**Downtown Edenton Social District**

**What is the Social District?**

In an effort to increase economic activity, promote business development, and boost tourism in Edenton’s downtown area, Town Council voted on August 8, 2023 to establish a social district along South Broad Street.

The social district allows people to drink beer or wine as they walk through a defined area of downtown Edenton, in accordance with House Bill 211.

Edenton’s social district operates **Thursday and Friday from 5 PM to 9 PM** and on **Saturday and Sunday from 11 AM to 9 PM**. The social district will NOT be in effect Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Social districts have been implemented in towns and cities across the state since the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that allowed municipalities to designate areas where open containers of alcoholic beverages purchased from a licensed ABC permittee can be consumed outdoors, on sidewalks, and on the property of participating businesses that do not have an ABC permit.

**Social District Boundaries**

There is one approved social district in Edenton — the Downtown Social District. Alcoholic beverages cannot be taken outside of the boundaries of this social district.

The boundaries include all of South Broad Street and its sidewalks from the intersection of Queen Street to the intersection with Water Street. Boundaries also include the 100 block of West Water Street to The Herringbone, the 100 block of East King Street to Colonial Avenue, the 100 block of East Eden Street to the Town-owned parking lot, and the **south-side sidewalk** of the 100 block of East Queen Street up to approximately 108 East Queen Street, before residential zoning begins.

The north-side sidewalk of the 100 block of East Queen Street, along the Chowan County Courthouse property, is **not included in the district**.

Additionally, alcoholic beverages are not allowed to be possessed or consumed on any paved street or parking lot. Crosswalks are an exception to this rule.

A map of the social district is included.

**Participating and Non-Participating Locations**

Businesses located within a social district boundary have the option to participate in the social district. Interested businesses can inform Town Hall or Destination Downtown Edenton of whether or not they wish to participate.

Participating businesses (ABC permittees and non-permittees) must display signage indicating their level of participation. This signage may come in the form of window cling stickers.

GREEN STICKERS - Alcohol sold here and welcome.

YELLOW STICKERS - Alcohol welcome but not sold here.

RED STICKERS - Alcohol NOT welcome here.

**Social District Requirements**

An alcoholic beverage purchased for consumption in the social district must:

* be consumed in the social district
* be disposed of before exiting the social district unless entering a business within the social district that allows alcoholic beverages to be brought inside the business.people in the streets at a special event

**ABC Permittee Requirements**

A permittee located and selling alcoholic beverages within the social district must meet the following requirements under North Carolina law:

The permittee must:

* only sell and serve alcoholic beverages for consumption on its licensed premises.
* only sell alcoholic beverages for consumption in a container that meets all of the following requirements:
	+ The container clearly identifies the permittee from which the alcoholic beverage was purchased.
	+ The container clearly displays a logo or some other kind of mark that is unique to the social district in which it will be consumed.
	+ The container is not made of glass.
	+ The container displays, in no less than 12-point font, the statement "Drink Responsibly - Be 21."
	+ The container shall not hold more than 16 fluid ounces.

**Patron Requirements**

The possession and consumption of an alcoholic beverage in a social district is subject to all of the following requirements of North Carolina law:

* Only alcoholic beverages purchased from a permittee located in the social district may be possessed and consumed.

Alcoholic beverages must:

* only be in designated social district containers
* only be possessed and consumed during the days and hours set by the Town: Thursday and Friday from 5 PM to 9 PM; Saturday and Sunday from 11 AM to 9 PM

A single patron cannot be sold or delivered alcoholic beverages in excess of:

* Not more than two alcoholic beverage drinks at one time of any of the following:
* A malt beverage, unfortified wine, fortified wine
* A person must dispose of any alcoholic beverage before exiting the social district unless entering a business within the social district that allows alcoholic beverages to be brought inside the business.

**Special Events**

North Carolina law allows a special event located within a social district to receive a permit from the ABC Commission for the sale of alcohol within the event area. The special event permittee may also participate in a social district if the requirements under North Carolina law to do so are followed, including allowing beverages with social district cups to be carried from and into the special event area.

Participation in the social district is at the special event holder's discretion. Event organizers will have the choice to allow social district beverages within their event footprint or not.

The Town of Edenton, Destination Downtown Edenton, the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce and the Chowan County Tourism Development Authority can work with event organizers to determine their preference.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Can a convenience store sell alcoholic beverages to-go as part of the social district?

No. Participating locations must have an ABC permit for on-site consumption as outlined in NCGS 18B-904.1(a).

1. Can I bring my own alcoholic beverage into a social district?

No. Alcoholic beverages must be sold by a permittee located within the social district. No personal beer, wine, or liquor can be brought into the social district.

1. Can I take an alcoholic beverage in my social district cup home with me?

No. Cups should be disposed of in a nearby recycling receptacle prior to exiting the social district.

1. Can I take my alcoholic beverage into a vehicle within the social district?

No. No person shall possess an alcoholic beverage while driving a vehicle, including bicycles and scooters. Open containers of alcohol are also prohibited in the passenger area of any vehicle while on the right-of-way within a social district.

1. How can participating businesses be identified?

Participating businesses will have window clings displayed to identify that they have opted into the social district.

1. How does a business opt-in to the social district?

Businesses may contact Town Hall at 252-482-2155 extension 182 to inform the Town Planner that they would like to opt in, or alternatively contact Destination Downtown Edenton Executive Director at destinationdowntownedenton@gmail.com.

1. How many alcoholic drinks can I purchase at one time in a social district?

A single patron cannot be sold or delivered more than two alcoholic beverage drinks at one time of beer or wine.

1. How will the social district be enforced?

The N.C. Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) and local law enforcement (EPD, CCSO) will all have jurisdiction over the social district.

1. How will the social district boundaries be marked?

Signage will be placed at the boundaries of the Town’s social districts. Alcohol is not permitted outside beyond the social district boundaries.

1. What cups will be used for the social district?

Establishments will be required to purchase their own cups that meet the statutory requirements if they choose to participate in the social district. The Town will provide the necessary graphics to be printed on the cups. Requirements of a social district cup are:

* Container shall not hold more than 16 fluid ounces and is not comprised of glass
* Container clearly identifies the permittee from which the alcoholic beverage was purchased
* Container clearly displays a logo (provided by the Town) that is unique to the social district in which it will be consumed
* Container displays, in no less than 12-point font, the statement "Drink Responsibly - Be 21" (To be included in the logo provided by the Town)
1. What happens if I leave the social district boundaries with an alcoholic beverage?

Individuals who leave the social district with an alcoholic beverage can be criminally charged. EPD can be contacted at 252-482-5144, Chowan Central Communications at 252-482-4444, and 911 for emergencies ONLY.

1. What if I am a retailer, and I do not want alcohol inside of my business?

All businesses located within the social district have the option to opt-out of the district. Signage indicating whether you are a participant in the social district or not will be provided by the Town.

1. When does the social district go into effect?

Fall 2023, an exact date will be announced when it is decided.