenities. So residents already least-served by the city will be over-served when it comes to liquor stores and the crime that problems of liquor store-dense areas.
- When residents who do live by a park, a hospital, a school, or a library do seek to buy liquor, this ordinance will put the place of retail outside of walking distance. In many cases, this will lead to people driving instead.

We should be striving to make more of Madison's neighborhoods walkable, vibrant, and self-sufficient. Each neighborhood should have access to amenities like parks, schools, libraries, healthcare, and yes, retail such as liquor stores. As currently written, this item is contrary to that goal.

I would fully support an ordinance to limit the density of liquor stores themselves on some purely geographic criteria--stores per square mile, distance between them, or travel time between them. That density of liquor stores in relation to each other is the problem that prompted this item, so let's solve that problem directly, without creating other problems.

Alternatively, let's take it one step further. Drunk driving is a persistent hazard in our community. Therefore, if there's anything we should separate liquor stores from, it's major roads.

Thank you,

Nick Davies  
3717 Richard St

**From:** [Ed Niles](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Item #11 of the 9/24/24 Common Council agenda  
**Date:** Sunday, September 22, 2024 8:51:46 PM

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Dear Alders,

In reading through the comments attached to Legistar item [83669](#) (Amending Section 38.05(9) (a) and creating 38.05(b) and (c) of the Madison General Ordinances related to Class A and Class "A" alcohol beverage licenses to impose geographic limitations on "Class A" and Class "A" license applications...), it has become apparent that concerns that myself and others have raised with our respective alders about this proposed change in policy are not being conveyed to the ALRC or the Council. So, I will attempt to share some of those concerns with you here, in the hopes that during Tuesday's Common Council meeting you will either vote down this item or send it back to the ALRC for further study and revision.

Obviously attempts to reduce the negative impacts of alcohol consumption is a worthy goal, and I have no doubt that the sponsors of this amendment have positive intentions. Unfortunately, this particular amendment, as it is currently structured, is simply bad policy. The amendment is a drastic and permanent change to city ordinances which would have far-reaching negative impacts on planning and neighborhoods for generations into the future. Given the expansive list of landmarks and the significant geographic range mentioned in this amendment, the practical effect of the change would be to completely calcify Class A licenses in the core of Madison. While this may lead to some minor attrition in the overall density of liquor establishments over time, it will more likely serve to create havoc when current licensees attempt to improve their business, or move, or change ownership. It would also make attracting businesses (including those who serve grocery needs) to infill neighbourhoods much, much harder as they will be effectively excluded from competing with existing businesses who are grandfathered into allowances to sell alcoholic beverages. It does not take much imagination to see how there could be serious unforeseen knock-on effects and unwanted economic consequences from allowing this aggressive change in geographic limitations on "Class A" licenses. It's also easy to predict how this policy could be unfairly weaponized against existing licensee businesses when a group of neighbors has unrelated issues with a particular business or business owner in their community.

There is no need to tie the future Council and ALRC's hands with this amendment in the interest of reducing access to alcohol near certain sites. The ALRC is already enabled to fully consider all aspects of a new application for a Class A license, and the Alders on the Common Council are well within their purview to provide guidance to the ALRC to take special care in noting proximity to certain sites when considering those new licenses. We do not need to permanently amend ordinances in a manner that could drastically and negatively impact Madison's future neighborhoods, when simple guidance to the ALRC could accomplish the same goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter,

-Ed Niles

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