ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE SALES POLICY

It is the City’s opinion that the sale of alcoholic beverages within its jurisdiction is a privilege, not a right. Alcohol abuse contributes significantly to public health and safety problems, which affect the welfare of the general population.

Consequently, it is the City’s policy to discourage the abuse of alcohol, alcohol-related criminal activity, alcohol-related traffic accidents and alcohol-related health problems through the strict regulation of businesses which sell or serve alcoholic beverages to the public.

In order to fairly evaluate requests for such businesses the City has established standards for the location, design, property development and operation of alcohol-related outlets. The City expects that any applicant for alcohol sales will conform to these standards.

To further assist potential applicants, the City has also indicated herein its general expectations for the different types of alcohol-related businesses.

OFF-SALE BUSINESSES

Liquor Stores/Convenience Stores
Packaged alcoholic beverages are available for sale at a wide variety of retail outlets. Such outlets run the gamut from large supermarkets and drug stores, where a very small percentage of sales involve alcohol, to small liquor stores whose primary business is alcohol sales. Businesses which are primarily dependent on alcohol sales cater to a fairly narrow segment of the buying public and offer little else of value to the community; therefore, they are not encouraged. The City expects that businesses requesting permits for off-premises alcohol sales will do so as part of a marketing plan which fulfills a variety of consumer needs.

ON-SALE BUSINESSES

Bars
It is the City’s assessment that businesses devoted exclusively to the on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages pose a threat to the health and safety of the community. Consequently, in evaluating applications for businesses meeting the Code definition of a “bar,” the City will expect that the primary focus of the facility will be non-alcoholic. An example of such a business would be a discotheque, a comedy club or a jazz club, where the sale of alcohol is an accessory to the primary purpose of entertainment or recreation. The mere existence of pool table or video machines would not necessarily meet this test. Furthermore, when a conditional use permits for a “bar” is granted, it is the applicant’s responsibility to prevent public intoxication and the operation of motor vehicles by persons under the influence of alcoholic beverages.
Restaurants
Subject to approval by the Planning Commission, the City permits the service of alcoholic beverages as an accessory to a restaurant. Such an accessory use can only be granted to a bona fide restaurant which offers a full range of menu selections. The City additionally expects that a bona fide restaurant will be characterized by full table service, extensive hours of operation and little, if any, emphasis on “take-out” food. Fast food restaurants, hamburger stands and snack shops do not meet this standard.

LICENSING STANDARDS

Location
1. All alcohol-related businesses should be located on main commercial streets with convenient access to consumers.
2. Over-concentration of such businesses should be avoided, with similar businesses located at least 1,000 feet apart.
3. Bars, liquor stores and convenience stores should be located at least 1,000 feet from “sensitive” uses such as schools, churches and some medical facilities.

Physical Development
1. All alcohol-related businesses should meet minimum Code standards for parking, landscaping, access and signage.
2. All such businesses should be sufficient in size to adequately serve the target clientele.

Design
1. The City expects that buildings in which alcohol sales are proposed will be constructed and/or renovated to conform to modern aesthetic design standards. All such building will be evaluated by the Architectural Review Board to assure compliance with design criteria.
2. Proliferation of signage, both inside and outside buildings, creates a cluttered urban environment and a distraction for passing motorists. Consequently, all visible signage will be kept to a minimum and visible advertising of alcoholic beverages will not be permitted.

Security
Different types of businesses will have different security needs. The requirements herein described may, at any time, be increased at the request of the Sheriff’s Department.
1. Liquor stores and convenience stores shall contain a security camera system which shall be operated during all business hours.
2. Liquor stores, convenience stores and bars shall employ a licensed security guard during hours of operation after 9:00 p.m.
3. Liquor stores and convenience stores shall not maintain interior displays which impair visibility from the exterior of the premises.
4. All alcohol-related businesses shall provide adequate interior and exterior lighting to make easily discernible the appearance and condition of persons.
5. Music and other forms of amplified noise shall not be audible from the exterior of any premises.

6. The consumption of alcoholic beverages shall not be permitted on premises licensed for off-premises sales.

7. Alcohol shall not be sold or served to any persons who are discernibly intoxicated.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The City recognizes that a number of existing locations do not conform to the guidelines and standards set forth in this policy. To the extent possible the City will work with the existing business community to accommodate requests to upgrade existing establishments.

CONCLUSION

The City currently has 1.17 businesses selling alcoholic beverages per each 1,000 in population. This figure includes all such businesses.

It is the City’s general goal to reduce the number of regulated alcohol-related premises within the City of Compton to approximately one such location per 1,000 of the population and to increase the number of locations that conform to prescribed guidelines. Additionally, types of licensed premises should be balanced, with the vast majority of fame being businesses which address a wide variety of consumer needs.

In order to accomplish these goals, the City will require that all applicants for regulated alcohol sales shall be in substantial compliance with the standards, goals and criteria set forth in the City’s policy. The City’s Alcoholic Beverage Sales Policy was adopted on June 20, 1989 by resolution no. 15,948.