



**A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING A SOCIAL DISTRICT WITHIN  
THE CITY OF IONIA AND ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL DISTRICT  
MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN**

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Ionia, Michigan, held in the City Council Chambers, Ionia City Hall, 114 North Kidd Street, Ionia, Michigan, on June 4, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., there were:

**PRESENT:** Margot Cook, Brenda Cowling, Dawn Ketchum, Tim Lee, John Milewski, Tom Millard, Jeff Winters

**ABSENT:** Richard Starr and Troy Waterman

The following resolution was offered by Mayor Milewski and seconded by Council Member Cook:

**WHEREAS**, Section 551 of the Michigan Liquor Control Code of 1998 (MCL 436.1101, *et seq.*), as amended (“the Act”), authorizes a municipality’s governing body to designate a social district with a commons area which may be used by qualified licensees that obtain a social district permit from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (the “MLCC”); and

**WHEREAS**, if a municipality’s governing body designates a social district with a commons area, the governing body must define and clearly mark the commons area with signs, establish local management and maintenance plans (including, but not limited to, hours of operation) for submission to the MLCC, and maintain the commons area in a manner that protects the health and safety of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff have prepared a social district management and maintenance plan, attached as Exhibit A (the “Social District Management Plan”), and a map identifying the social district’s boundaries and potential establishments, attached as Exhibit B (the “Social District Map”); and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority (the “DDA”) has recommended adoption of the Social District Management Plan and the Social District Map; and

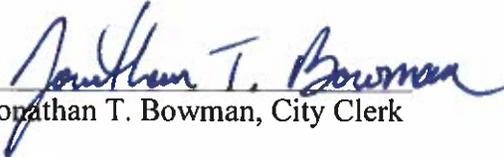
**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that designating a social district and commons area pursuant to the Act, and as recommended by the DDA, will enhance economic vitality, encourage social engagement in downtown Ionia, and otherwise promote the best interests of the City and its residents.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That, pursuant to the Act, the social district and commons area identified in the Social District Map are hereby designated as the Discover Ionia Social District.
2. That the Social District Management Plan is approved and adopted, and the Discover Ionia Social District shall be operated and maintained by the DDA in accordance with the Social District Management Plan.
3. That the City Manager and the DDA are authorized and directed to take such actions that are reasonably necessary to implement this Resolution and comply with the Act.
4. That the City Clerk is authorized and directed to file this Resolution and the attached exhibits with the MLCC as required by the Act.
5. That all resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith are hereby rescinded.
6. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

YEAS: Margot Cook, Brenda Cowling, Dawn Ketchum, Tim Lee, John Milewski, Tom Millard, Jeff Winters  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Richard Starr and Troy Waterman

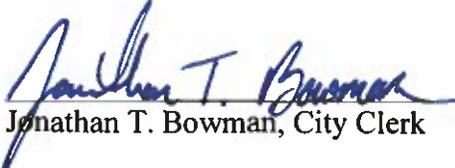
**RESOLUTION 2025-15 DECLARED ADOPTED**

  
Jonathan T. Bowman, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Ionia, Ionia County, Michigan at a regular meeting held on June 4, 2025, and that the public notices of said meeting were given pursuant to Act No. 267 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1976, including in the case of a special or rescheduled meeting notice of publication or posting at least 18 hours prior to the time set for the meeting.

Dated: June 4, 2025

  
Jonathan T. Bowman, City Clerk

**EXHIBIT A**  
**DISCOVER IONIA SOCIAL DISTRICT**  
**MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PLAN**

[Attached]

**City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority  
Discover Ionia Social District  
Marketing, Management and Maintenance Plan**

**Maintenance and Operations Plan Introduction**

On July 1, 2020, Michigan House Bill 5781 (MCL 436.1551) was signed into law, creating the “Social District Permit,” which allows local governments to designate a Social District within their jurisdictions. Businesses that are granted a Social District Permit may sell alcoholic liquor (beer, wine, mixed spirits, or mixed drinks) on their licensed premises to customers who may then consume the alcoholic liquor within the commons area of the Social District. The City of Ionia, in coordination with the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority, now seeks to establish such a Social District.

In the plan that follows, the management and maintenance of the Discover Ionia Social District is outlined, for review by the Ionia City Council and other stakeholders. Pending local approval, the plan will be submitted to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) for state approval.

**Management**

The Discover Ionia Social District is managed by the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority. The district management and operations will be supported by the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Public Works for signage and maintenance.

**District Boundaries**

The Discover Ionia Social District is located between Dexter and Library for Main Street, between Dexter and Kidd for Adams Street, Steele Street to Brown Boulevard, Brown Boulevard to Dexter, with a reduced boundary directly bordering Dexter for safety purposes. Refer to the Discover Ionia Social District Commons Area Map for a pictorial illustration of the district.

**Potential Participating License Holders**

As the Social District is established, the City will welcome businesses to participate once they apply for and receive their Social District license from the MLCC. All participating businesses will sign a Social District Agreement with the City of Ionia before applying to the MLCC. Current eligible liquor license holders within the Social District are listed below:

- **RYAM 2, LLC dba STEELE ST. HALL (115 S Steele St.)**
- **OLIVERA'S, LLC dba OLIVERA'S RESTAURANT (390 S Dexter St.)**
- **THE SANFORD BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC. dba STEELE STREET BREWING (300 S Steele St.)**

- **EL MARIACHI MEXICAN GRILL LLC (412 W Main St.)**
- **BRICK ROAD BAR, LLC dba VENUE 404 (404 1/2 W Main St.)**
- **DEVINE ENTERPRISES, INC. dba BRICK HOUSE TAVERN (312-314 W Main St.)**

## **Operations**

1. The Discover Ionia Social District will operate year-round, seven days a week, from 10am – 10pm. These hours are subject to change in order to accommodate special events and as necessary to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Ionia. District operating hours can be amended or closed at any time by the City Manager. The DDA intends to establish the Social District upon approval from the MLCC.
2. No tents, lighting, privately owned tables, chairs, heating mechanisms or fire pits of any kind shall be installed within the Social District or Commons Area without City permission in advance.
3. No amplified sound shall be used in the Social District or Commons Area without City permission.
4. Umbrellas may be installed with City permission but shall not be mechanically fastened to street or sidewalk surfaces.
5. Dogs are permitted in the Social District and Commons Area (the City's leash laws still apply, as does the obligation to pick up after dogs).
6. Visitors to the Social District will be expected to properly dispose of all trash they generate.

## **Access**

1. Pedestrian access shall be maintained to all buildings in the Social District and Commons Area.
2. Emergency access shall be maintained to all adjacent properties in the Social District and Commons Area as specified by the Department of Public Safety.

## **Alcohol**

1. Alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Commons Area only in accordance with a Social District Permit issued by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), any accompanying MLCC regulations, and City of Ionia requirements.
2. ONLY Alcoholic beverages purchased by an adult 21 or over from the licensed premises of a Social District Permit holder may be consumed by an adult 21 or over within the designated Commons Area.
3. **NO OUTSIDE ALCOHOL ALLOWED.** Alcohol purchased from any place other than the licensed premises of a Social District Permit holder (bar or restaurant) may not be brought into the Social District or Commons area. Visitors may NOT

bring alcohol from home or purchased outside of the Social District into the Social District.

4. Alcoholic beverages consumed in the Commons Area must be in designated cups per the requirements of the MLCC and the City of Ionia.
  - a. **Beverage Containers and Rules of Use:**
    - i. The container must prominently display 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.
    - ii. The container prominently displays the Social District logo.
    - iii. The container is not glass.
    - iv. The container has a liquid capacity that does not exceed 16 ounces
5. Social District Permit holders are responsible for the sale of alcohol on their licensed premises in accordance with their individual Social District Permits and all MLCC rules and regulations, including but not limited to, confirming the consumer's identification and age, and prohibiting the sale of alcohol to intoxicated parties. No more than two drinks will be supplied to an individual of legal age wanting to partake in the social district at a time.
6. During regular patrols, the Department of Public Safety will monitor the Social District and Commons Area as assigned for compliance with MLCC and City of Ionia rules and regulations.
7. City staff and/or contractors may also monitor the Commons Area and report compliance issues to the proper authorities.

### **Where Can and Can't Social District Cups Go?**

#### ***Can Go:***

1. Inside the Social District Common Area
2. Back into the establishment where the Social District cup was purchased

#### ***Can't Go:***

1. Social District cups cannot be taken into another alcohol serving establishment where they were not purchased.
2. Social District drinks cannot go outside the Common Area.
3. Social District drinks cannot go on private property.
4. Social District drinks cannot go into businesses that do not serve alcohol.
5. Social District Cups cannot be in the Common Area after 10 PM or before 10 AM.
6. Social District Cups cannot go inside barricaded outdoor events, unless specifically noted.

The DDA will make available Social District Stickers for the containers. Participating license holders will provide their own sticker displaying their trade name or logo and containers meeting the state requirements.

## **Financing**

The Discover Ionia Social District will be funded by the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority and local establishments.

## **Security and Enforcement**

Security and enforcement in the Social District will be executed under the authority of the Department of Public Safety.

## **Insurance**

The City of Ionia and DDA have procured appropriate liability and property insurance for their management and operation of the Social District. As part of the required Social District Agreement, participating license holders will secure their own liability insurance and indemnify the city, DDA, elected/appointed officials and employees.

## **Sanitation and Maintenance**

The City of Ionia Department of Public Works will provide sanitation services within the district. Trash/recycling receptacles will be located at the boundaries of the Social District to encourage patrons to properly dispose of their used cups, as well as throughout the Social District as presently available throughout the downtown.

## **Marketing and Promotion**

1. Marketing will be carried out by the Ionia Downtown Development Authority, City of Ionia and participating establishments of the district.
2. Signage
  - a. City staff, the DDA, and/or contractors will provide signage that designates the Commons Area and Commons Area boundaries.
  - b. Existing City of Ionia sign ordinances are still applicable within Social District and Commons Area.

## **District Designation and Logo**

The Social District will utilize a Discover Ionia Social District logo – as depicted below. Boundaries of the Social District will be clearly marked with signs affixed to light posts, trash cans and other locations as necessary.



### **Seating, Tables, and Related Furnishings**

1. City staff, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and/or contractors will maintain any seating, tables, and related furnishings that have been purchased and deployed by the City or the DDA within the Social District.
2. Seating, tables, and related furnishings that have been provided by individual Social District Permit Holders shall be the sole responsibility of the Social District Permit Holders and must comply with ADA accessibility and permitting requirements.
  - a. Related furnishings are defined as planters, fencing, spatial delineators or other elements that are deployed as part of a seating expansion within the Social District.

### **Review**

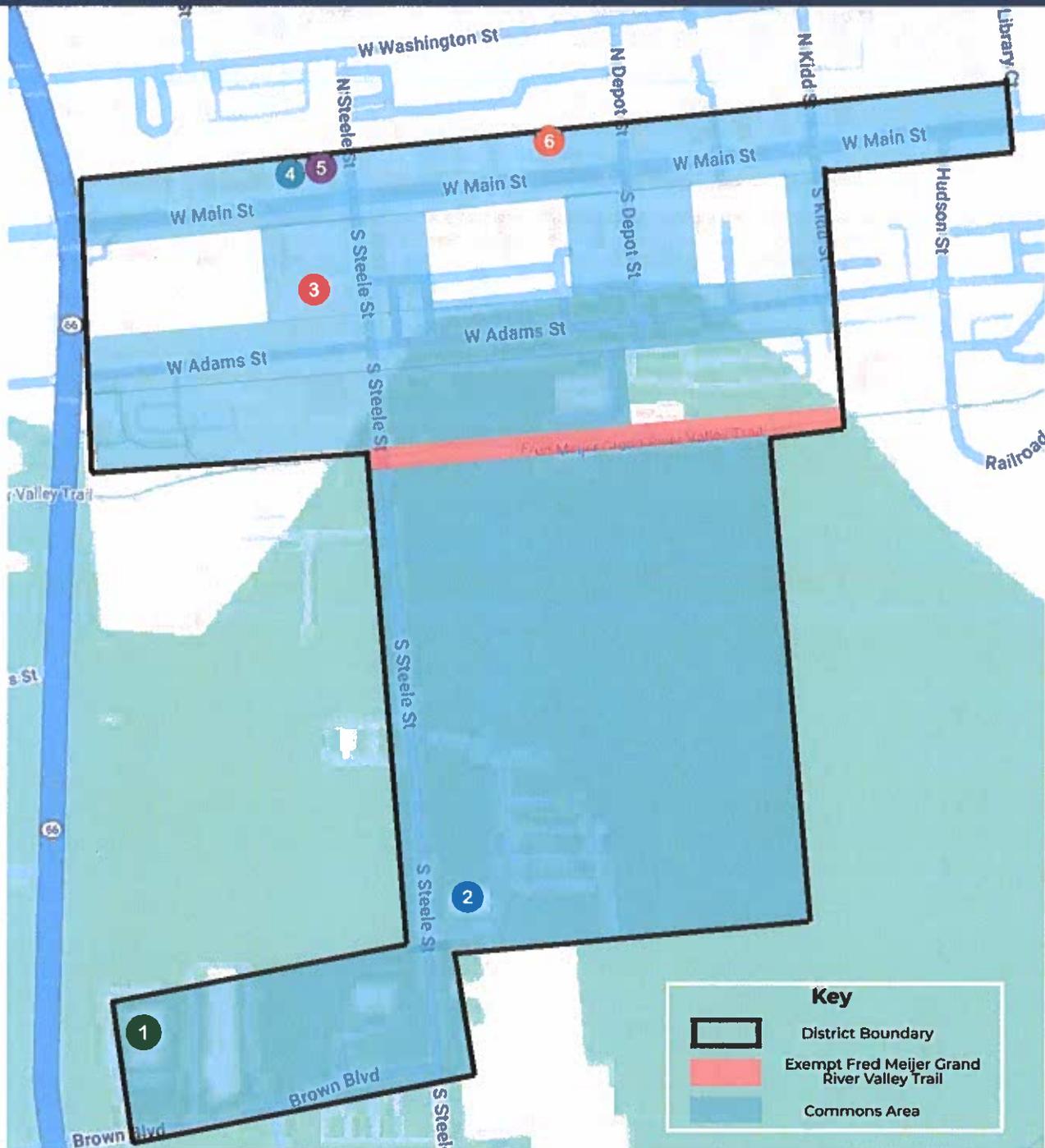
1. The Management and Maintenance Plan shall be included in any future Social District reviews conducted by the City of Ionia.
2. The City Manager shall be included in any review and consulted on any revisions to the Social District and Management and Maintenance Plan.
3. Additional Commons Areas may be considered at a future date by the City Council.
4. The City of Ionia reserves the right to close the Social District and/or Commons Area following a public hearing.

**EXHIBIT B**  
**DISCOVER IONIA SOCIAL DISTRICT MAP**

[Attached]



# Discover Ionia Social District Commons Area Map



## Social District Containers Permitted Daily 10 AM – 10 PM

- Drink from designated Social District Containers ONLY. No outside alcohol allowed.
- Stay within the designated Commons Area. Look for signs indicating boundaries.
- Do not take your cup from one establishment into another or into a vehicle.
- Each cup is one-time use. Dispose of your cup properly.

### Anticipated Participating Establishments in Ionia, MI:

- 1 OLIVERA'S, LLC dba **OLIVERA'S RESTAURANT** (390 S Dexter St.)
- 2 THE SANFORD BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC. dba **STEELE STREET BREWING** (300 S Steele St.)
- 3 RYAM 2, LLC dba **STEELE ST. HALL** (115 S Steele St.)
- 4 **EL MARIACHI MEXICAN GRILL LLC** (412 W Main St.)
- 5 BRICK ROAD BAR, LLC dba **VENUE 404** (404 1/2 W Main St.)
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