

Separation of Major and Minor Alcohol Sales from Sensitive Uses

Stakeholder engagement undertaken for *CR_5604 Options for Managing Impacts of Major and Minor Alcohol Sales*, presented at the October 2, 2018, Urban Planning Committee meeting, indicated a desire to buffer service providers from liquor stores. The context for the buffer was predominantly focused in the Downtown, Boyle Street, and McCauley neighbourhoods. As part of this engagement, Administration had telephone conversations with representatives with Hope Mission and the Bissell Centre, and met with a representative with Boyle Street Community Services regarding the impacts associated with liquor stores. In consideration of potentially reducing the separation distances required between liquor stores, Administration asked each representative whether there should be a buffer between liquor stores and service providers. Although there was general support for a buffer, it was identified that:

- Regardless of the distance between liquor stores and social service providers, alcohol and dangerous alternatives are accessible.
- There is no lack of access to liquor stores and more liquor stores in the downtown may increase issues addressed by the service providers.
- Liquor store operators need to be more responsible and not serve intoxicated customers.
- Predatory practices are undertaken by some operators.
- There should be a buffer of at least one block, if not more, between liquor stores and service providers.
- There are significant impacts and harms from consuming dangerous alternatives to alcohol (hand sanitizer and mouthwash).

In consideration of the concerns related to the desired buffer between liquor stores and service providers, and concerns with individuals consuming dangerous alcohol alternatives, Administration identified:

- a small buffer between liquor stores and service providers can provide sensitivity to the location of service providers and the services they provide to aid in alcohol-related harms reduction, and a larger buffer would reduce location opportunities for both liquor stores and service providers; and
- the consumption of dangerous alcohol alternatives cannot be solved by municipal zoning regulations. It requires education, awareness, and a voluntary dedication to changes in the legislative and business practices around the sale of these products. Examples include keeping these products behind a counter, or in a location where access to the product can be controlled or monitored.

To provide a buffer between liquor stores and existing service providers in the neighbourhoods noted above, two approaches can be taken to Zoning Bylaw 12800:

- Create a separation distance between the social service provider uses and liquor stores, or
- Use an Opportunity Boundary to limit the expansion of new liquor in proximity to existing service providers.

In order to create a separation distance between liquor stores and service providers, a new land use definition would need to be introduced to Zoning Bylaw 12800. This approach would be limited in its effectiveness due to the grandfathering of the existing permits for social service providers.

Currently, there is no specific land use definition or zoning for service providers. However, not defining these services explicitly in the bylaw has provided more location opportunities for service providers, in that they are able to fit under a broad set of uses, depending on the activities and services being provided at a particular location. Without being bound to a single land use definition, service providers can locate in a variety of zones where their support and services are needed, and helps avoid the possibility of exclusion through zoning. Some of the uses that service providers have been accommodated under include:

- Health Services,
- Temporary Shelter Services,
- Professional and Financial and Office Support Services
- Community Recreation Services, and
- Government Services.

In consideration of separation distances, the uses noted above accommodate a range of activities beyond those of social service providers, and therefore it would not be appropriate to create a separation distance between these uses and liquor stores. To create a separation distance that would apply specifically to service providers, a new land use would need to be introduced into Zoning Bylaw 12800. However, because social service providers have been approved under a variety of land use definitions, any new changes to the bylaw would not retroactively apply to existing service providers.

Consideration of the above has informed Administration's approach to use the proposed Liquor Store Opportunity Area Boundary, identified in CR_6497, to accomplish a similar outcome to that of a buffer between liquor stores and existing service providers in the Downtown, Boyle Street, and McCauley neighbourhoods. This approach provides:

- certainty for new liquor stores looking to locate within the Opportunity Area;
- certainty for new and existing service providers who prefer to remain/locate outside of Opportunity Area; and

Attachment 1

- allows new service providers to locate within the Opportunity Area at their discretion.