

City of Houghton
Downtown Social District
Commons Area Management and Maintenance Plan

Commons Area Management and Maintenance Plan

Overview

In an effort to support local restaurants, microbreweries, bars, and similar food service businesses; sustain and grow economic development; create placemaking amenities; and to supplement outdoor social distancing space when pandemics may occur, the City of Houghton has established an outdoor Social District and Commons Area aka “Lakeshore Lounge”.

Other Options for Outdoor Dining and Alcoholic Beverage Consumption

The establishment of the Commons Area in accordance with the provisions of MCL 436.1555 in no way negates the ability of a businesses to establish sidewalk cafes for outdoor dining and alcoholic beverage consumption in accordance with the pre-existing MLCC guidelines and city ordinances.

The establishment of the Commons Area in no way negates the ability of an organization or individual(s) to apply for and be granted an alcohol use permit on city properties where such activities are permitted.

Signage and Barriers

The city will prepare signs as required by the MLCC Rules. Signs shall be affixed in appropriate locations to manage alcohol use within the Social District. Boundaries of the Commons Area will be identified by signs matching the current streetscape signage. Signs will include the following as described: (1) General Welcome\Rules\Map Boundary sign that includes the rules and designates the boundaries of the Social District and Commons Area, (2) Public Park signs which indicates a park is within the Commons Area, (3) Public Parking Lot sign that indicates that a closed parking-lot is part of the Commons Area, (4) Public Street sign, indicating that a closed street is part of the Commons Area, (5) Boundary Zone sign, indicating the exit boundaries of the Commons Area and providing a violation warning.

Sign

General Welcome\Rules\Map Boundary Signs- To be placed in conspicuous locations nearest the peripheral edges of the Commons Area, specifically at access points using non-motorized transportation (Exhibit A).

Public Park Signs- To be placed at the entrances of all public parks that are included in the Commons Area for alcohol consumption (Exhibit B).

Public Parking Lot Sign- A sign to be placed at the entrances of all public parking lots, closed to public parking, and included in the Commons Area for alcohol consumption (Exhibit C).

Public Street Sign- A temporary sign to be placed at the entrances of a public street, closed to vehicular use, and included in the Commons Area for alcohol consumption (Exhibit D).

Boundary Exit Sign – To be placed at the exit points of the Commons District including a violation warning. (Exhibit E).

Qualified Licensed Participating Business- To be placed at of all participating licensed

businesses within the social district (Exhibit F).

General Requirements

The Commons Area is subject to the following requirements:

1. Boundaries, structures, and materials associated with Commons Areas shall:
 - a. Not impede drivers, pedestrians, or wheelchair users. Note: The City will consider the extended closure of sections of public parking lots and streets, subject to maintaining adequate access to the surrounding properties.
 - b. Not block sight visibility of remaining parking lot aisles or intersections.
 - c. Not impede emergency vehicle and personnel access.
 - d. Not prevent access to nearby businesses or homes.
2. Alcohol service shall conform to all Michigan Liquor Control Commission requirements, including any Social District and Commons Areas Permit requirements. Specifically:
 - a. The serving container must prominently display the licensee's trade name or logo or other designation that is unique to the business that sold the alcohol.
 - b. The serving container must prominently display a logo or other designation that is unique to the commons area to be provided by the City of Houghton.
 - c. The serving container is not made of glass.
 - d. The serving container does not have a liquid capacity over 16 ounces.
3. Hours of operation shall begin no earlier than 12:00 noon, food and beverage service shall discontinue in the Commons Areas no later than 11:00 pm, Monday through Sunday.
4. The layout of boundaries, structures, and materials shall conform to the proposed outdoor Commons Area layout plan during open hours. Tables, chairs, and temporary barriers may be permitted to remain outdoors during closed hours but must be secured. Service items, decorations, cleaning materials and equipment and other easily stored items must be removed from the area at the end of each business day. Solid barriers, if incorporated, may remain for the duration of the permitted timeframe. Consumption of alcohol on Sheldon Avenue and it's sidewalks is prohibited. Signage will direct where alcohol can be consumed.
5. Sites and surfaces shall be cleaned before service hours and upon close.
6. Tents and other temporary shelter structures may be approved by permit.
7. Amplified music shall be set at reasonable levels so as not to disturb owners and occupants of neighboring properties and will require a permit if not a city sponsored vendor or event.
8. All heating elements must be approved by permit.

City of Houghton Social District and Commons Area

The City of Houghton Social District shall include all yellow outlined areas on the attached map (Exhibit G). The Commons area will consist of all areas highlighted in orange where alcohol can be consumed and the following conditions are present: (1) Anywhere that is signed as "Commons Area" (2) Anywhere public sidewalks are present and where there is also signage saying it is part of the "Commons Area" (3) public parks that are signed as part of the "Commons Area", (4) publicly-owned parking lots and when closed to public parking and are signed as part of the "Commons Area", (5) and any public street closed to traffic and signed as part of the "Commons Area".

Enforcement and General Management

City of Houghton Police Department will manage enforcement of the boundary area according to their processes and procedures.

The City of Houghton will manage Social District business training and public education according to their processes and procedures.

The City of Houghton will manage additional restrooms, picnic tables, seating, food trucks, and ancillary services according to their processes and procedures.

The City of Houghton DPW will manage all street closures, signage, and grounds cleanup according to their processes and procedures.

Beverage Containers

All qualified, licensed, and participating businesses within the Social District must adhere to the following standards:

1. Unique beverage containers for use within the Commons Area must be supplied by the licensed permittee of a color and design specified and approved by the City Manager or his/her designee.
2. All unused beverage containers must be always kept under the control of the establishment.
3. All beverage containers must prominently display the approved City of Houghton Social District/Commons Area Logo (as provided by the City of Houghton).
4. Beverage containers supplied by a participating licensed permittee must prominently display the permittee's trade name or logo or another mark unique to the permittee.
5. Beverage containers must have a liquid capacity of 16 ounces or less.
6. Beverage containers must not be glass.
7. Businesses may place a surcharge on cups.
8. Alcohol served in the unique beverage container may only be consumed in the Commons Area.

Mandated Training

Businesses desiring to participate in the Houghton Social District will need to provide a certificate indicating they have passed the Michigan TIPS Alcohol Server training. Additional City training will be provided for the following:

1. Information on the Social District and Commons Area.
2. Information on Beverage Containers.
3. Answers to questions regarding anything associated with the Social District.

Exhibit A: General Welcome/Rules/Map Sign for Social District in Houghton (generic version)

Welcome to the Downtown Houghton Social District

Rules

1. Alcohol may only be consumed in the Commons Area (highlighted in orange). This includes designated sidewalks, certain parks, parking areas and streets where signage is present. There is no consumption allowed on Sheldon Avenue (including sidewalks).
2. All alcohol must be purchased from a participating licensed business.
3. No outside alcohol is permitted in the Commons Area.
4. Social District hours are noon- 11 pm, 7 days a week.

(Put map here with commons area and social district plus the key)

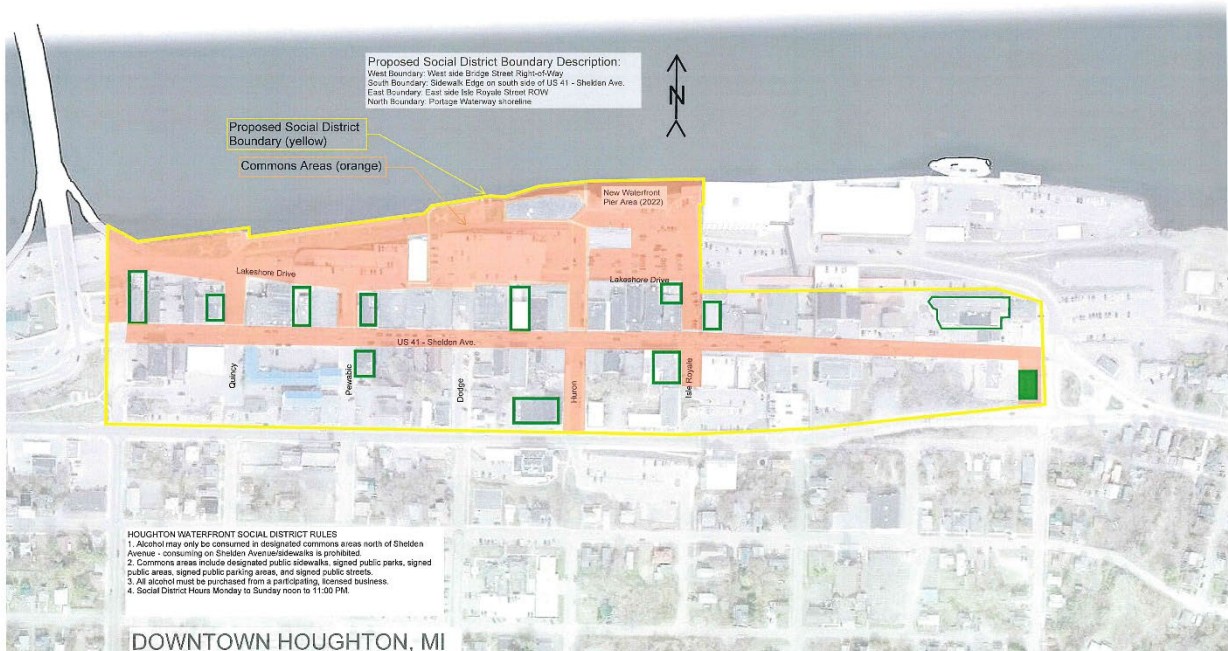


Exhibit B: Public Park (generic)

This park is within the Downtown Houghton Social District. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted where there is signage by order of the City of Houghton



Exhibit C: Parking Lot sign (generic)

This public parking lot is within the Downtown Houghton Social District. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted when the lot is closed and there is signage by order of the City of Houghton.



Exhibit D: Public Street signage (generic)

This closed street is within the City of Houghton Social District Commons Area. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted.



Exhibit E: Boundary Zone signage (generic)

You are now leaving the City of Houghton Social District Commons Area.

No alcoholic beverages are permitted past this point.

Failure to comply could result in a civil infraction and up to \$500 in fines.



Exhibit F: Participating Social District Business sign (generic)

**Participating Social
District Business**

Exhibit G: City of Houghton Downtown Social District Map

