

Charter Bylaw 18882

Text amendment to Zoning Bylaw 12800 to streamline regulations for Liquor Stores, update the design and on-site-parking requirements

Purpose

To amend Zoning Bylaw 12800 to simplify and clarify regulations for liquor stores by consolidating the Major and Minor Alcohol Sales uses into one new use, Liquor Stores; aligning the parking requirements for liquor stores with the general retail parking requirements, and improving the design regulations to enhance the appearance and safety of liquor stores.

Readings

Charter Bylaw 18882 is ready for three readings after the public hearing has been held. If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, then prior to moving third reading, Council must unanimously agree “That Charter Bylaw 18882 be considered for third reading.”

Advertising and Signing

This Charter Bylaw has been advertised in the Edmonton Journal on May 31, 2019, and June 8, 2019.

Position of Administration

Administration supports this Charter Bylaw.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the March 5, 2019, Urban Planning Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800, as generally outlined in Attachment 2 of the March 5, 2019, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development report CR_6497, except for the liquor store opportunity area, and return to a future City Council Public Hearing.

Report

Through previous reports and engagement with stakeholders on the regulation of liquor stores in Edmonton, Administration has identified opportunities to amend the regulations so that they are simplified, streamlined and are focused more on design and safety oriented outcomes.

Land Use Classification for Liquor Stores

Currently, the only distinction in Zoning Bylaw 12800 between a Major and Minor Alcohol Sales use is whether or not the floor area of the premises is greater than 275 m². As a result of analysis of development permits and discussion with liquor store operators undertaken for CR_6497, *Amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 - Major and Minor Alcohol Sales in the Downtown Core - Exemptions to Separation Distance Requirements* and CR_6498, *Implications of Alcohol Sales on Sensitive Uses and Entertainment Districts and Information on Appeals and Regulations*, it was identified that there is no land use impact related rationale to maintain a distinction between Major and Minor Alcohol Sales uses based on floor area. Some of the highest volume retailers by sales and traffic are classified as Minor Alcohol Sales, while some lower volume retailers by sales and traffic are Major Alcohol Sales. As a result, Administration recommends consolidating the Major Alcohol Sales and Minor Alcohol Sales uses into one new use, Liquor Stores.

With a new use of Liquor Store, the floor area threshold of 275 m² will no longer apply to the CB1, HA, TMU and MMUT zones, as highlighted in Attachment 2 - Mark-up of Proposed Changes for Liquor Stores.

Parking Requirements for Liquor Stores

Currently, the parking rates for liquor stores are higher than what is required for other retail-oriented establishments. Under the current parking requirements, Major Alcohol Sales requires one parking space per 23.3 m² of floor area and Minor Alcohol Sales requires one space per 31.3 m² of floor area. This is in contrast to General Retail Stores which only requires one space per 40 m², nearly half of what is currently required for Major Alcohol Sales.

The high parking requirements for liquor stores predate the privatization of liquor stores in 1994, reflecting a time when there were only 25 liquor stores in Edmonton, which contributed to high traffic volumes at these limited locations. Today, with approximately 250 liquor stores in operation, the volume of vehicle trips to liquor stores is much lower and no longer justifies a higher parking rate compared to other retail uses. This high rate of parking space requirements is also at odds with City policy to move towards a more multi-modal transportation network focused on walkability and other modes of active transportation. Taking this information into consideration, Administration proposes to reduce the parking requirement for liquor stores to align with General Retail Stores.

Design Regulations for Liquor Stores

Currently, Zoning Bylaw 12800 includes Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design regulations for liquor stores to encourage natural surveillance to deter criminal activity. Some of these regulations, however, are unclear and create uncertainty in the outcomes to be achieved. Administration recommends updating and clarifying the design regulations to promote natural surveillance and enhance safety for people entering and exiting liquor stores. The new requirement for applicants to submit a lighting plan to the Development Officer and the restriction on window signage will

ensure sufficient exterior lighting and window transparency to allow for unobstructed sight lines into and outside of liquor stores. These changes will apply to new liquor stores and existing liquor stores that make exterior alterations to their premises.

Conclusion

Taken together, these proposed changes will simplify and modernize the regulations for liquor stores across the City and will, over time, improve the safety and appearance of liquor stores. Further work to refine the regulation of liquor stores will also be undertaken as part of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal project to ensure a comprehensive approach based on land use impacts is applied to liquor stores moving forward.

Public Engagement

An earlier draft version of this report was circulated to external stakeholders on March 20, 2019, for four weeks. External stakeholders circulated to include:

- Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- All Business Improvement Area Associations
- Three local community service/shelter providers
- Liquor store industry stakeholders
- Alberta Liquor Store Association
- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
- Alberta Health Services
- Edmonton Police Service
- Urban Development Institute
- National Association for Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP) Commercial Real Estate Development Association
- Edmonton School Boards
- Surrounding municipalities

Only one comment was received from a liquor store retailer to clarify the application of Appendix 1 for the Non-Exemption Area to 500 m Separation Distance in relation to the proposed changes. Administration confirmed that no changes are proposed to the area of application of the non-exemption area.

Attachments

1. Charter Bylaw 18882
2. Mark-up of Proposed Changes for Liquor Stores