



PRESS RELEASE

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Sonoma County seeks public input on proposed update to Cannabis Ordinance

SANTA ROSA, CA – A 30-day public review and comment period on a proposed update to Sonoma County’s cannabis ordinance begins today. County officials are seeking feedback on proposed policy changes that emphasize neighborhood compatibility and environmental stewardship before the project moves forward to the environmental impact report process.

The proposed ordinance would allow most cannabis operations to be permitted by right, and not subject to review, in areas zoned as industrial and commercial; eliminate term limits and permit renewals; apply land-use regulations uniformly to medical and adult-use cannabis; adjust setback requirements that protect concentrated residential development; and allow on-site retail consumption, subject to relevant health ordinances.

The revised policy would also designate cannabis cultivation as “controlled agriculture,” which is considered a primary use on agricultural lands. The current ordinance considers cultivation to be secondary and incidental to traditional agricultural use. The revision would allow most policies related to agriculture to also apply to cannabis, as well as allow for regulations to protect public health and safety. While cultivation uses on agricultural lands would be subject to discretionary review, much of the environmental review requirements would be addressed by a programmatic environmental impact report, which will help streamline permit processing.

“This update reflects Sonoma County's commitment to supporting the local cannabis industry while prioritizing community well-being and environmental protections,” said Tennis Wick, director of Permit Sonoma. “By aligning our regulations with industry standards and neighborhood needs, we're laying the groundwork for a more innovative, equitable, and prosperous future.”

Written comments may be submitted to Cannabis@sonoma-county.org or sent by mail to Permit Sonoma, Attn: Cannabis Ordinance Update, 2550 Ventura Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

For more information and updates on Sonoma County's cannabis ordinance update, visit <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/cannabis-program>

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