



April 30, 2025

**To:** Shawn Purvis, Deputy Town Manager  
**Cc:** Randy Vosburg, Town Manager  
**From:** Joanna Helms, Economic Development Director  
**Re:** Social District Proposal

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The purpose of this memo is to highlight scenarios and options in the social district plan that have not been finalized and to clarify the proposed boundary lines for the social district. This memo includes information and clarification on the proposed boundaries and scenarios followed by applicable staff recommendations.

### Discussion

**Social District Boundary:** If a business has a sidewalk that connects to their entrance and the social district boundary abuts that sidewalk, that business can choose to opt-in to the social district. Therefore, the boundary line, as it extends down Salem Street from Chatham Street to William Street, only includes the sidewalks and not the actual buildings. The sidewalks are the congregation areas.

The Tap Station site is included within the social district boundary due to the green space between the sidewalk (congregation area) and the areas on the Tap Station property that have been permitted to sell/consume alcohol by the ABC Commission, which is specifically the building and the outside patio area. In order to not confuse the patrons and for ease in enforcement, the boundary includes the entire site, except for the parking lot.

The district boundary includes buildings in the 100 and 200 blocks of N. Salem Street to loop in congregational areas around and behind the businesses.

**The Depot and Seaboard Street:** The Town does not own the land on which the Depot building sits, but the Town does own the Depot building. The line that separates CSX owned property and the Town owned property in the Depot area runs down the middle of the Depot plaza. The Town's lease with CSX does not allow for alcohol on CSX property. CSX is a federally regulated entity, and they would have to approve a change to allow alcohol on their property.

Seaboard Street land is similarly owned by CSX, with the Town having the right of way for the street and parking. It has the same restrictions re: alcohol as the land the Depot sits on.

**Community Event Opt-in:** If a community event sponsor is holding an event that is contiguous to the social district boundary and they wish to have alcohol at their event, they can apply for a one-time permit. This will allow patrons to flow from the event area to the social district freely, so long as the event complies with the social district requirements (cups, labeling, etc.).

### Recommendations

The below scenarios represent decision points to still be made for the social district plan. Staff anticipate discussion with Town Council to receive directions for each scenario.

- **Saunders Street Parking Lot**

The concept of a social district implies an authorized congregation area. Staff recommend excluding any parking lot from the social district for the following reasons:

- An active parking lot should not be a congregation area.
- Communication/understanding regarding the boundary of the social district in the Saunders Street lot could be difficult due to required sign placement being in the far corners of the lot.
- Including the lot may tempt people to knowingly or unknowingly enter a vehicle with an alcoholic beverage.

***Include or exclude Saunders Street parking lot in the social district?***

- **Temporary Suspension of the Social District**

Once the social district concept and boundaries of the social district are established, it is not possible to temporarily suspend a certain area of the district, only the entire district can be suspended. Once established, the district is either entirely in effect/active or it is not. There is no mechanism to suspend only a portion of the social district, and should the Town try to exclude alcohol from a portion of the social district while the social district is active, there is no means to enforce the exclusion. The ordinance itself has the force of law.

***Establish the social district, which will be in effect every day, regardless of other activity in the district?***