



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

**Regulatory Services
Department**

**Licenses &
Consumer Services
Division**

350 South 5th Street – Room 1C
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1391

Office (612) 673-2080
Fax (612) 673-3399
TTY (612) 673-2157

Staff Report on Tobacco Dealers in C-1 Zoning Districts

July 16, 2008

Minneapolis currently has 481 licensed Tobacco Dealers. The majority of these tobacco dealer licenses are issued in conjunction with another business use such as grocery stores, convenience stores, and gasoline filling stations, to name a few examples. 86 of these tobacco dealers are currently located in C-1 zoning districts.

C-1 zoning districts are the city's lightest commercial zoning districts and generally located very close to residential properties. Eight of the top 15 problematic grocery and convenience stores have been located in C-1 zoning districts. Due to the proximity of C-1 establishments to residential areas, restricting tobacco access within walking distance will contribute to the city's initiative to eliminate underage tobacco sales.

The Grocery Store Task Force has analyzed the problems that exist near grocery and convenience stores and determined that tobacco products represent a significant role in behaviors such as loitering and street level drug sales and consumption. Many individuals loitering near stores have just purchased some type of tobacco product. For example, it is a well documented phenomenon that street level drug users buy a single cigar so that it can be hollowed out and filled with marijuana. Limiting the number of tobacco licenses in the city will reduce the access to tobacco products used for illegal drugs, thereby minimizing the need for police services at these establishments.

The Grocery Store Task Force believes that the neighborhoods would be better served if all future tobacco dealer licenses are limited to C-2 or higher zoning districts. C-2 districts are designed for higher volume retail sales businesses, commonly located on commercial corridors, and less likely to be surrounded by residential dwellings.

This amendment will not affect those existing licensed tobacco dealers that are located in C-1 Zoning districts.