

Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA)

WHAT IS DORA?

- DORA stands for Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area.
- A specific area of Downtown Mount Vernon will allow patrons over the age of 21 to purchase alcoholic beverages from a properly licensed establishment within the designated boundaries and carry the drinks within a clearly defined set of boundaries. This is only during Main Street Mount Vernon DORA Committee approved specific days, hours, and/or events.
- The intent of the Mount Vernon DORA is to have events that are regulated to help spur community involvement, tourism and economic development.



WHAT WOULD THE BOUNDARIES BE FOR THE PROPOSED DORA?

- **SEE BOUNDARY MAP.**
- Events will be required to propose boundaries to the Main Street Mount Vernon DORA Committee for approval.
- Event boundaries will rarely take up full DORA boundary.

WHY IS DORA GOOD FOR DOWNTOWN?

- **Increased foot traffic to restaurants and bars:** Properly licensed establishments will be able to increase their turn over rate by offering DORA beverages to event attendees who are not taking up valuable seating. The opportunity for an increase in sales at DORA events where visitors and community members alike prefer to discover Historic Downtown Mount Vernon and take in the downtown retail shops.
- **Ability to socially distance diners:** Restaurants are able to apply for a DORA event in preparation of a busy night to increase overflow seating and non-seating options outside. During DORA events, boundaries permitting, patrons are able to pass time waiting for seating by visiting retail establishments.
- **Increased retail sales:** *"We are tasked with bringing a walking atmosphere back to downtown."* – Chef Nav
The more opportunities our merchants have to connect with customers, establish relationships and complete transactions, the better. Retail establishments allowing for DORA beverages to enter their doors creates an opportunity for a visitor to be supporting two downtown establishments at the same time. Even establishments not allowing beverages in their doors benefit from this atmosphere by keeping visitors downtown longer.
- **Customer Retention = Increased Revenue:** DORA has the ability to lengthen time visitors spend in the Central Business District. By allowing drinks to be enjoyed within the event boundaries, the visitor's stay is lengthened and thus, increases the opportunity for additional support to a number of small businesses downtown.
- **Amplifies the unique Downtown Mount Vernon experience:** Mount Vernon is in competition with cities in neighboring counties. We are all vying for the same small business pool, the same visitors, the same customers and the same experience seekers. Creating this atmosphere would be an instrument to increase tourism dollars, influence entrepreneurial decisions to open their business in Mount Vernon while continuing to support our mix of committed downtown retail establishment.
- **Supporting local prevention measures:** A percentage of each DORA cup sale will go towards helping fund prevention measures in Knox County.
- **NOT intended to be a party in the street:** DORA events will be strategically organized and checked before approval moving forward.

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

- Alcoholic beverages can only be sold to individuals 21 years and older.
- Beverages (beer and wine only) must be purchased from a participating establishment.
- No outside alcoholic beverages will be permitted to be brought into the DORA.
- Any beverages consumed outdoors must be in designated DORA cups.
- Only two beverages may be purchased at a time.
- Per Ohio Revised Code 4301.82, once purchased, drinks are not allowed to enter other licensed establishments.
- Per Ohio Revised Code 4301.82, only businesses that display the “DORA Beverages Welcomed Here” sticker will allow patrons with beverages into their store.
- Businesses can choose not to allow beverages into their store by displaying the “No DORA Beverages” sticker.



WHEN IS DORA IN EFFECT?

- ONLY DURING CITY APPROVED EVENTS:
April 1—October 31, Monday—Friday 4pm-11:59pm & Saturday 11am—11:59pm.
- Event organizer must apply for event through Main Street Mount Vernon DORA Committee at least 60 days prior to event. [CLICK HERE FOR EVENT ORGANIZER FAQ](#)

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

- The organization applying for the event is responsible for arranging and paying for police or security.
- The organization applying for the event is responsible for arranging and paying for clean-up services during and after event.
- If an incident occurs, liability is assessed in same manner as is presently. Investigation conducted by enforcing police department and serving establishment may be held liable.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE A DORA EVENT?

- [CLICK HERE FOR EVENT ORGANIZER FAQ](#)

PROPOSED DORA BOUNDARIES



- Establishment of the DORA boundary was done so to include all of the qualified permit holders within the Central Business District and General Business District of Downtown Mount Vernon. Avoiding any treatment facilities along the outer edge of the boundary, the perimeter was created to also include parking lots, parks and other green spaces for optimal event spacing. The DORA Boundary is also located less than a block from Mount Vernon Fire Department Station 491 and the Mount Vernon Police Department is located within the DORA boundary itself.
- To approve DORA, a committee of community stakeholders, merchants, restaurants, substance abuse action teams, and other city representatives was created and met after an investigation and research period done by Main Street Mount Vernon. Communication with other communities and input from local Police and Fire Departments as well as other DORA Community Police Departments was reviewed. After the application was approved by the DORA Committee, the Main Street Mount Vernon Board of Directors approved of the application, before being sent to the Mount Vernon Greater Downtown Management Council and The City of Mount Vernon City Council for approval. Public forums were held and upon official approval from City Council, the Ohio Department of Liquor Control issues updated licensing to qualified permit holders within the DORA.