



**CITY OF HOUSTON - CITY COUNCIL**

Meeting Date: 12/14/2021

District C, District D

Item Creation Date: 11/9/2021

ARA - Proposed Midtown Entertainment Zone

Agenda Item#: 24.

**Background:**

The Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department recommends approving an Entertainment Zone in Midtown for the reasons described herein.

The City of Houston Code of Ordinances §3-2 makes it unlawful to sell alcoholic beverages within 300 feet of a church, school, or public hospital (or within 1,000 feet of a school district that has required an alcohol-free school zone). An Entertainment Zone is a mixed-use area consisting of at least 10 acres or 10 city blocks designated by City Council that is characterized by high-density, mixed land uses and special development interests like a TIRZ, enterprise zone, etc. Within an Entertainment Zone, an establishment may be authorized to sell alcohol without regard to the 300-foot distance. There is currently only one designated Entertainment Zone, located in downtown Houston.

An Entertainment Zone is being proposed for Midtown to recognize the character of the neighborhood and to encourage the continued growth within the neighborhood that is allowing its residents to live, work, and enjoy their leisure hours within walking distance of their homes and jobs. Cities across the country are seeing net migrations especially those that offer these types of vibrant, mixed-use communities. In Midtown, existing low-density land uses are increasingly being redeveloped into high-density, mixed land uses with retail or restaurant establishments on the ground level and residential uses on the higher levels.

Although the Entertainment Zone creates an exception to the distance prohibitions for establishments that serve alcohol, the boundaries of the proposed Zone have been crafted to avoid negative impacts on protected uses. The proposed Midtown Entertainment Zone only affects Trinity Church by allowing alcohol establishments to be located within 300 feet of the church. However, Trinity Church has expressed support for the establishment of the Zone.

ARA met with Midtown stakeholders, including the Midtown Management District; Trinity Episcopal Church; and the Midtown Super Neighborhood. All three stakeholder groups support the creation of the Midtown Management Zone. Both, Trinity Episcopal Church, and the Midtown Management District provided letters of support. South Main Baptist Church is outside of the proposed Midtown Entertainment Zone; however, they have also expressed support for the Midtown Entertainment Zone.

The proposed Midtown Entertainment Zone was presented by ARA to the Regulatory and Neighborhood Affairs Committee on November 9, 2021.

**Fiscal Note:**

There is no impact to the fiscal budget or no additional spending authority. Therefore, no Fiscal Note is required as stated in the Financial Policies.

**Departmental Approval Authority:**

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*Tina Paez*

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Tina Paez, Director

Other Authorization

Administration & Regulatory Affairs Department

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description	Type
11.30.2021 Proposed MEZ Map	Backup Material
11.30.2021 Proposed MEZ Map Enlarged	Backup Material
11.30.2021 Proposed MEZ LOS from Midtown Management District	Backup Material