

PROPOSED CHANGE TO WINE SHOP DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS

Currently the City of Saint Paul requires off-sale liquor stores to be located at least one-half mile away from any other off-sale liquor outlets, except in the downtown business district, where the requirement is 300 feet. Section 409.29 contains a provision for a wine only** off-sale license that is subject to the same conditions as the liquor off-sale license.*

*(*Off-sale liquor is the sale of beer, wine, or bottles of liquor to be taken off site for consumption. This is the type of license that a liquor store needs to have in order to sell their products.)*

*(**State's definition of wine is: Subd. 20.Wine. "Wine" is the product made from the normal alcoholic fermentation of grapes, including still wine, sparkling and carbonated wine, wine made from condensed grape must, wine made from other agricultural products than sound ripe grapes, imitation wine, compounds sold as wine, vermouth, cider, perry, and sake, in each instance containing not less than one-half of one percent nor more than 24 percent alcohol by volume for nonindustrial use. Wine does not include distilled spirits as defined in subdivision 7.)*

Councilmember Jane Prince has proposed amending the distance requirement for a wine only off-sale license to locate at least 300 feet away from any other off-sale outlet (regular or wine-only). This would mean full liquor stores would remain subject to the half-mile restriction but allow a smaller distance requirement of 300 feet for wine shops. This could increase the number of wine shops in Saint Paul and allow wine shops to open in locations where they are currently not allowed based on their proximity to other liquor stores.

Proposed Ordinance Amendment

The proposed ordinance change detailed below would change the allowable distance requirements for wine only off-sale to 300 feet.

Sec. 409.06.

(i) *License location restrictions*

- (2) No off-sale license shall be issued to any location within a half-mile radius of any existing off-sale establishment, subject to the following exceptions:
 - a. In the downtown business district, **and for any off-sale wine licenses issued under Section 409.29**, the distance restriction shall be reduced to a radius of three hundred (300) feet.

Licenses types and distance requirements

Below are the six types of off-sale licenses and the number of active licenses in Saint Paul:

- **off-sale liquor license (50)**
- **wine-only off-sale (0)**
- distilleries (2)
- malt (breweries) (15)
- malt (growlers) (4)
- non-intoxicating malt (sold in grocery and convenience stores, also known as 3.2) (43)

The distance requirement applies only to off-sale liquor and off-sale wine only stores (in bold above).

The distance requirements do not apply to distilleries, breweries and growlers, or non-intoxicating malt (grocery stores).

Background

- As of August 13, 2020, the City of Saint Paul has 50 active off-sale liquor licenses.
- State law limits the number of off-sale liquor licenses to 1 license for every 5,000 population. Saint Paul's population at the last Census in 2010 was 285,000. (Currently the Met Council estimates 315,925 people as of April 1, 2019) This means that the total number of off-sale licenses is capped at 57, (likely to increase to 63 after this current year's census), allowing for an additional 7 licenses at this time.
- In the last several years, as local breweries and distillers have been popping up in Saint Paul, the city has created new license types for growers, breweries and distilleries to allow for sales of their own products and thus creating more opportunities for specialty beer and spirit off sales.

Distance requirements in surrounding communities

Minneapolis is the only community in close proximity to Saint Paul that has distance requirements for off-sale liquor licenses. Two communities have recently removed their distance requirements, including Maplewood which just removed theirs in August 2020 to allow Hy-Vee to open a new grocery store with an attached liquor store.

City	Liquor store distance requirement
Arden Hills	None
Falcon Heights	None
Lauderdale	None
Little Canada	None
Maplewood	None (previously had half-mile restriction, removed it 8/10/20)
Mendota Heights	None
Minneapolis	2000 feet*
Oakdale	None
Roseville	None
Saint Paul	One-half mile
Shoreview	None
South Saint Paul	None (previously half-mile, removed it in 2014)
Vadnais Heights	None
West Saint Paul	None
Woodbury	None
Bloomington	None

* and located on a minimum of five contiguous acres of commercial development (except in the downtown zone)

LET US KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS. SHOULD THE CITY CHANGE ITS ORDINANCE and allow wine shops to locate in closer proximity to liquor stores?

DO YOU LIKE THE ORDINANCE AS IS?

Submit your comments to be included in the public record to Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us or by phone at 651-266-6805.

Contact Stephanie Harr, stephanie.harr@ci.stpaul.mn.us or (651) 266-8671 if you have any questions. The Council will compile all received comments for inclusion in the public record.