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## What is a Social District? 🍺



Authorized by Michigan law in 2020, social districts **allow communities to designate areas where beverages from licensed establishments can be enjoyed outdoors** in specially marked containers.

Introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic to support local businesses, these districts have since grown in popularity, enhancing downtown atmospheres and boosting tourism.

**All State of Michigan and City of Gladstone laws regarding public intoxication, impaired driving, and open containers apply within and beyond district boundaries.**

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## Benefits of a Social District

A social district enhances ***community engagement*** and ***economic vitality*** by creating a vibrant, walkable downtown that attracts businesses, residents, and visitors alike.

It ***increases foot traffic***, encourages longer downtown visits, and ***stimulates economic growth*** by supporting local businesses.

By making downtown more inviting, it ***incentivizes the occupation of vacant or underutilized buildings*** and ***fosters business collaboration***.

A social district ***strengthens community identity***, promotes outdoor socialization, and provides a platform for local arts, culture, and live entertainment, making the area ***a more attractive place to live, work, and visit***.



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## Drawbacks of a Social District

### Community Raised Concerns

#### Child Proximity to Alcohol

#### Increase in Alcohol Related Crimes

- Aggression/Bad Behavior
- Drunk Driving
- Noise
- Public Intoxication
- Underage Drinking

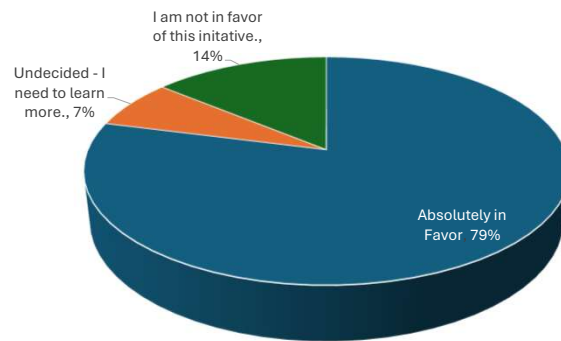
#### Increase in Litter and Trash



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## Community Survey Results

**Are you for or against the social district in Gladstone?**



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## Community Survey Results

*"I don't know who is behind the push to revitalize the downtown area of Gladstone, but I applaud you're your effort! Thank you!"*

*"I am an economic partner in the area and I think this would hugely benefit many downtown Gladstone businesses. Such a great idea!"*

**"Please please please do this. I'm begging you. In order to get younger people to want to move here we need to offer social opportunities that many of them experience in the larger areas that they go to college in. This is a great first step for us!"**

*"I think this is a great idea. I feel like in delta county we are so behind on trying new things. I understand we're more of an old person community but some of us are still younger."*

*"I think this is an innovative idea that has potential to be successful if the downtown businesses are on board."*

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## Community Survey Results

*"I think Dew Drop Inn has done a great job at offering outdoor seating where people, if they so choose, can enjoy the outdoors while also enjoying their drinks. Other businesses are free to take the steps they did."*

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"From my vantage point Gladstone already has substance abuse issues. It seems like this initiative might facilitate the problem. This would not be top of my list on ways to promote growth and tourism to this tiny but awesome town."



"I am highly disappointed in the fact of alcohol potentially being allowed openly and freely downtown is even being considered. As a DDA you could be using time to be much more productive. You're catering to a crowd of people who can potentially create major problems for the city and people of the city"

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## Steering Committee Established



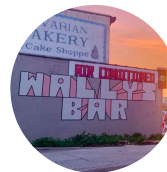
Joe Thompson  
Mayor



Ron Robinson  
Public Safety Director

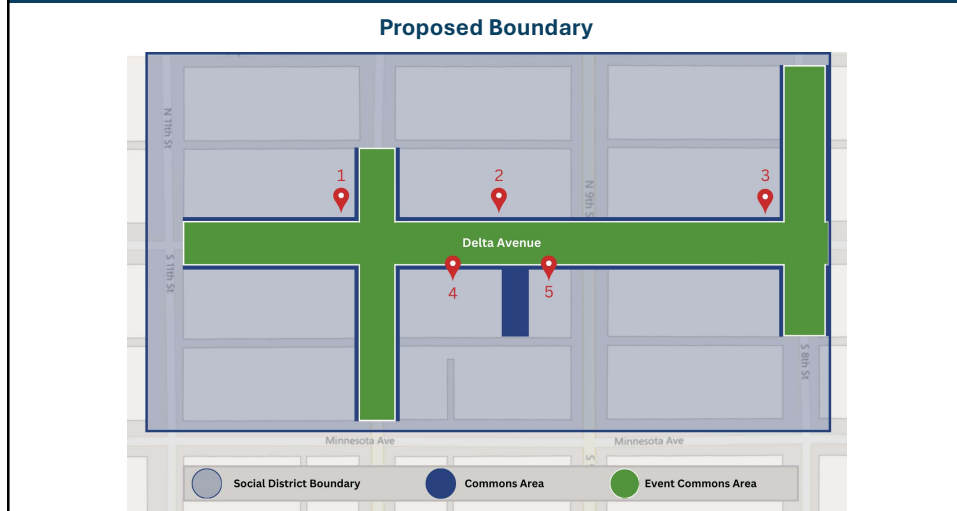


Patricia West  
DDA Director



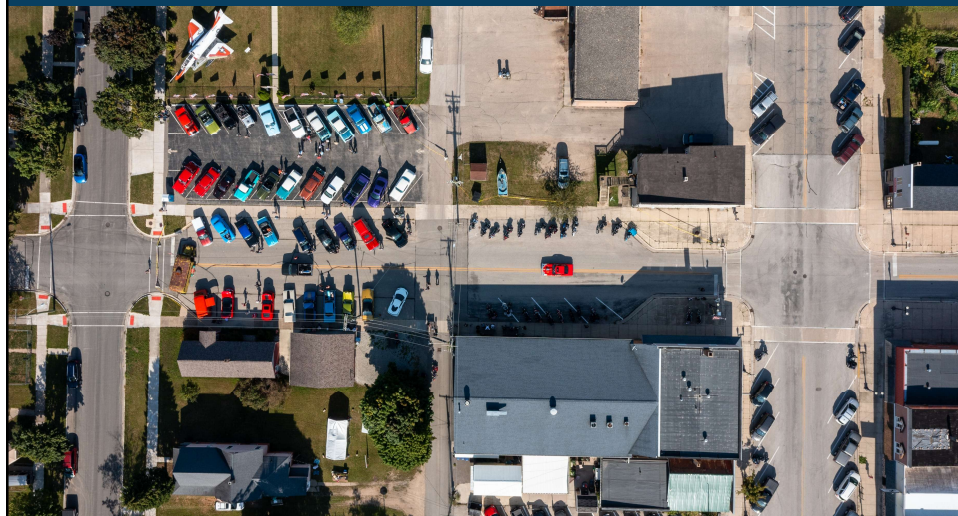
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## Steering Committee Proposal



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## Steering Committee Proposal



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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Hours of Operation

The social district **will operate year-round**, with hours of operation detailed in the table below. After 10:00 PM, beverages may only be sold for consumption within the license holder's service area and not in the district commons areas, per their liquor license.

Day of the Week	Hours
Sunday	12:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Monday	4:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Tuesday	4:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Wednesday	4:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Thursday	4:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Friday	4:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Saturday	12:00 PM – 10:00 PM

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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Research on Community Safety & Impact

"The City of Brighton started a social district in 2020/2021 and we currently have 14 participating establishments. In the beginning, there was some concern as to how this was going to impact the community and police service. So far, **we have not experienced any issues as it relates to drunk driving, fights, and people refilling the social district cups in parking lots.**

I believe the success of our social district is due to the educational campaign we did for the community, restaurants, and social district signage posted."

Brent Pirochta  
Chief of Police  
Brighton City Police Department

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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Research on Community Safety & Impact

"The City of Lowell has had a social district since 2020. Our biggest complaint is patrons drinking package alcohol in the district. They will bring it with or buy it a(t) our local liquor store. We just educate the public (pour it out and give a warning) and remind them of the restrictions."

Christopher Hurst  
Chief  
Lowell Police Department



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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Enforcement & Security



**Public Safety Enforcement:** Gladstone Public Safety will ensure compliance within the district.



**Clear Boundaries & Education:** Signage will define district limits, and the city's website will provide guidelines.



**Event Coordination:** Public Safety is notified of special events requiring City Commission approval. Additional police presence must be coordinated with event organizers. Event coordinators cover associated Public Safety staffing costs.



**Legal Compliance:** State and local laws on public intoxication, impaired driving, and open containers apply.



**Reporting Violations:** Any infractions should be reported to law enforcement.



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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Serving Container Oversight

**Licensed participating establishments will oversee the purchase of the social district containers** but are required to adhere to the Michigan Liquor Control Code Act 58 of 1998, Section 436.1551 requirements for social district containers. It is the establishment's responsibility to ensure that their serving containers are compliant.

### These requirements include:

- ✓ The container prominently displays the social district permittee's trade name or logo or some other mark that is unique to the social district permittee under the social district permittee's on-premises license.
- ✓ The container prominently displays a logo or some other mark that is unique to the commons area.
- ✓ The container is not glass.
- ✓ The container has a liquid capacity that does not exceed 16 ounces.

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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Sanitation & Trash Collection

State law requires that containers used for social district beverages be **single-use**. With increased foot traffic, a natural rise in waste is expected downtown.

The **Gladstone DDA contracts with Parks & Recreation staff to manage routine trash collection within the district**. This includes daily visual inspections of receptacles, which are emptied as needed.



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# Steering Committee Proposal

## Closing, Pausing, or Revoking the District

The privilege of having a social district comes with the responsibility of maintaining its benefits and integrity. A meeting shall be held annually between DDA administrative staff and the participating establishments to discuss the impact (either positive or negative) of the district and identify needs to ensure its future success.

### Pausing the District

The City Commission or DDA may temporarily close the district if public alcohol consumption is deemed inappropriate.

The DDA will provide at least 7 days notice to all licensed establishments.

During closure, licensees must restrict alcohol consumption to their service areas.

### Revoking the District

If misuse is identified, or the public's health, safety, or wellbeing is at risk, the municipality may revoke the district designation following a public hearing.

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## Questions?



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