

**From:** [Leah Timberlake Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_LH-Licensing](#)  
**Cc:** [The Morrows](#); [Sarah Dvorak](#); [Dean Cummings](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: UPDC Committee Support  
**Date:** Monday, January 29, 2024 10:40:53 AM  
**Attachments:** [midwaygrill.docx](#)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Leah Timberlake Sullivan** <[leah@unionparkdc.org](mailto:leah@unionparkdc.org)>  
Date: Mon, Jan 29, 2024 at 10:35 AM  
Subject: UPDC Committee Support  
To: <[mrmrsoza@gmail.com](mailto:mrmrsoza@gmail.com)>

Minal Oza,

The Committee for Land Use and Development at Union Park District Council supported your request for Liquor on Sunday and Gambling license. There was not time to obtain a Board of Director approved letter of support.

We received the following comment:

**Hello,**

**My name is Maureen Butler and I am the owner of Midway Liquor. We are a neighboring business of Quality Inn. We would like to see a restaurant and bar go into their establishment. It would bring customers back into the area.**

**We have many people coming in and asking for a sit down restaurant in the area.**

**I truly believe this will be a benefit to the area.**

**If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me via email or 651 644-7900.**

**Thank you**

**Maureen Butler  
Midway Liquor Store**

Additionally we received 6 letters of support from Days Inn employees. I have also attached a letter of support received.

Thank you,  
Leah Timberlake Sullivan  
Executive Director  
Union Park District Council

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Leah Timberlake Sullivan  
Executive Director  
Union Park District Council  
1821 University Ave W | Saint Paul, MN 55104  
651-645-6887 | [unionparkdc.org](http://unionparkdc.org)

*"Many Neighborhoods, One Community"*

**Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles, LLC**  
**520 N. Prior Avenue**  
**St. Paul, MN 55104**  
**651-641-1037**  
[info@mmrbstore.com](mailto:info@mmrbstore.com)



January 22, 2024

To the UPDC Board of Directors:

This letter is to give my support to the license request from the Midway Grill, located at the southwest corner of University Avenue and Prior Avenue, to amend their license to allow Sunday liquor and gambling on site.

I own Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles, one of the longest running businesses in the immediate area of the University/Prior intersection. MMRB has served the Midway area for over 15 years at this location. I am also the president of Midway Bicycle Supply, located at 506 N. Prior Avenue. Midway is a wholesale distributor of bicycle parts and accessories to the trade with accounts open in 48 states, and has been in business since 2013.

I do not see any reason to deny this request. My spouse and I spend a significant amount of time at our business locations and have a clear picture of what happens in the area, both during typical weekday business hours and during evening and weekend hours. Neither of us has observed significant amounts of disruptions or problems related to the Midway Grill or the adjacent hotel.

There are some significant problems in this area, but they don't originate from the restaurant or the hotel. The problems are related to a building on the southeast corner of Prior Avenue and Oakley. This building is supposed to be a place where musicians can rent studio space for rehearsals. However, for the last several years, we have not observed people hauling music gear in or out of the space. What we have seen is a lot of loitering, a steady stream of motor vehicle traffic coming and going starting around 8 in the evening and continuing to the wee hours of the morning, lots of cars parked illegally along Oakley, people sitting in vehicles smoking marijuana (we can smell it as we drive by), and what appears to be drug deals.

A couple of years ago, a man named Otis Elder was murdered at that intersection by a 17 year old over a drug deal gone bad. Subsequently, when police were looking for Mr. Elder's murderer, they used a no-knock warrant to break into an apartment over in Minneapolis that resulted in the murder of Amir Locke – an innocent man who was simply visiting his relatives. We have complained about this activity to police numerous times, yet the behavior continues unabated. We feel that had the police done their job that there are two men who would likely still be alive.

There is also other activity in the area during the warmer months, mainly in Iris Park. Catholic Charities runs a shelter in South St. Anthony Park for long term inebriates, and a number of those men congregate in Iris Park. While they may appear to passersby to be a potential threat, they do not engage in criminal activity, they just hang out in the park.

Folks who are only in the area in the daytime, such as the folks employed at the Habitat for Humanity Office Building, do not have a clear picture of what is happening at night and on weekends because they aren't there

during those times. The license sought by the Midway Grill is for Sundays, so it shouldn't have an impact on those who work in the area Monday through Friday.

I would be happy to answer any questions concerning what kinds of activities actually happen in the area of Prior and University. Based on my personal observations over the years, the problems in the area are not caused by the hotel or the Midway Grill. For this reason, I support the license request by Midway Grill to expand liquor and gambling on Sundays.

Benita Warns, Owner

Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles, LLC