

**Cannabis Visioning Session – Visual Considerations –
August 12, 2021 – 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM – Chat**

11:32:47 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

✉ Please email us your ideas, questions and comments to Cannabis@sonoma-county.org

🔗 Learn more about this process and get involved:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Cannabis/Comprehensive-Cannabis-Program-Update-and-Environmental-Impact-Report/>

11:41:29 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

We'll be using the dismiss tool in Zoom for any comments that are racist, sexist, homophobic, or ageist, or anything considered vulgar or disrespectful of others. These posts will still be part of the public record, they just won't detract from today's conversation.

11:47:10 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan: one of the attractions has always been the county's bucolic countryside and mixed agricultural pursuits. From cows, sheep, and horses to fields of plants, it's a pleasure to drive through the county, see things growing and hear cows mooing, and enjoy the sweeping expanses of countryside unfettered by the dense housing and structures I came from as a San Francisco native.

11:47:50 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From P Pfahl: The beautiful rolling hills of Sonoma County would become an eyesore when covered by plastic "hoop houses" that degrade after a couple years, then shredded by winds and polluting the environment .

11:48:08 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: Sonoma County is a special place. The natural beauty rivals any place in the world in my opinion. If the County allows cannabis cultivation such operations should not be visible from individual residences, neighborhoods, roadways, and scenic corridors like Bennett Valley and Sonoma Valley.

11:48:33 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From V Edelson: What I value most about the look and feel of our Sonoma Landscape especially here in west county is the gentle rolling hills and pasture lands.

I love seeing animals on the land. I feel calm and settled by the landscape. This feels like a safe and trusting community of agriculture and residents.

11:50:57 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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11:54:52 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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11:55:42 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan: I picture these hoop houses going in behind hills and in places not visible to the general public or to neighbors. There, they can sweep, multiply, and reside. (However, with a caveat: a more careful environmental consideration of where they are placed, so that they don't uproot endangered wildlife or draw dry the drought-stricken aquifers wildlife and people alike rely on.)

11:56:09 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: What are the types of places where cannabis cultivation should be allowed because it wouldn't impact the visual beauty of our county? Other counties and states.

11:57:09 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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12:01:55 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: What are the characteristics of the types of places where cannabis cultivation wouldn't be a good fit? (a) Rural Residential, R1, R2, and R3 Zoning districts, (b) scenic corridors like Bennett Valley and Sonoma Valley (c) any location where a cannabis operation can be seen from public roadways, individual residences, and neighborhoods, (d) properties that are adjacent to Rural Residential, R1, R2, and R3 zoning districts, (e) if staff or the Board of Supervisors want to see what the impact is of allowing commercial cannabis cultivation in scenic valleys, take a road trip to the Applegate Valley in Oregon which was once a beautiful bucolic setting until commercial cannabis operations were allowed and ask whether this is what is wanted in Sonoma County

12:03:19 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From N Graalman: Large-scale cannabis "farms" and associated operations -- especially any structures, lights, etc. -- should NOT be in small, unique valleys such as Franz Valley. Franz Valley qualifies in some considerations as a "boxed canyon" with its small, winding roads.

12:08:47 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: What would cannabis cultivation operations look like in a successful program? They would not be allowed or at the very least be invisible from roads, individual residences, and neighborhoods.

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12:09:15 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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12:09:43 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan:

A successful cannabis program will not have acres of big plastic houses in full view of residents, tourists, and drivers.

12:11:37 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan: Proximity, proximity, proximity. Make setbacks larger when immediate neighbors and residential uses are nearby, and reduce them when grows are located on expansive properties where neighbors already reside far from the property line (no, 100-300 feet is NOT far enough! 1,000-foot is a MINIMUM, and should, in some cases, be larger, when the grow is located near a neighborhood, public park, school, etc.).

12:18:17 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: If the County insists on having any cannabis cultivation in the County cultivation,

- should not be visible to surrounding areas because the natural topography hides the operation
- screening should be required and the screening should be natural vegetation (not cannabis) rather than unsightly fences

12:20:29 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

👤 Here is the County's Right to Farm ordinance:

https://library.municode.com/ca/sonoma_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH30AG_ARTIIRIFA

12:20:53 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

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12:22:24 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: What would a cultivation site that isn't separated well look like? Really? How about not allowing cultivation sites in the County that are not separated well.

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12:24:20 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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12:26:42 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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12:29:11 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: Again, I don't accept your premises that there should be a cannabis program particularly commercial cultivation, in Sonoma County but if the County insists cannabis operations should be limited to industrial zoning districts with all necessary visual mitigation measures so they are not seen by individual residences or neighborhoods.

12:29:41 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan: . Retail sales and tasting rooms should be limited to main corridors, just like retail endeavors always are. Put them in trafficked places where streets, emergency services, and police are nearby, to help growers and residents alike. This also takes the onus of self-policing expenses away from growers and places them where they should be: as part of existing county-wide services designed to support businesses located in appropriate commercial and retail locations.

12:30:24 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

Today's powerpoint: <https://share.sonoma-county.org/link/-pn0a5McFKU/PowerPoint%20Presentations/Cannabis%20Update%20Visioning%20Session%20PPT%20Visual%20Considerations%2008-12-2021.pdf>

12:31:11 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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12:34:14 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: Down lighting that is not visible to residences or neighborhoods, roadways, scenic corridors like Bennett Valley and Sonoma Valley.

12:38:16 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

Section 2.4

12:38:16 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

<file:///Users/sarahstierch/Downloads/General-Plan-Open-Space-and-Resource-Conservation-Element.pdf>

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12:38:23 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Long-Range-Plans/General-Plan/Open-Space-and-Resource-Conservation/>

12:42:58 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: Any violations of any regulations, conditions of permits, and other requirements should be immediately and aggressively investigated (without advance notice to the operators as to on site investigations) and if substantiated should be immediately abated and fines levied. Any cannabis operator violating requirements should be required to pay all costs of investigation and abatement. There should be zero tolerance. If the operator is in violation of its permit and other requirements and regulations more than twice, their permit should be revoked and operation closed down. In addition all permits should be reviewed on an annual basis and if operators are found to be out of compliance, abatement proceedings should be commenced and pursued to conclusion with operator paying all costs. (cont)

12:43:11 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

continued: Operators should not be given any special exemptions from County ordinances or regulations. Operators should be required to post a bond upon issuance of any permit to pay for potential abatement proceedings and fines.

There should be ownership and residency requirements placed operators to limit out of county operators.

12:43:59 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From D Donovan: Set up a responsive, effective entity for reporting violations that is mandated to quick response and quick shut-downs of facilities that choose to flaunt the law. In the winery industry, I know of entities that consider fines "part of doing business," for example. They just pay any fines and keep on doing what they want. Have clear guidelines to immediately shut down and lock up a facility that flaunts the laws. Even a stiff fine is considered nothing, by entities with deep pockets.

12:49:02 From McCall Miller to Everyone:

From R Rudnansky: Once again all of these questions seem to suggest that the majority of citizens of Sonoma County want commercial cannabis cultivation and operations in the county. The question and issue the Board should consider is whether the majority of their constituents want any expansion of cannabis operations or any at all. Please include that alternative in your report to the Board.

12:51:53 From Sarah Stierch to Everyone:

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