



Hello Worthington Neighbor,

May 12, 2021

This summer, Worthington wants to tryout, or trial a change to the City's Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA), which would allow people to consume and carry opened containers of alcohol at limited times, places and events, as long as it is purchased from restaurants within the DORA in the Old Worthington business district. (see map on P.2) The trial would be for a 90-day period.

As a neighbor in Old Worthington, the City is reaching out directly to get your input. This input will be used in crafting the parameters of the 90-day trial. Input will be sought again after completion of the 90 days and before changes are made permanent. Please read further for background and details on and how to provide your feedback.

Early in the pandemic, the City of Worthington quickly mobilized a team of local individuals (ReBOOT Worthington) focused on identifying ways to support small businesses. The efforts of ReBOOT Worthington have included a grant program, creating the "We're Open" marketing campaign, providing social media impact training, adding outdoor seating and activities to the Village Green, and organizing numerous events. These initiatives have helped, but the City must continue to identify new and innovative ways to help our small businesses generate revenue, while also being socially responsible. An idea that has been suggested, and is being used by other communities, is to consider an expansion of the hours, days and area of the existing DORA.

As a quick refresher, the City of Worthington became one of the first communities in central Ohio to create a DORA in 2017. Worthington's DORA program was originally designed to support outdoor dining in Old Worthington by allowing individuals to consume and carry opened containers of alcohol within defined patio areas of participating restaurants. Prior to the DORA, the consumption of alcohol was prohibited in these dining areas as they are in the public right of way. With the 2017 DORA approval, the City also authorized the ability to carry an opened container of alcohol anywhere within the commercial portion of Old Worthington, but only for a handful of identified annual special events.

The ReBOOT Worthington team has received feedback from the local small business community that an expansion of the DORA would result in increased sales revenues and provide more opportunities for the community and visitors to enjoy the downtown area. The City of Worthington is sensitive to the needs of our small businesses, but also wants to ensure that any changes to the DORA are balanced with the interests of neighbors and reflect the goals of the historic district and the greater-Worthington community.

We have begun the process of creating this trial by filing the required application with City Council. The application and more information can be found online at [worthington.org/DORA](http://worthington.org/DORA). At this point, the application does not contain specific recommendations for days or hours of operation during the trial, but it does identify the following considerations:

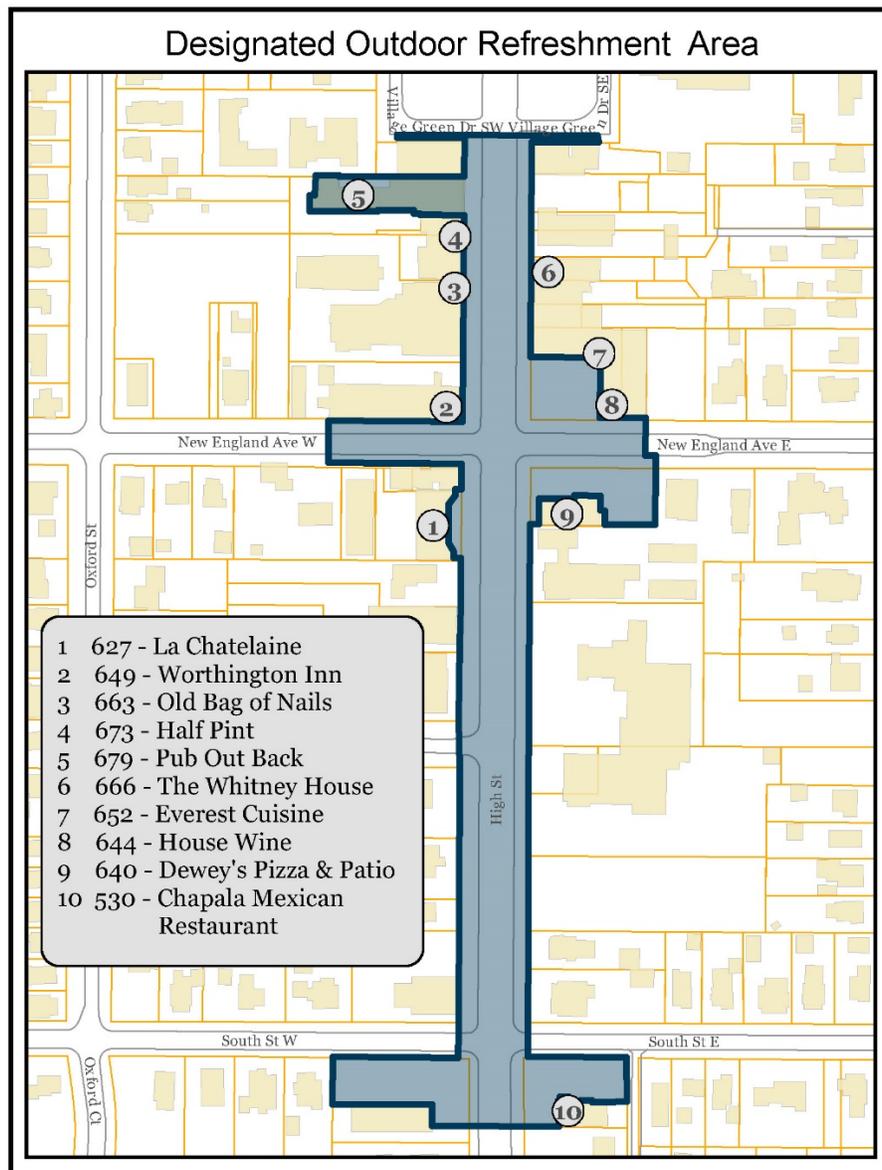
- Individuals would be permitted to carry an open container of alcohol purchased at one of the Old Worthington restaurants anywhere within the 5-acre DORA district on a recurring, weekly schedule. Options range from every day of the week, to a more limited schedule, for example Thursday through Sunday each week, during certain hours.

- DORA boundaries are slightly modified to include 530 High Street, the address for Chapala Mexican Restaurant, expected to open Summer 2021.
- Any changes to the DORA would be part of a 90-day trial program. Staff will then collect additional input and provide City Council with a report at the end of the 90-day trial period.

**This is where your input is important. We want to hear from you! What hours and days of the week should we try? Do you have questions about how the DORA works? What other suggestions do you have?**

**Please consider sharing your thoughts with City leaders by emailing us at [DORA@worthington.org](mailto:DORA@worthington.org).**

City Council will discuss the input received and options identified at a virtual public hearing via Microsoft Teams on June 7, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting can be accessed at [worthington.org/live](https://worthington.org/live).



*Current DORA ends at South Street. Proposed change extends DORA a short distance south to incorporate the new Chapala Mexican Restaurant.*