

TEMPORARY DESIGNATED OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT AREA

Imagine a more active and connected downtown area during events — residents and visitors enjoying Downtown Watertown, attending events, and supporting local businesses. Increased foot traffic can encourage businesses to extend hours, improve storefronts, and create a more vibrant downtown atmosphere. A Temporary Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (TDORA) can help create that experience in a safe and structured way.



What is an “Temporary Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (TDORA)”?

A Temporary Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (TDORA) is a City-approved area that exists only during approved special events. Within the approved event boundaries, individuals age 21 and older may purchase alcoholic beverages from participating licensed establishments and consume those beverages outdoors within the designated event area.

The following rules apply within the TDORA:

- Alcohol consumption is only permitted within the clearly marked TDORA event boundaries.
- Alcohol consumption is prohibited in parking lots and areas open to vehicle traffic unless specifically included in the approved event area.
- Alcoholic beverages may only be purchased from participating licensed establishments located within the approved event area.
- Outside alcohol and carry-in beverages are prohibited.
- Alcohol purchased from one participating establishment may not be taken into another licensed establishment.
- Beverages must be served in approved non-glass containers displaying the TDORA identifier.
- All participants consuming alcohol outdoors must wear an approved age-verification wristband.



A TDORA is not a way to bypass a temporary liquor (“picnic”) license. Only establishments already licensed to sell alcohol and located within the approved event boundaries may participate.

Compliance with all state and local alcohol laws remains mandatory, including prohibitions on underage drinking and carrying alcohol into another licensed premises.

How does this benefit Watertown?



A TDORA supports local businesses and restaurants, increases downtown foot traffic, enhances community events and tourism, and encourages longer visits and economic activity. It is intended to enhance community engagement and economic vitality by creating a safe and flexible environment for public gatherings.

How would a TDORA affect departments of City government?

Costs associated with a special event would continue to be billed to the event organizer through the existing special event process. Operational impacts would primarily involve street closures, an increase in trash removal, and other event support already associated with approved special events. Research from communities with similar programs indicates no significant increase in police-related incidents.

When would the TDORA occur?

The TDORA would only exist during approved special events and only for the dates, times, and boundaries approved as part of the special event permit.

How would a TDORA work?

1. Be age verified at a participating establishment and receive a wristband indicating age verification has been done.
2. Order a beverage (inside the boundaries) from a participating establishment; the beverage would be served in an approved plastic cup, with the TDORA logo on it.
3. Drink the beverage outdoors, within the boundaries of the TDORA.



What would be the boundaries of the TDORA?



Other Municipalities with a DORA

Here are a few applicable references of communities that have established a DORA:

<https://www.visiteauclaire.com/the-yard/about/altoona-downtown-outdoor-refreshment-area/>

<https://www.ci.neenah.wi.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TDORA-Guidelines.pdf>

<https://www.visitoshkosh.com/blog/stories/post/dora-in-downtown-oshkosh/>

Google search Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas in WI