

**Attachment F**  
**Public Comment – Written**  
**February 16, 2021**  
**Through**  
**March 11, 2021 at 2:30 PM**

**From:** [Lauren Mendelsohn](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Changes between preliminary draft and current draft cannabis documents?  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 2:33:22 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Good afternoon:

Could you please send me a document indicating the changes between the preliminary draft and the latest draft of the cannabis cultivation ordinance and subsequent MND? Either a redline version with the changes shown in the documents, or lists of the specific changes and locations within the applicable documents will do.

Thank you.

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/cannabis-program/>

\*\*\*\*\*



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7770 Healdsburg Avenue  
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[www.omarfigueroa.com](http://www.omarfigueroa.com)

**Have you heard about the International Cannabis Bar Association (INCBA)? [Check us out!](#)** Use code "Mendelsohn" for 15% off membership and events.

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**From:** [Lauren Mendelsohn](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Initial Comments on Draft Cannabis Ordinance 2.0 and Subsequent MND  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 3:04:37 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Good afternoon Honorable Planning Commissioners and County Staff,

Below are some initial comments, questions, and suggestions regarding the [draft cannabis cultivation ordinance 2.0 and associated subsequent MND](#):

- Allow for grandfathering or priority for applicants going through PRMD permit process if they'd be eligible to apply under the new rules. Shouldn't have to pay double the fees or wait twice as long. This is something that operators and advocates have been demanding -- why is the county continuing to ignore their requests? Does Sonoma County want its existing operators to fail to make room for new big operators with outside money? Seems like it.
- Allow cultivation on LEA, LIA, DA or RRD parcels smaller than 10 acres to be able to use the new Ag-Department pathway (the MND for the original ordinance included parcels < 10 acres; this was amended in 2018). Again, this is something the industry has been demanding for years, and the county should listen instead of effectively pushing legacy operators out of their homes and communities.
- Propagation area should not be limited to 25%. It is not limited in state law or regulations.
- Will a Chapter 38 cultivation permit from the Ag Dept be sufficient for a state cultivation license (in terms of CEQA)? Please demonstrate pathway(s).
- Do the limits on new or expanded permanent structures apply to hoop houses?
- Has the county analyzed how many parcels zoned DA, LEA, LIA, and RRD would be disqualified due to proposed restrictions, including but not limited to restrictions on parcel size and use of important farmland?
- Would events only be allowed at cultivation sites licensed through the Ag



Department under Chapter 38; or would the language in Chapter 26-88-250 be amended to allow cannabis events there too?

- 
- What does “in support of commercial cannabis cultivation” mean? Are offices and break areas included? Storage sheds for pesticides? Where to draw the line?
- 
- The definition for “new building coverage” should be changed, because it will be months before this is adopted and January 1, 2021 has already passed (and passed before any draft language was even released). Change to 2022 or later in 2021.
- Allow generators to be used for *any* emergency, as determined by a reasonable person, rather than limiting them to use during a locally / statewide / federally-declared emergency. Let's say a small area experiences a power outage but that doesn't rise to the level of a declared emergency. Does not make any sense to limit generator use in the way proposed especially in an area like Sonoma County that is notorious for power outages and fires.
- 
- How will distance from sensitive uses be measured? The draft MND says this will be measured from the land use activity instead of the parcel line, but the draft language still seems to imply a parcel-line-to-parcel-line method.
- 
- Applicants should be able to reduce the sensitive use setback for parks w/ a use permit, as is allowed under current ordinance.
- P. 23, "Authority to Inspect" --> Please go back to the language in the preliminary draft which required reasonable notice prior to an inspection by the Ag Commissioner.

Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*



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**From:** [Andrew Smith](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Questions for 1/19 meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 5:02:41 PM

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**From:** sica <sica@sonic.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 1:16 PM  
**To:** Andrew Smith <Andrew.Smith@sonoma-county.org>  
**Cc:** <nicolewilliams@lrmteam.org> <sam@greenwaveconsult.us> <kilapeterson@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Questions for 1/19 meeting

## EXTERNAL

Hi Andrew,

I hope you are well.

I have been invited , along with other grange members to be part of this friday morning's meeting with you about the new draft cultivation ordinance.

For the sake of efficiency, I put together a couple of our most frequent questions about this.

I was hoping that if you did not have the answers yourself, you could find out by the meeting time.

Questions:

- Can applicants who are currently going through the discretionary permit process transition over to the ministerial process, and if so, how?
  - Confirm this will be a parallel pathway, not a replacement
    - If amending any part of existing ordinance, need to see those redlines - ex. removing 25 plant count for cottage outdoor , to align with the state.
  - What about nurseries? Must they go through PRMD? Why not include them in this?
  - What does “in support of commercial cannabis cultivation” mean? Are offices and break areas included? Storage sheds for pesticides? Where to draw the line?
  - What pathway is there for operators to show CEQA compliance ?. The county permit is not viable for long if CEQA review cannot be met. Does the county know who the lead agency will be ? This is one of our biggest questions- How does this new ministerial permit process and new NEG DECK differ from the mistakes Mendocino county has made in relation to CEQA ? How has the county assured that our operators will not be put in the same position as Mendocino farmers - not able to be eligible for annual licenses because of no CEQA review under the Mendocino county ministerial permit process.
-

Thanks for your attention to this matter, we look forward to continuing to evolve this conversation.

Sica Roman

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Jennifer Klein](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comments on Proposed Draft Cannabis Ordinance, MND, etc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:02:39 AM

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## EXTERNAL

As you may recall, I requested that public comments to the preliminary cannabis zoning ordinance and mitigated negative declaration be posted to a public facing website regularly. That did not happen.

Of course, now that you have released the "final" draft documents, this becomes even more critical. Allowing the public to access all public documents in a timely manner is imperative.

Please immediately advise:

1. Did you receive any public comments to the preliminary working draft documents? If so, please forward all such comments to me as soon as possible.
2. Please establish a location on the County's cannabis website for all public comments you will receive regarding the just issues final draft cannabis documents, including a proposed ordinance, the proposed mitigated negative declaration, amendments to Chapter 26 and the General Plan amendment, and post those comments as you receive them.

Please advise if you will not be able to comply with request #2, above. I would prefer not to file regular public record act requests with you to obtain those public documents, but I will if I have to.

Below is an email from Cal Fire that has a link to have they have handled public comments to the Fire Safe regulations -- a similar solution would be acceptable, as long as the comments are posted regularly.

I look forward to receiving a response to this request at your earliest opportunity.

Thank you in advance for your courtesy and cooperation in this regard.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)

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**From:** Hannigan, Edith@BOF <[edith.hannigan@bof.ca.gov](mailto:edith.hannigan@bof.ca.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 12, 2021 3:42 PM  
**To:** Hannigan, Edith@BOF <[edith.hannigan@bof.ca.gov](mailto:edith.hannigan@bof.ca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Reminder - Fire Safe Regulation Comment Letters on Box

Good afternoon,

I've put up all of the comment letters received to date regarding the Fire Safe Regulations on our Box website: <https://calfire.box.com/s/o6qoin2gk4u7c3ykvvsptd9uzdcg6s1>

Have a wonderful weekend,

Edith

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** CUP to Ag  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:13:18 AM

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**EXTERNAL**

Please set up a pipeline for people in the line for a CUP that can go to Ag. They have waited in line and paid a lot, so please process them first without additional costs.

Lisa Lai  
All Cali Farm

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Zoning Change  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:19:32 AM  
**Attachments:** [Screenshot\\_20210216-085632.png](#)

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**EXTERNAL**

Can you please remove "except for cannabis" here?

Lisa Lai

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## Draft Amendments to Chapter 26 – Sonoma County Zoning Regulations

**County-designated area urban service area** means an urban service area designated in the General Plan land use element.

**County boundary** means the boundary of the county, or the boundary of any city in the county.

**Crop production:** The commercial growing and harvesting of agricultural crops including horticultural or ornamental shrubs, plants, flowers, trees, vines, industrial hemp, fruits, vegetables, hay, grain and similar food and fiber crops or agricultural commodities, except for **cannabis** or other controlled substances, which shall be defined and classified separately.

**Cropland:** Land devoted to the production of agricultural crops.

**Cultural events** means periodic special events such as parades, concerts, festivals, races and gatherings which attract, either by direct participation, or by spectators, a large gathering of people.

The following are not cultural events for the purposes of this chapter:

- (a) Events conducted entirely within dedicated right-of-way where event sponsors have secured necessary encroachment or other permits from the county surveyor and, if applicable, the California Department of Transportation;
- (b) Events conducted entirely within a building for which all necessary county permits have been secured; provided, that the events are within the scope of the use for which the building was permitted;
- (c) Events conducted at fairgrounds or events conducted at outdoor spectator facilities for which a use permit has been obtained, provided that the outdoor event is within the scope of the use permit;
- (d) An event which has all of the following characteristics:
  - (1) Has no live amplified music;
  - (2) Does not involve an admission fee either for participants or spectators,
  - (3) Is a one (1) day event conducted between the hours of seven a.m. and eleven p.m.,
  - (4) Does not involve overnight sleeping of participants or spectators,
  - (5) Is not conducted more than one (1) calendar day in a thirty (30) day period,
  - (6) Is not accompanied by newspaper, radio or television advertising or printed leaflets distributed to the public at large, and
  - (7) Does not involve the sale of food or beverages.

**Cumulative diameter at breast height or cdbh** means the sum of diameters at breast height of one (1) or more trees.

**Damage to a protected tree** means significant injury to the root system or other parts of a tree including burning, application of toxic substances, damaging through contact with equipment or machinery or compacting the soil within the dripline, changing the natural grade, interfering with the normal water requirements of the tree, trenching or excavating within the dripline, or removing more than one-third of the live wood.

**Day care center** means a facility other than a family day care facility which provides nonmedical care except as an accessory use, to children under eighteen (18) years of age in need of personal services, supervision or assistance essential for sustaining the activities of daily living or for the protection of the individual. Day care centers include infant centers, preschools, extended day care facilities and the like.



**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Water Use  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:29:07 AM

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**EXTERNAL**

The State is setting up ground water restrictions. This ordinance is setting up restrictions against cannabis that are not county wide. This is inequitable. Please remove this language.

At the least, CUP applicants in the line must not be held to this standard.

Thanks,

Lisa Lai

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Klein](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comments on Proposed Draft Cannabis Ordinance, MND, etc.  
**Date:** Thursday, February 18, 2021 1:27:58 PM

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## EXTERNAL

McCall, thank you for the link so I can download and read the comments received on the preliminary working drafts of the cannabis ordinance.

Unfortunately, what you have included on that link is only the emails -- you have not include any attachments. Well, I haven't gotten through them all, but there is an email identified as "A Morris 02-11-2021.pdf" that references an attachment that doesn't appear to be in these downloads.

Please immediately identify all missing attachments and send them to me.

I appreciate the link for public comments on the official draft documents. Can you please ensure that all attachments to emails are included in what you load to this website?

Thanks for your courtesy and cooperation in this regard.

And, yes, I deeply am looking forward to receiving this email exchange back!

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)

On 2/18/2021 12:49 PM, Cannabis wrote:

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Klein](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comments on Proposed Draft Cannabis Ordinance, MND, etc.  
**Date:** Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:21:36 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Thanks, McCall. Going forward, it would be great if you could make sure that all attachments are loaded to the website simultaneously with their forwarding email.

Sonia

On 2/18/2021 2:13 PM, Cannabis wrote:

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**From:** [Anna Ransome](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 4:21:03 AM

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**EXTERNAL**

Please provide a link to Public Comments for the Cannabis Ordinance revisions.  
Thank you.

Anna Ransome

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**From:** [Bridget Beytagh](#)  
**To:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Questions.  
**Date:** Monday, February 22, 2021 11:45:38 AM

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EXTERNAL

Good Morning Ms Miller.

I have a few questions regarding both the SMD, and the new ordinance that I'm hoping you will be able to answer.

1. Why does the County feel it necessary to...."revise measurement technique for sensitive uses...from the parcel line to the activity area, rather than parcel line to parcel line?
2. Why is the setback from residences not measured from the property line?
3. Why " Allow cannabis cultivation area to rotate around a parcel as shown on an approved site plan"? Please explain how the setback requirement applies to each move.
4. Permit renewal. "The same standards apply to issuance of permits..... except that setback requirements do not apply to permit renewal applications that do not propose changes to the cannabis cultivation site.."
5. Why has the definition of a hoop house been changed from the previous version?
6. In what ways do the above changes address the problems that have arisen in regard to neighborhood compatibility?

I would be grateful if you wouldn't mind explaining as clearly as possible, in particular item 4. I definitely need clarification to understand that one!

Thank you so much for your help.  
Sincerely  
Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Bridget Beytagh](#)  
**To:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Another question  
**Date:** Monday, February 22, 2021 2:39:44 PM

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EXTERNAL

Hi McCall. Sorry, I left out a final question in my preceding email.

7. If the County classifies cannabis as an agricultural crop, rather than a product, would that not have a negative effect on neighborhood compatibility? Wouldn't it then come under Right to Farm- effectively dismissing any input as to whether it is compatible or not?

Thanks again for your help.

Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Sharon H](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Weapons prohibited at grow sites - top of page 16 of draft ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, February 22, 2021 3:15:55 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

I do not think a weapons prohibition should be in the ordinance. A quick online search lists most mass shootings, 98%, were found to occur in gun free zones, also called soft targets. This is a terrible thing to announce in an ordinance. If it does end up in the ordinance, it should at least only be in the non public security plan, not announced that cannabis sites are soft targets. Shotguns are also effective with gophers. I have a rental and livestock. I prefer my tenants have guns to help protect them from coyotes etc. This prohibition seems like an urban antigun idea.

Thank you,  
Sharon

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**From:** [concerned citizens](#)  
**To:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrea Krout](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district5](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [district3](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [Pat Gilardi](#); [James.Gore@sonoma-county.org](#); [district4](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [bennett@bloomfield-flowers.com](#)  
**Subject:** Buffers and Neighborhood Compatibility under Part 2 of the Ordinance-Commenting on Documents out for Review  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 10:33:23 AM  
**Attachments:** [parcel mapmark-up2-23.pdf](#)  
[Sonoma County Incorporated & Unincorporated Communities \(3\).pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

February 23, 2021

Dear Supervisors:

Unless neighborhood compatibility is more adequately addressed in the Cannabis Ordinance, your Board and staff will continue to meet resistance from residents and voters. It will be of great benefit in the effort to normalize cannabis if reasonable buffers protect our rural towns and cities.

The County has correctly determined that cannabis cultivation and processing are not compatible with the residentially zoned areas. It necessarily follows that the issue of compatibility does not end at the border of those zones. A buffer between those residential zones and a cannabis operation is equally appropriate.

The impact of the current proposed project by Petrichor Sungrown LLC. adjacent to Bloomfield, population 400, affects every aspect of the community's serenity and has been met with overwhelming resistance by Bloomfield residents, as shown on the attached map.

The time, energy, and money spent by both community and county and the time and energy lost by the applicants can directly be attributed to the current lack of clarity in the ordinance. We had expected Part 2 of the Cannabis Ordinance to reflect what is stated on the County website: that "neighborhood compatibility" issues would be the focus of this ordinance. The Ad Hoc Committee Report, though, does not address this issue.

Bloomfield is just one of 42 unincorporated communities in Sonoma County adjacent to Ag zoned lands. Glen Ellen, Freestone and Geyserville are other examples from each District with unincorporated communities. In addition to these named communities there are a substantial number of unincorporated neighborhoods adjoining incorporated communities that are adjacent to Ag zoned lands such as North West from Petaluma, East from the City of Sonoma and North East from Santa Rosa. There are many linked unincorporated residential neighborhoods such on the Russian River from Mirabel to Jenner, the Joy Road area and Sea Ranch that are located adjacent to Ag zoned land. Ag zoning also surrounds some incorporated cities such as Cloverdale and Healdsburg allowing cannabis operations adjoining higher density residential communities. All of these residential areas could

Humboldt County, where the cultivation of cannabis is more widely accepted and normalized, requires 1000-ft buffers around densely populated cities, small towns, and neighborhoods. Such a requirement in Sonoma County would quell opposition and make the path to a cannabis cultivation permit easier, less time consuming and risky for growers.

As the Ordinance is prepared for public hearing, we emphasize the need for 1000-ft buffers for cannabis cultivation surrounding Rural Residential parcels of our rural residential neighborhoods, and ask for this buffer addition to Part 2 of the Ordinance.

Thanks you for your attention,

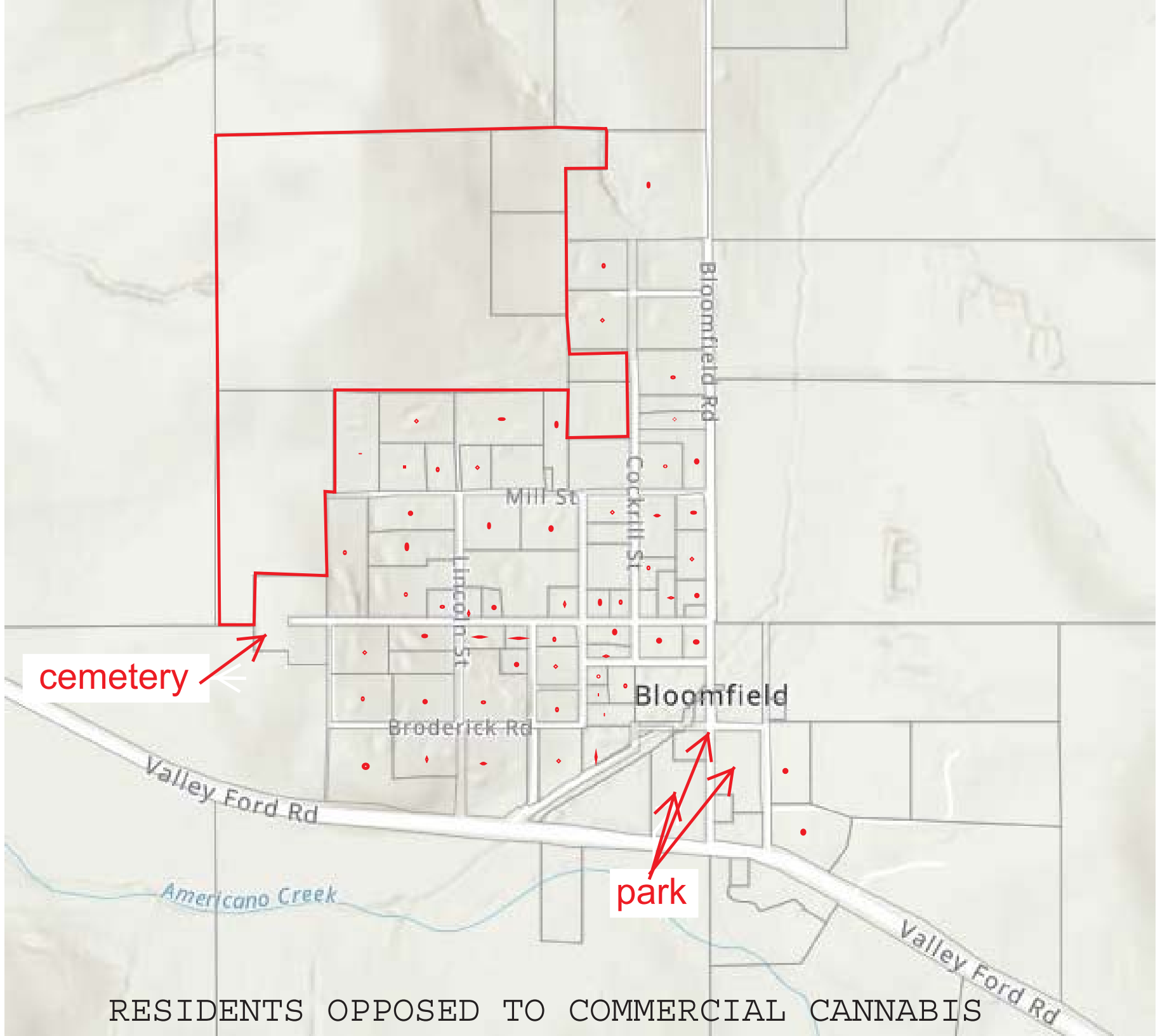
Contact community members for Concerned Citizens of Bloomfield  
Valorie Dallas, Diane Donovan, Veva Edelson, Toby Levy and Vi Strain

Attachments:

1. Map showing a red dot on parcels with residents opposed to Commercial Cannabis without adequate buffers adjacent to RR parcels.
2. List of residential communities with adjacent to AG land by district in Sonoma County.

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RESIDENTS OPPOSED TO COMMERCIAL CANNABIS

Sonoma County  
Incorporated and unincorporated Communities  
Within each Supervisorial District  
February 2021

SUPERVISOR SUSAN GORIN  
FIRST DISTRICT

INCORPORATED CIITIES

City of Santa Rosa and the community of Oakmont and the City of Sonoma.

UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Agua Caliente, Bennett Valley, Boyes Hot Springs, Eldridge (Sonoma Development Center), El Verano, Glen Ellen, Kenwood, Rincon Valley, Schellville & Vineburg

SUPERVISOR DAVID RABBITT  
SECOND DISTRICT

INCORPORATED CITIES

Cotati, Petaluma and a portion of Rohnert Park

UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Bloomfield, Lakeville, Penngrove, Two Rock, Valley Ford and a portion of the unincorporated community south of Sebastopol.

SUPERVISOR CHRIS COURSEY  
THIRD DISTRICT

INCORPORATED CITIES

Most of central Santa Rosa, with the northern boundary of Fountain Grove Parkway and most of Rohnert Park east of Highway 101 and Sonoma State University.

NO UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

SUPERVISOR JAMES GORE  
FOURTH DISTRICT

INCORPORATED CITIES

Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Portions of Santa Rosa and Windsor

UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Fulton, Geyserville, Larkfield-Wikiup, Mark West Springs, Mark West

SUPERVISOR LYNDA HOPKINS  
FIFTH DISTRICT

INCORPORATED CITIES

Southwest Santa Rosa and Sebastopol

UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Annapolis, Bodega, Bodega Bay, Cadwell, Camp Meeker, Carmet  
Casadero, Duncan Mills, Freestone, Forestville, Graton, Gualala, Guernville,  
Jenner, Monti Rio, Occidental, Rio Nido, Salmon Creek, Sea Ranch, Stewarts  
Point, Timber Cove and Valley Ford.

**From:** [Bridget Beytagh](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** public comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 3:50:42 PM

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EXTERNAL

I would like to be able to review the public comments on the draft ordinance.

Thank you

Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Bridget Beytagh](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Questions.  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 3:48:54 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Thank you for your quick response, much appreciated. I had wanted to be sure that I was understanding points correctly before making public comment. Item 4 is written in such an obscure way that i, (and surely others) have no idea what it means. Clearly, it was put there for a reason and I think that the public should be able to understand the meaning. Hence the request for clarification.

As to the public comments, are you saying that a person needs to email a request every day for each comment?

Is there not a board (easily accessible) where the public can read them all, along with responses?

So far, I have been unable to access any public comments.

Again thanks for any help you are able to give me.

Bridget Beytagh

On Feb 24, 2021, at 11:27 AM, Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Good morning Ms. Beytagh,  
Thank you for taking the time to comment on the public review documents. As we are anticipating a high volume of public comments, we are not responding to individual inquiries. Instead, we will be using received comments to guide updates to the [FAQs page](#), which will also lead into our policy discussion in the staff reports for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

*McCall Miller*

Sonoma County Cannabis Program  
County Administrator's Office  
[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>  
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 11:46 AM  
To: McCall Miller <[McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org](mailto:McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org)>  
Subject: Questions.

EXTERNAL

Good Morning Ms Miller.

I have a few questions regarding both the SMD, and the new ordinance that I'm hoping you will be able to answer.

1. Why does the County feel it necessary to....."revise measurement technique for sensitive uses...from the parcel line to the activity area, rather than parcel line to parcel line?
2. Why is the setback from residences not measured from the property line?
3. Why " Allow cannabis cultivation area to rotate around a parcel as shown on an approved site plan"? Please explain how the setback requirement applies to each move.
4. Permit renewal. "The same standards apply to issuance of permits..... except that setback requirements do not apply to permit renewal applications that do not propose changes to the cannabis cultivation site.."
5. Why has the definition of a hoop house been changed from the previous version?
6. In what ways do the above changes address the problems that have arisen in regard to neighborhood compatibility?

I would be grateful if you wouldn't mind explaining as clearly as possible, in particular item 4. I definitely need clarification to understand that one!

Thank you so much for your help.

Sincerely

Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Bridget Beytagh](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Questions.  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 3:56:52 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

On the question of reading public comments, I see that they are not being posted until just before the Planning Commission meeting. May I ask why not? As you stated you are expecting a high volume suggesting a lot of public interest. Surely more reason to post in a timely manner.

Bridget Beytagh

On Feb 24, 2021, at 11:27 AM, Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Good morning Ms. Beytagh,  
Thank you for taking the time to comment on the public review documents. As we are anticipating a high volume of public comments, we are not responding to individual inquiries. Instead, we will be using received comments to guide updates to the [FAQs page](#), which will also lead into our policy discussion in the staff reports for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

*McCall Miller*

Sonoma County Cannabis Program  
County Administrator's Office  
[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>  
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 11:46 AM  
To: McCall Miller <[McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org](mailto:McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org)>  
Subject: Questions.

EXTERNAL

Good Morning Ms Miller.

I have a few questions regarding both the SMD, and the new ordinance that I'm hoping you will be able to answer.

1. Why does the County feel it necessary to....."revise measurement technique for sensitive uses...from the parcel line to the activity area, rather than parcel

line to parcel line?

2. Why is the setback from residences not measured from the property line?
3. Why “ Allow cannabis cultivation area to rotate around a parcel as shown on an approved site plan”? Please explain how the setback requirement applies to each move.
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Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Klein](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comments on Proposed Draft Cannabis Ordinance, MND, etc.  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 8:05:54 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

McCall, I just checked the County's Cannabis website, and there is no link to either the public comments on the Preliminary documents or to the public comments on the draft documents on your website.

Can you please put links to these public comments on the Cannabis website ASAP?

Of course, I feel "special" that I have the links, but they should be easily available to everyone.

Thanks.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)

On 2/18/2021 2:13 PM, Cannabis wrote:

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**From:** [Erich Pearson](#)  
**To:** [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [James.Gore@sonoma-county.org](mailto:James.Gore@sonoma-county.org); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Sita Kuteira](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#); [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [Tony Linegar](#); [Gretchen Giles](#); [Alexa Rae Wall](#); [Dennis Hunter](#); [Ron Ferraro](#); [Joe Rogoway](#); [Tawny Tesconi](#)  
**Subject:** CBASC Cannabis Policy Letter from Landowners and Farmers  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021 10:59:54 AM  
**Attachments:** [20210224135331\\_001 \(1\) \(1\).pdf](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

Hello,

Please find attached letter related to Sonoma County's proposed cannabis policy changes.

erich pearson

CBASC

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**Sonoma County Leaders:**  
**Feb. 24, 2021**

**Re: Agriculture Businesses & Landowners Voice Support for Ordinance Amendments**  
*Improving Cannabis Policy, Expanding Economic Security & Preserving Ag Viability*

As a vital part of economic recovery for agricultural landowners in Sonoma County, we urge the Board of Supervisors to dedicate necessary county staff and resources to complete cannabis cultivation ordinance amendments in time for the 2021 growing season.

In recent years, many locally based cannabis businesses, such as Elyon Cannabis, SPARC, and Mosaic Ag, have entered into successful lease agreements with numerous agricultural landowners in Sonoma County. These agreements are mutually beneficial and allow these landowners an opportunity to dramatically increase the economic viability of their land. In addition to helping individual landowners, the resulting cannabis businesses make a sizable contribution to local job creation and the regional economy.

Sonoma County agriculture has dealt with numerous and unprecedented challenges over the past several years, including multiple wildfires, market fluctuations and a pandemic that has severely restricted agricultural tourism.

Now, more than ever, it is vitally important that the county adopt the right policies - in a timely fashion - that keep our farmers and ag lands viable as a key economic sector and backbone of our community.

One of the strategies to insulate farms from these pressures is diversification. Many landowners have already taken the opportunity to lease a small portion of their land for cannabis cultivation. While this has helped supplement agricultural incomes, and also proven that sound cannabis agricultural practices can co-exist with other commodities and community interests, it is limited by the current county policy that restricts cannabis cultivation to no more than one acre per parcel.

Now is the time, especially with new cannabis terroir and appellation laws, to take action that will give landowners and farmers the opportunity to remain viable and competitive.

As you are aware, CBASC submitted a list of legislative changes that we had requested. We are pleased with many of the proposed changes in the draft ordinance. We support the expansion of ministerial permitting in agricultural and resource lands, and believe that the permitting of cannabis farms is appropriately placed under the authority of the Agricultural Commissioner. Through our interactions with our agricultural partners, we have identified



provisions in the draft ordinance that will directly impact opportunities for agricultural landowners to diversify with cannabis. We urge the Board of Supervisors to consider these comments as we believe they will expand opportunities for our current and future partners. **The landowners signing onto this letter support the following comments on the draft ordinance:**

- 1) **Parcel Size Cap:** We support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.
- 2) **Individual Limits:** Support the removal of individual cultivation limits of 1 acre per person.
- 3) **Setbacks:** We support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency we also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of any adjacent sensitive use.
- 4) **Cultural Resources:** While we want to ensure that cultural and historic resources are preserved, we are concerned about subjecting each ministerial project to potential mitigations. This introduces a requirement that is completely unpredictable into the process and one that is inconsistent with existing ministerial permitting programs administered by the county. Alternatively, we request that a list of cultural surveyors pre-approved by local tribes be utilized to perform the required cultural surveys.
- 5) **Water Use:** Refrain from adding additional water use restrictions beyond what is required for conventional agriculture. The existing requirements in Ch. 26 were adequate until SGMA requirements take effect.

Many farmers and landowners are struggling to keep their land economically viable. There is a broad base of support for these changes. Together with our agricultural and community partners listed below, we urge the Board of Supervisors to consider our comments in the interest of maintaining economic viability for agricultural and resource lands in Sonoma County.

Once the ordinance is passed, it will be imperative that the Board of Supervisors properly staff the Department of Agriculture so that they may effectively administer these new responsibilities. We look forward to working with county staff to ensure the program's success. Thank you for your consideration.





Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Pearson', is written over the typed name.

Erich Pearson  
CBASC

**Supportive Landowners & Community Members**

- Western Dairy LLC
- Roland Trinka, Farmer and Rancher
- Lanore Riebli, Steve Riebli Dairy
- Mike Mulas, Mulas Dairy
- Lou Neve, Neve Bros
- Philip Coturri, Enterprise Vineyards
- Sam Coturri, Winery Sixteen 600
- Mike Benziger, GlenTucky Family Farm
- Sasaki Vineyards
- Randy Knight
- Nick Stromberg, Beacon Hemp Inc.
- Cecile Skinner, Skinner Vineyards
- Everardo Robledo, Robledo Vineyards
- Sharon Harston
- Sue Harris, Two Rock Dog Ranch
- Cotati Dog Grooming
- Carla Hardy

**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [Tennis Wick](#)  
**Subject:** COUNTY'S FORMAT IS DIFFICULT TO USE  
**Date:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:58:19 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Ms. Miller, the format you are using for the public comments to the cannabis draft are impossible for many to open. They are reporting they will be reduced to filing PRA requests. We Richardsons are able to open them if we download to our hard drive and open from there. Do you have an explanation and instructions for the public's ease in using documents that should be in the public record? Most are not computer novices and are familiar with opening PDF's and have tried downloading a new version of Adobe and are still unsuccessful.

Nancy and Brantly Richardson

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Christina Rivera](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [district4](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#)  
**Subject:** MORE: COUNTY'S FORMAT IS DIFFICULT TO USE  
**Date:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 2:50:50 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Ms. Miller, You misunderstand. **Personally** and after much trial and error, we **were** able to read the public comments! Others in the Neighborhood Coalition have not been successful. Below is sampling of the emails we have received. Names are redacted. In the interest of the BOS's announced goal of transparency it would be helpful if you revealed the format you are using and the format necessary to open the public comments.

Nancy and Brantly Richardson

This is soooo irritating. First of all, this link is not on the Ag Comm site, so the public can't see these unless they get the link through telepathy. Also, when I first checked there were County responses to those comments. Now those are gone! They won't respond to questions. That is just damn sloppy work on county counsel's part and needs clarification now, not at the Planning Commission. This obstruction of the residents getting ready access to information is beyond irritating.

I tried again on my PC, but I can't open this.

If this is how the county is supposedly letting us know about comments, they screwed something up.

Hi

I noticed quite a few comments include from you, but could only open one (A Norris NorCal cannabis). Does that sound right?

Yes, we can view them. It took me a while but you need to download adobe acrobat reader and then find the actual file in the downloads folder. XXX had to show me because I was unable to read or open the files at first. Sonoma County makes it very hard to find anything. What a mess.

I usually have to get them to send me documents from PRA requests as PDFs because their format does not open for me.

At this point, I have way too much to read and do so I will pass- but if you find particularly relevant letters, can you paste them in an email?

I tried that but it still didn't work- I even downloaded a new version of Adobe. Yet I can't open other

PDFs

there was no link?

Thanks. Maybe converting into something normal?

I open PDFs all the darned time with no problems

> I couldn't open it on my iPad last night. An Adobe issue

On my handheld, I have to download some readers (adobe etc) so no I can't see a lot of them. I can check with my computer later on.

>

---

**From:** Cannabis <Cannabis@sonoma-county.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 11:54 AM  
**To:** 'nrchrdsn@sonic.net' <nrchrdsn@sonic.net>  
**Cc:** Christina Rivera <Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org>; Tennis Wick <Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** RE: COUNTY'S FORMAT IS DIFFICULT TO USE

Good morning,

This is the first I have been informed of anyone having difficulty accessing the public comments. It may depend on the device and/or internet browser you are using to access the documents.

I recommend they try again. Let me know if you continue having difficulties.

*McCall Miller*

Sonoma County Cannabis Program

County Administrator's Office

[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

---

**From:** Nancy and Brantly Richardson <[nrchrdsn@sonic.net](mailto:nrchrdsn@sonic.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:58 AM  
**To:** Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Cc:** McCall Miller <[McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org](mailto:McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org)>; Christina Rivera <[Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org)>; Tennis Wick <[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** COUNTY'S FORMAT IS DIFFICULT TO USE

## EXTERNAL

Ms. Miller, the format you are using for the public comments to the cannabis draft are impossible for many to open. They are reporting they will be reduced to filing PRA requests. We Richardsons are able to open them if we download to our hard drive and open from there. Do you have an explanation and instructions for the public's ease in using documents that should be in the public record? Most are not computer novices and are familiar with opening PDF's and have tried downloading a new version of Adobe and are still unsuccessful.

Nancy and Brantly Richardson

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Jennifer Klein](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [district4](#); [district5](#); [Chris Coursey](#)  
**Subject:** QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED FOR THE INUSTRY BUT NOT FOR THE RESIDENTS  
**Date:** Friday, February 26, 2021 5:47:50 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Mr. Wick,

The emails below clearly show that:

1. Andrew Smith, the Ag Commissioner is attending meetings with the growers answering their questions (some of which are submitted beforehand) about the new cannabis draft and
2. Mc Call Miller from the Cannabis Program informs Bridget Beytagh (Friends of Graton) that quote ... “since we are anticipating a high volume of public comments, we are not responding to individual inquiries. Instead, we will be using received comments to guide updates to the [FAQs page](#), which will also lead into our policy discussion in the staff reports for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors”. a few days later.

Since the Ag Commissioner is finding time to answer questions it is only fair that you as department head or your designee (Scott Orr? Jennifer Klein?) have at least one meeting with the residents who also have many questions about the draft. Residents are forced to guess at the meaning of sections of the draft they find ambiguous and unclear, continually visit the FAQ's page where they may or may not receive an answer or wait until the Planning Commission hearing to find the answers.

Clearly a double standard exists for the “stakeholders”.

I hope you will remedy this preferential treatment.

Nancy Richardson for the Neighborhood Coalition

**From:** sica <[sica@sonic.net](mailto:sica@sonic.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 1:16 PM

**To:** Andrew Smith <[Andrew.Smith@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrew.Smith@sonoma-county.org)>

**Cc:** <[nicolewilliams@lrmtteam.org](mailto:nicolewilliams@lrmtteam.org)> <[sam@greenwaveconsult.us](mailto:sam@greenwaveconsult.us)> <[kilapeterson@gmail.com](mailto:kilapeterson@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Questions for 1/19 meeting

**EXTERNAL**

Hi Andrew,

I hope you are well.

I have been invited , along with other grange members to be part of this friday morning's meeting with you about the new draft cultivation ordinance.

For the sake of efficiency, I put together a couple of our most frequent questions about this.

I was hoping that if you did not have the answers yourself, you could find out by the meeting time.

**Questions:**

Can applicants who are currently going through the discretionary permit process transition over to the ministerial process, and if so, how?

Confirm this will be a parallel pathway, not a replacement

If amending any part of existing ordinance, need to see those redlines - ex. removing 25 plant count

for cottage outdoor , to align with the state.

What about nurseries? Must they go through PRMD? Why not include them in this?

What does "in support of commercial cannabis cultivation" mean? Are offices and break areas included?

Storage sheds for pesticides? Where to draw the line?

What pathway is there for operators to show CEQA compliance ?. The county permit is not viable for long if

CEQA review cannot be met. Does the county know who the lead agency will be ? This is one of our biggest

questions- How does this new ministerial permit process and new NEG DECK differ from the mistakes

Mendocino county has made in relation to CEQA ? How has the county assured that our operators will not

be put in the same position as Mendocino farmers - not able to be eligible for annual licenses because of no

CEQA review under the Mendocino county ministerial permit process.

Thanks for your attention to this matter, we look forward to continuing to evolve this conversation.

Sica Roman

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>

**Subject:** RE: Questions.

**Date:** February 24, 2021 at 11:27:48 AM PST

**To:** "Bridget Beytagh" <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>

Good morning Ms. Beytagh,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the public review documents. As we are anticipating a high volume of public comments, we are not responding to individual inquiries. Instead, we will be using received comments to guide updates to the [FAQs page](#), which will also lead into our policy discussion in the staff reports for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

*McCall Miller*

Sonoma County Cannabis Program

County Administrator's Office

[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>

Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 11:46 AM

To: McCall Miller <[McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org](mailto:McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org)>

Subject: Questions.

EXTERNAL

Good Morning Ms Miller.

I have a few questions regarding both the SMD, and the new ordinance that I'm hoping you will be able to answer.

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Thank you so much for your help.

Sincerely

Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** [Ms. Harriet Buckwalter](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment  
**Date:** Sunday, February 28, 2021 8:01:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [2021-02-28FMWWRequestForExtensionofCommentPeriod.pdf](#)

---

## EXTERNAL

FYI

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Ms. Harriet Buckwalter" <[hbuck@sonic.net](mailto:hbuck@sonic.net)>  
**Subject:** Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment  
**Date:** February 28, 2021 at 4:49:09 PM PST  
**To:** [Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org)  
**Cc:** [Borg@smwlaw.com](mailto:Borg@smwlaw.com), Raymond Krauss <[rkrauss@sonic.net](mailto:rkrauss@sonic.net)>, Tennis Wick <[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org)>, Susan Gorin <[Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)>

Mr. Orr,

Please find attached a letter from Friends of the Mark West Watershed regarding a request for extension of time for public comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Please confirm your receipt of this letter.

Thank you,  
Harriet

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Ms. Harriet Buckwalter, Co-Chair  
Friends of the Mark West Watershed  
Upper Mark West Fire Safe Council  
[hbuck@sonic.net](mailto:hbuck@sonic.net)  
(707) 538-5307  
6985 Saint Helena Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
[markwestwatershed.org](http://markwestwatershed.org)



A watershed community  
dedicated to preserving, protecting,  
and restoring the Mark West Creek and its  
watershed as a natural and community  
resource.

Friends of the Mark West Watershed  
6985 Saint Helena Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
Email: [info@markwestwatershed.org](mailto:info@markwestwatershed.org)  
Tel: 707-538-5307  
[www.markwestwatershed.org](http://www.markwestwatershed.org)

February 28, 2021

Via Email

Scott Orr  
Deputy Planning Director  
Sonoma County Planning Division  
575 Administration Drive Room 102A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[scott.orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:scott.orr@sonoma-county.org)

RE: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.

Dear Mr. Orr,

The Friends of the Mark West Watershed (FMWW) would like to respectfully request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Public comments on the MND are currently due on March 18, the same day as the scheduled hearing for the project. This deadline for public comments effectively means that decision-makers will have no meaningful opportunity to consider public comment, nor will staff have time to respond to public comments in their prepared report for the hearing date.


In email correspondence between County staff and FMWW between January 21 and March 16, 2020, County staff agreed that they would share a draft of the ordinance for our review and provide FMWW an opportunity to comment on the MND before a version of the draft was created for public hearing. That meeting was postponed at the beginning of March because a draft was not ready, and then postponed again later that month due to the COVID-19 closures. Another email from the County in August assured us we would be contacted soon to schedule a meeting. After hearing nothing back, we sent an email in September again requesting a meeting. There was no reply.

FMWW needs time to carefully study the draft ordinance, and we would appreciate County staff being given the opportunity to review our comments, so they may include responses to our concerns in the staff report for hearing.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Glass Fire that tore through our community have had long-term effects that make it difficult for us to complete our review of the MND within the allotted public comment period. Many of the members of over 150 households on our group list, and 350 followers on social media have been relocated due to losing their homes, which complicates their abilities to engage in the public comment process in a meaningful way. Furthermore, public in-person meetings are not recommended due to public health mandates, so meetings to consult with experts and face-to-face discussions with neighbors are more difficult to manage. Informed decision-making and informed public participation are fundamental purposes of the CEQA process. Because of the challenges facing our community, we need more time to adequately review the MND.

We therefore request that the County extend the deadline for the public comment period from March 18, 2021 to April 16, 2021. We request your response to this extension request as soon as reasonably feasible. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Harriet Buckwalter  
FMWW Co-Chair  
[hbuck@sonic.net](mailto:hbuck@sonic.net)



Penny Sirota  
FMWW Co-Chair  
[penny@monansrill.org](mailto:penny@monansrill.org)

**From:** [Linda Sartor](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment Period on the MND  
**Date:** Sunday, February 28, 2021 9:24:57 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Dear Mr. Orr,

I request that you extend the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Having public comments on the MND due on March 18, the same day as the scheduled hearing, effectively means that decision-makers will have no meaningful opportunity to consider public comment.

Sincerely,

Linda Sartor

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**From:** [craigspencerharrison@gmail.com](mailto:craigspencerharrison@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#); [Pat Gilardi](#)  
**Subject:** Request to Extend Deadline for comments on proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Date:** Monday, March 1, 2021 1:18:14 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

March 1, 2021

Dear Mr. Orr:

On behalf of Bennett Valley Residents for Safe Development, I request that you extend the March 18 deadline for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. I request that you begin a 30-day comment period after you fix the problems with Chapter 26, noted below, and can provide documents to the public that can be deciphered.

Besides being long and complicated, if implemented the proposal could make drastic changes to life in Sonoma County.

- Up to 65,733 acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation projects could be permitted; today about 50 acres are permitted.
- Cultivation permits could be issued in a backroom ministerial process where there is no public knowledge or participation for any parcel 10 acres or more that has an agricultural or RRD zoning.
- The size of outdoor cultivation will increase from 1 acre to either 10 acres or 10% of the size of the parcel. In addition, up to 1 acre of indoor/greenhouse cultivation in new or expanded structures would be allowed, and no limitation on the amount of indoor cultivation in existing structures.
- Large greenhouse cultivation operations could have 100 to 200 employees commuting to cultivation sites year-round, which could add 400 to 800 daily trips on rural roads that are already marginal.
- Health, safety, and nuisance protections are removed.
- There is no analysis of cumulative effects of odor, traffic on narrow rural roads, water demands, and many other issues.

The changes to Chapter 26 are impenetrable gibberish because the county recently extensively revised Chapter 26, but refers to the old version instead of the current version.

The public is being denied fair notice to comment on this proposal under the federal and California constitutions.

The public is also constrained by issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic as well as problems associated with the wildfires. Many residents lost their homes in recent years and are dealing with personal catastrophes.

We therefore request that the County cancel the current deadline and reschedule it to a date 30 days after you provide a decipherable version of the changes that will affect Chapter 26. I would appreciate a prompt response.

Thank you.

Craig S. Harrison  
4953 Sonoma Mountain Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-573-9990  
<https://www.craigsharrison.net/>

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**From:** [e Harris](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.  
**Date:** Monday, March 1, 2021 8:37:11 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Mr. Orr,

We would like to respectfully request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Public comments on the MND are currently due on March 18, the same day as the scheduled hearing for the project. This deadline for public comments effectively means that decision-makers will have no meaningful opportunity to consider public comment, nor will staff have time to respond to public comments in their prepared report for the hearing date.

In email correspondence between County staff and FMWW between January 21 and March 16, 2020, County staff agreed that they would share a draft of the ordinance for our review and provide FMWW an opportunity to comment on the MND before a version of the draft was created for public hearing. That meeting was postponed at the beginning of March because a draft was not ready, and then postponed again later that month due to the COVID-19 closures. Another email from the County in August assured FMWW that they would be contacted soon to schedule a meeting. After hearing nothing back, they sent an email in September again requesting a meeting. There was no reply.

Members of this community need time to carefully study the draft ordinance, and we would appreciate County staff being given the opportunity to review our comments, so they may include responses to our concerns in the staff report for hearing.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Glass Fire that tore through our community have had long-term effects that make it difficult for us to complete our review of the MND within the allotted public comment period. Many of the members of over 150 households on our group list, and 350 followers on social media have been relocated due to losing their homes, which complicates our abilities to engage in the public comment process in a meaningful way. Furthermore, public in-person meetings are not recommended due to public health mandates, so meetings to consult with experts and face-to-face discussions with neighbors are more difficult to manage. Informed decision-making and informed public participation are

fundamental purposes of the CEQA process. Because of the challenges facing our community, we need more time to adequately review the MND.

We therefore request that the County extend the deadline for the public comment period from March 18, 2021 to April 16, 2021. We request your response to this extension request as soon as reasonably feasible. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Harris  
7899 St. Helena Rd.

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**From:** [jared.pickard](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** comments on cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 1, 2021 9:24:58 AM

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EXTERNAL

Hello Scott and team,

As a Sonoma County property owner and farm owner I would like to submit my wholehearted support of your intentions to make permitting of cannabis a ministerial process as opposed to a Use Permit process on LEA and RRD land.

My only comment, as a regenerative farm owner who knows our impact is not detrimental to the environment or watershed, is does the new ordinance encourage regenerative practices?

Ideally there would be a financial savings or incentive for such behavior as land owners may not be incentivized to take these extra measures without government support.

Wishing you all my best,

Jared

3770 Langtry Rd

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**From:** [Kelli Maciel](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#); [info@markwestwatershed.org](mailto:info@markwestwatershed.org)  
**Subject:** Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.  
**Date:** Monday, March 1, 2021 8:03:05 AM

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**EXTERNAL**

March 1st, 2021

Via Email  
Scott Orr  
Deputy Planning Director  
Sonoma County Planning Division  
575 Administration Drive Room 102A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[scott.orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:scott.orr@sonoma-county.org)

RE: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.

Dear Mr. Orr,

I would like to respectfully request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Public comments on the MND are currently due on March 18, the same day as the scheduled hearing for the project. This deadline for public comments effectively means that decision-makers will have no meaningful opportunity to consider public comment, nor will staff have time to respond to public comments in their prepared report for the hearing date.

In email correspondence between County staff and FMWW between January 21 and March 16, 2020, County staff agreed that they would share a draft of the ordinance for our review and provide FMWW an opportunity to comment on the MND before a version of the draft was created for public hearing. That meeting was postponed at the beginning of March because a draft was not ready, and then postponed again later that month due to the COVID-19 closures. Another email from the County in August assured FMWW that they would be contacted soon to schedule a meeting. After hearing nothing back, they sent an email in September again requesting a meeting. There was no reply.

Members of this community need time to carefully study the draft ordinance, and would appreciate County staff being given the opportunity to review our comments, so they may

include responses to our concerns in the staff report for hearing.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Glass Fire that tore through our community have had long-term effects that make it difficult for us to complete our review of the MND within the allotted public comment period. Many of the members of over 150 households on our group list, and 350 followers on social media have been relocated due to losing their homes, which complicates our abilities to engage in the public comment process in a meaningful way. Furthermore, public in-person meetings are not recommended due to public health mandates, so meetings to consult with experts and face-to-face discussions with neighbors are more difficult to manage. Informed decision-making and informed public participation are fundamental purposes of the CEQA process. Because of the challenges facing our community, we need more time to adequately review the MND.

I therefore request that the County extend the deadline for the public comment period from March 18, 2021 to April 16, 2021. I request your response to this extension request as soon as reasonably feasible. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelli & Chris Cox  
Resident/5380 St Helena Rd  
Member FMWW

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Larry Reed](#); [Todd Tamura](#); [Gina Belforte](#); [Greg Carr](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); [Pamela Davis](#); [John Lowry](#); [Cameron Mauritson](#); [Jacquelynn Ocana](#); [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [district4](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Robert Pittman](#); [Andrew Graham](#); [Johnson, Julie](#); [Jim Sweeney](#); [Suzanne Doyle](#); [Steve Birdlebough](#); [Michael Allen](#); [Janis Watkins](#); [Teri Shore](#); [Padi Selwyn](#); [Judith Olney](#); [SCTLC list](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Cannabis Ordinance and Draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Date:** Monday, March 1, 2021 8:48:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [3 1 21 pc ltr chapter 26 final 1.pdf](#)

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EXTERNAL

Gentlepersons:

Attached to this email is my letter requesting withdrawal of, and reevaluation/revision of, and rerelease of the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and all documents associated therewith, and for a new 30-day public comment period.

As always, I am happy to discuss this request with any of you -- please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
great6@sonic.net

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Sonia E. Taylor  
306 Lomas Lane  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-579-8875  
[Great6@sonic.net](mailto:Great6@sonic.net)

1 March 2021

Larry Reed, Chair, District 2  
Todd Tamura, Chair, District 2  
Gina Belforte, District 3  
Greg Carr, District 1  
Caitlin Cornwall, District 1  
Pam Davis, District 5  
John Lowry, District 5  
Cameron Mauritson, District 4  
Jacquelynne Ocaña, District 3  
Sonoma County Planning Commission

McCall Miller -- [cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

[PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org)

Via email

Re: Draft Cannabis Ordinance and Draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Planning Commission Hearing Scheduled for March 18, 2021

Gentlepersons:

This letter is a request for withdrawal of and then reevaluation/revision of and rerelease of the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and all documents associated therewith, and for a new 30-day public comment period.

The reason for this request is that as an essential and integral part of the documentation released with the Notice of Intent are the Draft Amendments to Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Code, and that released document amends a Zoning Code that was partially repealed by the Board of Supervisors on February 9, 2021.

**FACTS:**

On February 16, 2021 Sonoma County published their Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Cannabis Land use Ordinance and General Plan Amendment. They also released the Draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration [hereinafter referred to as "MND"], the Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance [hereinafter referred to as "new draft Chapter 38"], Draft Amendments to Chapter 26 of Sonoma County Code [hereinafter referred to as "OLD Chapter 26"], and the Draft General Plan Amendment [hereinafter collectively referred to as "this project"]. The public comment period to these documents is through 12 pm on March 18, 2021.

On September 17, 2020, at a public hearing, the Planning Commission reviewed the Staff-prepared Zoning Code Amendment to clarify, reorganize and reformat Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Code and make updates to comply with state and federal law [hereinafter referred to as “NEW Chapter 26”].

As part of the proposed NEW Chapter 26, Permit Sonoma recommended memorializing a February 28, 2008 Board of Zoning Adjustment decision about cultural events, recommended renaming “Cultural events” to “Periodic Events,” and recommended codifying “applicable Sonoma County Code standards concerning safety, sanitation, noise, parking, and other topics.”

The Planning Commission approved NEW Chapter 26, sending it to the Board of Supervisors for final approval, with the exceptions that they renamed “Periodic Events” to “Periodic Special Events” and “modified [the] resolution to omit proposed standards for periodic special events that are not currently codified.”<sup>1</sup>

The reason the Planning Commission removed the standards from the “Periodic Special Events” section apparently was because “the Planning Commission recommends that changes to special events should occur through [the] separate, concurrent winery events process.”<sup>2</sup>

On February 9, 2021, the Board of Supervisors considered this same NEW Chapter 26, called “Zoning Code Modernization Phase 1 and 2” at a public hearing. They approved NEW Chapter 26, which repealed the following provisions of the OLD Chapter 26: A. Section 26-02-140; B. Articles 04 through 52, inclusive; and C. Section 26-88-080.

This Board of Supervisor’s action takes formal effect thirty days after their approval, or on or about March 11, 2021.

**DISCUSSION:**

It is inexcusable that staff released the amended OLD Chapter 26 with their package of documentation supporting the Adoption of a MND and new draft Chapter 38 covering cannabis in Sonoma County. They knew, or should have known, that the OLD Chapter 26 would no longer be in effect prior to the expiration of the public comment period, and in fact the NEW Chapter 26 will be in effect by the time any action will be taken on this matter.

By releasing an amended OLD Chapter 26 as part of their documentation supporting the MND and proposed Chapter 38, Sonoma County has and continues to mislead all stakeholders, referral agencies, interested parties and members of the public, who by the County’s actions have been and continue to be led to believe that OLD Chapter 26 are the regulations that will govern new draft Chapter 38.

This is incorrect.

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<sup>1</sup> In OLD Chapter 26, “Cultural Events” is described in the definitions Section of the code; in NEW Chapter 26, “Periodic Special Events” is codified in Section 26-22-120, and includes some standards not otherwise codified in OLD Chapter 26.

<sup>2</sup> This quote is from the Summary Report provided to the Board of Supervisors covering their consideration of this same matter on February 9, 2021, which is a reliable source.

Further, by not evaluating and amending NEW Chapter 26, the County has released a package of OLD Chapter 26, new draft Chapter 38, the MND, and the General Plan Amendment which has conflicts with NEW Chapter 26 and therefore the result will be exactly opposite of the County's important effort to attempt to "clarify" the County's Zoning Code by adoption of NEW Chapter 26.

NEW Chapter 26 is not just a minor update/clarification of OLD Chapter 26. It is a fundamental revision, and there are substantive changes contained within NEW Chapter 26, as well as the uncodified information about events, none of which were evaluated or considered by the MND, and therefore no interested party or referral agency has had the ability to evaluate same.<sup>3</sup>

Articles 04-52 have been substantially changed, as have the definitions now contained in Section 26-4-020 (the previous definition Section 26-02-140 has been repealed), sometimes in content, sometimes just in location of information. While Articles 54-86 and 89-95 remain the same, the remainder of NEW Chapter 26 is entirely different.<sup>4</sup>

OLD Chapter 26 is referenced and referred to in the MND, and new draft Chapter 38, and in fact was used by the MND to evaluate the environmental impacts of this project. Therefore, the amendments to OLD Chapter 26 are part and parcel of this proposed approval.

There are multiple problems with coordination and clarity between the amended OLD Chapter 26, the unamended – and soon to be law – NEW Chapter 26 and new draft Chapter 38. It is clear that the release of the cannabis MND package – this project – was premature, inaccurate, and that the entire package must be reevaluated and then rereleased with amendments being made to the NEW Chapter 26, and then a new evaluation of impacts of draft Chapter 38, in a revised MND. Obviously, such rerelease must include resubmission to all referral agencies, with a new 30-day public comment period commencing after said rerelease of the package.

**DISCREPANCIES/ERRORS/OMISSIONS/PROBLEMS:**

I have spent hours attempting to understand what is proposed by this project, and therefore what is evaluated by the MND.

During my efforts, I have discovered multiple discrepancies, errors, omissions and problems, so far, that are a result of the differences between OLD Chapter 26, NEW Chapter 26, the alleged "harmonization" between Chapter 26 and new draft Chapter 38, and therefore what was evaluated by the MND.

Since it would take far too many additional hours to explain all of the issues, I will list just a few examples of significant discrepancies, errors, omissions and problems with this project.

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<sup>3</sup> The County's effort to prepare new winery event regulations is worthy, but does not include the cannabis events proposed by new draft Chapter 38, which means that those cannabis events are not being evaluated during that process. Further, the timeline for adopting said new winery event regulations is such that even were cannabis events being evaluated during that effort, it is very possible that new draft Chapter 38 could be adopted and in force prior to the issuance of any winery event regulations. These two discrepancies will lead to potential unstudied long-term environmental impacts.

<sup>4</sup> Because the County's amendments to OLD Chapter 26 Sections 26-88-250, et seq., covering Cannabis, are to sections of Chapter 26 that have not been changed, they stand, although the interaction between Sections 26-88-250, et seq., covering Cannabis, NEW Chapter 26 and new draft Chapter 38 have not been studied or evaluated by this project.

1. Within new draft Chapter 38, an internal inconsistency exists in Section 38.14.020.<sup>5</sup> Subsection A lists the hours of operation for activities, including “outdoor processing.” Then, directly below that, in subsection B, it is stated that “processing is required to be indoors.”

This discrepancy is exacerbated by inconsistent and missing definitions of cannabis “processing” and other types of potential cannabis processing activities in OLD Chapter 26, NEW Chapter 26, and new draft Chapter 38.

Clearly draft Chapter 38 is internally inconsistent and therefore must be in error. Either processing activities are allowed outdoors, or they are only allowed indoors. Further, a clear definition of what cannabis processing is, and how/where it is will be permitted, under what conditions, is necessary, doesn’t exist, and hasn’t been evaluated by the MND.

2. I have compiled a long list of definitions that were in OLD Chapter 26 (and therefore were relied upon by the MND and by new draft Chapter 38) that are no longer contained within NEW Chapter 26, and are also not contained within new draft Chapter 38, or where there are substantive differences between the definitions in OLD Chapter 26, NEW Chapter 26 and/or new draft Chapter 38.

Just two examples:

- a. There is an unamended definition of “hoop house” in OLD Chapter 26. There is no definition of “hoop house” in the NEW Chapter 26. There is a definition of “hoop house” in the draft Chapter 38 that is substantively different than the unamended definition contained in the amended OLD Chapter 26 that is a part of this project. It is impossible to determine what the MND evaluated in their consideration of new draft Chapter 38, and whether the MND’s evaluation of the impacts of hoop houses was accurate.
- b. Another discrepancy is the definition of “Nursery – Cannabis.” In NEW Chapter 26 that definition is changed to make clear that a cannabis nursery is a wholesale nursery, and that it is specifically for the “planting, propagation, and cultivation of medical cannabis.” In OLD Chapter 26, the definition of “Nursery – Wholesale” explicitly prohibits cannabis nurseries, and the definition of “Nursery – Cannabis” does not permit wholesale or retail cannabis nurseries. In new draft Chapter 38, the definition of “Nursery” is the same as it was in OLD Chapter 26, although elsewhere wholesale “Nursery Use” is explicitly allowed. However, in Section 26-18-200, “Nursery, Wholesale” in the NEW Chapter 26, cannabis nurseries are explicitly prohibited. How is any interested party supposed to understand what is permitted, what was evaluated by the MND, and whether what the MND evaluated was accurate?

These, and other, omissions, errors and discrepancies make it impossible for anyone to understand the impacts will be, or the intent of the MND or new draft Chapter 38.

3. There are multiple sections of OLD Chapter 26 that I believe were not correctly amended in the OLD Chapter 26 released as part of this project, including instances where cannabis cultivation (and other activities surrounding cannabis) are explicitly prohibited. Compounding this problem, there are multiple

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<sup>5</sup> Incidentally, I have to wonder why new draft Chapter 38 uses periods in its article/section numbers, when to the best of my knowledge that has never been the County’s practice.



sections of NEW Chapter 26 that were obviously not amended as part of this project, since NEW Chapter 26 has not been evaluated as part of this project. See Lisa Lai email of February 17, 2021 for just one example, in OLD Chapter 26 (although, incidentally, Cannabis Cultivation is still explicitly prohibited in NEW Chapter 26, as well, which was not amended as part of this project).

This situation is particularly unfortunate, considering the years of time and effort that has gone into preparation of NEW Chapter 26. Neither Permit Sonoma nor the Agricultural Commissioner should be in the position of saying to any stakeholder “well, that’s what it says, but this is what we meant” at this stage of the game. Further, these multiple omissions, errors, discrepancies and problems render the MND’s evaluation of the impacts of new draft Chapter 38 defective.

**THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION IS FATALLY DEFECTIVE:**

The MND issued on February 16, 2021 is fatally defective, and must be withdrawn, reconsidered, reevaluated, revised and rereleased to all stakeholders, referral agencies, interested persons and the public, with all necessary supporting documents, with a new 30-day comment period.

The MND evaluates new draft Chapter 38 of the Sonoma County Zoning Code, and both that new draft Chapter 38 and the MND rely on the underlying Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Zoning Code. Unfortunately, as is obvious, the MND used the OLD Chapter 26 for its evaluation, rendering the MND defective.

A cursory review of both the MND and new draft Chapter 38 make it obvious that there are many definitions, topics, sections, etc. of Chapter 26 that are necessary for a full and complete understanding of the impacts of new draft Chapter 38.

The MND references the "associated technical amendments" to Chapter 26, and since OLD Chapter 26 has those alleged "technical amendments" but NEW Chapter 26, which will be in effect on or about March 11, 2021, does not, there is no way for the MND to have evaluated the impacts of the same.

Further, the MND states:

“The establishment of expanded ministerial permitting in Agricultural and Resource zoning designations (LIA, LEA, DA, and RRD) within the unincorporated area of Sonoma County, through the adoption of the proposed new chapter 38 to the county code, also requires minor and technical revisions to existing county code provisions governing cannabis cultivation in chapter 26. Such revisions and technical corrections will remove unnecessary, conflicting, or duplicative provisions, and will otherwise harmonize existing chapter 26 with the proposed new chapter 38, thereby clarifying the relationship between these two chapters regarding local land use regulation of cannabis cultivation and supply chain business activity.”

Obviously, it is impossible for this project to “harmonize” or “clarify” “existing Chapter 26” with anything, since it has amended OLD Chapter 26, which has been repealed. Again, NEW Chapter 26 will be in effect when any actions will be taken to approve any portion of this project, including the MND and new draft Chapter 38, and in fact will be in effect prior to the expiration of the public comment period for the MND.

To say that this is unacceptable would be an understatement.

Since the County chose not to use NEW Chapter 26 to evaluate the impacts of new draft Chapter 38 in the MND, the MND is fatally defective.

With this letter I request that you withdraw this project immediately and reevaluate the impacts of new Draft Chapter 38 in a revised MND based on consideration of and amendments to NEW Chapter 26. I further request that after said reevaluation, you rerelease the reevaluated/revised documents – the Notice of Intent, the MND, and all of the associated documents for this project – send them to all of the appropriate referral agencies, and commence a new 30-day public comment period.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

Sonia E. Taylor

Cc: Tennis Wick, Permit Sonoma Director  
Scott Orr , Permit Sonoma Deputy Director  
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
Robert Pittman, Sonoma County Counsel  
Andrew Graham, Press Democrat  
Julie Johnson, Press Democrat  
Jim Sweeney, Press Democrat  
Sierra Club  
Sonoma County Conservation Action  
Greenbelt Alliance  
Preserve Rural Sonoma County  
Sonoma County Transportation and Land Use Coalition

**From:** [Anna Ransome](#)  
**To:** [Larry Reed](#); [Todd Tamura](#); [Gina Belforte](#); [Greg Carr](#); [Susan Cornelis](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); [Pam Davis](#); [John Lowry](#); [Cameron Mauritson](#); [Jacquelyne Ocana](#); [Planning Agency](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#); [district5](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Cannabis Documents inadequate for review  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 2:29:22 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Friends of Graton (FOG) has been analyzing the draft documents released on Tuesday, February 16 with a 30 day comment period for establishment of Chapter 38 as the new cannabis ordinance. We have found many inconsistencies and unclear statements in these documents. Now we have found (from a 3/1/21 letter to the County from Sonia Taylor) that the Chapter 26 version that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 9 should have been included for analysis. The County erred in attaching a soon to be replaced version of Chapter 26. This error made accurate analysis impossible. We therefore request that the documents be withdrawn and that appropriate, consistent and corrected versions be released with a 30 day comment period from the date of release.

Our group and others who have waited over a year to engage the County in discussions about neighborhood compatibility have been ignored and stonewalled at every turn. When asking legitimate questions of the cannabis manager at the County, one neighbor was told that they are not answering questions. Cannabis industry representatives however were referred to Andrew Smith for answers. This unequal treatment is absurdly undemocratic. Now we learn that our concerns were justified and legitimate. I believe that there have been six different cannabis "managers" over the course of this process and none have been open to community input. We were told to wait for Phase 2 (Neighborhood Compatibility) which never arrived. Instead we were presented with a draft devoid of our input and even that is so flawed that we can't analyze it.

Please correct this error so that the entire process is not deemed to be illegitimate.

Anna Ransome for Friends of Graton (FOG)

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**From:** [Colleen Mahoney](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrew Smith](#)  
**Cc:** [Pat Gilardi](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [PlanningAgency](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Andrea Krout](#); [district3](#); [Jenny Chamberlain](#); [district4](#)  
**Subject:** Our Dairy Belt and Two Rock Valley, West Petaluma  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 2:24:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [March 2 cannabis letter.docx](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Colleen Mahoney  
Architect  
Six C Street, Petaluma  
707.765.0225  
mobile 415.517.0912  
[www.Mahoney-Architects.com](http://www.Mahoney-Architects.com)



MAHONEYARCHITECTS&INTERIORS

March 2, 2021

Dear Mr. Orr,

I am writing this letter representing the views of many rural property owners of the Dairy Belt, particularly the Two Rock area. We request that you push out the March 18 deadline for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. We'd like to see proper documents provided to the public before you begin a 30-day comment period.

As we understand it right now - the proposal will result drastic changes to our way of life in West Sonoma County.

- Up to 65,733 acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation projects could be permitted; today about 50 acres are permitted. We don't want this land transitioning to this product.
- PRMD typically requires an arduous process for permits for everyone else. We do not agree with giving backroom ministerial permits with no public notification, or participation for any parcel 10 acres or more that has an agricultural or RRD zoning.
- The size of outdoor cultivation will increase from 1 acre to either 10 acres or 10% of the size of the parcel. For those of us on larger ranch parcels of land this could be a disastrous change in land use in our area.
- Large greenhouse cultivation operations could have hundreds of employees driving to and from these properties on narrow and poorly maintained roads. How can you justify the addition of 400 to 800 daily trips on our rural roads that are already marginal? What is your plan for repairs and safety for current residents?
- We wonder how you will manage our continued safety, health, environmental and nuisance protections?
- In particular we are very worried about aquifer draw down and ever increasing water demands on already water scarce properties, and many other issues.

We see that the public is being denied fair notice to comment on this proposal under the federal and California constitutions. We therefore request that the County cancel the current deadline and reschedule it to a date 30 days after you provide a proper version of the changes that will affect all of us.

I would appreciate a prompt response to share with our neighborhood and larger rural community.

Thank you.

**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Cannabis Ordinance and Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration scheduled for March 18, 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 5:56:44 PM

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## EXTERNAL

To the Planning Commissioners of Sonoma County:

I am requesting that the county withdraw the cannabis and general plan documents released February 16 concerning a Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration, a new and revised cannabis ordinance and revisions to chapter 26. The materials released on February 16 concerning the General Plan Amendments used the old chapter 26, not the revised one adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 9, to become effective March 9. I am requesting that the county issue a new document showing the proposed revisions to chapter 26 using the document approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 9, and make the appropriate changes in the SMND and chapter 38. It has been very difficult to review these documents based on the many inconsistencies, both between the previous chapter 26 and the new one, and the SMND and chapter 38 and chapter 26, making it impossible to properly review these documents.

This new proposed cannabis ordinance as written will dramatically change the face of Sonoma County, allowing very large outdoor and hoop house cultivation as well as large indoor cultivation operations, with profound effects on both natural resources (eg, water and biotic resources), odor, tourism and the wine industry (repelled by the stinking pervasive odor). It is critical that the public be afforded time for proper review and comment of these interacting documents to give you, our Planning Commissioners, proper feedback to assist in your analysis.

Please restart the clock for the 30 day comment period once these corrected documents are publicly released.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical matter.

With best regards,  
Deborah Eppstein, PhD

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**do not** click any web links, attachments, and **never** give out your user ID or password.

**From:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**To:** [PlanningAgency](#); "[Grace Barresi](#)"; [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 5:04:26 PM

---

Dear Grace-

My understanding is that the final drafts were released on 2/16/2021. You are saying that it is not the correct final document – what are you comparing it with? I'm concerned that you might be comparing it with the older draft released in January.

Cannabis team, can you help clarify when documents were released? My understanding is that there was a preliminary draft issued at the end of January, to meet an expectation of the community, and then there were small edits made between then and 2/16/2021. Once the 2/16/2021 version was posted, there were no longer any changes were there? That is how it seems on the website as well.

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/cannabis-program/>

Thanks,  
Leo

**Leo Chyi**

**District Director to**

**Supervisor Lynda Hopkins**

575 Administration Drive 100A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

707.565.2241

---

**From:** Alexandria Sullivan <Alexandria.Sullivan@sonoma-county.org> **On Behalf Of** PlanningAgency  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 3:00 PM  
**To:** 'Grace Barresi' <gmbarresi@gmail.com>; Cannabis <Cannabis@sonoma-county.org>;  
PlanningAgency <PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org>  
**Cc:** Lynda Hopkins <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>; Leo Chyi <Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments

Thank you for the email Ms. Barresi and for copying the Cannabis email account. That email address will serve as the primary conduit for all correspondence related to the ordinance update.

Kind regards,

*Alexandria Sullivan*

Senior Office Assistant

County of Sonoma

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Direct: 707-565-1737 |

Office: 707-565-1900 | Fax: 707-565-1103

[www.PermitsSonoma.org](http://www.PermitsSonoma.org)



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*Due to Public Health Orders, Permit Sonoma will be temporarily closing to the public effective Monday, July 20 until further notice. We continue to provide services remotely minimizing person-to-person contact which helps protect our community. We look forward to serving you and will reply to your message within the next three business days. We encourage you to use our online services for permitting, records, scheduling inspections, and general questions. You can find out more about our extensive online services at [PermitsSonoma.org](http://PermitsSonoma.org).*

*Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work together to keep our communities safe.*

---

**From:** Grace Barresi <[gmbarresi@gmail.com](mailto:gmbarresi@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 9:45 AM

**To:** Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>; PlanningAgency <[PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org)>

**Cc:** Lynda Hopkins <[Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)>; Leo Chyi <[Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org)>

**Subject:** Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments

## **EXTERNAL**

Dear Sonoma County Planning Agency and Cannabis Program Manager,

We request that you extend the review period for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. The reason for this request is for the County staff to address inconsistencies and problems uncovered with the amendments / revisions of Chapter 26.

Chapter 26, which was released by Sonoma County Cannabis Program Staff on 16 February, is actually not the correct document. This is both misleading and unacceptable. Interestingly, this now makes sense because there are several inconsistencies between all three documents. We found it incredibly confusing and time consuming to continuously flip back and forth between all three documents. And we have prepared public statements against the outdated, incorrect Chapter 26.



The public is being misled by posting the wrong data and information. Please make the appropriate references and release the updated Chapter 26 in order for the public to read and understand the correct language that could become law.

In closing, the March 18 deadline will not give us sufficient time to comment on your documents.

We respectfully request Sonoma County to reissue the correct documents to allow us more time to adequately decipher them and provide input to help shape the updated Cannabis Ordinance.

Thank you,  
Grace and Robert Guthrie  
Anita Lane, Sebastopol

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**From:** [Grace Barresi](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Subject:** Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 9:45:39 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Agency and Cannabis Program Manager,

We request that you extend the review period for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. The reason for this request is for the County staff to address inconsistencies and problems uncovered with the amendments / revisions of Chapter 26.

Chapter 26, which was released by Sonoma County Cannabis Program Staff on 16 February, is actually not the correct document. This is both misleading and unacceptable. Interestingly, this now makes sense because there are several inconsistencies between all three documents. We found it incredibly confusing and time consuming to continuously flip back and forth between all three documents. And we have prepared public statements against the outdated, incorrect Chapter 26.

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In closing, the March 18 deadline will not give us sufficient time to comment on your documents.

We respectfully request Sonoma County to reissue the correct documents to allow us more time to adequately decipher them and provide input to help shape the updated Cannabis Ordinance.

Thank you,  
Grace and Robert Guthrie  
Anita Lane, Sebastopol

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**From:** [jim@braccos.com](mailto:jim@braccos.com)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrea Krout](#)  
**Subject:** Request to Extend Deadline for comments on proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 1:05:37 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Agency and Cannabis Program Manager,

We request that you extend the review period for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. The reason for this request is for the County staff to address inconsistencies and problems uncovered with the amendments / revisions of Chapter 26.

Chapter 26, which was released by Sonoma County Cannabis Program Staff on 16 February, is actually not the correct document. This is both misleading and unacceptable.

The changes to Chapter 26 are not apparent because the county recently extensively revised Chapter 26, but refers to the old version instead of the current version.

The public is being denied fair notice to comment on this proposal under the federal and California constitutions.

In addition the public is also constrained by issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic as well as problems associated with the wildfires.

We respectfully request Sonoma County to reissue the correct documents to allow us more time to adequately decipher them and provide input to help shape the updated Cannabis Ordinance.

In closing, the March 18 deadline will not give us sufficient time to comment on your documents.

Thank you,  
James and Melinda Bracco  
Moro Street, Bloomfield

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**To:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Redo  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 6:29:57 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

County officials

I am writing to you to urge you to stop any action on the new proposed cannabis ordinance revision. It has been trotted out in a very incomprehensible manner. It is inaccurate alluding to the wrong chapters in the current county ordinances. It is a messy document with many mistakes. It needs to be withdrawn, rewritten, and sent out for comment period of 30 days when it has been corrected.

It is a complete embarrassment with its lack of clarity. I would hope that the county can do better than this document.

Do it over again and make it readable and understandable.

Rachel Zierdt

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comments on Proposed Draft Cannabis Ordinance, MND, etc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 8:41:50 PM  
**Attachments:** [20210226 NMFS Letter re cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County.pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

Thank you for this explanation, McCall. I understand the problem, and very much appreciate your detailed response regarding this situation.

I do have a question for you though: I just checked the documents you loaded for the week through 2/28, and the attached letter (which I got from another source, obviously) is not included on line as a document you received. As you can see, it is dated 2/26, and although it is addressed to Tennis Wick, I would imagine that he would have made certain that you had a copy to make available to the government.

Have you seen this letter? Are there any other letters like this that are out there?

I'll appreciate your response.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)

On 2/26/2021 12:25 PM, Cannabis wrote:

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**From:** [Keith Roberts](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: SCCA request to withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 3:22:12 PM

---

fyi

Keith Roberts  
Community Relations Specialist for  
James Gore, 4th District Supervisor  
County of Sonoma

---

**From:** Michael Allen <mallen@pon.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 10:00 AM  
**To:** Lynda Hopkins <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>; Susan Gorin <Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org>; courseyforsupervisor@gmail.com; district4 <district4@sonoma-county.org>; David Rabbitt <David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org>  
**Cc:** 'Janis Watkins' <janiswatkins@gmail.com>; 'Blake Hooper' <bmhooper1@gmail.com>; 'Anne Seeley' <aseeleysr@gmail.com>; 'Michael Allen' <mallen@pon.net>; 'Neal Fishman' <njfishman@gmail.com>; 'Danny Martinez' <danny.scca2020@gmail.com>; 'Mark Walsh' <markwalshcpa@sonic.net>; 'Matthew Callaway' <matt@conservationaction.org>; 'Megan Kaun' <megan.kaun@gmail.com>; 'Dennis Rosatti' <drosatti@yahoo.com>; 'Rue Furch' <pqrst@monitor.net>; Sonia Taylor <great6@sonic.net>; 'Teri Shore' <tshore@greenbelt.org>; 'Kerry Fugett' <kerryfugett@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** SCCA request to withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance

**EXTERNAL**

**Dear Supervisors, Sonoma County Conservation Action (SCCA) requests that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and the Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance. Both the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the new draft chapter 38 are based on a portion of the county's zoning code that has since**

**been significantly revised. Passing a land use policy that is incongruent with the current zoning code would only serve to create confusion and further complicate the county's ability to come to resolution on this important issue.**

**Once these items have been revised, we would request that they be re-released for a full 30 day public comment period, with a clear explanation of the changes made based on the newly updated portion of county zoning code.**

**Thank you for your attention to this matter, Michael Allen Board Chair Sonoma County Conservation Action**

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**From:** [Bridget Sheils](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [district5](#); [Shawn Moon](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance Concerns  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 2:34:36 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

To Whom It May Concern,

My husband and I moved to Sonoma County late last year - a life long dream come true. Joining this agricultural and nature-loving community has brought us more happiness than we'd ever imagined. Today, we're reaching out with concern about the [proposed cannabis ordinances](#).

First, making cannabis applications ministerial within agricultural and RRD zoning removes important environmental impact studies meant to protect people and wildlife. We do not agree that cannabis should be included in the right-to-farm law because the logistics and impacts of such operations greatly deviate from those stemming from all other agricultural activities in the county.

Next, the current proposal could greatly deteriorate our quality of life. Were it to go forwards is, we would face the following threats and nuisances:

- competition for available ground water
- cannabis pesticide use
- employee work vehicles coming and going on 9-12 ft wide lane
- noise
- need for heightened security
- destruction of current bucolic view from our home (not to mention the general beauty of the county)
- odor

With the above concerns in mind, we ask that:

- the total number of acres dedicated to cannabis production be reduced to no more than 10k acres within Sonoma County
- standard setbacks be no less 1000 feet to residence property lines
- more time for public review and discourse **AFTER THE PANDEMIC** is in the rearview mirror

Thanks in advance for hearing our concerns. We look forward to hearing about more opportunities to consider the trade-off and discuss the future of life in Sonoma County.

Sincerely,  
Bridget Sheils and Shawn Moon  
2400 Coffee Ln.  
Sebastopol, CA 95472



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**Warning:** If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected,  
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**From:** [Charlene Stone](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district4](#); [district5](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**Subject:** Re: town hall meetings  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 8:36:02 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

You said it Rachel. Travesty!!!

On Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 06:03:04 PM PST, Rachel Zierdt <[rzierdt@gmail.com](mailto:rzierdt@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Supervisors,

You have got to be kidding...after spending the past two years in bed with the cannabis industry who helped you write a totally one sided document, you are now reaching out to the public. This is a pathetic attempt to smooth over the total abomination that was released 2 weeks ago. If passed your plan will totally decimate our county.

Additionally the ordinance as written is littered with mistakes and inconsistencies....I can only conclude that this messy document is purposely written like that so that it can be liberally interpreted to massage any problems that occur in its implementation. The county loves giving its staff broad discretion to interpret the ordinance. An incomprehensible document does just that.

Rescind it, rewrite it, and bring it out again. As it stands now, it is an embarrassment and reflects badly on staff abilities. The town hall will solve nothing.

Rachel Zierdt

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**From:** [Claudia Zbinden](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Please postpone these meetings...  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 6:45:03 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

This ordinance update is far reaching and a serious price tag for the environment to be done so fast like this with these surprising changes your are proposing. Making these permits a ministerial process and excluding neighbors input and consideration is very serious and people need more time to understand what you want to do here. It's crazy. Do you really think those of us living in the Mayacamas will trust one county bureaucrat to make an informed decision about pot farms in these areas?

At least delay these meetings and do a better job of informing the public about this ordinance and how easy it will be for pot farms to proliferate.

Respectfully, Claudia Zbinden, 5400 Alpine Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** [Dick and Vi Strain](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrea Krout](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Subject:** Please see attached letter re Draft Cannabis Documents  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 11:46:19 AM  
**Attachments:** [Draft cannabis document review.docx](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

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**do not** click any web links, attachments, and **never** give out your user ID or password.

From: Vi Strain >[vcrstrain@yahoo.com](mailto:vcrstrain@yahoo.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
To: Scott Orr [Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org), Tennis Wick  
[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org), [cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:cannabis@sonoma-county.org)  
[PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org)  
CC: [David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org](mailto:David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org); [Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org)  
Chair, [lyndahopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:lyndahopkins@sonoma-county.org)

Subject: Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance (Chapter 38), Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 26), Mitigated Negative Declaration and General Plan Amendments

Concerned Citizens of Bloomfield have spent many hours reviewing the draft documents relative to cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County. We are especially interested and concerned as there is a large cannabis operation proposed adjacent to our community. However, It soon became apparent in reviewing the cannabis ordinance and then referencing the zoning ordinance there were major technical problems between the two ordinances. The problems of inconsistencies and language were impossible to decipher and are rife throughout the documents. Trying to determine how the ordinances would apply to the specific project looming over our community was not possible.

In checking the County website we read the letter from Sonia Taylor on 3/1/21 and now understand why the documents are inconsistent and not accurate. The Chapter 26 version that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 9 should have been included for analysis. It's unprofessional and injurious to public trust that the County put a version of Chapter 26 out for review that would no longer be relevant during the review period. We request the documents be withdrawn and that internally consistent and corrected versions be released with at least a 30-day comment period from the date of release.

In addition, we believe the County cannabis web-site information relaying the message that the proposed Part 2 cannabis ordinance would include neighborhood compatibility is blatantly untrue and misleading. We have been more than disappointed as we have waded through the ordinance to find only deference to the cannabis industry. Our community has spent hours of time and energy submitting petitions and letters to the County with our concerns and solutions to cannabis cultivation adjoining residential neighborhoods and do not see our concerns addressed. We have tried to identify a staff person in the cannabis program to answer question and to date have received no reply to our emails asking for such a contact person.

Please put this flawed process on hold and produce professional documents including the input you have received from the many concerned neighborhoods in Sonoma County and then set a new public review period for the revised documents.

Vi Strain on behalf of Concerned Citizens of Bloomfield.

**From:** [Grace Barresi](#)  
**To:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Cc:** [PlanningAgency](#); [Cannabis](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 1:37:44 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Leo,

Thank you for your prompt reply. I really appreciate it, and am hoping my comments will be useful to County Staff. I would like to address your comments. I downloaded the following documents from [Sonoma County's cannabis program website](#) dated **16 February 2021**:

1. Chapter 26, ORD20-0005, Draft Amendments to Chapter 26 – Sonoma County Zoning Regulations (427 pages)
2. Chapter 38, ORD20-0005, DRAFT CHAPTER 38 SONOMA COUNTY COMMERCIAL CANNABIS CULTIVATION IN AGRICULTURAL & RESOURCE AREAS ORDINANCE (32 pages)
3. Draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration, ORD20-0005 (108 pages)

On Feb 9, 2021, the Board of Supervisors **adopted a new Chapter 26**, Ordinance Number 6335, which is **not listed** on the cannabis program site. Link to this document.

[https://library.municode.com/ca/sonoma\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CH26SOCOZORE](https://library.municode.com/ca/sonoma_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH26SOCOZORE)

**Here are some examples of the discrepancies between the documents:**

<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD20-0005, Page 18 From cannabis program website	<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD6335, Page 5 From Feb 9 BoS adoption	<b>Chapter 38</b> , ORD20-0005, Page 26 From cannabis program website
Agricultural crop: Any cultivated crop grown and harvested for commercial purposes, except for cannabis and other controlled substances, which are defined and classified separately.		Agricultural crop means any cultivated crop grown and harvested for commercial purposes.

The document posted online to the cannabis program site differs from the other two:

<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD20-0005, Page 20 From cannabis program website	<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD6335, Page 8 From Feb 9 BoS adoption	<b>Chapter 38</b> , ORD20-0005, Page 27 From cannabis program website
"Cannabis is classified as an agricultural product separately from other agricultural crops". (pasted as found in the document)	Cannabis is classified as an agricultural product separately from other agricultural crops	

Three differing situations or definitions across these docs:

<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD20-0005, page 30 From cannabis program website	<b>Chapter 26</b> , ORD6335 From Feb 9 BoS adoption	<b>Chapter 38</b> From cannabis program website
Hoop house - Cannabis: A temporary structure used for season extension or crop protection erected for less than one hundred eighty (180) days where the material covering the structure is removable. Hoop houses do not have any electrical components, such as ventilation or artificial lighting, and are not used for light deprivation.	<i>Does not define "Hoop Houses"</i>	1. "Hoop House" means a temporary structure used for season extension or crop protection that is erected for less than 180 days in a twelve month period, less than 12 feet in height, constructed of light frame materials, and covered with shade cloth or clear, flexible plastic that is readily removable. A hoop house may or may not have associated temporary electrical, plumbing, or

How are we expected to provide public comments by 18March when these documents are contradicting one another and inconsistent? I have also read through many of the public comments asking for clarifications to these documents. Others have pointed out these inconsistencies as well.

My intention is to help shape the revised Cannabis Ordinance to improve neighborhood compatibility. My home is in Sebastopol and is one of 7 properties that border Misty Mountain Services at 885 Montgomery Road, which has been operating a non-permitted commercial cannabis business under the PRP since 2017. Unfortunately, after reading through Chapter 26, Chapter 38, and the SMND, **I see NO changes to setbacks to properties bordering commercial cannabis businesses AND the proposed outdoor odor mitigations are completely inadequate.** We are extremely disappointed, especially since we were promised neighborhood compatibility by the Board of Supervisors in April 2018, almost 3 years ago.

Thank you for your attention,

Grace Guthrie

On Wed, Mar 3, 2021 at 2:04 AM Leo Chyi <[Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Dear Grace-

My understanding is that the final drafts were released on 2/16/2021. You are saying that it is not the correct final document – what are you comparing it with? I’m concerned that you might be comparing it with the older draft released in January.

Cannabis team, can you help clarify when documents were released? My understanding is that there was a preliminary draft issued at the end of January, to meet an expectation of the community, and then there were small edits made between then and 2/16/2021. Once the 2/16/2021 version was posted, there were no longer any changes were there? That is how it seems on the website as well.

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/cannabis-program/>

Thanks,

Leo

**Leo Chyi**

**District Director to**

**Supervisor Lynda Hopkins**

575 Administration Drive 100A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

707.565.2241



---

**From:** Alexandria Sullivan <[Alexandria.Sullivan@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Alexandria.Sullivan@sonoma-county.org)> **On Behalf Of** PlanningAgency  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 3:00 PM  
**To:** 'Grace Barresi' <[gbarresi@gmail.com](mailto:gbarresi@gmail.com)>; Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>; PlanningAgency <[PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Cc:** Lynda Hopkins <[Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)>; Leo Chyi <[Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments

Thank you for the email Ms. Barresi and for copying the Cannabis email account. That email address will serve as the primary conduit for all correspondence related to the ordinance update.

Kind regards,

*Alexandria Sullivan*

Senior Office Assistant

County of Sonoma

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Direct: 707-565-1737 |

Office: 707-565-1900 | Fax: 707-565-1103

[www.PermitSonoma.org](http://www.PermitSonoma.org)



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*Due to Public Health Orders, Permit Sonoma will be temporarily closing to the public effective Monday, July 20 until further notice. We continue to provide services remotely minimizing person-to-person contact which helps protect our community. We look forward to serving you and will reply to your message within the next three business days. We encourage you to use our online services for permitting, records, scheduling inspections, and general questions. You can find out more about our extensive online services at [PermitSonoma.org](http://PermitSonoma.org).*

*Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work together to keep our communities safe.*

---

**From:** Grace Barresi <[gmbarresi@gmail.com](mailto:gmbarresi@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 9:45 AM

**To:** Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>; PlanningAgency <[PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org)>

**Cc:** Lynda Hopkins <[Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)>; Leo Chyi <[Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org)>

**Subject:** Extension request for 18March deadline for public comments

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Sonoma County Planning Agency and Cannabis Program Manager,

We request that you extend the review period for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. The reason for this request is for the County staff to address inconsistencies and problems uncovered with the amendments / revisions of Chapter 26.

Chapter 26, which was released by Sonoma County Cannabis Program Staff on 16 February, is actually not the correct document. This is both misleading and unacceptable. Interestingly, this now makes sense because there are several inconsistencies between all three documents. We found it incredibly confusing and time consuming to continuously flip back and forth between all three documents. And we have prepared public statements against the outdated, incorrect Chapter 26.

The public is being misled by posting the wrong data and information. Please make the appropriate references and release the updated Chapter 26 in order for the public to read and understand the correct language that could become law.

In closing, the March 18 deadline will not give us sufficient time to comment on your documents.

We respectfully request Sonoma County to reissue the correct documents to allow us more time to adequately decipher them and provide input to help shape the updated Cannabis Ordinance.

Thank you,  
Grace and Robert Guthrie  
Anita Lane, Sebastopol

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**From:** [johnamodeo@aol.com](mailto:johnamodeo@aol.com)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** cannabis permit  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 1:07:53 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Hello,

Thanks for your service.

I am a Graton senior resident, living here for 32 years. For many reasons, it is concerning to me to have this plant in our neighborhood. I am especially concerned about the effects of noise, odor, traffic, and water use. It is unclear how much of the water table will be depleted as a result of the massive water needs of the plant. And will there be an odor wafting through the area? That would be very unpleasant.

Please ensure that, if approved, the plant will abide by strict limits, to help ensure the continued peace, safety, and tranquility of the neighborhood and a good quality of life for residents here.

Thanks for listening.

Gratefully,  
John Amodeo  
3121 Brush St.  
Graton, CA 95444

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**From:** [perryj4@comcast.net](mailto:perryj4@comcast.net)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#); [planingagency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:planingagency@sonoma-county.org)  
**Subject:** Request to Extend Deadline for comments on proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 8:03:10 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Mr. Orr:

On behalf of Penngrove Residents I request that you extend the March 18 deadline for comments on the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment, and Supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration. I request that you begin a 30-day comment period after you fix the problems with Chapter 26, noted below, and can provide documents to the public that are correct and true.

If implemented the proposal could make drastic changes to life in Sonoma County.

- Up to 65,733 acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation projects could be permitted; today less than 50 acres are permitted.
- Cultivation permits would be issued in the ministerial process where there is no public knowledge or comment.
- The size of outdoor cultivation will increase from 1 acre to either 10 acres or 10% of the size of the parcel. In addition, up to 1 acre of indoor/greenhouse cultivation in new or expanded structures would be allowed, and no limitation on the amount of indoor cultivation in existing structures.
- Large greenhouse cultivation operations could have 100 to 200 employees commuting to cultivation sites year-round, which could add 400 to 800 daily trips on rural roads that are already marginal.
- Health, safety, and nuisance protections are removed.
- There is no analysis of cumulative effects of odor, traffic on narrow rural roads, water demands, and many other issues.
- With the low rain for 2021 we are all wondering how this crop will impact the water wells. Will there be unprecedented law suits filed against the County of Sonoma due to the county knowingly allowing the cannabis grows to tap the water needed to sustain the residents of Penngrove.

The changes to Chapter 26 are in error because the county recently extensively revised Chapter 26, but refers to the old version instead of the now current version.

The public is being denied fair notice to comment on this proposal under the federal and California constitutions.

The public is also constrained by issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic as well as problems associated with the wildfires. Many residents lost their homes in recent years and are dealing with personal catastrophes.

We therefore request that the County cancel the current deadline and reschedule it to a date 30 days after you provide a corrected version of the changes that will affect Chapter 26.

Please respond as to the action that will be taken on the County of Sonoma's behalf.

Thank You  
Joseph Perry  
707-477-3862

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**From:** [Schoutsen](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Anna Ransome](#)  
**Subject:** My comments on cannabis ordinance. Please read.  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 10:57:32 AM

---

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County,

I am writing to express my very strong opinions regarding upcoming decisions on cannabis ordinances.

There are so many objections, but I will list a few...

To begin with, regarding odor! I would hope that at least 1000 feet away from property lines will be required.

As well as the impact on water usage and environmental impacts.

I am adamantly against having close proximity to growers. Any closer than 1000 feet to our schools and parks.

We make herculean efforts during our child's entire life to avoid crime and that kind of potential danger, and so I want those potential problems as far away as possible from my home and business and school.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Lisa Schoutsen

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**From:** [Marshall Behling](#)  
**To:** [PlanningAgency](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Cannabis Ordinance and Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration scheduled for March 18, 2021  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 1:31:58 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

To Sonoma County Planning Commissioners:

Please withdraw the cannabis and general plan documents released February 16 concerning a Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration, a new and revised cannabis ordinance and revisions to chapter 26.

The materials released on February 16 concerning the General Plan Amendments used the old chapter 26, not the revised one adopted by the Board fo Supervisors on February 9, to become effective March 9.

The county must issue a new document showing the proposed revisions to chapter 26 using the document approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 9, and make the appropriate changes in the SMND and chapter 38. It has been very difficult to review these documents based on the many inconsistencies, both between the previous chapter 26 and the new one, and the SMND and chapter 38 and chapter 26, making it impossible to properly review these documents and provide input.

This new proposed cannabis ordinance, as written, will dramatically change the face of Sonoma County, allowing very large outdoor and hoop house cultivation as well as large indoor cultivation operations, with profound effects on natural resources (eg, water and biotic resources) and on tourism and the wine industry (repelled by the stinking pervasive odor).

It is critical that the public be afforded time for proper review and comment of these interacting documents to give you, our Planning Commissioners, proper feedback to assist in your analysis.

Please restart the clock for the 30 day comment period once these corrected documents are publicly released.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical matter.

Marshall Behling

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**From:** [phillip knowlton](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Cc:** [phillip knowlton](#); [David Rabbitt](#)  
**Subject:** Please do not permit ministerial cannabis operations Ordinance to go to Planning Commission  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 12:48:38 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Supervisors Hopkins and Rabbitt

Please allow my email to support FOG's efforts to help Sonoma County residents that have concerns on cannabis ordinances being reviewed by Planning Commission

I feel the following key issue of the Sonoma County Supervisors to not adopt ministerial issues of marijuana need to be addressed by elected county supervisors  
I ask that you protect and support my concerns as a long term resident of Sonoma county here

Please do not permit **ministerial cannabis operations in neighborhoods. I do not want to have no notice, no public hearings, no chance to talk with my elected supervisors**

Please keep and expand setbacks in the ordinance to sensitive uses (parks, schools, daycares, drug treatment facilities **and residences**) that are irrespective of zoning.  
especially with different zonings adjacent to each other.

I ask for **1000' standard setbacks to parks,**

- Disruption of rural identity with ugly security measures, commercial activities, hoop houses, processing buildings, parking lots and large volumes of plastic required.
- Odor (the primary complaint in every county)
- Water Usage (6 times more than grapes!)
- Impact on the environment with habitat loss, disruption of wildlife corridors, water use with surface and groundwater impacts, night lighting. Wetland, riparian and biotic habitat setbacks can be lessened under ministerial permits.
- Noise – Employees coming and going 24/7, mechanical greenhouse and hoop house noises, employee radios, sprayers, ventilation systems, cars starting, car lock beeps, doors slamming, conversations, truck deliveries.
- Crime potential (There were two major cannabis crimes at **legal** facilities in 2019, complete with guns and car chases.)
- Cannabis is not an ag crop like tomatoes or hay. It requires security measures that set it apart. No one gets held at gunpoint for a roll of irrigation or their potato crop.
- The cannabis ordinance now opens the door to cannabis events. Winery events are having multiple impacts – traffic jams, accidents on narrow rural roads, noise, night lighting, water use.

- In order to get two crops a year (the standard) hoop houses will proliferate and will affect your views. You may see acres of white, glaring plastic where you once saw rolling hills. Hoop houses could now have electrical, plumbing or mechanical features, which makes them greenhouses evading the need for a Use Permit for a permanent building and also contributing to light pollution, noise and odors.
- Right-to-Farm law should not apply to a product that has so many potential impacts.
- Most other counties that have tried this approach have been sued and have had to go back to a use permit process. This wastes County money and time.

Thank you for your considerations and attention with this matter regarding marjuna ordiances

Phillip Knowlton

cell 4515 225 6214

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**From:** [Patrick Pfahl](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 9:45:29 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

To whom it may concern :

Please do not allow this ordinance to pass as we are opposing it vehemently on the following bases:

- Disruption of rural identity with ugly security measures, commercial activities, hoop houses, processing buildings, parking lots and large volumes of plastic required.
- Odor (the primary complaint in every county)
- Water Usage (6 times more than grapes!)
- Impact on the environment with habitat loss, disruption of wildlife corridors, water use with surface and groundwater impacts, night lighting. Wetland, riparian and biotic habitat setbacks can be lessened under ministerial permits.
- Noise – Employees coming and going 24/7, mechanical greenhouse and hoop house noises, employee radios, sprayers, ventilation systems, cars starting, car lock beeps, doors slamming, conversations, truck deliveries.
- Crime potential (There were two major cannabis crimes at **legal** facilities in 2019, complete with guns and car chases.)
- Cannabis is not an ag crop like tomatoes or hay. It requires security measures that set it apart. No one gets held at gunpoint for a roll of irrigation or their potato crop.
- The cannabis ordinance now opens the door to cannabis events. Winery events are having multiple impacts – traffic jams, accidents on narrow rural roads, noise, night lighting, water use.
- In order to get two crops a year (the standard) hoop houses will proliferate and will affect your views. You may see acres of white, glaring plastic where you once saw rolling hills. Hoop houses could now have electrical, plumbing or mechanical features, which makes them greenhouses evading the need for a Use Permit for a permanent building and also contributing to light pollution, noise and odors.
- Right-to-Farm law should not apply to a product that has so many potential impacts.
- Most other counties that have tried this approach have been sued and have had to go back to a use permit process. This wastes County money and time.

Thank you for considering our opinion.  
Patrick Pfahl

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district4](#); [district5](#); [Susan Gorin](#)  
**Subject:** town hall meetings  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 6:03:06 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Supervisors,

You have got to be kidding...after spending the past two years in bed with the cannabis industry who helped you write a totally one sided document, you are now reaching out to the public. This is a pathetic attempt to smooth over the total abomination that was released 2 weeks ago. If passed your plan will totally decimate our county.

Additionally the ordinance as written is littered with mistakes and inconsistencies....I can only conclude that this messy document is purposely written like that so that it can be liberally interpreted to massage any problems that occur in its implementation. The county loves giving its staff broad discretion to interpret the ordinance. An incomprehensible document does just that.

Rescind it, rewrite it, and bring it out again. As it stands now, it is an embarrassment and reflects badly on staff abilities. The town hall will solve nothing.

Rachel Zierdt

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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Cc:** [Christina Rivera](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Sonoma County Cannabis Updates  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 11:40:44 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Hi McCall,  
Thanks for organizing these town halls, with the opportunity to submit questions. I have big concerns on the audience 'voting' with thumbs up or down on which questions to address. That would allow one faction to sniffle important questions from an opposing point of view. Rather, if you see multiple questions on the same topic, or if a question is submitted on behalf of multiple participants, you could give more weight if time is limited.

As the county consulted for over a year with the cannabis industry in drafting this ordinance, but refused to meet with neighborhood or environmental groups, other than the single opportunity we requested to present to you on August 31 (which you limited to 1 hr instead of the originally planned 2 hours) we don't want the meeting to be unfairly dominated by the industry.

Thanks for your consideration, and I look forward to your reply.

Best regards,  
Deborah Eppstein

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Sonoma County, CA" <[casonoma@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:casonoma@public.govdelivery.com)>  
**Subject:** Sonoma County Cannabis Updates  
**Date:** March 3, 2021 at 10:31:32 AM PST  
**To:** [deppstein@gmail.com](mailto:deppstein@gmail.com)  
**Reply-To:** [casonoma@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:casonoma@public.govdelivery.com)



You are receiving this email because you are subscribed to Sonoma County Cannabis Updates.  
The County of Sonoma Cannabis Program today announced four virtual town halls, including two each on March 8 and March 12. These listening sessions will provide the public an overview of staff's recommended changes to cannabis operator permitting and will collect observations, concerns, and questions as part of the 30 day public comment period.  
To learn more, visit the [Cannabis Program - Calendar of Events](#) page.  
For more information, visit [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Cannabis](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Cannabis).



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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](mailto:Deborah.Eppstein)  
**To:** [Christina Rivera](mailto:Christina.Rivera)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](mailto:McCall.Miller)  
**Subject:** Re: Sonoma County Cannabis Updates  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 12:27:20 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Ok, thanks for that clarification!

On Mar 4, 2021, at 12:25 PM, Christina Rivera <[Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Hola Deborah,

Although your message was directed to McCall, it is (in my view) more appropriate for me to respond to you observation re: the voting Zoom function being planned as part of the virtual town halls.

The webinar logistics plan was recommended by our outside facilitation consultant. As I understand it, the focus is on "Yes" voting so that folks can express their ditto, rather than re-typing. The No votes, will not exclude that comment/observation from being summarized for the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors deliberation on the policy updates.

Gracias!

---

**From:** Deborah Eppstein <[deppstein@gmail.com](mailto:deppstein@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 11:41 AM  
**To:** McCall Miller <[McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org](mailto:McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Cc:** Christina Rivera <[Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Sonoma County Cannabis Updates

**EXTERNAL**

Hi McCall,

Thanks for organizing these town halls, with the opportunity to submit questions. I have big concerns on the audience 'voting' with thumbs up or down on which questions to address. That would allow one faction to sniffle important questions from an opposing point of view. Rather, if you see multiple questions on the same topic, or if a question is submitted on behalf of multiple participants, you could give more weight if time is limited.

As the county consulted for over a year with the cannabis industry in drafting this ordinance, but refused to meet with neighborhood or environmental groups, other than the single opportunity we requested to present to you on August 31 (which you limited to 1 hr instead of the originally planned 2 hours) we don't want the meeting to be unfairly dominated by the industry.

Thanks for your consideration, and I look forward to your reply.

Best regards,  
Deborah Eppstein

Begin forwarded message:



**From:** "Sonoma County, CA" <[casonoma@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:casonoma@public.govdelivery.com)>  
**Subject:** Sonoma County Cannabis Updates  
**Date:** March 3, 2021 at 10:31:32 AM PST  
**To:** [deppstein@gmail.com](mailto:deppstein@gmail.com)  
**Reply-To:** [casonoma@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:casonoma@public.govdelivery.com)

Sonoma County Cannabis Program



You are receiving this email because you are subscribed to Sonoma County Cannabis Updates.

The County of Sonoma Cannabis Program today announced four virtual town halls, including two each on March 8 and March 12. These listening sessions will provide the public an overview of staff's recommended changes to cannabis operator permitting and will collect observations, concerns, and questions as part of the 30 day public comment period.

To learn more, visit the [Cannabis Program - Calendar of Events](#) page.

For more information, visit [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Cannabis](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Cannabis).



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**From:** [kenhshop@sonic.net](mailto:kenhshop@sonic.net)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Concerns for March 18 Meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 7:44:33 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Hello Sonoma County Planning Commission,

As fellow Sonoma County Residents, we request that you decline:

- making cannabis applications ministerial (not needing individual environmental study like an EIR or Negative Declaration) in all agriculture and RRD zonings, and/or
- making cannabis production subject to the Right-to-Farm law.

Most other counties that have tried this approach have been sued and have had to go back to a use permit process. This wastes County money and time.

Our biggest concerns are:

- Crime potential (There were two major cannabis crimes at **legal** facilities in 2019, complete with guns and car chases.)
- Cannabis is not an ag crop like tomatoes or hay. It requires security measures that set it apart. No one gets held at gunpoint for a roll of irrigation or their potato crop.
- Water Usage (6 times more than grapes!) may affect near-by businesses and residents.
- Odor (the biggest complaint). Currently setbacks in the proposed ordinance to sensitive uses (parks, schools, daycares, drug treatment facilities **and residences**) are only 300 feet.

If these cannabis plans must go forth, we are seeking **1000' standard setbacks to parks, schools, daycares and residence property lines, regardless of zoning.** Some odor studies have recommended 3000' but 1000' is a sane compromise.

Thank you for your work on our behalf.

Ken Hutchins Jr.  
Stephanie Hutchins  
429 Bowers Place, Graton, CA 95444

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**From:** [Joe & Kathy](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Totally opposed to ANY additional cannabis cultivation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 9:57:07 PM

---

EXTERNAL

I am a lifetime Santa Rosan, and am 100% opposed to ANY further cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County. I will monitor my supervisor's votes re this carefully and will actively campaign against him if he votes in favor of any significant expansion of cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County.

Kathy Story

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**From:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**To:** [Susan Gorin](#); "[Lynn Garric](#)"; [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** RE Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 8:17:40 AM  
**Attachments:** [Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance .docx](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

Thank you for your comment Ms. Garric, I am forwarding your letter to the primary cannabis email being used to track public comment on this item

**Scott Orr**

Deputy Director of Planning

[www.PermitSonoma.org](http://www.PermitSonoma.org)

County of Sonoma

Planning Division

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Direct: 707-565-1754 | Office: 707-565-1900



---

**From:** Lynn Garric <[cransac@sonic.net](mailto:cransac@sonic.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 9:01 PM  
**To:** Scott Orr <[Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Cc:** Susan Gorin <[Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update  
**Importance:** High

**EXTERNAL**

To: Scott Orr

Deputy Planning Director

Sonoma County Planning Division

[scott.orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:scott.orr@sonoma-county.org)

cc: Susan Gorin, First District Supervisor, [Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)

RE: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.

Dear Mr. Orr,

As we enter another serious drought year, water conservation should be a consistent priority for land-use decisions. The new Cannabis Ordinance Update that would allow expanded *ministerial* permitting for commercial cannabis cultivation in agricultural and resource (RRD) zoned areas is very disturbing. This is especially true for those of us who live in the sensitive Upper Mark West Watershed. The current requirements for public notification for commercial cannabis applications, and public input have been essential for getting accurate information to county staff concerning past permits. I am not opposed to growing cannabis, but I am opposed to the ministerial permitting process that would circumvent these important steps in evaluating the appropriate use of water in the Mark West Watershed and other water sensitive areas.

I am also surprised that public comments period (due March 18) for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration for the new Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update is the same date as the scheduled hearing for the project. How will decision makers have adequate time to consider public comment?

COVID-19 and the Glass Fire have devastated much of our Upper Mark West Watershed community. Over 150 households of our community have been relocated due to losing their homes in the Glass Fire, and they have not been informed of the details of the proposed project nor been able to participate in the process. Members of our community need time to carefully study and comment on the draft ordinance, and this needs to be followed by fair consideration of our input by county staff.

I would respectfully request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project from March 18, 2021, to April 16, 2021. I look forward to hearing of this change in dates. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Garric

Co-Chair, Upper Mark West Fire Safe Council

5400 Alpine Road

Santa Rosa, CA 95404

[cransac@sonic.net](mailto:cransac@sonic.net)

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To: Scott Orr  
Deputy Planning Director  
Sonoma County Planning Division  
575 Administration Drive Room 102A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[scott.orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:scott.orr@sonoma-county.org)

From: Lynn Garric  
Co-Chair, Upper Mark West Fire Safe  
Council  
5400 Alpine Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
[cransac@sonic.net](mailto:cransac@sonic.net)

RE: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.

Dear Mr. Orr,

As we enter another serious drought year, water conservation should be a consistent priority for land-use decisions. The new Cannabis Ordinance Update that would allow expanded *ministerial* permitting for commercial cannabis cultivation in agricultural and resource (RRD) zoned areas is very disturbing. This is especially true for those of us who live in the sensitive Upper Mark West Watershed. The current requirements for public notification for commercial cannabis applications, and public input have been essential for getting accurate information to county staff concerning past permits. I am not opposed to growing cannabis, but I am opposed to the ministerial permitting process that would circumvent these important steps in evaluating the appropriate use of water in the Mark West Watershed and other water sensitive areas.

I am also surprised that public comments period (due March 18) for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration for the new Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update is the same date as the scheduled hearing for the project. How will decision makers have adequate time to consider public comment?

COVID-19 and the Glass Fire have devastated much of our Upper Mark West Watershed community. Over 150 households of our community have been relocated due to losing their homes in the Glass Fire, and they have not been informed of the details of the proposed project nor been able to participate in the process. Members of our community need time to carefully study and comment on the draft ordinance, and this needs to be followed by fair consideration of our input by county staff.

I would respectfully request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project from March 18, 2021 to April 16, 2021. I look forward to hearing of this change in dates. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Garric

Cc: Susan Gorin, First District Supervisor, [Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)

**From:** [LAUREN LOCKWOOD](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Request Extension Of Public Comment Period Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 11:17:31 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Via Email

Scott Orr  
Deputy Planning Director  
Sonoma County Planning Division  
575 Administration Drive Room 102A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[scott.orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:scott.orr@sonoma-county.org)

RE: Request for Extension of Time for Public Comment on the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project.

Dear Mr. Orr,

We would like to request an extension of the public comment period for the Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment Project. Public comments on the MND are currently due on March 18, the same day as the scheduled hearing for the project. It is important to allow all of us to make informed comments and for the county staff and decision-makers to review and respond to the public's comments before the hearing. Because of the challenges facing our community after the Glass fires and on-going Covid-19 crisis, many people need more time to adequately review the MND.

Please extend the County's deadline for the public comment period from March 18, 2021 to April 16, 2021. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,  
John Wetzels & Lauren Lockwood  
3430 Chalfant Rd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404



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**From:** [Marsha Dupre](#)  
**To:** [Robert Pittman](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [district4](#); [district5](#); [Susan Gorin](#)  
**Cc:** [PermitSonoma](#); [Son. Co. Planning Agency](#); [Cannabis](#); [Sierra Club - Redwood Chapter](#); [Planning & Conservation League](#); [Center for Biological Diversity](#); [Jeff Morris](#); [Matt St. John](#); [Warren Watkins](#); [Janis Watkins](#)  
**Subject:** LETTERS TO THE COUNTY ASKING FOR A DELAY with respect to CEQA regs.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 5:09:36 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Bd. of Supes.:

As we all know, "Whiskey is for drinking. Water is for fighting!" Recently, this ethos was highlighted in a 1937 film we saw on TCM: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Family\\_Affair\\_\(1937\\_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Family_Affair_(1937_film)) . When water rights are abused in Dist. 4, it affects all the Districts. Pl. read these letters of concern below which Jack and I endorse from reps. of SCCA and FOG.

Sincerely,  
Marsha

Marsha Vas Dupre, Ph.D.  
Former Santa Rosa City Council Vice Mayor, SRJC Trustee  
3515 Ridgeview Drive  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-528-7146

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:**SCCA request to withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance

**Date:**Tue, 2 Mar 2021 09:59:55 -0800

**From:**Michael Allen <[mallen@pon.net](mailto:mallen@pon.net)>

**To:**'Lynda Hopkins' <[Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)>, 'Susan Gorin' <[Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)>, [courseyforsupervisor@gmail.com](mailto:courseyforsupervisor@gmail.com), [District4@sonoma-county.org](mailto:District4@sonoma-county.org), [David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org](mailto:David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org)

**CC:**'Janis Watkins' <[janiswatkins@gmail.com](mailto:janiswatkins@gmail.com)>, 'Blake Hooper' <[bmhooper1@gmail.com](mailto:bmhooper1@gmail.com)>, 'Anne Seeley' <[aseeleysr@gmail.com](mailto:aseeleysr@gmail.com)>, 'Michael Allen' <[mallen@pon.net](mailto:mallen@pon.net)>, 'Neal Fishman' <[njfishman@gmail.com](mailto:njfishman@gmail.com)>, 'Danny Martinez' <[danny.scca2020@gmail.com](mailto:danny.scca2020@gmail.com)>, 'Mark Walsh' <[markwalshcpa@sonic.net](mailto:markwalshcpa@sonic.net)>, 'Matthew Callaway' <[matt@conservationaction.org](mailto:matt@conservationaction.org)>, 'Megan Kaun' <[megan.kaun@gmail.com](mailto:megan.kaun@gmail.com)>, 'Dennis Rosatti' <[drosatti@yahoo.com](mailto:drosatti@yahoo.com)>, 'Rue Furch' <[pqrst@monitor.net](mailto:pqrst@monitor.net)>, Sonia Taylor <[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)>, 'Teri Shore' <[tshore@greenbelt.org](mailto:tshore@greenbelt.org)>, 'Kerry Fugett' <[kerryfugett@gmail.com](mailto:kerryfugett@gmail.com)>

**Dear Supervisors, Sonoma County Conservation Action (SCCA) requests that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and the Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance. Both the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the new draft chapter 38 are based on a portion of the county's zoning code that has since been significantly revised. Passing a land use policy that is incongruent with the current zoning code would only serve to create confusion and further complicate the county's ability to come to resolution on this important issue.**

**Once these items have been revised, we would request that they be re-released for a full 30 day public comment period, with a clear explanation of the changes made based on the newly updated portion of county zoning code.**

**Thank you for your attention to this matter, Michael Allen, Board Chair, Sonoma County Conservation Action**

**From:** Anna Ransome <[ransome@sonic.net](mailto:ransome@sonic.net)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 2:29 PM

**To:** Larry Reed <[larry.reed@sonoma-county.org](mailto:larry.reed@sonoma-county.org)>; Todd Tamura <[todd.tamura@gmail.com](mailto:todd.tamura@gmail.com)>; Gina Belforte <[gina.belforte@sonoma-county.org](mailto:gina.belforte@sonoma-county.org)>; Greg Carr <[Greg.carr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Greg.carr@sonoma-county.org)>; Susan Cornelis <[susan@imaginewithart.com](mailto:susan@imaginewithart.com)>; cornw >> Caitlin Cornwall <[caitlin.cornwall@sonoma-county.org](mailto:caitlin.cornwall@sonoma-county.org)>; Pam Davis <[pam.davis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:pam.davis@sonoma-county.org)>; John Lowry <[john.lowry@sonoma-county.org](mailto:john.lowry@sonoma-county.org)>

[county.org](#)>; Cameron Mauritson <[cameron.mauritson@sonoma-county.org](mailto:cameron.mauritson@sonoma-county.org)>; Jacquelynne Ocana <[jacquelynne.ocana@sonoma-county.org](mailto:jacquelynne.ocana@sonoma-county.org)>; Planning Agency and [Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org)<[Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org)>

**Cc:** Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>; Tennis Wick <[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org)>; [Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org); Lynda Hopkins <[District5@sonoma-county.org](mailto:District5@sonoma-county.org)>

**Subject:** Draft Cannabis Documents inadequate for review

Friends of Graton (FOG) has been analyzing the draft documents released on Tuesday, February 16 with a 30 day comment period for establishment of Chapter 38 as the new cannabis ordinance. We have found many inconsistencies and unclear statements in these documents. Now we have found (from a 3/1/21 letter to the County from Sonia Taylor) that the Chapter 26 version that was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 9 should have been included for analysis. The County erred in attaching a soon to be replaced version of Chapter 26. This error made accurate analysis impossible. We therefore request that the documents be withdrawn and that appropriate, consistent and corrected versions be released with a 30 day comment period from the date of release.

Our group and others who have waited over a year to engage the County in discussions about neighborhood compatibility have been ignored and stonewalled at every turn. When asking legitimate questions of the cannabis manager at the County, one neighbor was told that they are not answering questions. Cannabis industry representatives, however, were referred to Andrew Smith for answers. This unequal treatment is absurdly undemocratic. Now we learn that our concerns were justified and legitimate. I believe that there have been six different cannabis "managers" over the course of this process and none have been open to community input. We were told to wait for Phase 2 (Neighborhood Compatibility) which never arrived. Instead we were presented with a draft devoid of our input and even that is so flawed that we can't analyze it.

Please correct this error so that the entire process is not deemed to be illegitimate.

Anna Ransome for Friends of Graton (FOG)

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**From:** [Kate Murray](#)  
**To:** [BOS](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** North Bay Leadership's Comments on Cannabis Regulation Changes  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 4:42:22 PM  
**Attachments:** [NBLC Comment on Cannabis Regulation Changes.pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

Hello Sonoma County Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of North Bay Leadership Council, we would like to share our comments on the recent proposed changes to cannabis regulations. Please read the attached letter outlining our position. Thank you for your time and consideration.

-Kate

Kate Murray

**North Bay Leadership Council**

775 Baywood Dr., Suite 101

Petaluma, CA 94954

707.283.0028

707.763.3028 Fax

[kmurray@northbayleadership.org](mailto:kmurray@northbayleadership.org)

[www.northbayleadership.org](http://www.northbayleadership.org)

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**DEREK NELSON**  
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Recology

**ERICH PEARSON**  
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SPARC

**LESLIE PERRY**  
Partner  
Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller  
& Moskowitz LLP

**MIKE RYAN**  
North Bay Practice Leader  
INTERWEST INSURANCE SERVICES, LLC

**JUDY SAKAKI**  
President  
Sonoma State University

**SHANNON THOMAS**  
Administrator/Chief Nurse Executive  
Novato Community Hospital  
Sutter Health

**FRED VELA**  
Regional Vice President  
Wells Fargo Bank

**CYNTHIA MURRAY**  
President & CEO

**KATE MURRAY**  
CAO



March 3, 2021

Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, Chair  
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Drive, Room 100A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Via Email

Re: Comments on Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration, Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance, Proposed Amendments to Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Code and General Plan Amendment

Dear Chair Hopkins and Supervisors:

The cannabis industry is a bright light for the Sonoma County economy now and in the future, if we allow the industry to flourish and reach its potential to produce good jobs, provide more revenue for local governments and local businesses, and boost tourism. The industry has been stymied by a regulatory morass and over-taxation that has stunted its growth when it is sorely needed to help with our economic recovery.

North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC) wants to see the cannabis industry become a marquee product of Sonoma County like other ag related businesses such as wine, cheese and beer. The Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration, Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance, Proposed Amendments to Chapter 26 of the Sonoma County Code and General Plan Amendment miss the mark and are not what is needed at this time if we want to see the economic benefits that are readily available if we do the right things.

Here is a list of our concerns, please note they are not in order of importance:

- 1. Concern: Water**  
Recommendation: Do not include in regulations and instead let the State Water Board manage water.
- 2. Concern: Cultural resources**  
Recommendation: Request to eliminate across-the-board tribal approval and regulate like all other agriculture crops.
- 3. Concern: Tree protection**  
Recommendation: Eliminate the tree language in the cannabis ordinance and instead reference the larger tree policy that is currently being created.
- 4. Concern: Important farmlands**  
Recommendation: There should be no 1:1 offset for cannabis, and this should be regulated like other agriculture crops.
- 5. Concern: Ridge top protection**  
Recommendation: Eliminate this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.
- 6. Concern: Slope planting limitations**  
Recommendation: Eliminate this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

7. Concern: Hoop houses

Recommendation: Establish policy to allow hoop houses to be permanent on property to reduce unnecessary material and labor waste, as well as improved sustainability because of reduced water usage.

8. Concern: Energy/ Generators

Recommendation: Eliminate this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

9. Concern: Operational hours

Recommendation: These are already regulated by the state, so no local regulations are necessary.

10. Concern: Events

Recommendation: Align events with the greater event policy with which the wine industry is complying to ensure community benefit and the opportunity for participation in the state event licensing program.

11. Concern: Fire prevention

Recommendation: Eliminate this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

12. Concern: Wastewater

Recommendation: This is already regulated by the State, so no local regulations are necessary.

13. Concern: Lighting

Recommendation: Eliminate this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

NBLC also supports ag tourism and urges that cannabis events be regulated like other agricultural events. We request that language be added to provide for a Conditional Use Permit that would allow for cannabis retail onsite on parcels with commercial cannabis cultivation and setbacks consistent with other cannabis operations. The CUP process would ensure extensive environmental and public review and be subject to state regulations.

The benefits for supporting cannabis retail on agriculture parcels includes creating new revenue streams for ag operations, providing stability in times of agriculture disasters, diversifying the tourist opportunities for ag land, and will ultimately add another layer to Sonoma County's extremely diverse and inclusive agriculture brand and reputation.

Cannabis is having a national moment, with 36 states having some form of state cannabis legalization and full federal legalization on the horizon. California is the largest cannabis market in the world, with the reputation of growing the best cannabis in the world, because of genetics, terroir, and our culture of cutting edge, modern products. Our county's agricultural base is primed to embrace cannabis by adding to the diversity of crops and allowing our ag producers to thrive.

In a recent survey by the California Cannabis Tourism Association, in partnership with **MGM** Intelligence, 1,500 Americans across the country with a minimum annual household income of \$50,000 were surveyed. Forty-four percent of millennials surveyed report that they have consumed cannabis and have traveled for a cannabis experience. Interestingly,

58% of boomers have never experienced cannabis but say they plan to travel within the next 12 months to have a cannabis experience.

The market demand is strong and will be a boon to the Sonoma County economy if we can get cannabis regulated and taxed reasonably. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia Murray".

Cynthia Murray  
President & CEO



**From:** [theresa roach melia](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Graton  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 9:23:32 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Many, many of us here in Graton do NOT want POT grown anywhere near our homes , bike trail, kids, families. We do not want the stench . We do not want the ugly security lights and fencing. We do not want the crime magnet that POT creates. We do not want our aquifer sucked dry by Pot. Pot does NOT qualify as a right-to- farm crop . WE QUALIFY as residents and property owners who say NO to this ugly invasion. KEEP POT GROWS OUT OF GRATON !!! The LEAST we ask is that IF POT IS GROWN near residential areas it be kept FAR FAR FAR away from property lines and the public bike trail ..... as Far as possible !,000 feet minimum Thanks Theresa Melia and Sean Casey 420 Edison St. Graton 95444 707-824-0645

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**From:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Cannabis Ordinance Update  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021 3:41:28 PM

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**From:** Wanda Swenson <wanda.swenson54@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 1:16 PM  
**To:** Leo Chyi <Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org>  
**Cc:** Scott Farmer <farmer.cmac@mcn.org>; Elise VanDyne <Elise.VanDyne@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance Update

## EXTERNAL

Hi Leo,  
Hope you and your family are doing well.  
Scott Farmer tells me that you'll be giving an overview of the cannabis laws in Sonoma County as part of our next agenda.  
I appreciate you doing this as the update has happened during our first two years as a MAC and we haven't had it mentioned lately (A LOT has been going on....).

What I'm most interested in is this:

1. How is the county opening up to larger commercial operations (I believe there was an initial 5 year moratorium on this)
2. Is 'well water' still a requirement for smaller/cottage size growers
3. How does the county determine that a property has enough water to grow a proposed number of plants and account for decreased water supply during drought years.
4. Define 'cottage' growers and describe their ability to sell products (smoking/vaping material, edible, topical)

I'm hoping this won't take a lot of time during the meeting, but I do appreciate it getting into the minutes.

Thanks so much,  
Wanda Swenson/Ft Ross Coastal MAC Rep

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**From:** [Bill Krawetz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrea Krout](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 11:16:14 AM  
**Attachments:** [3 1 21 pc ltr chapter 26 final 1.pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

March 5, 2021

To: [cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

CC: [David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org](mailto:David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org) ; [Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org)

Re: Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance

Dear Sonoma County Cannabis:

On behalf of Gold Ridge Neighborhood Group, I am writing in regards to the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendment which was released Feb 16 2021 with a 30 day window for public comment.

Creating and releasing this document is contrary to what the public was told and promised coming out of public hearings from the first amendment back in 2019. Namely, the first amendment was a temporary patch, didn't cover neighborhood concerns and phase 2 would primarily address neighborhood compatibility issues via an open public meetings and outreach process. NONE of which has occurred! And reading the draft ordinances it's obvious none of the neighborhood compatibility issues were addressed either!

- On April 29 2019, Supervisor Hopkins stated "...The second set of amendments, which will focus on neighborhood compatibility..... I remain committed to prioritizing the neighborhood compatibility phase of the cannabis ordinance..."
- On June 20, 2019 Amy Lyle Leading County Planner at the time stated "Neighborhood compatibility is a primary focus of the ordinance amendments".
- On July 10 2019 Supervisor Rabbit meeting with The Dairy Belt folks in his district indicated "Public outreach for the new ordinance begins this autumn and could take 2 years..."

The County has failed in this public outreach process, which should have occurred before writing a draft amendment and accordingly doesn't include concerns of the average resident.

Upon reviewing the documents by my neighborhood group as well as reading the

comments submitted by the public, specifically Sonia Taylor detailed analysis (attached copy), it seems clear the documents are inconsistent enough that it's impossible for the general public to truly understand the impacts. It seems the "old edition of Chapter 26" is no longer in effect yet your documents led us to believe it will govern the new draft ordinance.

We request the County fix the errors and the reissue all the documents to all stakeholders. (Better yet would be to engage your constituents via the public meetings promised before writing the draft..)

We request the county delay the current 30 day comment period. Once the revised documents are released, a new 30 day comment period can begin.

Thank you  
Bill Krawetz  
Gold Ridge Neighborhood Group.

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**From:** [concerned citizens](#)  
**To:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Andrea Krout](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district5](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [district3](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [Pat Gilardi](#); [James.Gore@sonoma-county.org](#); [district4](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [bennett@bloomfield-flowers.com](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Buffers and Neighborhood Compatibility under Part 2 of the Ordinance-Commenting on Documents out for Review  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 9:49:48 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Supervisors, Commissioners and Staff,

Please acknowledge that you received this email and our request for consideration of the 1000ft Buffer under part 2 of the ordinance.

We understand that there are Virtual Town Hall Meetings scheduled for next week however as was conveyed by Vi Strain, we believe that the public comment period should be extended and the inconsistencies within the Ordinance addressed.

Thank you. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Veva Edelson  
Member CCOBloomfield

On Feb 23, 2021, at 10:33 AM, concerned citizens <[ccobloomfield@gmail.com](mailto:ccobloomfield@gmail.com)> wrote:

February 23, 2021

Dear Supervisors:

Unless neighborhood compatibility is more adequately addressed in the Cannabis Ordinance, your Board and staff will continue to meet resistance from residents and voters. It will be of great benefit in the effort to normalize cannabis if reasonable buffers protect our rural towns and cities.

The County has correctly determined that cannabis cultivation and processing are not compatible with the residentially zoned areas. It necessarily follows that the issue of compatibility does not end at the border of those zones. A buffer between those residential zones and a cannabis operation is equally appropriate.

The impact of the current proposed project by Petrichor Sungrown LLC. adjacent to Bloomfield, population 400, affects every aspect of the community's serenity and has been met with overwhelming resistance by Bloomfield residents, as shown on the attached map.

The time, energy, and money spent by both community and county and the time and energy lost by the applicants can directly be attributed to the current lack of clarity in the ordinance. We had expected Part 2 of the Cannabis Ordinance to reflect what is stated on the County website: that "neighborhood compatibility" issues would be the focus of this ordinance. The Ad Hoc Committee Report, though, does not address this issue.

Bloomfield is just one of 42 unincorporated communities in Sonoma County adjacent to Ag zoned lands. Glen Ellen, Freestone and Geyserville are other examples from each District with unincorporated communities. In addition to these named communities there are a substantial number of unincorporated neighborhoods adjoining incorporated communities that are adjacent to Ag zoned lands such as North West from Petaluma, East from the City of Sonoma and North East from Santa Rosa. There are many linked unincorporated residential neighborhoods such on the Russian River from Mirabel to Jenner, the Joy Road area and Sea Ranch that are located adjacent to Ag zoned land. Ag zoning also surrounds some incorporated cities such as Cloverdale and Healdsburg allowing cannabis operations adjoining higher density residential communities. All of these residential areas could

Humboldt County, where the cultivation of cannabis is more widely accepted and normalized, requires 1000-ft buffers around densely populated cities, small towns, and neighborhoods. Such a requirement in Sonoma County would quell opposition and make the path to a cannabis cultivation permit easier, less time consuming and risky for growers.

As the Ordinance is prepared for public hearing, we emphasize the need for 1000-ft buffers for cannabis cultivation surrounding Rural Residential parcels of our rural residential neighborhoods, and ask for this buffer addition to Part 2 of the Ordinance.

Thanks you for your attention,

Contact community members for Concerned Citizens of Bloomfield  
Valorie Dallas, Diane Donovan, Veva Edelson, Toby Levy and Vi Strain

Attachments:

1. Map showing a red dot on parcels with residents opposed to Commercial Cannabis without adequate buffers adjacent to RR parcels.
2. List of residential communities with adjacent to AG land by district in Sonoma County.

<parcel mapmark-up2-23.pdf>

<Sonoma County Incorporated & Unincorporated Communities (3).pdf>

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**From:** [Isabel Wyatt](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for Virtual Town Hall  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 11:35:00 AM

---

EXTERNAL

I wanted to sound a note of caution about the smell of cannabis blossoms. It is a skunk smell. Last fall the smell from my neighbor's six plants made my yard uninhabitable. I can't imagine the stink of fields of the stuff.

The community, the tourist industry could be negatively impacted!

Isabel Wyatt  
Sonoma

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** [Jo Bentz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Cc:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Subject:** Agency Notification Problem- Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance CEQA Notice  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 10:15:02 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

I have reviewed Sonoma county's cannabis CEQA notice at:  
<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021020259> , for the draft Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance.

There is an omission. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region 1, the main office for water quality regulation in Sonoma County, but it is not included in the agency notification list. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region 2 (RWQCB) is listed, but Region 2 only oversees a small part of southern Sonoma County.

Please let me know how you will fix this problem. Thank you for your attention to this problem.

Thank you- Jo Bentz, 9990 Graton Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472

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**From:** [Joi Losee](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Cindy Schellenberg](#); [Perry Perry](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 2:11:57 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Please read to planning commission since I can not be there.

Do you really think that the respond to important planning issues about Cannabis reflect the general population view when facing Covid 19 restrictions. ???

Cannabis decision are made on the economy not American value of protecting a persons home.

You are asking to Cannabis

To be treated as an Agricultural issue.

What other agricultural product has so many problems socially?

Robbery and drug issues are well documented; even deaths are no uncommon.

It is laughable that a hallucinogenic drug is classified as agriculture.

It is clearly a issue with it's own set of problems.

The cannabis growth on Davis Lane has been a problem with port a potties, fabric fences blowing down, viewing the site as a mess.

I view this problem as an industry with more Cannabis requests to invade home owners value of their land.

Joi Losee

160 Davis Lane

Penngrove Ca 94951

4153282743. Phone

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**From:** [Laurel Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [district4](#)  
**Subject:** Against proposed cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 2:08:55 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Hello Planning Commission,

I would like to express my position AGAINST the new Cannabis Ordinance that will be voted on on April 13th.

Development specifically in Palmer Creek and Mill Creek is a concern to me, as we moved to the area in 2019 specifically for the quiet, privacy, and access to nature. But even more important to me is the impact such development would have on further increasing this area's fire risk levels, as the water scarcity and narrow, one-way dirt access roads here are even more top-of-mind to me after the trauma of Walbridge.

I share many of the concerns that various local groups have expressed, including:

- Disruption of rural identity with ugly security measures, commercial activities, hoop houses, processing buildings, parking lots and large volumes of plastic required.
- Odor (the primary complaint in every county)
- Water Usage (6 times more than grapes!)
- Impact on the environment with habitat loss, disruption of wildlife corridors, water use with surface and groundwater impacts, night lighting. Wetland, riparian and biotic habitat setbacks can be lessened under ministerial permits.
- Noise – Employees coming and going 24/7, mechanical greenhouse and hoop house noises, employee radios, sprayers, ventilation systems, cars starting, car lock beeps, doors slamming, conversations, truck deliveries.
- Crime potential (There were two major cannabis crimes at **legal** facilities in 2019, complete with guns and car chases.)
- Cannabis is not an ag crop like tomatoes or hay. It requires security measures that set it apart. No one gets held at gunpoint for a roll of irrigation or their potato crop.
- The cannabis ordinance now opens the door to cannabis events. Winery events are having multiple impacts – traffic jams, accidents on narrow rural roads, noise, night lighting, water use.
- In order to get two crops a year (the standard) hoop houses will proliferate and will affect your views. You may see acres of white, glaring plastic where you once saw rolling hills. Hoop houses could now have electrical, plumbing or mechanical features, which makes them greenhouses evading the need for a Use Permit for a permanent building and also contributing to light pollution, noise and odors.
- Right-to-Farm law should not apply to a product that has so many potential impacts.
- Most other counties that have tried this approach have been sued and have had to go back to a use permit process. This wastes County money and time.

Sincerely,  
Laurel Anderson  
5356 Mill Creek Rd (Palmer Creek)  
Healdsburg, CA

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment ch 38  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 12:49:27 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.

In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.

I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture. After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance with state laws wherever possible. Why make more work for everyone?

As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with them. Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.

Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries

Please create an advisory committee for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.

Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.

I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD.

I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)

Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.

The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.

Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.

What happened to priority processing?

Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.

Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.

Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.

Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.

Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer.

They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)

Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.

Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.

Why are we not allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.

Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.

Align with the state at 2500sqft for "Cottage Outdoor", rather than the 625sqft the county currently allows.

Chapter 38 defines greenhouse setbacks at the parcel base zone, however they were previously required to meet the 100 & 300ft setback requirements. Please align greenhouse setbacks with indoor cultivation setbacks.

How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction?

Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?

Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?

Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?

How will renewals be handled?

Why are 10% acre caps being allowed before priority processing applicants are through the que? Please prioritize these applicants!

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize these workshops. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME

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**From:** [Pamela Ellers Singer](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** thankss  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 7:27:59 AM

---

EXTERNAL

Its time Sonoma County looks at this as a crop....  
Glad to come from California were we see the need for this product, the job it provides

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Redo  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 12:18:04 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

yes, summary...that is what is bothersome.  
Rachel Zierdt

On Fri, Mar 5, 2021 at 11:49 AM Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Hello Rachel,

Thank you for engaging in the public review of the draft documents. Your request will be included in the public comments summary that will be provided to the Planning Commission. During the hearing, the Planning Commission may consider your request.

*McCall Miller*

Sonoma County Cannabis Program

County Administrator's Office

[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

---

**From:** Rachel Zierdt <[rzierdt@gmail.com](mailto:rzierdt@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 6:30 PM  
**To:** Lynda Hopkins <[Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)>; Scott Orr <[Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org)>; Tennis Wick <[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org)>; Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** Redo

**EXTERNAL**

County officials

I am writing to you to urge you to stop any action on the new proposed cannabis ordinance revision. It has been trotted out in a very incomprehensible manner. It is inaccurate alluding to the wrong chapters in the current county ordinances. It is a messy document with many

mistakes. It needs to be withdrawn, rewritten, and sent out for comment period of 30 days when it has been corrected.

It is a complete embarrassment with its lack of clarity. I would hope that the county can do better than this document.

Do it over again and make it readable and understandable.

Rachel Zierdt

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**From:** [sica](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis ordinance updates - comments  
**Date:** Friday, March 5, 2021 6:14:44 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other. In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment. I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.

After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

- Please align with the state laws.
- Please create an advisory committee for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.
- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.
- I support 5 year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD. I would like to see RR and AR added back, as well as smaller parcels being allowed.
- Please release the site specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state has strict rules for water use. Please remove the new water rules you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and mom's that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening. They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.
- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor or greenhouse on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and use extra energy. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are virtually the same plant.
- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared. There may be a power outage on a single particle that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.
- Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offence and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should be incentivised.
- Please remove the plant count for cottage outdoor permits.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new fire safe rules? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self transportation be allowed?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

Sica Roman

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**From:** [Grace Barresi](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Questions regarding draft ordinance  
**Date:** Sunday, March 7, 2021 2:54:59 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to engage in the public review of the cannabis ordinance draft documents. Please include these questions and comments in the public comments summary that will be provided to the Planning Commission.

Q: What scientific data are the County using to recommend the FOG odor neutralizing system to mitigate odors from outdoor grows, given this system has been used primarily in greenhouses?

Q: What data demonstrates the FOG system, which uses neutralizing chemicals, are safe for residents and cannabis cultivators to inhale chronically? What long term studies have been conducted?

Q: The county does not specify design specs or success metrics for the FOG odor neutralizing system for 1-acre of outdoor, open air cannabis cultivation. How do you know this system will work?

Q: Why does the draft ordinance require that no odor can be detected on a neighboring property from an indoor grow, which acknowledges odor is an intrusion on a neighbor, but there is no such requirement for an outdoor grow?

Q: What protections are included in the draft ordinance to protect neighbors if odor cannot be mitigated with the proposed measures? The draft ordinance only has the FOG system as a mitigation to outdoor odor but has no language to state a permit must be withdrawn if odor cannot be mitigated.

Q: Why are setbacks from cannabis cultivation 100 feet to a neighbors patio, for example. given technical experts state the optimum distance for buffers is between 500 - 1,000 feet from the property line? The 100 feet setback to a property line is inadequate and will result in odor and noise impacts. Sonoma County's setback must be increased to a minimum of 1,000 feet to the property line: Evidence: Trinity Consultants expert testimony for Yolo County's ordinance found that the optimum buffers are between 500 to 1,000 feet. Ortech Consulting, Leaders in Air Quality testing and expertise in odor detection, has shown that odor from cannabis terpenes can travel over 3000 ft.

Q: Regarding outdoor grows, will you require the same minimum 1000 ft setback to

the property line for residences given they serve the same sensitive receptors as schools and elderly and need to be treated the same?

Q: Will you require a third party company with expertise in odor analysis / dispersion to study how winds will affect odor dispersion for outdoor cultivation, and then recommend a further increase in setbacks to over 1000 ft to account for prevailing winds or larger grows?

Q: Why was the Health and Safety Clause removed from the draft ordinance?

Q: Have you spoken to Staff from other California counties such as Yolo County about their Cannabis ordinances? Yolo County did a proper EIR and the Planning Commissioners are now recommending 1000 foot setbacks to property lines to protect residents from cannabis odor, noise and light pollution.

Q: What data informs the County's measures for indoor versus outdoor cultivation, given there will be odor impacts from both if a cannabis business has both on a parcel?

Q: How will Sonoma County BOS and Staff address all of the inconsistencies in the Draft Cannabis Ordinance? Chapter 26, Chapter 38 and the SMND have inconsistent language and are vague and open to interpretation. There are even contradictory statements.

Q: Will the Board of Supervisors pressure Staff to push for a timeline / deadline to finish the current round of ordinance changes? Phase 2 was supposed to be completed in October 2018 and include neighborhood compatibility, which it does not.

Thank you for your attention.

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**From:** [Monica Boettcher](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** public comment on cannabis regs  
**Date:** Saturday, March 6, 2021 12:21:38 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Be honest, pot got a foothold as "medicinal" but was never regulated like a medicine or even a supplement. Now growers want to be treated as an ag crop. Most ag crops are not psycho-active. Tobacco doesn't get you high nor do unprocessed grapes. There may be health benefits to CBD, but smoking is not healthful, and that's where most cannabis ends up. Recreational cannabis is NOT agriculture in the way that food or forest products are.

In truth, the cannabis industry aims to scoop up big bucks at big costs to our community and the environment, with little social concerns of any kind. Investors want the envisioned "green" gold rush and municipalities want tax revenue. When the aim is more money, the individual homeowners, who will suffer under the new regulations, get ignored.

Cannabis grown in a business park is easier for the community: traffic where it belongs, control of quality and taxation, odor and nuisance control, worker safety, environmental oversight. Cannabis isn't little family gardens anymore; it's big business and doesn't belong on Sonoma country backroads.

I don't appreciate Sonoma County becoming known for cannabis growing instead of natural beauty. This is not a fair trade.

Monica Boettcher

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Question for Cannabis zoom meetings - BEST MANAGMENT PRACTICES  
**Date:** Saturday, March 6, 2021 3:42:41 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Supervisor Gore is quoted in a recent article ([Sonoma West Cannabis Article](#)) that he doesn't "know what the right setbacks need to be. We need to base this ministerial approach on standards that match **best management practices.**"

**QUESTION:** Do the best management practices (BMP's) referred to in the new ordinance documents align with the best management practices in the Hemp Ordinance? Are the BMP's in the Cannabis Draft also "required" (mandatory) but can the Ag Commissioner "adopt, amend or rescind required best management practices" at will? Are the BMP's in the cannabis draft documents totally up to the discretion of the Ag Commissioner?

*HEMP ORDINANCE: The Ag Commissioner MAY adopt, amend or rescind required best management practices. Section 37-6A of the Draft Hemp ordinance/ Required BMP's*

*Parallel language on Recommended BMP's in Section 37-6B of the Draft Hemp ordinance.*

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** QUESTION FOR CANNABIS ZOOM MEETINGS: SCREENING NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR HOOP HOUSES?  
**Date:** Saturday, March 6, 2021 5:52:38 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

**QUESTION:**

The current Chapter 26 requires all outdoor cultivation and structures to be NOT visible from public view. Hoop houses are included in outdoor.

Outdoor cultivation areas and all structures associated with the cultivation shall not be located in the front yard setback area and shall be screened from public view. Outdoor cultivation areas shall not be visible from a public right of way.

Chapter 38 specifically requires no screening for hoop houses. Is this correct? Will this oversight be addressed in further edits? Or was removing all screening requirements for hoop houses intentional and why?

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: March 18 meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, March 6, 2021 12:10:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [Document.docx](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

Please provide this to all the PC and BOZ members as well as placing this on the public record.

Regards,  
Rachel Zierdt

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

I hope you are as alarmed and concerned as my neighbors and I are about the draft cannabis ordinance before you on March 18. It is a sweeping and broadly worded document that if implemented will severely change the topography of this county. There is very little in it that provides solace for those of us who value the environment and lifestyle that Sonoma County currently affords to us.

To make matters worse, there has been little or no effort being put forth to allow neighborhood groups to put input as it currently stands (the 4 town hall meetings are after the fact are too little, too late.)

You are the only entity right now that can block this massive change proposed by this ordinance. Please do not be a rubber stamp committee and send this back to staff to redo, revise, and resubmit to the public for comment and input.

Regards  
Rachel Zierdt

**From:** [jim@sosneighborhoods.com](mailto:jim@sosneighborhoods.com)  
**To:** [Larry Reed](#); ["Todd Tamura"](#); [Gina Belforte](#); [Greg Carr](#); ["Susan Cornelis"](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); ["Pam Davis"](#); [John Lowry](#); [Cameron Mauritsen](#); [Jacquelynn Ocana](#); [Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Planning.Agency@sonoma-county.org); [Cannabis](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Sita Kuteira](#); [Jennifer Klein](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#); [Arielle Kubu-Jones](#); [Andrea Krout](#); [Jenny Chamberlain](#); [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district4](#)  
**Subject:** Request delay for cannabis ordinance review - Bounced Resending  
**Date:** Saturday, March 6, 2021 11:42:33 AM  
**Attachments:** [sosn\\_can\\_ord\\_changes.pdf](#)  
[Message Delivery Failure - Mail Delivery System.msg](#)

---

## EXTERNAL

[This email bounced, this is a re-send of previous email]

March 5, 2021

Delivered via electronic mail

TO: Lynda Hopkins, Susan Gorin, Chris Coursey, David Rabbitt, James Gore

CC: Tennis Wick, Sonoma County Cannabis, Scott Orr, et al

Dear Sonoma County Supervisors, Planning and Staff,

Save our Sonoma Neighborhoods (SOSN) requests that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and the Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance.

Both the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the new draft chapter 38 are based on a portion of the county's zoning code that has since been significantly revised. Passing a land use policy that is incongruent with the current zoning code would only serve to create confusion and further complicate the county's ability to come to resolution on this important issue.

Once these items have been revised, we would request that they be re-released for a full 90 day public comment period, with a clear explanation of the changes made based on the newly updated portion of county zoning code.

Our group and others who have waited over a year to engage the County in discussions about neighborhood compatibility have been ignored and stonewalled at every turn. We were told to wait for Phase 2 (Neighborhood Compatibility) which never arrived. Instead we were presented with a draft devoid of our input and even that is so flawed that we can't analyze it.

Please correct this error so that the entire process is not deemed to be illegitimate.

SOSN requests notice of any and all action(s) related to this project. Notice may be sent by e-mail to [jim@sosneighborhoods.com](mailto:jim@sosneighborhoods.com)

Sincerely,

James Bracco, for Save our Sonoma Neighborhoods  
[www.sosneighborhoods.com](http://www.sosneighborhoods.com)

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March 5, 2021

Delivered via electronic mail

TO: Lynda Hopkins, Susan Gorin, Chris Coursey, David Rabbitt, James Gore

CC: Tennis Wick, Sonoma County Cannabis, Scott Orr

Dear Sonoma County Supervisors, Planning and Staff,

Save our Sonoma Neighborhoods (SOSN) requests that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors withdraw, revise and re-release the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and the Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance.

Both the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the new draft chapter 38 are based on a portion of the county's zoning code that has since been significantly revised. Passing a land use policy that is incongruent with the current zoning code would only serve to create confusion and further complicate the county's ability to come to resolution on this important issue.

Once these items have been revised, we would request that they be re-released for a full 90 day public comment period, with a clear explanation of the changes made based on the newly updated portion of county zoning code.

Our group and others who have waited over a year to engage the County in discussions about neighborhood compatibility have been ignored and stonewalled at every turn. We were told to wait for Phase 2 (Neighborhood Compatibility) which never arrived. Instead we were presented with a draft devoid of our input and even that is so flawed that we can't analyze it.

Please correct this error so that the entire process is not deemed to be illegitimate.

SOSN requests notice of any and all action(s) related to this project. Notice may be sent by e-mail to [jim@sosneighborhoods.com](mailto:jim@sosneighborhoods.com)

Sincerely,

James Bracco, for Save our Sonoma Neighborhoods  
[www.sosneighborhoods.com](http://www.sosneighborhoods.com)

**From:** [Anna Ransome](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Andrew Smith](#)  
**Subject:** Questions Regarding Draft Cannabis Ordinance and support documents  
**Date:** Sunday, March 7, 2021 8:59:01 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

1. Will changing cannabis from a product to a crop mean that 50% of the sensitive biotic habitat zoning, riparian and wetland setbacks can now be encroached on by cannabis projects? For instance many agricultural activities are allowed in these areas that would disallowed for other non-ag categories of use. Sec. 26-65-040. - Allowed land uses, activities and permit requirements. Section H appears to show that each category of setback would be reduced by half. Is there a study of the cumulative impacts of more than doubling the potential encroachments on these sensitive uses?
2. How can you offset impacts from pumping groundwater (the predominant source of water for cannabis operations in Sonoma County according to the 2/26/21 NOAA/NMFS letter from Robert Coey to Tennis Wick) on up to 65,000 acres of cannabis? According to Coey, surface water and groundwater are inextricably linked and limiting or allowing wells based on groundwater availability zones is insufficient to protect the resource.
3. Why wasn't an EIR done for a project of such scope and impact? A Programmatic EIR would have been more appropriate.
4. Why aren't public comments more readily available for this process? Instead of a link on the website, interested citizens have to email to get a link, which hasn't been updated since 2/28/21. We know that very important letters have been received by the County and are still not available to the public, such as the NOAA/NMFS letter and Sonia Taylor's letter pointing to your error in posting and sending to agencies the wrong Chapter 26 version.
5. We have been paying a 1/4 cent sales tax since 1990 for the preservation of ag and open space through the district expecting that we would be seeing forever wild easements or traditional agricultural activity in our viewsheds. How will cannabis, with it's ugly security measures and bright, glaring rows of 12' high hoop houses impact the scenic vistas of the county?

6. CEQA should address unintended consequences, one of which is the impact of tens of thousands of acres of hoop houses on the character of the landscape. How is that not a CEQA trigger?

7. Changing hoop houses into de facto greenhouses with allowable electrical, plumbing and mechanical features without the need for the environmental review that a permanent structure requires will have a negative impact on County fees and property taxes. Has this been studied as a CEQA issue? What is impermanent about these structures, that may have foundations and infrastructure? Would Permit Sonoma require a demolition permit to tear them down when they have outlived their usefulness? If so, they are permanent.

8. Why are operations allowed 24/7 if the majority of the work is seasonal?

9. Why is there odor control for indoor grows, which acknowledges the problem, and not for outdoor? Same plant, same problem.

10. How can sellers and realtors make accurate disclosures when there is no way to determine if a ministerial application has been made on an adjacent property or close by? A suit of this type is underway Supervisor Rabbitt's district.

11. Why were definitions removed from the update Chapter 26, approved by the Board of Supervisors on 2/9/21?

12. Hoop houses are described as "temporary" but there is no description of if or when the plastic has to be removed? Where is the language that defines this process?

13. There is no analysis of the environmental impact of all this disposable plastic being replaced every year, assuming it has to be removed, which destroys it for re-use. With greenhouses, the plastic is durable, rigid and long lasting. Even if not removed yearly, the UV resistant plastic only lasts about 3 years. Where does all this landfill material go and where is the study on the impact of this?

14. There is potential for over-saturation of cannabis plantings (see state list of applications for cannabis for reference.) This will likely result in abandoned cannabis sites county-wide, especially as other states

legalize it and can grow it more cheaply. Where does the money come from to clean up these sites and what agency has the responsibility?

15. State law requires the study of cumulative impacts and assessment of each individual project. How does this ordinance then comply with state law?

16. There are many instances in the Draft Ordinance where the Agricultural Commissioner will have to exercise discretion, yet this process is purported to be ministerial. He can "amend, rescind or remove" buffers for instance. Isn't this a discretionary process?

17. Please explain this section: Sec. 38.10.030. – Time limit, Renewal, and Expiration.

Renewal. Once a permit is issued and prior to its expiration, the permittee may apply to renew the permit by submitting a renewal application in a form established by the Agricultural Commissioner and application fee. No permit or permit renewal shall issue without payment of all required fees. The same standards apply to issuance of permits and permit renewals under this Chapter, except that **setback requirement do not apply to permit renewal applications that do not propose changes to the cannabis cultivation activity or cannabis cultivation site.** An applicant for permit renewal shall indicate proposed changes to the permitted cannabis cultivation activity and cannabis cultivation site, if any, in the permit renewal application.

18. Chapter 38.14.020 states that outdoor processing is allowed 8 am to 5 pm, then B. states processing has to be indoors. Which is it?

19. What happened to the phrase that cannabis is "an attractive nuisance to children"? It was used to explain setbacks to schools, parks, etc.

20. Chapter 38 leaves out a key phrase of the County Right-to-Farm

law: "if it was not a nuisance when it began." This omission changes the entire meaning of the RTF ordinance, to make it appear that there is no recourse if a farming activity impacts your right to peaceful enjoyment of your property. State RTF law reads that farming activity has to be determined to be a nuisance at the beginning and then a complainant has three years to file suit. Why has this important distinction been omitted from Chapter 38?

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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** For Cannabis Town Hall  
**Date:** Sunday, March 7, 2021 7:24:44 PM

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## EXTERNAL

The SMND, Chapter 38 and the revisions to Chapter 26 ordinance are fatally flawed, so full of errors and inconsistencies and false conclusions that they must be discarded. A full EIR must be conducted, analyzing required environmental and health and safety impacts, and determining locations and what level of cannabis cultivation is the right balance for Sonoma County's to maintain its current character, balance of wine, tourism and assure health and safety of the public.

I have attached a few questions that must be considered when a new ordinance is written.

1) **Odor.** For both indoor and outdoor grows, odor should not leave the parcel line. The current draft requires this for indoor grows, but not for outdoor or the hoop houses that would now function as unpermitted greenhouses. If the County acknowledges that odor must be controlled from indoor grows, why doesn't it extend the same logic to outdoor grows by requiring much longer setbacks, and not allowing grows next to residential neighborhoods? Why are sensitive receptors located in schools treated differently from those exact same receptors on residential property?

2) **Aesthetics.** Does the County really want our vista to be covered with fully visible and very obtrusive hoop houses, bringing the blight to our County as has happened to Santa Barbara County? Are you not concerned about losing the beauty of our countryside, losing our wine-county reputation and associated tourism, all to be replaced with the unknown of what canna tourism will bring?

3) **Water** is scarce in much of rural Sonoma County. Why does the County want to allow proliferation of such large acreage of cannabis, a plant that uses 6X more water per acre than vineyards? Do you realize that allowing unlimited proliferation of hoop houses, functioning as greenhouses, will allow multiple harvests each year., further taxing our limited water resources?

4) **Wildfire.** We all know our huge exposure to wildfire risk. Most residents in the rural county have been evacuated in 3 of the last 4 fire seasons. How can you justify further increasing both fire risk and evacuation safety with allowing all the added electrical infrastructure of thousands of acres of hoop houses and indoor grows with

thousands of employees traveling each day into high fire risk areas? People are a major cause of starting fires.

5) What **evacuation** models and road requirements are you requiring to ensure that residents as well as thousands of employees in the high fire risk areas can safely and efficiently evacuated during wildfires?

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**From:** [Joan Conway](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [district3@sonomacounty.org](mailto:district3@sonomacounty.org); [district4@sonomacounty.org](mailto:district4@sonomacounty.org); [district5@sonomacounty.org](mailto:district5@sonomacounty.org)  
**Subject:** Proposed Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance  
**Date:** Sunday, March 7, 2021 6:44:39 PM

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EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners,

You are about to make a decision that could forever change the Sonoma County we know and love, transforming it into a landscape of hoop tunnels emitting a foul, skunk-like odor and exposing its citizens to increased fire danger, security threats, loss of quality of life and possible life-threatening security risks.

Please consider these serious issues facing Sonoma County before voting on this impactful ordinance:

\*Drought — with rainfall at historical lows, allowing the unfettered growth of a water hungry crop seems mystifyingly short sighted and irresponsible.

\*Security — what other ag crop requires 24/7 security protection? Much of the areas of Sonoma County that would be made available for cannabis production by this ordinance are remote and inadequately served by county security services and are difficult to access, making them extremely vulnerable to a situation that invites crime, which cannabis verifiably does.

\*Fire danger — many areas that would be opened to cannabis cultivation by this ordinance are difficult to access due to one lane, dead end roads. Lives would very likely be lost if residents are trying to evacuate at the same time fire engines and personnel are attempting to reach a fire.

Please do NOT allow this ordinance to take effect.

Sincerely,  
Joan Conway  
1083 Vine St. #282  
Healdsburg, CA95448

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** My questions for town hall  
**Date:** Sunday, March 7, 2021 8:47:19 PM

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## EXTERNAL

These are my questions for the Town Hall

Q: What happened to the promise of neighborhood compatibility voiced in 2018 by Supervisors Gorin, Hopkins, Gore and Rabbitt?

Q: Why has there been no outreach to neighborhood coalitions in inputting ideas to help shape the draft ordinance, except for one 45 minute zoom meeting? (Gore and Hopkins?)

Q: Why have you abandoned the first part of this statement in the original 2016 ordinance including protecting health, safety, environmental resources, and ensure public health safety, nuisance factors..... all supervisors

“The proposed amendments are necessary and desirable to protect the public health, safety and environmental resources, provide a consistent regulatory pathway for the cannabis industry consistent with state regulations, foster a healthy, diverse and economically viable cannabis industry that contributes to the local economy, and ensure that environmental, public health, safety and nuisance factors related to the cannabis industry are adequately addressed.”

Q: Why has the County resorted to this ridiculous Zoom format vs a proper virtual Town Hall with active participation?

Q: What fears do you have by engaging residents who have been negatively impacted by your “cannabis first” ordinance and policies? all supervisors

Q: What other Counties in California have you spoken to regarding their experiences with cannabis? Have you not learned from the mistakes of Santa Barbara?

Rachel Zierdt

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325  
Santa Rosa, California 95404-4731

February 26, 2021

Tennis Wick, Director  
County of Sonoma  
Permit and Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, California 95403

Dear Mr. Wick:

This letter communicates NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) concerns regarding the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) addressing the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment (Update) for cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County, California. NMFS is responsible for conserving threatened and endangered marine species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and ESA-listed Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), CCC steelhead (*O. mykiss*), and California Coastal Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) reside within many rivers and streams throughout the County. Our concerns stem from the proposed requirements for cultivators using groundwater as their water source, and how these requirements will likely be inadequate in preventing impacts to ESA-listed salmonids and their habitat.

Surface water and underlying groundwater are likely hydraulically linked throughout much of Sonoma County, and this linkage is critically important in creating seasonal habitat for juvenile salmonids. Where the groundwater aquifer supplements streamflow, the influx of cold, clean water is critically important for maintaining temperature and flow volume during summer months. Pumping from these aquifer-stream complexes can adversely affect instream habitat by lowering groundwater levels and interrupting the hyporheic flow between the aquifer and stream.

Groundwater is the predominant source of water for cannabis cultivation operations within Sonoma County. State Water Board regulations concerning surface water diversions for cannabis cultivation contain required best management practices (BMP's) highly protective of instream flow volume and fish habitat, such as requiring summer forbearance, winter diversions, and fish friendly bypass flows. However, similar BMP's are not required by the State Water Board for cultivation sites utilizing groundwater wells as a source for cannabis cultivation. Because of this discrepancy under state law, the vast majority of cannabis cultivation applications throughout the County are opting for groundwater wells as their water source. We are concerned in particular, that wells are being drilled and pumped without appropriate analysis regarding their potential impact to surface water, especially near-stream wells that may also impact groundwater/surface water dynamics and result in streamflow depletion. With those concerns in mind, we offer the following comments.

Re Page 70, Section 10(b): The MND states the following: *Future cannabis facilities in rural areas would rely on either surface (rivers, lakes, and springs) or well water sources. Accordingly, the introduction of cannabis cultivation in these areas could increase the use of groundwater.* As explained above, very few rural cultivation sites are currently using surface water



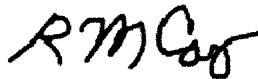
diversions as a water source, likely to work around the required BMP's mandated by the State Water Board for surface water diversions. NMFS is concerned about both surface water and groundwater diversions, as they are linked, and we believe the potential for impacts from unrestricted groundwater use is high.

Re Page 71, Section 10(b)(4)(b): This section addresses near-stream wells (e.g., "well is within 500 feet of blue line stream"), and is intended to minimize streamflow depletion impacts. According to the MND, if a well is within 500 feet of a blue line stream, the applicant must document one of three things: 1) prepare a "net zero water plan", 2) document the well is near the Russian River or Dry Creek, or 3) document the well is within the Groundwater Availability Zone 1 or 2. By including the third option, the authors of the MND seem to assume that streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely in Groundwater Availability Zones 1 and 2. However, streamflow depletion can occur within any of the groundwater zones in Sonoma County, and is largely influenced by well distance from the waterway, the pumping intensity, and the transmissivity of the underlying geology, not groundwater availability zones. Thus, the current standards and requirements appear unlikely to adequately mitigate the potential impact of streamflow depletion, making a MND inappropriate. NMFS recommends the Update require either a net zero water plan, or a hydrogeologic analysis confirming streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely, before any cannabis operation utilizing a near-stream well is approved, regardless of which Groundwater Availability zone it may occur in.

Furthermore, while we understand that the current Update applies only to cannabis cultivation, NMFS recommends the County also update their well ordinance and permitting procedures to apply this requirement (i.e., require a net zero water plan, or a hydrogeologic analysis confirming streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely) to all permit applications for near-stream wells.

NMFS appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration addressing the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment for cannabis cultivation. If you have any comments or questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Rick Rogers at [rick.rogers@noaa.gov](mailto:rick.rogers@noaa.gov), or 707-578-8552.

Sincerely,



Robert Coey  
North Coast Branch Supervisor  
North-Central Coast Office

cc: (via email)

Bryan McFadin, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
([Bryan.McFadin@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Bryan.McFadin@waterboards.ca.gov))

Wes Stokes, California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([Wes.Stokes@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Wes.Stokes@wildlife.ca.gov))

David Hines, California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([David.Hines@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:David.Hines@wildlife.ca.gov))

Daniel Schultz, State Water Board ([Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov))

Jessica Maxfield, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
([Jessica.Maxfield@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Jessica.Maxfield@wildlife.ca.gov))



**From:** [Amy Beilharz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** rules for grow operations  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:24:40 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

I am VERY worried about water resources for cannabis cultivation in our already drought area that is very prone to fire. We need our water.

Best wishes for miracles in your life--today, and every day!

Amy Beilharz,

Co-Founder, CEO [Artistree](#)  
Co-Founder, [Cypress Valley](#)

[Check out Artistree's latest initiative!](#)



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**In the rush to return to normal,  
use this time to consider which  
parts of normal are worth  
rushing back to.**

Davie Hollis - Author

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**From:** [Amy Beilharz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** property requirements  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:29:11 PM

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## EXTERNAL

I assume all cannabis operations will be on properties that are a specified distance from schools and campgrounds. This needs to be super strict.

Best wishes for miracles in your life--today, and every day!

Amy Beilharz,

Co-Founder, CEO [Artistree](#)  
Co-Founder, [Cypress Valley](#)

[Check out Artistree's latest initiative!](#)



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**In the rush to return to normal,  
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Davie Hollis - Author

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**From:** [Amy Beilharz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** fire issues  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:37:06 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

What are the protections for fire?

Best wishes for miracles in your life--today, and every day!

Amy Beilharz,

Co-Founder, CEO [Artistree](#)  
Co-Founder, [Cypress Valley](#)

[Check out Artistree's latest initiative!](#)



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**In the rush to return to normal,  
use this time to consider which  
parts of normal are worth  
rushing back to.**

**Davie Hollis - Author**

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**From:** [Ayn Garvisch](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Questions for todays 3/8 webinar  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:11:39 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Please add these to the questions for todays webinar.

Sec. 26-88-250. - Commercial cannabis uses.

Will tasting, and consumption (either smoking, eating or drinking) of cannabis product (either grown on site or brought in), still prohibited under the proposed new ordinance as written?

Sec. 26-06-030. - Permitted residential density and development criteria.

Will the 85,000 sf or 5% new cultivation or support building limit allow for growing more cannabis on one LEA Parcel (in addition to outdoor growing space of 10% allowed?)  
Essentially allowing for an extra 2+ acres “indoor”

Thank you,

Ayn Garvisch  
625 Purvine Rd

Member SOSN (Save Our Sonoma Neighborhoods)

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**From:** [storms](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed pot changes  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:56:00 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Hello:

At first I was eager to weigh in with my feelings on these huge & significant changes around marijuana farms.

However, after watching the public Zoom meeting today, I have come to the conclusion that it is all **a done deal**.

The cannabis consortiums & grower groups have, by their unrelenting & aggressive ploys, influenced county and city governments to the degree that the regular citizens of Sonoma County don't stand a chance.

Everyone knows marijuana "farming" is big money, and of course, that is what trumps any common sense or regard for our environment or our people.

A sad sad state of affairs and no turning back, I am afraid. I hate to give up on the idea that regulation and some actual boundaries be set, but so far the city of Santa Rosa & the county of Sonoma have made clear their intentions.

Ann Storms

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**From:** [storms](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Thank you  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:06:22 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Thank you Dr. Bischoff for your comments & reassurance.

I will try to stay positive.

Sincerely,  
Ann

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**From:** [Alexa Wall](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition@googlegroups.com](mailto:sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition@googlegroups.com)  
**Subject:** Support for Sonoma County Cannabis  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 6:24:21 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Commissioners, Board of Supervisors, Staff, and other County Officials:

As a former Sonoma County Ag Commissioner once said back in 2018, “If the overall goal of the [cannabis] program was to create a regulatory scheme that favored a corporate, big dollar, new-money industry, then I think we have succeeded. If the goal was to create a workable regulatory pathway for existing cultivators to become legal, I think we have failed.” We have to do better and we can do better. Now is our chance.

As you know, what was once a robust industry of some 5,000+ farmers during the Prop. 215 years is now barely thriving, with operators waiting years for permits and those most deserving to enter the regulated market — our legacy craft farmers — still without a proper pathway to permitting.

Whether it has intended to or not, Sonoma County has destroyed the businesses of small legacy farmers who have been feeding their families through cannabis income for generations, who put dollars back into our local economy, and who wish to become legal and compliant. The program is a failure because enforcement without opportunity is a failed paradigm. This new ordinance update is finally a chance for Sonoma County to right the wrongs and fix the real problems that have been created by taking Sonoma County out of step with state law recommendations, housing the program in Permit Sonoma rather than the Dept. of Agriculture, being unduly influenced by a handful of NIMBYs, and grossly restricting right-to-farm opportunities for cannabis. This is not a time to fix the non-existent non-problems that NIMBYs are spreading as an illusion to further destroy this program and to push cannabis back indoors.

Looking to the day when cannabis is not only nationally legal but internationally traded, the CDFA rolled out its Cannabis Appellations program on Jan. 1, 2021 and Sonoma County legacy craft farmers won't be able to participate if our only production is indoor. Indoor grows are ecologically taxing and don't support the robust tourist industry that cannabis can — and will — attract.

During this extraordinary era of pandemic and economic collapse, Sonoma County must not miss out on the opportunity for the essential cannabis industry to generate desperately needed jobs and tax revenue. One Santa Rosa cannabis manufacturer alone has hired over 140 people since the pandemic began in March. The tax revenue even with the failure of county officials tops \$2 million a year to date.

After nearly five years of engagement, county officials at every level know our industry is burdened with heavily restrictive policies and environmental rules. As examples, cannabis operators are required to meter water usage and cannot use harmful pesticides. No other agricultural industry is held to the standards that cannabis is.

So I urge you, please don't let a few loud naysayers continue to destroy what is left of this valuable industry. Treat cannabis as agriculture. Protect the farmers who have been stuck in the process for years. And ultimately adopt pro-cannabis, pro-business policies! As Socrates said, "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new." Let's join together and focus on the new. Sonoma County depends on it. We depend on you.

Sincerely,  
Alexa Wall

--

[Luma California](#)

LIC#: CCL20-0000303

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**From:** [Bob Fink](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis hearing questions  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 4:59:14 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Concern:

My primary concern is the very heavy water used of cannabis in our water scarce areas of west county, especially the hills west of Occidental.

My secondary concern is smell.

My third concern is worker access on west county roads already in failure mode due to size and existing traffic.

Question:

What protections, if any, will there be to regulate how much land is allowed into cannabis production based on water usage and the local situation.

What specific methods will be used to respond to smell complaints and how will enforcement work. It seems once it is a problem it will be a major financial problem to remove it.

Will there be any restriction for cannabis production on roads already in failure of county and state regulation for road width and pullouts, etc.

Thankyou,

Robert Fink  
Occidental

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**From:** [Bobby Hughes](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [BOS](#)  
**Subject:** CANNBIS DRAFT  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 12:51:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [BOS letter.doc](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

Attached is my letter in response to potential cannabis draft changes.

Thank you,  
Bobby Hughes

--

Co-Owner  
NCM Corp.

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March 8, 2021

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

575 Administration Drive

Room 100 A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

bos@sonoma-county.org

RE: Cannabis Draft Ordinance

Dear Supervisor Hopkins and Other Honorable Members of the Board:

Thank you for moving forward with the difficult process of drafting a cannabis ordinance that will serve all Sonoma County citizens fairly and well.

As you are more than aware, Sonoma County agriculture has dealt with numerous and unprecedented challenges over the past several years, including multiple wildfires, market fluctuations, and a pandemic that has severely restricted agricultural tourism.

Now more than ever, it is vitally important that the county adopt the right policies - and in a timely fashion - that will keep our farmers and ag lands viable as a key economic sector and backbone of our community.

As a vital part of economic recovery for agricultural landowners in Sonoma County, I urge the Board of Supervisors, especially with new state cannabis appellation laws in effect, to take action that will give landowners and farmers the opportunity to remain viable and competitive across the largest and most formidable cannabis market in the United States.

I support the expansion of ministerial permitting in agricultural and resource lands, and believe that the permitting of cannabis farms is appropriately placed under the authority of the Agricultural Commissioner.

*I urge the Board of Supervisors to consider the below recommendations to expand opportunities for our current and future partners:*

**1) Parcel Size Cap**

I support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an

allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.

## 2) **Individual Limits**

I support the removal of individual cultivation limits of 1 acre per person.

## 3) **Setbacks**

I support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency, I also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of any adjacent sensitive use.

## 4) **Cultural Resources**

While preservation of cultural and historic resources is vital, I am concerned about subjecting each ministerial project to potential mitigations. Alternatively, I request that a list of cultural surveyors pre-approved by local tribes be utilized to perform the required cultural surveys.

## 5) **Water Use**

I suggest refraining from adding additional water use restrictions beyond what is required for conventional agriculture.

## 6) **Important farmlands**

I suggest that there should be no 1:1 offset for cannabis, and this should be regulated like other agriculture crops.

## 5) **Ridge top protection**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

## 7) **Slope planting limitations**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

## 8) **Hoop houses**

I am in favor of establishing policy to allow hoop houses to be permanent on property to reduce unnecessary material and labor waste, as well as improved sustainability because of reduced water usage.

**9) Energy/ Generators**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**10) Operational hours**

These are already regulated by the state, so no local regulations are necessary.

**11) Events**

I would like to see the County align events with the policy governing the wine industry to ensure community benefit and the opportunity for participation in the state event licensing program.

**12) Fire prevention**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**13) Wastewater**

This is already regulated by the State, so no local regulations are necessary.

**14) Lighting**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

15) EQUAL TREATMENT- We have been downtrodden as cannabis operators since the inception of prop 64 in this county. How much more can you hold this industry back? It is beginning to get tiring.

I thank the Board of Supervisors for considering these comments in the interest of maintaining economic viability for agricultural and resource lands in Sonoma County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Bobby Hughes**  
**Windsor, CA**

**From:** [Bill Krawetz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Townhall questions, observations, concerns  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 6:23:33 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

March 8, 2021

To: [cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:cannabis@sonoma-county.org)

Re: Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance and General Plan Amendments, and Draft Ordinance

On behalf of Gold Ridge Neighborhood Group, I am providing observations, concerns and questions to the proposed revisions to the Cannabis Land Use Ordinance, General Plan Amendment and Mitigated Negative Declaration.

No community input in latest draft! The 2019 amendment was adopted by the BOS with a clear understanding not all issues were resolved. The most significant was neighborhood compatibility concerns, and that there would be an extensive public outreach process to gather all concerns (public and growers) to be incorporated into the next amendment. For 2 years, there have been no such meetings! Now without any public input (maybe only from the industry?), the County has issued a draft, establishing a baseline we are to start from. Unfortunately this starting point is biased pro-grower document, in which the public is disadvantaged and is being discriminated against before even the first discussions are held. I understand these are harsh, accusatory words, which I do not say lightly and I back up with the following simple questions.

I ask the Staff (and BOS), what provisions have been added into this amendment to address neighborhood concerns and protect us?

1. Is it making most permits ministerial, so the public has no voice? Follow the proper best practice approach: Fix the draft to eliminate ministerial permits for cannabis, go back and fix the conditional use permit processes (CUP) and ensure project-specific environmental review.
2. Is it by proposing a Negative Declaration of Environmental Impacts for an industry which your own documents recognize will operate 24/7, 365 days a year that require 24/7 security, lighting and fencing, waste management, water run-off requirement, water use/ground water use constraints, dust control, odor control, energy use and noise limits? On up to 65,000 acres in Sonoma County and within short distances of residential homes? (A Negative Declaration is

- inappropriate for this industry and I request a complete CEQA review be done.)
3. Is it by providing less protection to my family at home than in public? The BOS understood the problems and specifically amendment the setback requirements to 1000 feet for Schools, Parks, and Bikeways. Yet your draft retains the 100 foot setback from personal residences. So your proposal provides my children and spouse more protection at places where they will only be for a few hours' than their home where they spend the majority of their time and are more subjected to the impacts? This difference makes no sense. The BOS saw the wisdom to increase the setbacks to 1,000ft, the same setbacks are appropriate for the home. Should be 1,000 ft. everywhere.
  4. Is it by leaving the parcel size to 10 acre minimums that the BOS knew in 2019 when they adopted such, still didn't address many situations on the ground? Increasing the minimum to 20 acres provides a reasonable chance for a grower to set up operations far enough away from a neighbor, situated properly on the parcel to have minimal impacts on neighbors.
    - a. For any parcel that borders RR or AR, in water zones 3 or 4, or within 500 feet of a stream, would need a detailed review before allowing any cannabis.
  5. Is it by not specifically requiring the same kind of Air Quality, Odor, Noise controls required for indoor operations for outdoor grows also? Where neighbors will more likely be impacted? Your document acknowledges odor should not leave the property line for indoor grows. The same principles need to be carried forward for outdoor grows.
  6. Is it by only requiring the payment of a penalty fee when the operator doesn't comply with the law? Considering the profitability of cannabis, a financial fine will not deter a grower from continuing operations even when out of compliance. The financial penalties proposed need to be imposed in conjunction with a stop operating order. There should be a probationary period (1- 5 years) where they can't apply for a permit to grow again. There needs to be enough of a penalty to assure compliance.

Finally, now after a couple years of no action, there is pressure and urgency to push this amendment through (and without the upfront public outreach process promised). As any business person negotiating a deal or the average citizen buying a car knows, there is a salesman on the other side trying to convince you if you don't sign immediately, it's the end of the world and you'll lose out on the best deal. When things are rushed, errors happen, important provisions are overlooked and unexpected consequences occur. Let's take the time to get this right!

Thank you  
Bill Krawetz  
Gold Ridge Neighborhood Group.

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**Warning:** If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected,  
**do not** click any web links, attachments, and **never** give out your user ID or password.

**From:** [Craig Harrison](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Removal of Public Health Protections for Odor  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:06:02 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Sonoma County's vision for public health is:

To lead, collaborate and succeed in making Sonoma County the healthiest county in California.

The proposed revisions to the cannabis ordinance and General Plan would remove health, safety, and nuisance protections to neighbors who are exposed to pungent terpene odors from cannabis. Please explain how this furthers the county's vision to become the healthiest county in California.

In 2018 a group of neighbors on Herrerias Way, Petaluma, sued a grower whose cannabis odors impinged on their homes. As reported in the Press Democrat, "the Uppals claim the stench of cannabis has caused significant breathing problems for their son, Gurjiwan, who is a paraplegic and relies on a breathing tube."

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/8684268-181/neighbors-file-federal-lawsuit-to>

Is your vision for Sonoma County that paraplegic individuals such as Gurjiwan should just suck it up and live with the stench? Is that a vision of a compassionate county government?

Craig S. Harrison  
Santa Rosa

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**From:** [Cameron Hattan](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:36:37 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.

- In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.
- I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.

After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

- Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance where applicable to state laws.
- As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.
- Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.
  - Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on



## nurseries

- Please create an advisory commission for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.
- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.
- I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD.
- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
- Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or

dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.

- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.
- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)
- Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.
- Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these

documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely

Cameron Hattan

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** [Cindy Schellenberg](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Town Hall Comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:17:22 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Sonoma County,

I am very strongly opposed to any continuation and indeed expansion of the ministerial process in conjunction with commercial cannabis permit applications and approvals. This process is diametrically opposed to the civil rights of residents in neighborhoods to be informed of, as well as participate in decisions that will change their safety and quality life. It only makes it easier for pot growers and county staff and that is not what it means to be a public servant.

L. Schellenberg  
Penngrove

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**From:** [Claire Sideras](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** 3/8 Pro Cannabis  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 4:33:23 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

To whom it may concern,

- Treat cannabis like any other agricultural industry!
- Prioritize the farmers that have been stuck in the permitting process for YEARS.
- Adopt pro-cannabis policies that allow our essential industry to thrive by creating jobs and stimulating the economy!

Thanks,  
Claire

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**From:** [Eric Valianti](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Response to Cannabis Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:09:35 PM

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EXTERNAL

The water use issue seems to always be exaggerated when it comes to cannabis.

I agree that properties should be bound to the same rules as vineyards. But the amount of water per finished product is actually very low compared to vineyards and livestock.

A large cannabis plant provides for the same amount of ‘imbibing’ as a thousand cases of wine. Made that number up, but you see my point. :)

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** [Eric Valianti](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Response to Cannabis Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:31:28 PM

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EXTERNAL

Do these proposed changes address only large outdoor operations, or the current prohibition of small boutique indoor operations in rural residential areas?

Seems to me that these two land uses should be separate.

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**From:** [Eric Valianti](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Response to Cannabis Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:44:20 PM

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EXTERNAL

Seems like security and odor issues are the big concerns. And rightly so. The water issue can be solved easily by making cannabis facilities a ide by the same regulations as other industries like wine and cattle.

How many permitted operations with security measures have had issues? How can the facility ensure the security of neighbors as well as their cultivation site?

And the odor issue... maybe it's solvable. Indoor facilities need engineered, effective odor control plans.

Maybe allowing smaller indoor and greenhouse facilities that can be safely secured and odor free would also eliminate the setback requirements as well?

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**From:** [Gretchen Giles](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Sonoma County Cannabis Coalition](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Cannabis in Sonoma County  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:27:46 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Honorable Members of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and Madam Chair Lynda Hopkins:

I appreciate the care and thoughtful nature of your approach to better aligning Sonoma County's cannabis regulations with those of the state of California.

I feel strongly that Sonoma County should be world renowned for the quality of our sungrown cannabis and that we should make every effort to place our county in the best position possible to benefit from the cannabis appellation system newly instituted by the state. Tourism for cannabis as well as wine and food should be a major focus of our county's efforts.

We are at the gateway to the Emerald Triangle and make a perfect jumping off point for the curious and ambitious NorCal traveler. What's more, we have better, more plentiful, and more luxurious food and accommodations than do Mendocino, Humboldt, or Trinity counties — the triumvirate which compose the Emerald Triangle. We should be welcoming those travelers on their way north and providing them a memorable starting point against which to measure all others, knowing they'll soon return. To that end, let's ensure that our cannabis is given the same support we offer to our profitable wine industry.

Specifically, I request that the Board please:  
Treat cannabis as you do other ag products.  
Align Sonoma County goals with those of the state.  
Offer a more generous path forward for cannabis ag retail.  
Embrace cannabis tourism and pave the way for its full impact.

Recognizing the immense economic engine that cannabis is — California reaped \$1 billion in tax revenue last year from this one commodity and gained thousands of jobs that can only exist within the state — and harnessing its good is vital to the continued success of our county.

Thank you,  
Gretchen Giles  
Santa Rosa  
Gretchen Giles  
707.570.7887  
[@gretchengiles](mailto:@gretchengiles)  
[hellogretchen.com](http://hellogretchen.com)

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**From:** [Gil](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Cannabis Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:33:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [iaknifpfbgmbhfnj.png](#)  
[pknihgnkllldmff.png](#)  
[acpfndhmhjnpiim.png](#)

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**EXTERNAL**



March 8, 2021

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Drive, Room 100 A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

[Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)  
cc: [bos@sonoma-county.org](mailto:bos@sonoma-county.org)

Dear Supervisor Gorin and Other Honorable Members of the Board:

The 214 member Sonoma Valley Cannabis Group would like to thank you for moving forward with a cannabis ordinance that will serve all Sonoma County citizens fairly and well.

We all understand the importance of adopting the best policies that will keep our farmers and ag lands viable as a key economic resource for our community.

We urge the Board of Supervisors, especially with new state cannabis appellation laws in effect, to provide landowners and farmers the opportunity to remain viable and competitive across the largest and most formidable cannabis market in the United States.

We support the expansion of ministerial permitting in agricultural and resource lands, and believe that the permitting of cannabis farms is appropriately placed under the authority of the Agricultural Commissioner.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to consider the below recommendations to expand opportunities for our current and future partners:

1) Parcel Size Cap

We support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.

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3) Setbacks

We support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency, we also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of any adjacent sensitive use.

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#### 5) Water Use

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#### 13) Wastewater

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#### 14) Lighting

We suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

We thank the Board of Supervisors for considering these comments in the interest of maintaining economic viability for agricultural and resource lands in Sonoma County.

Sincerely,

Gil Latimer, Founder

Sonoma Valley Cannabis Group

Sonoma, CA

*The Sonoma Valley Cannabis Group is a collective of cannabis advocates, patients, recreational consumers and industry professionals. SVCG's mission is to actively engage the community and city government to help bring cannabis business to Sonoma. SVCG was founded in August of 2017 and currently has 214 members.*



**Sonoma Valley Cannabis Group | For responsible health care policy**

✉ [SVCG@sonomavalleycannabisgroup.com](mailto:SVCG@sonomavalleycannabisgroup.com) [www.sonomavalleycannabisgroup.com](http://www.sonomavalleycannabisgroup.com)

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**Warning:** If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected, **do not** click any web links, attachments, and **never** give out your user ID or password.

**From:** [Justin A](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** cannabis regulation comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:23:05 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.

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- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.
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- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
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- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
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- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these

documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

Justin Arowcavage  
c: (415) 906-9691

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**From:** [Jamie Ballachino](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [James.Gore@sonoma-county.org](mailto:James.Gore@sonoma-county.org); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Shirlee Zane](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [courseyforsupervisor@gmail.com](mailto:courseyforsupervisor@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 9:28:30 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am a small cannabis farmer in Sonoma County and have been cultivating under my current legal cannabis business for the last 15 years. I am currently a state licensed cultivator. I do not have a county permit, but have been working on trying to get one for the last 4 years. It hasn't been any easy ride. I'd like to voice my support over the following changes that myself and many other local farmers feel the need to express:

### 1) Pipeline Clause

When I first applied for my cultivation permit I was told that I would have priority since I was already in business as a cultivator under the medical marijuana laws. I was told that I needed an AG property that was at least 2 acres. The Board Of Supervisors voted unanimously in favor of this 2 acre minimum. I was also told that my permit would take about 6 months to achieve. Four years later, I have no permit, and now my 7 acre parcel is considered too small under the new ordinance. Keep in mind that this parcel would have been over 3 times larger than it needed to be under the first version of your Ordinance. There was a Pipeline Clause in the last version of the Ordinance. I do not see one in this ordinance. If you don't have a way for the operators that followed your guidance in the beginning to be grandfathered in, you have effectively betrayed them. My career will come to a sudden halt, for my hard earned license will no longer be valid. Please put the Pipeline Clause back in the law!!!

### 2) Parcel Size Cap

I support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.

### 3) Individual Limits

I support the removal of individual cultivation limits of 1 acre per person.

### 4) Setbacks

I support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency, I also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of

any adjacent sensitive use.

#### **5) Cultural Resources**

While preservation of cultural and historic resources is vital, I am concerned about subjecting each ministerial project to potential mitigations. Alternatively, I request that a list of cultural surveyors pre-approved by local tribes be utilized to perform the required cultural surveys.

#### **6) Water Use**

I suggest refraining from adding additional water use restrictions beyond what is required for conventional agriculture.

#### **7) Important farmlands**

I suggest that there should be no 1:1 offset for cannabis, and this should be regulated like other agriculture crops.

#### **8) Ridge top protection**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### **9) Slope planting limitations**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### **10) Hoop houses**

I am in favor of establishing policy to allow hoop houses to be permanent on property to reduce unnecessary material and labor waste, as well as improved sustainability because of reduced water usage.

#### **9) Energy/ Generators**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### **10) Operational hours**

These are already regulated by the state, so no local regulations are necessary.

#### **11) Events**

I would like to see the County align events with the policy governing the wine industry to ensure community benefit and the opportunity for participation in the state event licensing program.

#### **11) Fire prevention**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same

language as other agriculture for consistency.

12) **Wastewater**

This is already regulated by the State, so no local regulations are necessary.

13) **Lighting**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

Thank you for the hard work,

Jamie Ballachino  
President  
Hands in the Earth, Inc.  
License #:  
CCL18-0000131  
841 Leslie Rd.  
Healdsburg, CA 95448  
Email:  
[Jamie@HandsInTheEarth.com](mailto:Jamie@HandsInTheEarth.com)

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**Warning:** If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected,  
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**From:** [Jeff Calegari](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Letters of Support for Ordinance Change  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 12:14:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [JusticeCannabisCo-V3-45hx125w\\_45e68ba8-fb42-4fbe-a661-1494e8b007e6.png](#)  
[LoS Cannabis Owner Leader Supporting HoopHouses.docx](#)  
[LoS General Stronger Economy.docx](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

Thank you

**Jeff Calegari**  
Vice President, Western Region

415-847-2930  
[jcalegari@justicecannabisco.com](mailto:jcalegari@justicecannabisco.com)



422 Larkfield Center #325  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[www.justicecannabisco.com](http://www.justicecannabisco.com)

The Future of Justice Grown is Justice Cannabis Co. [Learn More](#)

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Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Dr #102A  
Administration Building  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Dear PRMD & Sonoma County Supervisors,

I'm writing to you today as one of many cannabis business leaders who are in support of the use of cannabis hoop houses and the revisions of the cannabis ordinance. There are a number of scientific benefits to this practice, as well as community benefits, and I encourage you to keep language in the cannabis ordinance that will keep these benefits available to cannabis operators and the community alike.

The use of hoop houses is crucial to the continued viability of Sonoma County cannabis in a statewide market. Not only does it help smaller cannabis farmers to grow a higher quality outdoor product, but it allows Sonoma County growers entirely to compete with neighboring County cannabis operators.

Hoop houses protect cannabis during critical stages of development while also limiting overspray from adjacent parcels and protects the cannabis from smoke and particulate matter. This is particularly important for medical cannabis patients. Furthermore the use of hoop houses allows the grower greater quality control and protection from the elements. In addition to the benefits it provides the cannabis grower and customers, hoop houses also serve as a screen from public view and can add helpful layers of security to the operation.

Thank you for your consideration,

NAME – Jeff Calegari  
TITLE – VP of the Western Region of Justice Cannabis Co  
ADDRESS – 3541 Regional Parkway

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Dr #102A  
Administration Building  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Dear PRMD & Sonoma County Supervisors,

I write to you today to encourage you to adopt a comprehensive cannabis cultivation ordinance that will expand the industry responsibly to grow our economy and support those ancillary businesses that benefit from a working cannabis industry.

As with any other sector or industry, cannabis farmers spend money to build their farming capacity. That means infrastructure, hiring tradespeople, and purchasing building materials. All of this keeps our collective economy flowing with the exchange of goods and services. There are hundreds of cannabis ancillary businesses throughout Sonoma County that completely depend on the strength and success of the cannabis industry.

A more comprehensive cannabis ordinance should be looking to expand our local economy and share the benefits of this new industry. With local cannabis regulations being in a perpetual state of change, these ordinance revisions should reflect that which the state of California has already deemed appropriate when it comes to cannabis operations. Instead of rewriting the ordinance every 18 months, we ought to strive to match the state policy instead of creating our own. With a comprehensive cannabis ordinance that matches state law more cannabis businesses and ancillary businesses can participate in the new market with a degree of confidence that the rug won't be pulled out from under them.

As a County we ought to strive to diversify our agricultural offerings and by doing so we are investing in our collective future where a wide range of businesses from soil producers to light manufacturers benefit alike.

Thank you for your consideration,

NAME – Jeff Calegari  
TITLE – VP of Western Region for Justice Cannabis Co  
ADDRESS – 3541 Regional Parkway

**From:** [Jamie Reagan](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Policy update comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:27:50 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Board of Supervisors

After reading through the draft and suggested updates to amend the cannabis permit and zoning rules. I would like to include my support of most listed changes. I am excited to see cannabis progress as a whole in Sonoma County.

However, as a licensed dispensary in Sonoma County I want further details as to why we would move to align cultivation sites to include retail sales but retail locations aren't included in the option to cultivate? I support tasting room of flower or cannabis products produced onsite, similar to wineries, and limited sales of those specific items. I especially love the idea of events such as cannabis weddings. However, sales should be through a dispensary and delivery service. I don't feel that flower produced on other farms or products such as manufactured items ie vapes, edibles, concentrates from other facilities by same operator should be included as stated in this draft. Tasting should be limited to site specific and part of the tourism plan. Or if anything else with retail of farm stand style store it should be limited to the public for weekends only. I do not want farms to become retail stores for all things cannabis. It should be limited to what is produced on location. Finally, If on site consumption is something that is finally being considered in Sonoma County, retailers should be included in the language as allowable with permit.

Please reach out to me for additional discussion on these topics.

Sincerely,

Jamie Reagan, CEO  
Down Under Industries  
Cell 707-478-7237

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Non conforming parcels  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:19:29 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Will the county be restricting ministerial permits to conforming parcels within the 4 zoning areas to keep commercial cannabis outside areas where the zoning may be "DA" but the use of the area is more representative of RR and AR and the "DA" parcel is legal but non-conforming?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Odor  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:22:20 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

There is now a lot of information available coming from other states where studies are being done regarding odor/air quality reach of up to roughly 1,000 feet.

How will the Board of Supervisors and the Ag department be addressing the odor/air quality issues and both outdoor and mixed-light given these study results?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** CEQA/water usage  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:25:45 PM

---

## **EXTERNAL**

Preliminary water usage information on cannabis shows cannabis uses approximately 6 times the amount of water per acre than wines and/or residential uses.

How is it that 65,000 eligible acres of cannabis in the county, the vast majority being new production, does not trigger a CEQA evaluation on water usage – especially since we could be losing the water source from Lake Pillsbury?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Violation inspections  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:37:08 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Humboldt County has surprise visits on cannabis sites to insure compliance, where permits are reviewed and plants inspected for compliance. Will the Board of Supervisors be removing the advance notice given to cannabis growers before an inspector comes onsite?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Answers to questions  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:41:50 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Can you please let us know when/where the answers to the questions will be available?

Will they be posted on the website?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Greenhouses  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:45:42 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Since greenhouses are being treated as indoor for setback requirements, will they be required to have the same odor control requirements as other indoor?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Press Release  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:50:32 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Would you be willing to send a press release out with the changes to the ordinance to the local newspapers/Press Democrat and also some of the FAQs along with informing the residents of Sonoma County at large what is going on with the Cannabis ordinance?

I looked all over the Press Democrat website to get information and there was ZERO mention of these ordinance changes and the deadlines for public comment.

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Sensitive uses  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:53:12 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

Will this include schools, parks and other locations where children congregate?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Please explain water source definitions  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:59:21 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

What do you mean by “retail” supply?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** NIMBY comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:05:40 PM

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## EXTERNAL

With all due respect, there have been a couple NIMBY comments and I think it's important to note that most community members don't believe that commercial cannabis should be located in ANYONE'S back yard.

That these grows should be away from homes and children.

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** What does the annual review entail?  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:10:08 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

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**From:** [Kila Peterson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 12:30:37 PM

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## EXTERNAL

- It is confusing that you only have even numbered articles.
- Please define Critical Watershed.
- 38.02.040 says shall apply to **all** commercial cannabis occurring in ag and rrd. This is not correct because you can still have a permit under chapter 26. You can still get a discretionary permit if you don't qualify under 38. For example, if you can't make the new ridgeline or water use requirements. Thank you for adding RRD!
- 38.02.040 C. Why do you have federal law here when cannabis is not federally legal? This cancels out your whole ordinance and should be removed.
- 38.02.050 A. Allows the Ag Commissioner to issue an official written interpretation. This is dangerous and should be removed as it may lead to bias and inequity. One person should not have power over decisions. They should be written out and equal to all.
- 38.02.070 A. The state of California mandates individual CEQA compliance site by site. How will you deal with this requirement? The documents need to be added as an Appendix.
- Article 6 should be 06
- 38.06.010 Does this include renewals for permits obtained under chapter 26?
- 38.06.030 This information should be added as an Appendix and not a phone call. It is easy to get the wrong information from someone answering a phone call. This should be transparent.
- 38.10.030 A Five year permits are great! Thank you. Should be date, not edate.
- 38.10.030 B Thank you for this grandfathering clause. You should also include a clause for exisiting cannabis farms that are now non-conforming due to ordinance changes. Please protect the folks who went through the CUP process, are in penalty relief, and/or have been unable to finnish their permits due to the long and challenging process.
- 38.10.050 All or just ministerial? What about discretionary permits under chapter 26? Please be clear in the language.
- 38.12.020 A If someone owns two parcels next to each other and they add up to 10 acres, why would they be disqualified? Please remove "single."
- 38.12.030 A 1. Thank you for increasing the total canopy size. Are we now allowed to have unlimited canopy or is it still 10,000 square feet per property and 1 acre within the county? Please explain. Is a hoop house now considered outdoor? Because the definition of a hoop house has changed and is now allowed to have temporary power and shade cloth. So is a hoop house outdoor or mixed light? If I have an outdoor permit, can I now use supplemental lighting to do a winter grow? Please clarify.
- 38.12.030 2. Does this include Nurseries or flowering only? Please clarify. I would like to advocate for inclusion. Right now, greenhouse Nurseries are only allowed 10,000 square feet. This is too small to support the increase in allowable canopy for large properties.
- 38.12.030 C. Is this just a building permit and not a use permit? Please clarify.
- 36.12.040 3. Measures site of cultivation to property line of sensitive use but C says property line to property line. Please clarify if there is a change here and be consistent. Thank you for grandfathering in use. Please explain the use permit that allows a

separation reduction and how that works with this chapter.

- 38.12.050 C. Are tribes allowed to add conditions? Because this is ministerial, and should have no conditions.
- 38.12.060 A 1. Since 2016, 25% of our county has burned down. This leaves much land that needs to be worked, dead trees removed, and new projects allowed. Please change the language to reflect that dead trees in burned areas may be (and should be) removed.
- 38.12.060 2. The graphic is missing.
- 38.12.060 B. Please add link to interactive map showing where "important farmlands" are.
- 38.12.070 C. Please add link to interactive map showing where "biotic habitat combing zones" are.
- 38.12.080 A. Didn't we lose our certification for chapter 13? Should this be removed and state law referenced? If emergency vehicle access is equal to 20 foot wide roads, please state that here. Will outdoor not be held to this standard and only properties with buildings? Please explain how you are dealing with the Board Of Forestry changes at the state level.
- 38.12.090 C. Please add link to interactive map showing where "Ridgetops" are. Please add a detailed description under the definitions. The Board Of Forestry defines ridge and ridgeline very differently. Please add graphics and clarify. Please add a clause to grandfather permit holders on ridges. I am specifically thinking about Pat Brandsford and David Drips.
- 30.12.010 should be 30.12.100 for Design, Lighting, Security and Screening
- 30.12.100 A. Please add a link or reference for the set standards.
- 38.12.100 C. 1. e. Again, 20 foot roads? If so, please clearly state.
- 38.12.100 D. 2. Thank you for removing native screening, as many are not evergreen. But my real complaint here is, why do we have to hide? We are growing a legal crop and should not be treated like we are hiding. Hemp can grow openly and is not any different looking. Even the Ag folks have to test it to tell if it is hemp or cannabis. This is just wrong.
- 38.12.100 D 4. Please elaborate. Are these a few sentences describing what types of plants we will use, or architectural drawings? Please change this to a description of what is allowed and don't leave room for NIBMYs to complain that they don't like the shrubs on the neighbors pot farm. Again, we shouldn't even have to hide.
- 38.12.110 B. What is the point? Hemp and outdoor cannabis can stink up the county, but indoor and greenhouse have to filter smell? Unacceptable. Again, we shouldn't have to hide anymore. It is an acceptable ag smell.
- 38.12.110 C. Carbon credits should not be allowed. Is this even a thing yet? It creates inequitable situations. We are growing plants that decrease CO<sub>2</sub>, not adding carbon to the atmosphere.
- 38.12.110 2. We should not have to wait for an emergency to be declared before we can save our crop. There can be local emergencies on single properties that will never be declared, yet are emergencies all the same. Give us some respect and assume we will follow rules. We are professionals and need to be able to use our own judgment in emergencies.
- 38.12.130 A. 1. You know how much water will be used. We should not need to come up with "data" to support estimates. Release a chart as an appendix. If changes from the chart occurs we will explain them.
- 38.12.140 1. Is retail water City water?
- 38.12.140 2. You should be asking us to truck water or use recycled water to offset ground and surface water use, not banning it. I understand wanting to make sure we

- have water without trucking, but we should still be allowed to do so as desired.
- 38.12.140 A.4. 1) Please add a link to the priority Groundwater Basin Map or list them here.
  - 38.12.140 A. 4. c. Are you going to wave the first year so people have time to do the test? We plant before the window.
  - 38.12.140 A. 5. We must be able to decide when it is an emergency and truck when we need to.
  - 38.12.140 B Is this for all zones or just 3&4? One and two should be exempt.
  - 38.14.020 B. Do we need ADA compliant bathrooms for indoor processing when we have outdoor permits? What about if we have temporary drying buildings? What type of processing does this include: harvesting, big leafing, weighing, drying, trimming, storing, grading, curing, packaging? All these are allowed on site. What if we don't have a building?
  - 38.14.020 C Is self transport allowed for discretionary permits as well?
  - 38.14.020 D. Please clarify. Is outdoor propagation unlimited? Are we allowed to use lights outside? Can they be in a hoop house? Why are we limiting propagation size? This should be the same as the state and not have a limit.
  - 38.14.020 E. I don't understand what this means. Please clarify.
  - 38.14.020 F. Please elaborate. Do we need a general plan amendment? How do we get these permits? Would we qualify to do events if we are licensed under chapter 26?
  - 38.16.020 B. Please remove this line. What about Use Permits under chapter 26? What about grandfathering in projects? It is unnecessary and untrue, which makes it dangerous.
  - 38.16.030 A Where are sections 1-7.1, 1-7.3, and 1-7.6?
  - 38.16.060 Please remove "guilty of misdemeanor." You can charge someone, but not say they are guilty without due process. Also, if we are working with you and in the legal market, we should not be threatened with criminal charges! Treat us like other Ag.
  - 38.16.070 B. If you give a "Stop work order" are we forced to cut down our plants without due process? If the order was in error, will the county reimburse the farmer for the year of lost income? This is dangerous and needs to be removed. Treat us like other Ag.

Thank you for your hard work in trying to make positive changes to the ordinance. This document still needs a lot of work.

Kila Peterson  
Sweetcreek Farm

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** [Kim Roberts-Gutzman](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Odor  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:15:25 PM

---

EXTERNAL

In Santa Barbara county home owners have tried to sell their homes that are next To a cannabis business and in a two year period they have had no offers. The odor Is unbearable. Is the county prepared to adjust property values given the negative Impact to our property's.

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** [Kim Roberts-Gutzman](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Odor  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 8:00:07 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Cannabis is NOT a plant that should be grow as a crop regulated by the Ag Dept.

This product should be grow in a ware house where it doesn't endanger our neighborhoods with crime, smell, and dried up water wells. A teenage shot in the head trying to steal pot. An older couple killed on Roblar Road because they had no pot. A shoot out on Hessel Road in Sebastopol over drugs and money, two killed. We don't want this next door to us.

There are a lot of 10 acre properties that are bordered by many small acreage properties. So 15 homes are negatively impacted by one pot grower. This is an unfair position for families.

Two of our neighbors have wells that are hand dug wells. Given the massive amount of water a crop of pot needs; this retired couple will have NO water.

We don't want our lives destroyed by the production of this drug. The state doesn't want people to smoke tobacco but pot is any different in its effect to our health and the cost to our health care.

Kim Roberts

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [BOS](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis ordinance draft changes  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 9:23:46 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Drive  
Room 100 A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Dear Members of the Board,

Thank you for moving forward with the difficult process of drafting a cannabis ordinance that will serve all Sonoma County citizens fairly and well.

As you are more than aware, Sonoma County agriculture has dealt with numerous and unprecedented challenges over the past several years, including multiple wildfires, market fluctuations, and a pandemic that has severely restricted agricultural tourism.

Now more than ever, it is vitally important that the county adopt the right policies - and in a timely fashion - that will keep our farmers and ag lands viable as a key economic sector and backbone of our community.

As a vital part of economic recovery for agricultural landowners in Sonoma County, I urge the Board of Supervisors, especially with new state cannabis appellation laws in effect, to take action that will give landowners and farmers the opportunity to remain viable and competitive across the largest and most formidable cannabis market in the United States.

I support the expansion of ministerial permitting in agricultural and resource lands, and believe that the permitting of cannabis farms is appropriately placed under the authority of the Agricultural Commissioner.

I urge the Board of Supervisors to consider the below recommendations to expand opportunities for our current and future partners:

### 1) Parcel Size Cap

I support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.

### 2) Individual Limits

I support the removal of individual cultivation limits of 1 acre per person.

### 3) Setbacks

I support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency, I also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of any adjacent sensitive use.



#### 4) Cultural Resources

While preservation of cultural and historic resources is vital, I am concerned about subjecting each ministerial project to potential mitigations. Alternatively, I request that a list of cultural surveyors pre-approved by local tribes be utilized to perform the required cultural surveys.

#### 5) Water Use

I suggest refraining from adding additional water use restrictions beyond what is required for conventional agriculture.

#### 6) Important farmlands

I suggest that there should be no 1:1 offset for cannabis, and this should be regulated like other agriculture crops.

#### 5) Ridge top protection

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### 7) Slope planting limitations

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### 8) Hoop houses

I am in favor of establishing policy to allow hoop houses to be permanent on property to reduce unnecessary material and labor waste, as well as improved sustainability because of reduced water usage.

#### 9) Energy/ Generators

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### 10) Operational hours

These are already regulated by the state, so no local regulations are necessary.

#### 11) Events

I would like to see the County align events with the policy governing the wine industry to ensure community benefit and the opportunity for participation in the state event licensing program.

#### 12) Fire prevention

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

#### 13) Wastewater

This is already regulated by the State, so no local regulations are necessary.

#### 14) Lighting

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lai

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**From:** [Cindy Schellenberg](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Town Hall Comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:17:22 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Sonoma County,

I am very strongly opposed to any continuation and indeed expansion of the ministerial process in conjunction with commercial cannabis permit applications and approvals. This process is diametrically opposed to the civil rights of residents in neighborhoods to be informed of, as well as participate in decisions that will change their safety and quality life. It only makes it easier for pot growers and county staff and that is not what it means to be a public servant.

L. Schellenberg  
Penngrove

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**From:** [Marta May](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Regulations  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:22:01 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Planning Commission C/O McCall Miller  
Department Analyst, Cannabis Program  
County Administrator's Office  
575 Administration Drive  
Suite 104 A  
Santa Rosa, Ca. 95403

Petaluma (Bloomfield), California, March 8, 2021

### **To all local officials and authorities concerned.....**

We, David and Marta May, along with all the other 422 residents of the town of Bloomfield, ask our local officials to act responsibly in restricting Cannabis growing areas as to **not jeopardize the quality of living in Rural Residential neighborhoods such as ours.**

The legalization of Cannabis is a fact. The way the legalization is implemented is left to **the elected officials in the Counties and Cities. *Please act responsibly!***

The industry has well-connected Sonoma County people in its leadership. Many “conflicts of interest” can be sited as related to people who are supposed to be protecting the interests and safety of Sonoma County’s unincorporated small communities **who have only the County Board of Supervisors to protect their interests.** They will be held accountable! We do not have elected members or a Mayor.

We understand the Board of Supervisors is considering relaxing Cannabis grow regulations. We have read most of the documents involved and **seriously object** to the new changes adversely impacting our town and our way of life. We, the citizens of Bloomfield request the Board of Supervisors instead develop a comprehensive plan on how small rural communities can be protected and continue to thrive as home to residents who value their rural location and want to protect their neighborhood **values and safety.** Our neighborhood **is not** compatible with the proposed new Cannabis development rules... *“sets objective standards for issuance of ministerial permits in those zones to protect public health, safety, and the environment and to promote neighborhood compatibility.”*

### **Location, Zoning and Project Description:**

The purchase of the Zimmerman Dairy at 6405/6410 Cockrill Street in Bloomfield by Petrichor Sungrown LLC brings with it the intention to commercially grow cannabis in our town, drill new wells, and construct new buildings to support this commercial endeavor.

### **The property parcels are:**

027-100-025 (2.3 acres) / 027-100-026 (1.45 acres) / 027-020-007 (5.09 acres)  
027-020-008 (5. acres) / 027-020-009 (51.4 acres) / 027-020-010 (16.01 acres)

The owners of such parcels propose to maintain a large (if allowed through the new rules) grow and development of cannabis cultivation...**right in the center of our town!**

**How can anyone in good conscience allow such development?**

How could the laws be altered in a manner **as to not protect** an entire residential town of 424 inhabitants?

WE can think of a few reasons not to allow any of it in our community.....

1) The parcels in question are in the center of our town. They were a dairy farm, but have been inactive for many years. Many **wild life species** have made their home within, and will be seriously impacted by the proposed grow.

2) Our cemetery, where the local pioneers are buried, is a **historic park**, and it is adjacent to the proposed growing area. **We are a historic Community!**

3) The people who have bought the land, desire to create a **“Cannabis Resort”** They intend to build **houses and swim pools** and create a “spa” where many strangers will invade our town. The **traffic** from the visitors as well as the trucks required for the operation will be horrific!

I quote.... *“clarify the relationship between the two chapters regarding local land use regulation of*

*cannabis cultivation and supply chain business activity and when a discretionary use permit is*

*required. The ordinance changes include the removal of the prohibition on tasting, promotional*

*activities, and events related to commercial cannabis activities”* **Why destroy the safety of our town?**

4) Water: Bloomfield is in a marginal Zone 2 groundwater area, precludes large-scale commercial, water-intensive activities such as cannabis or vineyards. **Swim pools? Really?** It takes an extreme amount of water to bring each individual plant to maturity? Grown **water depletion** and **pollution** of our ground water by the many **chemicals and pesticides** used to keep the plants safe from plague. 13 different pesticides are shown in the Site Management Plan. **This is a town of organic gardens.**

5) Not far from us, and in an area hit by our heavy winds, is **Olympia House, a recovery center**. It’s also important to note, as it currently doesn’t show on the county’s Cannabis Site Evaluation map, that The Olympia House Alcohol Rehab and Drug Treatment Center at 11207 Valley Ford Rd is part of the Bloomfield Community, and cannabis grow is not compatible with a drug treatment center. The people that are there trying to cure their addiction will get **“Contact High”** The entire town of Bloomfield is downwind of the prevailing coastal winds that flow from the ocean down the lowlands of the Estero Americano. Any odors originating from the properties in question would quickly propagate through the entire area.

6) Our **air quality** will be seriously disturbed. Many of us are elderly and with our age come respiratory problems. Many of us walk daily. Why would anyone who is trying to **preserve a safe way of life** for our community allow our air quality to be ruined with the **perpetual smell of skunk** that accompanies

such Cannabis growth operations?

<!--[if !supportLists]-->7) <!--[endif]-->Fire Safety and Road Access Concerns. The town of Bloomfield has narrow one-lane roads with no sidewalks. Two cars have to allow each other space to pass. When we walk, some of us with our children, stop to allow cars to pass us safely. The LEA parcels of the proposed commercial cannabis (grow) operation are surrounded by RR. There is no buffer; nor current access roads other than Mill Street and Cockrill Street. Access roads need to follow the existing ordinances for a commercial operation for both access and fire safety. We are far from any fire response team and /or/ ambulances. Our nearest volunteer fire station is approximately 4.6 miles and 6 minutes away. Our unincorporated town has no police department and depends on the Sonoma County Sheriff Patrol. Bloomfield is in Fire Zone 5, an area of 178 square miles. The town is downwind of the proposed site, with fire escape routes on the same one-lane roads that fire vehicles would need to use. The Sonoma County document located at [www.sonomacounty.ca.gov](http://www.sonomacounty.ca.gov), ‘Cannabis Cultivation Within Resources And Rural Development Lands’ studies key issues and policy options in rural (RR) areas such as ours. It notes that, “Although cannabis cultivation operations would have to obtain proper building and electrical permits, allowing cannabis in this area would increase the number of structures and people that would potentially need emergency protection.” SAFETY FIRST!

<!--[if !supportLists]-->8) <!--[endif]-->The owners of the proposed development tell us they will be **active around the clock....24/7**. There is much **noise** as well as **light pollution** associated with such enterprise. Many of the residents of the town’s back yards are adjacent to the operation.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->9) <!--[endif]-->The new owners of the land propose to guard their enterprise with “**drones**.” What will they do to our town’s rights to **privacy** and specially that of the adjacent residents?

<!--[if !supportLists]-->10) <!--[endif]-->Safety? Security? Many such operations are guarded by armed **guards**. **Crime** follows; Threat of **violent crimes**. With the wholesale price of cannabis ever increasing, our concerns are not only about our protection, but the storage of both cash and cannabis. **Are we to be condemned to such perils?**

<!--[if !supportLists]-->11) <!--[endif]-->A commercial enterprise of such magnitude in the middle of a residential town? Really? How can that be morally acceptable nor legal?

**We, the citizens that reside in the community of Bloomfield, overwhelmingly oppose the proposed operation of parcels: 027-100-025 (2.3 acres) / 027-100-026 (1.45 acres) / 027-020-007 (5.09 acres) / 027-020-008 (5. acres)027 / 020-009 (51.4 acres) / 027-020-010 (16.01 acres) Address: 6405/6410 Cockrill Street in Bloomfield by Petrichor Sungrown LLC.**

We believe cultivation as presently proposed should be evaluated on ALL SIX SITES, to assess their cumulative impact upon our community. No permit for a cannabis operation around and within our RR neighborhood should be granted. Cannabis cultivation should not be allowed to proliferate and/or be concentrated in the vicinity of communities. The zoning that allows this should be amended to reflect that this parcels are in the middle of an RR town. **We, the citizens that reside in the community of Bloomfield, overwhelmingly oppose** having a commercial cannabis operation located in the middle of our TOWN !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

David and Marta May

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**Warning:** If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected,  
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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#)  
**Subject:** QUESTIONS FOR THE VIRTUAL MEETINGS on the Cannabis drafts  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 7:47:59 AM

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## EXTERNAL

All these questions for the virtual “town halls” deal with hoop houses.

1. Are hoop houses considered “outdoor”? Has the category “mixed light” been abandoned?
2. If electricity is allowed, plumbing is extended and filtration for odor is not required, isn’t a hoop house an unpermitted and inexpensive green house?
3. Is a permit required to extend electricity to proposed hoop houses? Is a demotion permit required to dismantle the electricity?
4. If plumbing is extended to hoop houses, will a permit be required?
5. Do the allowed 180 days need to be contiguous? If the days are not required to be contiguous, using nursery clones, how many crops can be harvested each year in a hoop house?
6. Who will monitor the 180 days allowed?
7. If more than one crop is being produced each year how many months of odor will there be? The SMND says there will be no more than two months of odor for outdoor grows. Is there likely to be 8 months of odor for hoop house grows?
8. How will Code Enforcement monitor when a grower doesn’t bother to put tarps over the hoop houses at night?
9. If growers don’t cover up the hoop houses up with tarps, will “glow worms” result lighting up area that used to be completely dark?
10. Has changing hoop houses into de facto greenhouses with allowable electrical, plumbing and mechanical features without the need for the environmental review been studied as a CEQA issue?
11. What is impermanent about these structures? Will they be allowed to have foundations as well as electricity , plumbing with no requirements for filtration for odor?
12. Is filtration for odor from hoop houses impossible?



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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** QUESTIONS FOR CANNABIS VIRTUAL MEETING  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 9:47:57 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

ANOTHER QUESTION RE: HOOP HOUSES

The new chapter 26 goes into effect tomorrow 3/9, with the definition of hoop houses gone. According to the definitions, current cannabis operations can start putting lights in their hoop houses as of tomorrow- the def of mixed light says 'greenhouses or other structures' and it can be only using natural light. It would not be included under "Cannabis Cultivation- Outdoor".

**Cannabis Cultivation - Mixed-Light.** Cannabis cultivation in a greenhouse or other similar structure using natural light, light deprivation, and/or any combination of natural and supplemental artificial lighting.

**Cannabis Cultivation – Outdoor.** Cannabis cultivation using no artificial lighting conducted in the ground or in containers outdoors.

Will many cannabis operators will be in violation of their applications that include specified sf for outdoor vs mixed light, if they start using hoop houses as of March 9, even with no artificial light.

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** QUESTION FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS ON CANNABIS DRAFTS  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:47:16 AM  
**Attachments:** [Water meter automation.docx](#)

---

## EXTERNAL

### QUESTION:

Have automated well water meter usage systems been considered for cannabis wells? Wouldn't such a requirement be in compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Act?

I am a member of a small county water company (80 residences) that recently converted to an automated system. The cost was reasonable and the benefits a real plus. Not only did it eliminate the need for manual bi-monthly reading of the meters, but provides real time usage, as well as monthly/seasonal fluctuations. This would be a win-win for the growers as well as the county. For the growers it would eliminate the work involved in recording and self-reporting and for the county/public there would be confidence in the accuracy of the ground water usage/demand for cannabis irrigation.

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [David Rabbitt](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [district4](#); [district5](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#); [Robert Pittman](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Christina Rivera](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC NOTICING DOES NOT MEET TRANSPARENCY GOALS: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 4:00:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [SantaRosaPressDemocrat\\_20210308.pdf](#)

---

## EXTERNAL

**Good afternoon, Supervisors,**

**Attached is a public notice in today's (3/8) Press Democrat. The public notice states that the meeting materials are available on the cannabis program website. Those meeting materials including the agenda and staff report to the Planning Commission as well as all other supporting documentation are of vital interest to many county residents. Unfortunately, those materials are NOT available as advertised on the Cannabis web pages.**

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**See email below for a similar mistake in November of 2019 and the posting of materials for the hemp ordinance hearings days after the public notice was published.**

**Sonoma County can do much better.**

## Nancy Richardson, for the Neighborhood Coalition

**From:** Nancy and Brantly Richardson <[nrchrdsn@sonic.net](mailto:nrchrdsn@sonic.net)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 19, 2019 10:56 PM

**To:** 'SonomaAg@sonoma-county.org' <[SonomaAg@sonoma-county.org](mailto:SonomaAg@sonoma-county.org)>; 'Tony Linegar' <[Tony.Linegar@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tony.Linegar@sonoma-county.org)>; 'Bruce Goldstein' <[Bruce.Goldstein@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Bruce.Goldstein@sonoma-county.org)>; 'Sita Kuteira' <[Sita.Kuteira@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Sita.Kuteira@sonoma-county.org)>

**Cc:** 'larry@reedgilliland.com' <[larry@reedgilliland.com](mailto:larry@reedgilliland.com)>; 'pcook@ch-sc.org' <[pcook@ch-sc.org](mailto:pcook@ch-sc.org)>; 'cameron@mauritsonfarms.com' <[cameron@mauritsonfarms.com](mailto:cameron@mauritsonfarms.com)>; 'johnlowryCA@gmail.com' <[johnlowryCA@gmail.com](mailto:johnlowryCA@gmail.com)>; 'Pamela Davis' <[p.davis479@gmail.com](mailto:p.davis479@gmail.com)>; 'sonomafogg@aol.com' <[sonomafogg@aol.com](mailto:sonomafogg@aol.com)>

**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT FOR THE PROPOSED HEMP ORDINANCE HEARING 11/21/19

Please add to the Proposed Hemp Ordinance file for Planning Commission meeting on November 21, 2019

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The process does not exhibit transparency in government or encourage public participation.

Nancy Richardson

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PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR COUNTY OF SONOMA CANNABIS LAND USE ORDINANCE AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS
WHO & WHAT: The County of Sonoma is proposing to adopt amendments to the County Code, Chapter 26 and new Chapter 38...

AMENDED NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF Hilma J. Schaffer CASE NO. SPR-095456
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will, or estate or both, of: Hilma J. Schaffer.

COUNTY OF SONOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS NOTICE TO BIDDERS CONTRACT NO. C21401
Sealed bids for the work shown on the plans entitled: COUNTY OF SONOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS CONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR: 2021 PAVEMENT PRESERVATION PROGRAM - FULL DEPTH RECLAMATION AND OVERLAYS

NOTICE OF ESCHEAT OF MONIES IN THE BAY AREA TOLL AUTHORITY FASTRAK® REFUND ACCOUNT UNCLAIMED FOR THREE YEARS PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 50050 ET SEQ.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that there is in the Treasury of the Bay Area Toll Authority - FasTrak® Refund Account, un-claimed FasTrak® customer credit balances arising from un-cashed refund checks issued to FasTrak® customers that have remained outstanding, since before December 31, 2017 in an amount totaling \$397,086.88.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF Richard Allen Comfort CASE NO. SPR-095401
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will, or estate or both, of: Richard Allen Comfort.

NOTICE INVITING BIDS
1. Notice is hereby given that the Governing Board of the Rincon Valley Union School District ("District"), of the County of Sonoma, State of California, will receive sealed bids for the Matanzas Elementary School Roofing Rehabilitation Project (Roof Repair and Special Coatings) up to, but not later than, 2:00 pm, on April 6, 2021 and will thereafter publicly open and read aloud the bids.

Notice of Self Storage Sale
Please take notice Central Self Storage - Rohnert Park located at 6100 State Farm Dr., Rohnert Park, CA 94928 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility.

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE:
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to California Business and Professions Code sections 21700-2176, Storage Master will hold a Public Auction on 03-16-2021 at 9:00 am.

NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL PROPERTY
1. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, subject to confirmation by this court, on 3/13/2021, at 9:00 AM, or thereafter within the time allowed by law, RONALD EUGENE HALLEEN, Administrator of the estate of LARRY G. NERISON, also known as LARRY GENE NERISON, will sell at private sale, or public auction, to the highest and best bidder on the terms and conditions stated below all right, title, and interest that the estate has acquired in addition to that of the decedent at the time of death, in the real property located in Sonoma County, California.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF Katherine Wendy Hanes CASE NO. SPR-095447
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will, or estate or both, of: Katherine Wendy Hanes

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**From:** [Nancy and Brantly Richardson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD: PUBLIC NOTICING DOES NOT MEET TRANSPARENCY GOALS: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 6:21:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [SantaRosaPressDemocrat\\_20210308.pdf](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

To be clear, I want this email in the public record...N.R.

---

**From:** Nancy and Brantly Richardson <nrcchrdsn@sonic.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 4:01 PM  
**To:** David Rabbitt (David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org) <David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org>; 'chris.coursey@sonoma-county.org' <chris.coursey@sonoma-county.org>; Susan Gorin (Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org) <Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org>; 'district4@sonoma-county.org' <district4@sonoma-county.org>; 'district5' <district5@sonoma-county.org>  
**Cc:** 'Cannabis' <Cannabis@sonoma-county.org>; 'Robert.Pittman@sonoma-county.org' <Robert.Pittman@sonoma-county.org>; 'Tennis Wick' <Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org>; 'Scott Orr' <Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org>; 'McCall Miller' <McCall.Miller@sonoma-county.org>; 'Christina Rivera' <Christina.Rivera@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** PUBLIC NOTICING DOES NOT MEET TRANSPARENCY GOALS: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing

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**Sent:** Tuesday, November 19, 2019 10:56 PM

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**Cc:** 'larry@reedgilliland.com' <[larry@reedgilliland.com](mailto:larry@reedgilliland.com)>; 'pcook@ch-sc.org' <[pcook@ch-sc.org](mailto:pcook@ch-sc.org)>; 'cameron@mauritsonfarms.com' <[cameron@mauritsonfarms.com](mailto:cameron@mauritsonfarms.com)>; 'johnlowryCA@gmail.com' <[johnlowryCA@gmail.com](mailto:johnlowryCA@gmail.com)>; 'Pamela Davis' <[p.davis479@gmail.com](mailto:p.davis479@gmail.com)>; 'sonomafogg@aol.com' <[sonomafogg@aol.com](mailto:sonomafogg@aol.com)>

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**From:** [Phoebe Lang](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** question for town hall meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 12:57:11 PM

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## EXTERNAL

The Two Rock community in West Petaluma has seen a very strong emergence of commercial cannabis operations in the past several years with considerably more planned in the near future. Many are owned by entities from out of the area who do not live at these locations. The unbearable smell alone, not to mention the undue pressure placed on the already depleted water table and numerous other negative impacts, has been enough to drive a handful of longtime homeowners to sell their properties against their wishes. Several other families are preparing to place their homes on the market in the near future because commercial cannabis activities next to them are making life untenable.

As you prepare to possibly green-light thousands of acres worth of commercial cannabis to be grown all over the Two Rock area with little or no recourse available to the existing homeowners, **please comment on how this is representative of sound public policy and how it is in keeping with your stated commitment to take neighborhood compatibility into strong consideration.**

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**From:** [Ruess](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Brian Oh](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [district4](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [Matt@Waterboards.St.John](#); [Kayson Grady](#); [Rick Rogers](#); [Corinne.Gray@wildlife.ca.gov](#); [Jenna Von Esmarch](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); [Greg Carr](#); [Pamela Davis](#); [Michael Allen](#); [Janis Watkins](#); [Blake Hooper](#); [Anne Seeley](#); [Neal Fishman](#); [Danny Martinez](#); [Mark Walsh](#); [Matt Callaway](#); [Megan Kaun](#); [Sonia Taylor](#); [Ernest Carpenter](#); [Norman Gilroy](#); [Terry Harrison](#); [Evan Wiig](#); [Christina David](#); [George Davis](#); [Sheila's Fischer](#); [Wendy Krupnick](#); [Kimberly Burr](#); [Denny Rosatti](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 11:33:07 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Good morning,

Please implement a threshold based application process for cannabis operations. I suggest *in simplest terms* that three tiers be employed:

- 1) Ministerial permits issued for applications that meet *definable/measurable standards* that are determined to require NO mitigations.
- 2) Public hearings required for all applications that would fall into a mitigatable category - with clear measurable and achievable Conditions of Approval.
- 3) Applications beyond the limits of conditioning without thorough environmental analysis require an EIR.

There will certainly be specific language and very possibly far greater nuance necessary to employ this process, and I've not attempted to "get into the weeds" here. This is conceptual.

Several years ago Agencies and Departments met to consider this approach and it was well received as it would allow permit processing that could expedite review if all applications included information that would inform all Agencies and jurisdictions simultaneously.

Funding should also be provided for ongoing monitoring. There are several methods for this and should be worked out prior to project approvals.

Thank you all very much for your continuing efforts to get this right. No small task.

Take good care. Stay well.  
Rue

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**From:** [Ruth Wilson](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis; district4](#)  
**Subject:** proposed changes in cannabis permitting  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:18:12 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commission and Supervisor Gore -

I was very surprised to read of the proposed changes to the approval process for cannabis grows in Sonoma County. As a member of the Dry Creek Valley Citizens Advisory Council for four years, I participated in several reviews of use permits for cannabis grows. In all cases, presuming that neighbors had been made aware of the hearing, they attended the hearing to express their views. Although this process can be time consuming and contentious, I believe that it would be detrimental to eliminate the involvement of neighbors in the approval process.

Cannabis grows can have a major impact on the surrounding area, and it would be unfair and unwise to approve grows without formally soliciting input from neighboring properties. During my time as a member of the DCVCAC, our public hearings provided a forum for the applicant and affected neighbors to begin a conversation and work together to attempt to find a solution acceptable to all parties.

Sincerely,  
Ruth Wilson

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**From:** [Stacey Carlo](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Moderators - Zoom Chapter 38  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 3:20:38 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Good afternoon,

Thanks you for your time and encouragement today. I appreciate your work :-)

Can you please watch out for those that are making inappropriate/harassing comments. I'm just here to learn, not judge. I didn't appreciate J7 (username) chastising me publicly. If you want public comment and engagement, perhaps those that are less than contributing should be censored.

Best,  
Stacey Carlo

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**From:** [Sam De La Paz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [james.gore@sonoma-county.org](mailto:james.gore@sonoma-county.org); [Andrew Smith](#); [Christina Rivera](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Ordinance Comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 2:56:28 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.

- In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.
- I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.

After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

- Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance where applicable to state laws.
- As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.
- Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.
  - Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries
- Please create an advisory commission for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the

industry.

- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.
- I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD.
- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
- Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.
- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot



point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.

- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)
- Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.
- Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

Sam De La Paz



**Sam De La Paz** Managing Partner, GreenWave  
Consulting LLC

---

707.827.3045 | 707.354.3884 | [sam@greenwaveconsult.us](mailto:sam@greenwaveconsult.us)

[www.greenwaveconsult.us](http://www.greenwaveconsult.us)



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*Sent with [Shift](#)*

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**From:** [sica](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [BOS](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis ordinance updates - comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:42:11 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

March 8, 2021

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

575 Administration Drive

Room 100 A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

[bos@sonoma-county.org](mailto:bos@sonoma-county.org)

RE: Cannabis Draft Ordinance

Dear Supervisor Hopkins and Other Honorable Members of the Board:

Thank you for moving forward with the difficult process of drafting a cannabis ordinance that will serve all Sonoma County citizens fairly and well.

As you are more than aware, Sonoma County agriculture has dealt with numerous and unprecedented challenges over the past several years, including multiple wildfires, market fluctuations, and a pandemic that has severely restricted agricultural tourism.

Now more than ever, it is vitally important that the county adopt the right policies - and in a timely fashion - that will keep our farmers and ag lands viable as a key economic sector and backbone of our community.

As a vital part of economic recovery for agricultural landowners in Sonoma County, I urge the Board of Supervisors, especially with new state cannabis appellation laws in effect, to take action that will give landowners and farmers the opportunity to remain viable and competitive across the largest and most formidable cannabis market in the United States.

I support the expansion of ministerial permitting in agricultural and resource lands, and believe that the permitting of cannabis farms is appropriately placed under the authority of the Agricultural Commissioner.

*I urge the Board of Supervisors to consider the below recommendations to expand opportunities for our current and future partners:*

**1) Parcel Size Cap**

I support removal of the 1 acre per parcel cap on cultivation, to be replaced with an allowance that 10% of the parcel be eligible for cannabis cultivation.

**2) Individual Limits**

I support the removal of individual cultivation limits of 1 acre per person.

**3) Setbacks**

I support setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse cultivation structures that are consistent with base zoning or applicable combining zone. For consistency, I also support measuring setback distance from the cultivation area to the property line of any adjacent sensitive use.

**4) Cultural Resources**

While preservation of cultural and historic resources is vital, I am concerned about subjecting each ministerial project to potential mitigations. Alternatively, I request that a list of cultural surveyors pre-approved by local tribes be utilized to perform the required cultural surveys.

**5) Water Use**

I suggest refraining from adding additional water use restrictions beyond what is required for conventional agriculture.

**6) Important farmlands**

I suggest that there should be no 1:1 offset for cannabis, and this should be regulated like other agriculture crops.

**5) Ridge top protection**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**7) Slope planting limitations**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**8) Hoop houses**

I am in favor of establishing policy to allow hoop houses to be permanent on property to reduce unnecessary material and labor waste, as well as improved sustainability because of reduced water usage.

**9) Energy/ Generators**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**10) Operational hours**

These are already regulated by the state, so no local regulations are necessary.

**11) Events**

I would like to see the County align events with the policy governing the wine industry to ensure community benefit and the opportunity for participation in the state event licensing program.

**12) Fire prevention**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**13) Wastewater**

This is already regulated by the State, so no local regulations are necessary.

**14) Lighting**

I suggest eliminating this in the cannabis regulations and manage it using the same language as other agriculture for consistency.

**15)**

I suggest eliminating the plant count for the cottage outdoor license type. Please align with the state and remove the plant count.

I thank the Board of Supervisors for considering these comments in the interest of maintaining economic viability for agricultural and resource lands in Sonoma County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sica Roman

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**From:** [sica](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [BOS](#)  
**Subject:** Sonoma County Ordinance draft amendments  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:25:36 PM

---

## **EXTERNAL**

**Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,**

**We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.**

**You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.**

- **In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.**
- **I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.**

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- **As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.**
- **Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.**
  - **Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries**
- **Please create an advisory commission for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.**
- **Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.**
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- **I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)**
- **Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.**
- **The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.**
- **Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.**
- **Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.**
- **Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.**
- **Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.**
- **Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.**
- **Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)**
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**the state which has removed the plant count.**

- **How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?**
- **Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?**
- **Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?**
- **How will renewals be handled?**

**Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.**

**Sincerely,**

**Sica Roman**

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**From:** [sica](#)  
**To:** [Gretchen Giles](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#); [Sonoma County Cannabis Coalition](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [SoCo Cannabis Coalition] Support for Cannabis in Sonoma County  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:38:49 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Beautiful,

Thank You Gretchen.

On 2021-03-08 13:27, Gretchen Giles wrote:

Dear Honorable Members of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and Madam Chair Lynda Hopkins:

I appreciate the care and thoughtful nature of your approach to better aligning Sonoma County's cannabis regulations with those of the state of California.

I feel strongly that Sonoma County should be world renowned for the quality of our sungrown cannabis and that we should make every effort to place our county in the best position possible to benefit from the cannabis appellation system newly instituted by the state. Tourism for cannabis as well as wine and food should be a major focus of our county's efforts.

We are at the gateway to the Emerald Triangle and make a perfect jumping off point for the curious and ambitious NorCal traveler. What's more, we have better, more plentiful, and more luxurious food and accommodations than do Mendocino, Humboldt, or Trinity counties — the triumvirate which compose the Emerald Triangle. We should be welcoming those travelers on their way north and providing them a memorable starting point against which to measure all others, knowing they'll soon return. To that end, let's ensure that our cannabis is given the same support we offer to our profitable wine industry.

Specifically, I request that the Board please:  
Treat cannabis as you do other ag products.  
Align Sonoma County goals with those of the state.  
Offer a more generous path forward for cannabis ag retail.  
Embrace cannabis tourism and pave the way for its full impact.

Recognizing the immense economic engine that cannabis is — California reaped \$1 billion in tax revenue last year from this one commodity and gained thousands of jobs that can only exist within the state — and harnessing its good is vital to the continued success of our county.

Thank you,  
Gretchen Giles  
Santa Rosa  
Gretchen Giles  
707.570.7887  
[@gretchengiles](mailto:@gretchengiles)  
[hellogretchen.com](http://hellogretchen.com)

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Sonoma County Cannabis

Coalition" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

To view this discussion on the web visit [https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition/CANO4ZqG%3DQu9fy8MhHrCR1LjoDXeLfPa2CFefYyZVFf\\_9O\\_qnxQ%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/sonoma-county-cannabis-coalition/CANO4ZqG%3DQu9fy8MhHrCR1LjoDXeLfPa2CFefYyZVFf_9O_qnxQ%40mail.gmail.com).

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Tennis Wick](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 7:51:37 AM  
**Attachments:** [SantaRosaPressDemocrat\\_20210308.pdf](#)

---

EXTERNAL

In today's Press Democrat is a public notice of the 3/18 Planning Commission public hearing on the cannabis "package."

See attached. In that public notice it states that the meeting materials are available on the Cannabis program website. I presume that those meeting materials will include the agenda and staff report to the Planning Commission, as well as all other supporting documentation.

Unfortunately, those materials are not available on either the Cannabis or the Planning Commission web pages.

While I will very much appreciate your posting the materials for this meeting 10 days in advance of the hearing -- in keeping with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed policy of supporting greater County transparency -- I'm wondering where those materials are.

Also, I think it would be important and appropriate to post those meeting materials on the County's Planning Commission website, since that is where the agendas, staff reports and other meeting materials properly belong. A secondary posting on the Cannabis website is also appropriate.

Please let me know when I can obtain the agenda, staff report, and other meeting materials (beyond the draft documents previously released in February).

I will appreciate your early response to this email, since the public notice has obviously been published.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
great6@sonic.net

Sonia

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Orr](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:19:54 AM

---

EXTERNAL

Thank you, Tennis. I hope that you will be able to post the agenda/staff report as soon as possible, naturally.

Please let me know the status when you find out.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
great6@sonic.net

On 3/8/2021 10:15 AM, Tennis Wick wrote:

> Good morning, Sonia.  
>  
> Thank you for bringing this information to our attention. Staff and I will follow up immediately.  
>  
>  
> Tennis Wick, AICP  
> Director  
> www.PermitSonoma.org  
> County of Sonoma  
> 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
> Direct: 707-565-1925 |  
> Office: 707-565-1900 | Fax: 707-565-1103  
>  
>  
>  
>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Sonia Taylor <great6@sonic.net>  
> Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 7:52 AM  
> To: Cannabis <Cannabis@sonoma-county.org>  
> Cc: Tennis Wick <Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org>  
> Subject: Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing

> EXTERNAL

> In today's Press Democrat is a public notice of the 3/18 Planning Commission public hearing on the cannabis "package."

> See attached. In that public notice it states that the meeting materials are available on the Cannabis program website. I presume that those meeting materials will include the agenda and staff report to the Planning Commission, as well as all other supporting documentation.

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in keeping with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed policy of supporting greater County transparency -- I'm wondering where those materials are.

>

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>

> Please let me know when I can obtain the agenda, staff report, and other meeting materials (beyond the draft documents previously released in February).

>

> I will appreciate your early response to this email, since the public notice has obviously been published.

>

> Sonia

>

> Sonia Taylor

> 707-579-8875

> great6@sonic.net

>

> Sonia

>

>

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Scott Orr](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:37:38 AM

---

EXTERNAL

Thank you for that information, Scott. Can you explain to me why a Public Notice was released today stating that all those materials are available NOW, and also allegedly available on the Cannabis webpage, instead of the Planning Agency webpage?

While I will appreciate the agenda and staff report for the 3/18 Planning Commission meeting being posted on 3/11, publishing a Public Notice making claims that are untrue is unacceptable, particularly considering the Board of Supervisors' new direction of requiring more governmental transparency and community engagement.

McCall, can you please immediately explain your actions?

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
great6@sonic.net

On 3/8/2021 10:28 AM, Scott Orr wrote:

> Hi Sonia, the March 18 PC materials, including the staff report, will be posted on the Planning Agency page on Thursday, March 11.

>

> Scott Orr

> Deputy Director of Planning

> [www.PermitSonoma.org](http://www.PermitSonoma.org)

> County of Sonoma

> Planning Division

> 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

> Direct: 707-565-1754 | Office: 707-565-1900

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Sonia Taylor <[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)>

> Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 10:20 AM

> To: Tennis Wick <[Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org)>; Cannabis <[Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org)>

> Cc: Scott Orr <[Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Scott.Orr@sonoma-county.org)>

> Subject: Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing

>

> EXTERNAL

>

> Thank you, Tennis. I hope that you will be able to post the agenda/staff report as soon as possible, naturally.

>

> Please let me know the status when you find out.

>

> Sonia

>

> Sonia Taylor

> 707-579-8875

> great6@sonic.net

>

> On 3/8/2021 10:15 AM, Tennis Wick wrote:

>> Good morning, Sonia.

>>

>> Thank you for bringing this information to our attention. Staff and I will follow up immediately.

>>

>>

>> Tennis Wick, AICP

>> Director

>> www.PermitSonoma.org

>> County of Sonoma

>> 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

>> Direct: 707-565-1925 |

>> Office: 707-565-1900 | Fax: 707-565-1103

>>

>>

>>

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Sonia Taylor <great6@sonic.net>

>> Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 7:52 AM

>> To: Cannabis <Cannabis@sonoma-county.org>

>> Cc: Tennis Wick <Tennis.Wick@sonoma-county.org>

>> Subject: Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing

>>

>> EXTERNAL

>>

>> In today's Press Democrat is a public notice of the 3/18 Planning Commission public hearing on the cannabis "package."

>>

>> See attached. In that public notice it states that the meeting materials are available on the Cannabis program website. I presume that those meeting materials will include the agenda and staff report to the Planning Commission, as well as all other supporting documentation.

>>

>> Unfortunately, those materials are not available on either the Cannabis or the Planning Commission web pages.

>>

>> While I will very much appreciate your posting the materials for this meeting 10 days in advance of the hearing - in keeping with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed policy of supporting greater County transparency -- I'm wondering where those materials are.

>>

>> Also, I think it would be important and appropriate to post those meeting materials on the County's Planning Commission website, since that is where the agendas, staff reports and other meeting materials properly belong. A secondary posting on the Cannabis website is also appropriate.

>>

>> Please let me know when I can obtain the agenda, staff report, and other meeting materials (beyond the draft documents previously released in February).

>>

>> I will appreciate your early response to this email, since the public notice has obviously been published.

>>

>> Sonia

>>

>> Sonia Taylor

>> 707-579-8875

>> great6@sonic.net

>>

>> Sonia



>>

>>

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**From:** [Sonia Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 3/18 Cannabis PC Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:50:07 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

McCall, I don't even quite know what to say to your response. This is not standard practice anywhere that I am aware of -- to publish a legal Public Notice to "elicit follow up correspondence."

Public Notices are legal documents. In this case, you promised something you can't deliver -- "Meeting materials are available...." As Scott Orr stated, below, the ACTUAL meeting materials will be available on Thursday 3/11, and then will be available on the Planning Agency website, where they belong (instead of being on the Cannabis website, where your public notice stated they would be).

If you want to elicit follow up correspondence, perhaps a Next Door or FaceBook post would have been more appropriate.

Sonia

Sonia Taylor  
707-579-8875  
[great6@sonic.net](mailto:great6@sonic.net)

On 3/8/2021 11:42 AM, Cannabis wrote:

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**From:** [jim@sosneighborhoods.com](mailto:jim@sosneighborhoods.com)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Question for Town Hall  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:59:26 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

The public has discovered countless issues in the draft documents. These flaws are shockingly numerous. Moreover, because the current draft is so challenging to interpret, there may be many more undetected flaws.

**QUESTION:** Has the county considered the solution of stopping this process and doing a re-write rather than addressing every mistake the public has discovered in the draft documents? Will the County actually bring this flawed, poorly written and cobbled together document to the Planning Commissioners?

-jim

---

Jim Bracco  
Save our Sonoma Neighborhoods  
[jim@sosneighborhoods.com](mailto:jim@sosneighborhoods.com)  
<http://www.sosneighborhoods.com>  
*Like us on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurSonomaNeighborhoods/>*

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**From:** [Willie Melia](#)  
**To:** [district4](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** New Cannabis Permitting and Ordinances  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 1:53:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [JusticeCannabisCo-V3-45hx125w\\_45e68ba8-fb42-4fbe-a661-1494e8b007e6.png](#)

---

**EXTERNAL**

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
575 Administration Dr #102A  
Administration Building  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Dear PRMD & Sonoma County Supervisors,

I write to you today to encourage you to adopt a comprehensive cannabis cultivation ordinance that will expand the industry responsibly to grow our economy and support those ancillary businesses that benefit from a working cannabis industry.

As with any other sector or industry, cannabis farmers spend money to build their farming capacity. That means infrastructure, hiring tradespeople, and purchasing building materials. All of this keeps our collective economy flowing with the exchange of goods and services. There are hundreds of cannabis ancillary businesses throughout Sonoma County that completely depend on the strength and success of the cannabis industry.

A more comprehensive cannabis ordinance should be looking to expand our local economy and share the benefits of this new industry. With local cannabis regulations being in a perpetual state of change, these ordinance revisions should reflect that which the state of California has already deemed appropriate when it comes to cannabis operations. Instead of rewriting the ordinance every 18 months, we ought to strive to match the state policy instead of creating our own. With a comprehensive cannabis ordinance that matches state law more cannabis businesses and ancillary businesses can participate in the new market with a degree of confidence that the rug won't be pulled out from under them.

As a County we ought to strive to diversify our agricultural offerings and by doing so we are investing in our collective future where a wide range of businesses from soil producers to light manufacturers benefit alike.

Thank you for your consideration,

Willie Melia  
Production Manager, Justice Cannabis Co.  
3612 Sweetgum St  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**Willie Melia**  
Processing Supervisor

707-528-9984  
willie@justicecannabisco.com



422 Larkfield Center #325  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
[www.justicecannabisco.com](http://www.justicecannabisco.com)

The Future of Justice Grown is Justice Cannabis Co. [Learn More](#)

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**From:** [barbara thomas](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis growth in Sonoma county  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 7:39:29 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

I am writing to let you know I have no problem having people grow cannabis in Sonoma County. I think this will bring in more jobs and taxes that we need.  
Barbara Thomas

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**From:** [craigspencerharrison@gmail.com](mailto:craigspencerharrison@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** The wrong way to plan for cannabis cultivation  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:59:12 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The article below was primarily written by Ray Krauss, a retired professional planner.

I hope that you will recommend to county staff that they change direction and properly plan for this activity.

The county has for years wasted the time of residents and growers by failing to undertake standard, proper planning.

Craig S. Harrison  
4953 Sonoma Mountain Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-573-9990  
<https://www.craigsharrison.net/>

---

Kenwood Press  
Guest Editor: 04/01/2019  
**The wrong way to plan for cannabis cultivation**

By Ray Krauss and Craig S. Harrison

On April 16, the Board of Supervisors will decide whether to direct Permit Sonoma to address the severe compatibility problems with cannabis cultivation in rural neighborhoods. Last year the supervisors publicly committed to amending the cannabis ordinance to fix these problems, but ultimately failed to

do much.

The supervisors need to acknowledge the fundamental problem. The primary reason there are so many “problem sites” with cannabis cultivation is that they turned the planning process upside down. Even if all problem sites today were denied permits, there will be more applications for new problem sites in the future.

The proper way to proceed is to identify sites that are suitable based on a set of planning criteria, not identify sites where there may be problems. That is how all other planning is done. For example, in preparing the General Plan and Zoning Maps, planners identify those areas where specified uses are environmentally suitable and compatible with surrounding uses. Thus, we end up with identified commercial zones, industrial zones, multi-residential zones (apartments and condos) and residential zones. Those areas not so identified do not allow any of these uses.

Similarly, the county should study its environmental and land use information and identify locations where cannabis grows are suitable based on criteria such as:

- Areas where public water and other necessary public services are available including power, sewer, storm water drainage, etc.
- If not on public water, areas located in a groundwater basin where water use will not impact environmental resources.
- Areas served by adequate and safe road access.
- Areas remote from incompatible residential sites.
- Areas remote from public and private schools.
- Areas remote from public and private parks, children’s camps, trails and other recreation sites.
- Areas easily secured and accessible to law enforcement.
- Areas free of extreme or high danger of wildfire.



- Areas free of landslides, flooding and other natural hazards.
- Areas free of rare and endangered or sensitive plants.
- Areas free of historic and/or archaeological resources.
- Areas free of important wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Areas free of other identified incompatibilities.

Once areas meeting these criteria are identified and mapped, planners would normally do an assessment of how much suitable land can be projected as reasonably necessary to meet current and future demand (20 years for a General Plan).

The proposed suitable areas are then presented to the public in hearings, and after considering all public comment, the planners select those areas where permits for grows will be considered.

Individual proposals are then evaluated to make sure that they indeed meet all of the necessary criteria. They go through the Conditional Use Permit and California Environmental Quality Act processes where the public has an opportunity to provide comment and participate in public hearings.

This is how planning has always been done. The county's failure to undertake the appropriate planning process is why we have problems with grows in unsuitable areas. The county has never previously done planning for any other land use by asking for the public to identify unsuitable or problem sites. They always do an analysis and pick areas that are most likely to be suitable. The county's approach is like allowing anyone to locate a junkyard anywhere unless enough neighbors show up after the fact and complain.

These controversies could have been avoided if the county had undertaken the usual, normal planning process that is applied to all other land uses. The proposed Phase II compatibility planning process should follow the normal and appropriate planning process described above.

The supervisors should never have assigned the planning effort to Economic

Development instead of Permit Sonoma. Economic Development does not have the experience or expertise to manage the land use planning for cannabis grows.

The county got into its public controversy dilemma because it falsely assumed that cannabis grows are “just agriculture.” That’s like saying pig farms and dairies are “just agriculture.”

Most of the remote places proposed for commercial cannabis cultivation would otherwise only accommodate what is called “extensive agriculture.” Perhaps a few cattle at best. The sites in the Mark West Watershed would not be suitable for vineyards or any other intensive agriculture. Most wouldn’t even support grazing.

Growers use imported soil and heated containers in commercial structures with artificial lighting, none of which is normal agriculture.

Once the county assumed cannabis production is the equivalent of a vegetable garden (or a potato patch, as one county official opined) and ignored the accompanying huge water use, fire hazards, multiple employees, traffic generation, pesticide use, noxious odors, crime, and a plethora of other impacts that of necessity accompany cannabis production, the planning process went awry.

To address adequately the compatibility problems with rural neighborhoods, the supervisors need to acknowledge the impacts and quit trying to fit the round cannabis peg in the square “just agriculture” hole.

Ray Krauss is a retired environmental planner who lives in the Mark West Watershed.

Craig S. Harrison is a retired lawyer who lives in Bennett Valley.

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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis odor  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 10:07:38 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The only way to mitigate odor from outdoor cannabis cultivation is distance. I have personally experienced being overpowered from strong skunk-like stench where I lived from a 10,000 sq ft outdoor cannabis grow over 600 feet away, separated from residences by thick forest. At least 1000 ft minimum setback must be maintained to a neighbor's property line (not residence), more if down wind or for larger grows. The odor is pervasive for several months each year (July-Oct), and it could become year round once the new ordinance enables multiple harvests a year in hoop houses using mixed-light, thus functioning as low cost and unpermitted greenhouses.

It is preposterous that the Health and Safety clause does not appear in the proposed new cannabis ordinance, nor is there an option to terminate a license if there are unresolved odor complaints.

In addition to the completely inadequate measures to protect neighbors from odor from an outside cultivation (100 ft setback to back yard, as in current ordinance, is absurd), there are major problems with the proposed ordinance, starting with making permits Ministerial:

- 1) It preclude notifying or allowing input from neighbors
- 2) There are many decisions subject to discretion from county officials as well as mitigation 'conditions', that may be imposed, precluding making these permits ministerial. Some of these are:
  - analyzing biotic reports and hydrology reports rather than blindly accepting what the applicant provides with no scrutiny (we know from past experience that applicants often contract for 'generic' reports prepared for others, with minimal changes)
  - analyzing and verifying what constitutes net-zero water consumption
  - verifying odor complaints, determining what constitutes 'several' people, and imposing mitigation conditions
  - determining what is adequately screened from public view and determining mitigation measures
  - determining what constitutes 'little' light escaping from a structure and determining mitigation measures

Furthermore, with no full EIR done, state law requires CEQA analysis for each new

application. This is required to obtain a state license.

This draft ordinance and the SMND are fatally flawed, and I find it incredible that they are even being presented for your review. I will send a separate letter detailing additional deficiencies next week.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Eppstein, PhD

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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis draft ordinance- questions for your consideration  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 5:54:55 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The SMND, Chapter 38 and the revisions to Chapter 26 ordinance rife with errors, omissions, inconsistencies and false conclusions; they must be discarded. These permits cannot be ministerial, preventing input from neighbors and preventing requirements of conditions as are even listed in the draft SMND. A full EIR must be conducted, analyzing required environmental and health and safety impacts, and determining locations and what level of cannabis cultivation is the right balance for Sonoma County to be environmentally sound, obtain a viable balance of aesthetics, wine, and tourism and assure health and safety of the public.

To help in your discussion of some of the important issues that need to be addressed, I am providing questions that must be considered when a new ordinance is written.

1) **Odor.** For both indoor and outdoor grows, odor should not leave the parcel line. The current draft requires this for indoor grows, but not for outdoor cultivation or the hoop houses that would now function as unpermitted greenhouses. If the County acknowledges that odor must be controlled from indoor grows, why doesn't it extend the same logic to outdoor grows by requiring much longer setbacks, and not allowing grows next to residential neighborhoods? Fog systems are not the answer; they are not applicable to large outdoor grows and the long term safety of breathing the aerosols by pregnant women, babies, children, and adults with health conditions as well as healthy adults, has not been determined. Why are sensitive receptors located in schools treated differently from those exact same receptors on residential property? Why was the health and safety clause removed? Are you aware that wineries in Santa Barbara County are complaining that the pervasive odor is driving away customers from their tasting rooms?

2) **Aesthetics.** The current cannabis ordinance requires hoop houses to be screened from public view, but that requirement has been removed in the new draft. Why? Does the County really want our vistas to be covered with fully visible and very obtrusive hoop houses, bringing that visual blight to our County as has happened to Santa Barbara County? Have you considered the trash and environmental impact from discarded plastic after it wears out in a few years? Are you not concerned about losing the beauty of our countryside, losing our wine-county reputation and

associated tourism, all to be replaced with the unknown of what canna-tourism will bring?

3) **Water** is scarce in much of rural Sonoma County. Why does the County want to allow proliferation of such large acreage of cannabis, a plant that uses 6X more water per acre than vineyards? Do you realize that allowing unlimited proliferation of hoop houses, functioning as greenhouses, will allow multiple harvests each year, further taxing our limited water resources?

4) **Wildfire**. We all know our huge exposure to wildfire risk. Most residents in the rural county have been evacuated in 3 of the last 4 fire seasons. How can you justify further increasing both fire risk, traffic into high fire risk areas and further jeopardizing evacuation safety with allowing all the added electrical infrastructure of thousands of acres of hoop houses and indoor grows, and with thousands of employees traveling each day into high fire risk areas? People are a major cause of starting fires.

5) What **evacuation** models and road requirements are you requiring to ensure that residents as well as thousands of employees in the high fire risk areas can safely and efficiently evacuated during wildfires?

Thank you for considering these critical issues.

Deborah Eppstein, PhD  
Sonoma County

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**From:** [Jasmin Ansar](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jasmin Ansar](#)  
**Subject:** Public comments on proposed commercial cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 10:29:01 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

I am a resident of Sebastopol, Sonoma County and I love and enjoy the thrilling beauty and sanctuary of this blessed land and community. I am horrified and shocked by the proposed commercial cannabis ordinance. I am also dismayed by the lack of consideration that the proposed ordinance would have for the residents and community of this beautiful land.

**Please please** reconsider the proposals and at a minimum do a complete EIR for the proposal. **Commercial cannabis is destructive to the environment, and to the safety and health of the community. Please do not let vested interests 'buy out' the rights of the community to clean water, air, natural beauty and safety.**

I hope you will give consideration to these concerns.

Sincerely,

Jasmin Ansar,  
10320 Burgandy Way, Sebastopol, CA 95472

Jasmin Ansar PhD  
Adjunct Professor  
Economics Department  
Mills College  
cell: 510-220-6918  
<https://www.mills.edu/faculty/jasmin-ansar.php>

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** screening  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 5:48:33 PM

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**EXTERNAL**

How will screening be addressed for neighbors that are uphill from growing locations?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Propose water testing  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:57:46 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

I would like to suggest that water supply have an EIR for grows that pop up in areas that do not currently have uses that are less water usage.

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Neighbor Issues in the Ag Department  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 9:48:10 PM

---

## **EXTERNAL**

In April 2018, the Board of Supervisors promised residents of this county that each cannabis permit would go through the CUP process and take into account the impact on the neighbors of a specific permit location.

With the process moving to the Ag department, how will the Ag department be communicating with neighbors and how will neighbor considerations be handled?

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**From:** [Kristen Decker](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Please send me a copy of the slides from this town hall  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 10:58:50 PM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Thanks,  
Kristen Decker

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**From:** [district2](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Issue: Cannabis odor  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 7:58:36 AM

---

Tina Thomas  
Board of Supervisors Aide, Second District David Rabbitt  
County of Sonoma  
Email: [tina.thomas@sonoma-county.org](mailto:tina.thomas@sonoma-county.org)  
Phone: (707) 565-2241

-----Original Message-----

From: [no-reply@sonoma-county.org](mailto:no-reply@sonoma-county.org) <[no-reply@sonoma-county.org](mailto:no-reply@sonoma-county.org)>  
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 9:16 PM  
To: [district2](mailto:district2@sonoma-county.org) <[district2@sonoma-county.org](mailto:district2@sonoma-county.org)>  
Subject: Issue: Cannabis odor

Sent To: County of Sonoma

Topic: Issue

Subject: Cannabis odor

Message: Cannabis should NOT be considered just another plant just like opium poppys are not just another crop. The Ag Dept should NOT manage this plants production. Grow Cannabis in warehouses not in neighborhoods. Don't destroy our way of life.

Sender's Name: Kim Roberts  
Sender's Email: [krutzman@gmail.com](mailto:krutzman@gmail.com)  
Sender's Cell Phone: 7079742226  
Sender's Address:  
5153 Old Redwood Hwy  
Petaluma, CA 94952

**From:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 1:28:53 PM

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**From:** BOS <[BOS@sonoma-county.org](mailto:BOS@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 1:03 PM  
**To:** Andrea Krout <[Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrea.Krout@sonoma-county.org)>; Arielle Kubu-Jones <[Arielle.Kubu-Jones@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Arielle.Kubu-Jones@sonoma-county.org)>; Elise VanDyne <[Elise.VanDyne@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Elise.VanDyne@sonoma-county.org)>; Jason Wilson <[Jason.Wilson@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Jason.Wilson@sonoma-county.org)>; Jennifer Mendoza <[Jennifer.Mendoza@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Jennifer.Mendoza@sonoma-county.org)>; Jenny Chamberlain <[jchamber@sonoma-county.org](mailto:jchamber@sonoma-county.org)>; Karina Garcia <[Karina.Garcia@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Karina.Garcia@sonoma-county.org)>; Keith Roberts <[Keith.Roberts@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Keith.Roberts@sonoma-county.org)>; Leo Chyi <[Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org)>; Lynn Morton-Weil <[Lynn.Weil@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Lynn.Weil@sonoma-county.org)>; Pat Gilardi <[Pat.Gilardi@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Pat.Gilardi@sonoma-county.org)>; Tina Thomas <[Tina.Thomas@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Tina.Thomas@sonoma-county.org)>; district3 <[district3@sonoma-county.org](mailto:district3@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** FW: Cannabis ordinance

---

**From:** Lindsay Goldenberg <[ogsparklelove@gmail.com](mailto:ogsparklelove@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 5:10 PM  
**To:** BOS <[BOS@sonoma-county.org](mailto:BOS@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** Cannabis ordinance

**EXTERNAL**

**Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,**

**We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.**

**You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.**

- In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.**
- I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.**

**After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:**

- Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance where applicable to state laws.**
- As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.**
- Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.**
  - Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries**
- Please create an advisory commission for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.**
- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.**
- I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in**

## LIA and RRD.

- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
- Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.
- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.

- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)
- Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.
- Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,



Lindsay Goldenberg

Ps. We should be able to combine parcels.

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:28:40 AM

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## EXTERNAL

I am very concerned with the wording in the draft ordinance regarding off-site smells. There is no way to measure off-site smell. It is solely based on opinion. That leaves a wide berth for interpretation and bias. There is no way to mitigate smell, besides setbacks and vegetation, which are already in the ordinance. Using large misting systems, like they do at the dump, would lead to mold problems for the crop.

I think the county is doing itself a major dis service by promising neighborhood groups that there will be smell mitigation. It is an empty promise, unable to be filled. Please come clean with both the cannabis industry and the neighborhood groups regarding smell. The reality is that there is a smell associated with cannabis farming.

Please remove this language.

Lisa

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**From:** [Lauren Mendelsohn](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [McCall Miller](#)  
**Cc:** [PlanningAgency](#); [BOS](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Cannabis Draft Ordinance: Method for Current Applicants + Permittees to Transfer to New Pathway  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 3:43:39 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear County Staff, Honorable Planning Commissioners, and Honorable Supervisors:

The draft cannabis ordinance does not include any mention of how persons who've applied for or who have been issued a permit under the current Chapter 26 pathway can switch over to being processed under the new Chapter 38 pathway if they're eligible. County staff indicated to industry stakeholders that this would be included, which is critical for the survival of numerous local family-owned small businesses who have been going through the PRMD permit process for multiple years. To address this concern, I propose adding the following language (which I wrote) to the draft Chapter 38 ordinance:

### **Sec. [#]. Transition to Chapter 38 Pathway.**

A.

*An applicant who, as of the date of the adoption of this ordinance, has applied for a commercial cannabis cultivation permit under Chapter 26 and who would also qualify to submit an application pursuant to this Chapter 38 may request for their project to be reviewed under this Chapter instead (an “application track transition”). Such requests shall be granted if the requester meets the criteria for a cultivation permit under Chapter 38. The Agricultural Commissioner shall develop and promulgate specific rules to govern application track transitions, which shall include, at a minimum: (i) a description of the process and any required forms; (ii) a method for prioritizing application track transitions above new applications; and (iii) a waiver or reduction of the normal application fees to reflect the fees that have already been paid to process the original application.*

B.

*A holder of a commercial cannabis cultivation permit under Chapter 26 who would also qualify for a permit under Chapter 38 shall, prior to renewal of their permit, have the option to continue with their Chapter 26 permit or to submit a request to transfer their project to be regulated according to Chapter 38 (a “compliance track transition”). Such requests shall be granted if the requester meets the criteria for a cultivation permit under Chapter 38. The Agricultural Commissioner shall develop and promulgate specific rules to govern compliance track transitions, which shall include, at a minimum: (i) a description of the process and any required forms and (ii) a method for*

*allowing permitted operators to continue their operations while their request is considered.*

This seems only fair, and I hope you agree.

(I have more comments about the proposed cannabis policy updates that I will submit soon, but wanted to send this one first.)

Thank you for your time working on this important issue, and your dedication to the Sonoma County community.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Lauren A. Mendelsohn, Esq.**  
Senior Associate Attorney  
Law Offices of Omar Figueroa  
7770 Healdsburg Avenue  
Sebastopol, CA 95472-3352  
Tel: (707) 829-0215  
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[lauren@omarfigueroa.com](mailto:lauren@omarfigueroa.com)  
[www.omarfigueroa.com](http://www.omarfigueroa.com)

**Have you heard about the International Cannabis Bar Association (INCBA)? [Check us out!](#)** Use code "Mendelsohn" for 15% off membership and events.



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**From:** [nfleig](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 9:11:41 AM

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EXTERNAL

To: Sonoma County Planning Commission:

We are long-time Graton residents and have been following the County's proposed regulation of commercial cannabis for the past two+ years.

We are deeply disturbed by the proposed cannabis ordinance for the following reasons:

1. The County's designation of cannabis as a crop and therefore subject to the right-to-farm law. To designate cannabis as "just another crop" is ridiculous. No other agricultural crop needs the intensive security measures that cannabis does.
2. Whatever regulations you come up with, we feel strongly that there needs to be a 1,000 foot setback to parks, schools, daycare centers and residential property lines, regardless of zoning.
3. The level of odor from cannabis grows is intense, highly unpleasant, and a health risk for people with asthma or other respiratory illnesses. I'm sure you are well aware this is a primary complaint in other counties.
4. The water usage for cannabis is six times more than grapes. Given our current drought concerns and shrinking aquifers, this level of water usage is very concerning, especially for those of us who rely on our wells for water.
5. The violent crimes associated with cannabis cultivation, whether legal or not, is well documented across the country. As long as cannabis has such a high monetary value, this will continue to be an issue.
6. Cannabis tourism- just what we need, more impaired drivers, traffic jams, and accidents on our rural roads!

We are not opposed to commercial cannabis, but please use some common sense and take into account what has and hasn't worked in other parts of the country. And please keep in mind that the beauty of our county and quality of life for those of us who live and work here could be greatly reduced if you don't properly regulate commercial cannabis from the start.

Please do not make cannabis applications ministerial. There must be a process through Permit Sonoma and a Conditional Use Permit in order to grow and cultivate commercial cannabis.

Thank you for your time,

Nyla Fleig and Lisa Mathiesen

Graton

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**From:** [Rich Wolf](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis; Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma.county.org](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance priority should protect our rural community  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 9:51:59 AM

---

**EXTERNAL**

Dear County Supervisors,

The cannabis ordinance must not be allowed to pass without serious changes that make protecting our homes, our water, our fundamental standard of living the number one priority.

Please set strong standards that restrict commercial cannabis and prevent it from negatively impacting our neighborhoods, including but not limited to:  
establishing aggressive setbacks, restrictions on water use, lighting, processing, and overall commercial activities in our rural county.

This ordinance threatens our community on many levels.

Sincerely ,

Rich Wolf  
home owner

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**From:** [Rachel Zierdt](#)  
**To:** [Andrew Smith](#); [Cannabis](#); [John Lowry](#); [Pamela Davis](#); [Todd Tamura](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); [Cameron Mauritson](#); [Gina Belforte](#); [Greg Carr](#); [jacquelynn.ocana@sonoma-county.org](mailto:jacquelynn.ocana@sonoma-county.org); [Larry Reed](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Subject:** town hall meeting 2 - for the public record please.....  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 1:27:11 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Mr. Smith,

I must say I was taken completely by surprise yesterday when you told the listeners that you expected us to come up with solutions to the problems that the county created...I would have expected that our concerns are not unusual and that the county (that's you as well as the writers of this legislation) would have taken the time and put in the effort to see what has worked or has not worked in other counties.

There have been huge documented problems with odor, land useage, water useage, carbon emissions everywhere it is planted....cannabis is not a friendly neighbor that is gentle to the environment and kind those living near it...and it behooves the county to have done their homework...not trot out an ordinance that is proving to be unworkable.....instead of building on other counties' successes and learning from their mistakes, this county just forged ahead willy nilly fulfilling the wishlist of the industry.

When the neighborhood coalitions offered suggestions and solutions, the county staff turned its back on us...now at the 11th hour you are asking for help when you and staff ignored it all along.

**You wanted a solution....here it is.....take back this document, fix it, vet it with all stake holders, release it again.**

Rachel Zierdt

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**From:** [Sharon H](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [Sharon H](#)  
**Subject:** Setback comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 2:05:31 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Changes and additions I would like to have considered on page 11:

Sec.36.12.040 - Setbacks.

A. 1. Property line Setback. For a cultivation site with outdoor or hoop house cultivation, the cultivated area must be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the property lines of the parcel on which the cannabis is cultivated.

**ADD** *Excepting if the adjoining parcel is under the same ownership there shall be no setback required to that parcel. Should ownership change setbacks will be reinstated December 31st in the year of ownership change. Changes into or out of trusts or other forms of ownership with the same beneficial interests shall not be considered a change of ownership for purposes of this ordinance.*

2. Neighboring structures. For a cultivation site with outdoor or hoop house cultivation, the cultivated area must be set back a minimum of 300 feet from residences on any parcel other than the parcel on which the permitted cannabis is cultivated.

3. Sensitive uses. For a cultivation site with outdoor or hoop house cultivation, the cultivated area must be set back a minimum of 1,000 feet from the property line of a parcel **ADD** *under 10 acres, or set back 1,000 feet from the area of a parcel over 10 acres being used for sensitive activities* with a school providing education to K-12 grades, a public park, Class I Bikeway, a day care center, or an alcohol or drug treatment facility **ADD** *if the sensitive use is in a defined area of the parcel. If the parcel itself is large enough to allow 1,000 feet, (or even 1,100 feet?) between the cultivated area and a sensitive use area, both activities can occur on the same parcel.*

COMMENT on 3: I can think of several parcels that are hundreds of acres and have entrances and addresses on completely different roads. Requiring the owner to subdivide into multiple parcels to have both activities when they could be separated by sufficient distance is much simpler.

B. Setbacks for Indoor and Greenhouse Cultivation and Associated Structures. Except for hoop houses, the setbacks for which are governed by subsection A of this section above, any structure used for or in support of cannabis cultivation must comply with setback requirements contained in chapter 26 for a parcels base zone and any applicable combining zone.

C. For purposes of this chapter, distance shall be measured from the nearest point of the property line of the parcel that contains the proposed or permitted commercial cultivation to the nearest point of the property line of the enumerated use using a direct straight-line measurement. A new adjacent use does not affect the continuation of an existing use that was permitted and legally established under the standards of this chapter.

Comment on C: This seems contrary to lesser setbacks allowed in 3 above. Odor complaints and those who engage in undesired activity have no regard for parcel lines. Setback rules might force otherwise undesired parcel subdivision. Actual distance should be the only consideration.

If I were to grow cannabis on a large parcel, school groups such as STRAW, who have previously visited and done riparian planting, could still occur, but visitors could be kept 1,000 feet away from and unaware of cannabis cultivation. Children enjoy these field trips and learn about agriculture and environmental enhancements. Please consider unintended consequences and unwanted limitations of using parcel line distance separation vs actual distance separation of cultivation and sensitive activity areas and use the distance between cultivation areas and sensitive use areas, not parcel lines.

General comments:

With the passage of Proposition 19 and other possible changes resulting in 1,000 % plus property taxes increases that threaten agricultural lands, agriculture property badly needs to increase income to be able to keep the land that has often been stewarded for generations by the same family. Large areas of crops cannot be grown on some parcels for various reasons and grazing livestock does not cover taxes based on house site values. The value of a small area of cannabis can pay property taxes and allow grazing on the rest of the parcel. Ag property being sold for an expensive homesite is very often taken out of agriculture completely when a new owner is not interested in ag, creating a brushy fire hazard they then want the county to provide chipping services for.

Two of the many trespass growers on my property each had well over 100 plants, discovered when the drip tubing to the timer failed and the well eventually was running dry and eroding a hillside. A deputy came out but did not remove plants. The trespassing grower probably tried to avoid being spotted going there and did not check it often. I believe easing requirements and quickly granting permits would lessen trespassing growers on my property as well as provide tax revenue.

Knowing of people trying to get permits for years, it seems much of the cost and difficulty of permitting includes very unreasonable water regulations, including state regulations, specific to cannabis. Reservoirs should be encouraged for their many benefits.

Financial institutions now serve cannabis businesses. Concerns about robberies should now be no more than that of any other business.

Like the rural housing situation, the cost of permits, engineering, delays, and building requirements such paving roads, lead many to forgo permits entirely, especially in the west county.

The new proposed ordinance is a step in the right direction. Please support those who are trying to cultivate legally and will pay taxes.

Thank You

Sharon Harston

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**From:** [scsommer@earthlink.net](mailto:scsommer@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Cannabis is Agriculture  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 11:00:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cannabis is Agriculture.msg](#)

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EXTERNAL

Please read my attachment.....thx.

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**From:** [scsommer@earthlink.net](mailto:scsommer@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [Cannabis@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Cannabis@sonoma-county.org); [district3](#); [district4](#); [district5](#); [Pat Gilardi](#); [Andrea Krout](#)  
**Cc:** [andreawolcott14@gmail.com](mailto:andreawolcott14@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Cannabis is Agriculture  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 9:49:40 AM

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Greetings,

My name is Steve Sommer. My wife, Candy, and I have been involved in agriculture for over 45 years. Candy's family has been in agriculture in Dry Creek Valley for over 100 years. I was president of Sonoma County Convention & Visitors Bureau, one of founders of Sonoma County Grape Growers and United Wine Growers. I helped develop the Ag Element of the General Plan and right to farm that now goes in every real estate transaction in Sonoma County. Also was on Alexander Valley Farm bureau which included the annual Prune Blossom Tour and Alexander Valley School Board.

Listening to District 5 Linda Hopkins, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors on KSRO recently she was discussing the cannabis cultivation here and her thoughts on it should be in Agriculture Department, right to farm, not PRMD. I hope you realize that "the system" has made it easier to "grow a house" in agriculture zone than a agriculture business. The best way to keep open space in this county is to keep Agriculture healthy and thriving. I would like to volunteer my time to keep moving Cannabis/Agriculture forward.

Our path is to continue in agriculture and supporting all of the supervisors to complete an Amendment to put cannabis cultivation in the General Plan, a right to farm thru the Agriculture Dept. We are writing for your assistance in completing our 1-acre cannabis permit. Our permit has been in PRMD for 3 plus years...needless to say how much in revenue would the county had received for its budgets, programs for all, etc. if cannabis is identified as a Agricultural business.

**From:** [Vivien Hoyt](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:13:14 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear PRMD & Sonoma County Supervisors,

I write to you today to encourage you to adopt a comprehensive cannabis cultivation ordinance that will expand the industry responsibly to grow our economy and support those ancillary businesses that benefit from a working cannabis industry.

As a cancer survivor, I relied on cannabis during chemotherapy/radiation for nausea, pain and sleep. I learned that it's truly a healing plant. I want everyone to have the opportunity to purchase clean, affordable medicine.

As with any other sector or industry, cannabis farmers spend money to build their farming capacity. That means infrastructure, hiring tradespeople, and purchasing building materials. All of this keeps our collective economy flowing with the exchange of goods and services. There are hundreds of cannabis ancillary businesses throughout Sonoma County that completely depend on the strength and success of the cannabis industry.

A more comprehensive cannabis ordinance should be looking to expand our local economy and share the benefits of this new industry. With local cannabis regulations being in a perpetual state of change, these ordinance revisions should reflect that which the state of California has already deemed appropriate when it comes to cannabis operations. Instead of rewriting the ordinance every 18 months, we ought to strive to match the state policy instead of creating our own. With a comprehensive cannabis ordinance that matches state law more cannabis businesses and ancillary businesses can participate in the new market with a degree of confidence that the rug won't be pulled out from under them.

As a County we ought to strive to diversify our agricultural offerings and by doing so we are investing in our collective future where a wide range of businesses from soil producers to light manufacturers benefit alike.

Thank you for your consideration and I trust you will advocate for this healing medicine.

Vivien Hoyt  
Rincoln Valley

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**From:** [Amber Morris](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Klein](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Scott Orr](#)  
**Subject:** Comments- Chapter 26  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 1:38:39 PM  
**Attachments:** [Comments- Industrial Zoned Cannabis Cultivaion.pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

Good afternoon,

Attached are comments and suggestions regarding **industrial zoned** cannabis cultivation.

We would like to emphasize that though the discussion to date has focused on the proposed language of Chapter 38, there are significant impacts to cultivation that will remain under Chapter 26 (industrial zoned). The disparities that are being created by allowances drafted in Chapter 38, and draft changes to Chapter 26 must be addressed simultaneously to avoid large indoor cultivation from being pushed to ag and resource zoning.

Feel free to reach out to me directly if I can provide any additional information or clarity regarding the attached comments and suggestions. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,



**AMBER MORRIS** | Director of Government Affairs  
916-606-0771 | [amber.morris@norcalcann.com](mailto:amber.morris@norcalcann.com)  
[NorCal Cannabis Company](#)

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## Sonoma County

### Draft Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Language (County Code, Chapter 26 and 38)

#### Summary of Legislative Action

On February 16, 2021, Sonoma County released draft amendments to County Code, Chapter 26, and Chapter 38, a new chapter that would

. These changes were made at the direction of the Board of Supervisors who sought to explore changes to improve cannabis cultivation permitting in Sonoma County.

#### Industrial Zoned Cultivation- More Restrictive than Agricultural and Resource Zones

Based on their directive, staff focused on creating Chapter 38 to address improvements for agricultural and resource zoned cultivation only. Importantly, all industrial zoned cultivation activities were excluded from the migration of commercial cultivation to Chapter 38. Through the amendments to Chapter 26 and introduction of Chapter 38, the County is proposing to make land use requirements more restrictive for commercial cannabis cultivated in industrial zones by creating significant inconsistencies with maximum cultivation areas.

#### Maximum Cultivation Area Disparities- Comparisons and Solutions

As detailed below, draft changes will create a significant disparity between indoor cultivation in agricultural and resource zones vs. industrial zones and will result in migration of indoor cultivation to agricultural and resource zones for those who seek higher cultivation area limits.

Chapter 38 significantly expands maximum cultivation area in agricultural and resource zones for indoor cultivators, while changes to Chapter 26 further limit maximum cultivation area for indoor cultivation in industrial zones (see Table 1 comparison below).

Table 1- Comparison of Cultivation Area Limitations			
	Chapter 26 (Current)	Chapter 26 (Draft)	Chapter 38 (Draft)
<b>Maximum Cultivation Area</b>	<b>Agricultural</b> (LIA, LEA, DA) 5,000 sqft	<b>Industrial</b> (MP, M1, M2, M3) 22,000 sqft (not to exceed 10% of the parcel size)	<b>Agricultural &amp; Resources</b> (LIA, LEA, DA, RRD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Existing permanent structures- <b>square footage is not limited</b></li><li>New or expanded permanent structure<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10-20 acres- cannot exceed 43,560 sqft of new building coverage</li><li>20 acres or more- cannot exceed 43,560 sqft or 50% of the max lot coverage prescribed by base zone, whichever is greater</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Indoor Cultivation &amp; Indoor Nurseries</b>	<b>Resources</b> (RRD) 5,000 sqft  <b>Industrial</b> (MP, M1, M2, M3) 22,000 sqft  Ref. Table 1A-D Allowed Cannabis Uses and Permit Requirements	Ref. Sec. 26-88-254(f)(2)	Ref. Sec.38.12.030(A)(2-3)

## Solution for Maximum Cultivation Area Limitations

Align language from Chapter 38 with cultivation remaining in Chapter 26 to create parity in all zones by amending the language as follows:

Sec. 26-88-254(f)- Language Comparison and Solution	
<p><b>Current Language</b></p>	<p>(2) Multi-Tenant Operations. Multiple permits may be issued for multi-tenant operations on a single parcel provided that the aggregate cultivation area does not exceed the maximum area allowed for the cultivation type and parcel size in compliance with Table 1A-D Allowed Cannabis Uses and Permit Requirements.</p>
<p><b>Draft Language</b> (Feb 16, 2021)</p>	<p>(2) Multi-Tenant Operations. Multiple permits may be issued <u>under this section</u> for multi-tenant operations on a single parcel provided that the aggregate cultivation area does not exceed the maximum area allowed for the cultivation type and parcel size in compliance with Table 1A-D Allowed Cannabis Uses and Permit Requirements. <u>In no case may the total permitted cultivation area exceed 10% of the parcel area, regardless of the number of permits.</u></p>
<p><b>Solution*</b> Replace current language to mirror allowances in Chapter 38.  Sec.38.12.030(A)(2-3)</p>	<p><del>(2) Multi-Tenant Operations. Multiple permits may be issued for multi-tenant operations on a single parcel provided that the aggregate cultivation area does not exceed the maximum area allowed for the cultivation type and parcel size in compliance with Table 1A-D Allowed Cannabis Uses and Permit Requirements.</del></p> <p>(2) <u>Existing Permanent Structures. Permits issued under this section for indoor cultivation, greenhouse cultivation, and nursery cultivation in an existing permanent structure, canopy is not limited. An existing permanent structure is a structure that is legally constructed prior to January 1, 2021, and includes those structures that have been or will be reconstructed or renovated, provided there is no modification to the building footprint, nor expansion of the square footage of the structure.</u></p> <p>(3) <u>New or Expanded Permanent Structures. Permits issued under this section for indoor cultivation, greenhouse cultivation, and nursery cultivation in new or expanded permanent structures, canopy cannot exceed 43,560 square feet or 50% of the maximum lot coverage prescribed by the base zone, whichever is greater. A new permanent structure is a structure legally constructed on or after January 1, 2021. An expanded permanent structure is an addition or expansion to an existing permanent structure, as defined in paragraph 2 of subsection A of Section 38.12.030, that results in a modification to the building footprint or an expansion of the square footage of the structure. New building coverage means building coverage legally constructed on or after January 1, 2021.</u></p> <p>* The 'Table 1C: Allowed Cannabis Uses and Permit Requirements for Industrial Zoned' would also need to be updated to reflect canopy allowances in (2) and (3) above.</p>

To provide consistency with the recommended solution above for maximum cultivation area, existing and draft ownership limitations would need to be addressed simultaneously as described below to avoid conflict within the final ordinance changes.

<b>Sec. 26-88-254(e)- Language Comparison and Solution</b>	
<b>Current Language</b>	(e) Multiple Permits. Multiple cultivation permit applications will be processed concurrently. Multiple cultivation permits may be issued to a single person, provided that the total combined cultivation area within the county does not exceed one (1) acre. For the purposes of this provision, the entire cultivation area of a permit shall be attributed in full to each person who meets the definition of cannabis business owner of the permit holder.
<b>Draft Language</b> (Feb 16, 2021)	(e) Multiple Permits. Multiple cultivation permit applications will be processed concurrently. Multiple cultivation permits may be issued to a single person, provided that the total <u>permitted cultivation area for any parcel does not exceed 10% of the parcel, regardless of the number of permits issued for the parcel.</u> <del>combined cultivation area within the county does not exceed one (1) acre. For the purposes of this provision, the entire cultivation area of a permit shall be attributed in full to each person who meets the definition of cannabis business owner of the permit holder.</del>
<b>Solution</b>	(e) Multiple Permits. Multiple cultivation permit applications will be processed concurrently. Multiple cultivation permits may be issued to a single person, <del>provided that the total combined cultivation area within the county does not exceed one (1) acre. For the purposes of this provision, the entire cultivation area of a permit shall be attributed in full to each person who meets the definition of cannabis business owner of the permit holder.</del>

**From:** [donnasfineart@att.net](mailto:donnasfineart@att.net)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [SusanGorin@Sonoma-county.org](mailto:SusanGorin@Sonoma-county.org)  
**Subject:** Proposed cannabis environmental impact Sonoma County  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 12:52:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [imagef11.png](#)

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## EXTERNAL

The supervisors' proposed ordinance would change Sonoma County forever. It would

- allow over 65,733 acres of outdoor cultivation permits on agricultural and RRD parcels 10 acres or more--enough to satisfy worldwide demand. This increases the acreage currently cultivated (50 acres) by a factor of 1,300.
- issue permits in an over-the-counter, backroom "ministerial" process without public knowledge or participation.
- increase the size of outdoor cultivation on each parcel from 1 acre to either 10 acres or 10% of the size of the parcel.
- allow up to 1 acre of greenhouse cultivation in new structures (over 8,000 acres), with no limit on indoor cultivation in existing structures.
- allow individual large greenhouse operations with 100-200 employees year-round, adding 400-800 daily trips.
- allow greenhouses that resemble self-storage units and [white hoop houses](#) to blight our scenic vistas.
- force many residents to smell marijuana terpenes (a skunk smell) 4-6 months each year.
- remove health, safety, and nuisance protections so neighbors have no recourse when subjected to noise and stench.
- retain inadequate setback requirements.
- not analyze the cumulative effects of odor, noise, scenic blight, traffic on narrow rural roads, water demands, and other issues. The county's attitude seems to be "How could adding 65,733 acres of outdoor cultivation and over 8,000 acres of greenhouses possibly affect our environment?"

Please rethink the impact of our beautiful county. The above proposals will change our county from a beautiful place of nature to ugly images of pot farms that destroy quality of life. People come to Sonoma County to play, explore and and enjoy the fresh air of a natural area. Yes, some will come for the cannabis but farms need not be within the main beauty of this county. You can do better than this proposal. People live here to have a quality of life that does not change the nature of this area. Why not work to make it a better place. This proposal is not progress.

We vote for those of you to do the right thing for this community; to preserve the beauty and not destroy the area and land and to spend our money wisely. If you look to the bigger picture you will see this proposal and anything close to it will diminish our quality of life. It is already apparent we have difficulty now with traffic, housing, roadways, etc. I can only guess why you would want this destruction in our county. So. Co. should be much more than acres of cannabis plants. We voted for more parks and this speaks for the future of what our county can represent. This is our home; we live here and love this; do not take it away from us and the future. Is this proposal something you really believe in and something you want to implement or can you do better? What motivates one to destroy instead of build on the quality of life in their own county.

I am asking you to look deep into this proposal and ask yourself if you will be proud of

this county wide destruction and if this is what would make Sonoma County a better place for all of us and the future. Do we need to follow the destruction of other areas or can we work with making it better. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Donna DeLaBriandais

[donnasfineart@att.net](mailto:donnasfineart@att.net)

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**From:** [Deborah Eppstein](#)  
**To:** [Larry Reed](#); [Todd Tamura](#); [Gina Belforte](#); [Greg Carr](#); [Caitlin Cornwall](#); [Pamela Davis](#); [John Lowry](#); [Cameron Mauritson](#); [Jacquelynne Ocana](#); [Cannabis](#); [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [Chris Coursey](#); [district4](#); [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Tennis Wick](#); [Scott Orr](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Hoop Houses and Cannabis Ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 4:18:04 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I have reviewed the proposed Chapter 38, revisions to Chapter 26 and the SMND concerning cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County. These documents are full of inconsistencies, errors, and false conclusions. They should be discarded and a full EIR be conducted before drafting revisions to the existing cannabis ordinance.

To help you understand and evaluate the issues, I am limiting this letter to the issue of hoop houses, with additional comments on other issues sent separately. The cannabis industry has been pushing to allow hoop houses to function as unpermitted greenhouses with no odor control, as ag exempt structures, with electrical, plumbing and mechanical infrastructure. In addition to the multitude of other environmental issues and aesthetics, this adds huge electrical usage and doubles or triples water usage.

Hoop houses need to be banned from the cannabis industry in Sonoma County for the following reasons:

- 1) The plastic degrades from UV and wind, and tears during strong winds (ever more common now due to climate change). It will both litter the landscape as well as go into landfills. California has banned plastic grocery bags and plastic straws- this is much worse!
- 2) Plastic flapping in the wind is noisy (an acre or several acres of hoop houses can be 100 ft from a neighbor's property line- even with longer setbacks it creates noise pollution).
- 3) Use of hoop houses over the large 'outdoor' cultivation area (1-10 acres) now allows 2-3 harvests/year (using clones grown in their nursery), vs one if only truly outdoor. Thus water usage increases- instead of 6x more water usage per acre of vineyards, it now can be 12-18 x more water usage per acre.
- 4) The additional electrical usage (even if solar) creates fire hazards in high fire risk areas.
- 5) With addition of electricity, these should require building permits and fire

protection plans approved by Permit Sonoma. The cannabis industry proposed that hoop houses not require building permits and be ag-exempt structures, which appears what is proposed under the new chapter 38.

6) Although ‘little to no light’ is supposed to escape, we know from current experience in Sonoma County that enforcement at cannabis operations is almost non-existent. We will see ‘glow worms’ at night (see what Humboldt county looks like- despite similar requirements that hoop houses have dark tarps put over them at night).

<https://kymkemp.com/2018/05/10/glowing-greenhouses-light-up-rural-hills/>

7) And of course there is the visual blight to our landscapes of acres and acres of white plastic structures.

<https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-santa-barbara-pot-grows-20190612-htmlstory.html>

8) The visual blight continues long after the operations cease, when the glut on the market makes prices fall so that high priced land in Sonoma County is no longer profitable, and hoop houses are left to further fall apart on the hillsides with tattered plastic and falling down hoops flapping in the wind. Again, we know from experience in Sonoma County that it can take years for the county to make an operator remove dilapidated structures.

Thank you for careful evaluation of these issues.

With best regards,  
Deborah Eppstein, PhD  
Sonoma County  
801-556-5004

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**From:** [Eric Fuge](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [David Rabbitt](#); [ccobloomfield@gmail.com](mailto:ccobloomfield@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance 38  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 2:34:54 PM

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## EXTERNAL

March 9, 2021

Dear Sonoma County Planning Commissioners and staff,

I am concerned with the deficiencies in the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance 38. It neither addresses or protects neighborhoods or residents from the impacts of commercial cannabis.

I live in Bloomfield and have been concerned about that particular cannabis grow and its impact on our town. We awaited this ordinance with the understanding that it would address neighborhood compatibility issues. But neighborhood compatibility is not even mentioned in this new ordinance. I ask Sonoma County to clear up these deficiencies by addressing neighborhood compatibility, like you said you would.

The ordinance does not take into consideration the 42 unincorporated neighborhoods in the county. It does not consider or protect areas of public use by members of those communities. These include the walking paths, parks, neighborhoods where children play, streets where neighbors meet up to talk, and backyards where families and friends congregate. Nowhere in the ordinance are these precious areas - some private and some public - protected from the environmental impact, smells, traffic, fire risks, noise, runoff, view impacts, and light and sound pollution of commercial cannabis operations.

**I request a minimum 1000 foot buffer/setback zone around residential property lines in all unincorporated towns and neighborhoods. Please put all cannabis processing facilities in a commercially-zoned district. Additionally, a cannabis permit should not be issued inside neighborhoods and towns until a CEQA study is done.**

Most cannabis projects will be large, and their impacts great. **Ministerial permitting should not be allowed.**

**Please allow more time to repair the ordinance to protect those of us who live in these neighborhoods. The County must do a Program EIR before they write an ordinance—one which complies with the State environmental and licensing requirements for cannabis cultivation.**

Thank you,

Eric Fuge  
12460 Mill St  
Bloomfield, CA 94952

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**From:** [Joanna Cedar](#)  
**To:** [Tennis Wick](#); [Christina Rivera](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Andrew Smith](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Transition (from Permit Sonoma to the Ag Department) Pathway Language  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 9:22:58 AM

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**EXTERNAL**

Hello All,

I am in favor of the transition language submitted by Lauren Mendelsohn.

Thank you,  
Joanna

Joanna Cedar  
Principal Consultant  
The Cedar Group  
[joanna@cedargroup.org](mailto:joanna@cedargroup.org)  
(707) 953-5829

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**From:** [Jane Newman](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** cannabis culture  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 9:53:02 AM

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## **EXTERNAL**

Good Morning: I am writing with regard to the upcoming debate for the cannabis culture ordinance.

My greatest concern is the drain on the watershed-impacting the salmon and wild life. If cannabis is a greater consumer than grapes, I fear the future of this valuable resource. We live on Eastside Road in Healdsburg. We live there for the beauty of the land. It is frightening to think of the disruption to the rural identity that this cannabis ordinance will create with fields of hoop houses draped in plastic. Other counties complain about the odor- what will this mean to the birds and native animal populations?

Please reconsider passing this ordinance.

Thanks-Jane Newman

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**From:** [Judith Olney](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#); [McCall Miller](#); [Andrew Smith](#); [Scott Orr](#)  
**Cc:** [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Subject:** Chapter 38 and SMND do not comply with State Law  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 1:51:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [03\\_10\\_21\\_CannaPRSC\\_REG\\_Framework-1.pdf](#)  
[NOAA Cannabis letter.pdf](#)  
[20210226 NMFS Letter re cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County.pdf](#)  
[Projected Demands Update 0121 pv.pdf](#)

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners - When cannabis industry advocates say - “ ..we are amending the General Plan to recognize cannabis as a crop, as consistent with State Law” - nothing could be further from the truth. State law, as administered by the California Department of Food and Agriculture defines cannabis as a product, and recent clarifications from the Director of the CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing Division verify that there are no efforts underway to change this product designation, and the State licensing requirement for project-specific CEQA review would hold regardless given a State License is a discretionary license requiring CEQA review. If an Applicant is not required to do project-specific CEQA review as part of the county permitting process, then it will be required prior to obtaining a State license. (See endnotes in attached letter)

Our Neighborhood letter below outlines the multiple ways Chapter 38 and its SMND do not meet the State’s dual licensing requirements, State Water Code requirements, Cal Dept of Fish and Wildlife or NMFS requirements, or Department of Water Resources Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requirements. In addition, the draft documents do not meet the CEQA Guidelines Article 19 standards and criteria for ministerial permits. And, per notification to the County on March 1st, the version of Chapter 26 used for preparation of analyses has been substantially changed.

The Neighborhood Coalition respectfully requests that Sonoma County complete the recommended Program EIR, determine the appropriate locations and scale of cannabis cultivation, and then prepare or amend an ordinance that fits within the framework of State licensing and environmental law.

Sincerely - Judith Olney

Letter

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3 Attachments

March 10, 2021

To: Sonoma County Planning Commission c/o McCall Miller

(Please put Letter and attachments in Planning Commission packet, not just transmittal email)

Cc: Planning Commissioners

From: Judith Olney, Member of the Neighborhood Coalition

RE: Non-compliance of proposed Ordinance 38, and its SMND with State laws

Members of the Neighborhood Coalition have reviewed the documents provided by Sonoma County on February 16, 2021, and are entering this analysis of errors, omissions, “lack of substantive evidence to support findings,” and deficiencies into the Administrative Record. (Letter, endnotes, and three attachments) Areas requiring County responses are **highlighted**.

**Issue: The Commercial Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance and SMND do not comply with a number of State licensing, water resource and environmental regulations.** The County must complete a Program EIR; then, prepare an ordinance that fits within the framework of State licensing laws governing cannabis cultivation, which require project-specific CEQA review. The proposed change to ministerial permitting must be set aside as the short and long-term consequences resulting from its weak environmental foundation will be too costly for Sonoma County’s taxpayers and too risky for our tourism-based economy.

**Fix Sonoma County’s 2018 Ordinance instead:** Sonoma County’s current 2018 Ordinance meets state licensing requirements for project-specific CEQA review via the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process. Please regain the public’s trust by first determining the least impactful locations for this new industry, and then developing regulations respectful of both the applicant’s and neighboring property owners’ rights.

**Proposed Ministerial Permit Process Deficiencies:** Sonoma County proposes to amend the Ag Resources Element of the General Plan to deem cannabis a “crop” for the purpose of approving and implementing a ministerial permit program – a “fast-track” process with no public notice and insufficient environmental analyses.

- Other counties have attempted a ministerial permitting approach only to have it repealed by the courts, with settlement negotiations re-establishing the CUP process;
- Certain Chapter 38 Ordinance procedures have insufficient mitigations or non-compliant measurements that conflict with the General Plan Noise or Open Space elements;
- The State clearly requires project-specific CEQA review; and Chapter 38 Section 12 falls short of this standard. The ministerial process has few numerical standards, and relies on unenforceable “Best Management Practices” or future mitigations not allowed under CEQA;
- Given Chapter 38 Ordinance allows the Ag Commissioner to change and rescind standards and any or all Best Management Practices; the public has no assurance that future cannabis cultivation will require sufficient protective plans or regulatory oversight.

**How does a fast-track local permit serve the Applicant when the State will require project-specific CEQA review and prudent water planning to obtain a State license?**

**I. Proposed General Plan Amendment, Chapter 38 Ordinance and SMND do not comply with State Law – State CEQA requirements for a License under MAUCRSA**

Cannabis is regulated under the **Federal Controlled Substances Act**. If cannabis was just like any other crop, cultivation would not require fencing, 24/7 security systems and personnel or essential buffers to avoid creating nuisances at residences, businesses and sensitive uses.

**Point I A: Dual Licensing:** The cannabis-industry’s statement that “a *General Plan amendment to recognize cannabis as an agricultural crop, is consistent with State law*” is not true. Rather, the County’s General Plan and Zoning Code changes are an attempt to by-pass State requirements both for project-specific CEQA, comprehensive water availability analyses, and other CEQA requirements.

Cannabis operations require dual licensing – a local permit and a State license. The **State determined that cannabis is a product** and requires annual licensing by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) under the **Business & Professional Code Section 26012 (a)(2)**.

**As a State License is discretionary, project-specific CEQA compliance will be required at the State level.** On May 13, 2019, CDFA issued a memorandum for local jurisdictions titled, “*CEQA Practice Recommendations from CDFA for Cannabis Licensing.*”

**As verified by CDFA regulators, wording changes do not alter the statutory designation of cannabis as a product (full quote in the endnote):** On January 29, 2021 CDFA verified: “*Issuance of a State license under MAUCRSA is a discretionary process that requires CEQA compliance...I am not aware of any current efforts to change the statutory designation of cannabis from a product to a crop in the MAUCRSA.*”

State discretionary license requirements per CDFA regulations, clearly require CEQA analyses: In August 2018, Shute Mihaly Weinberger LLP clarified, “*...under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b3) or Bus and Prof Code Section 26055(h), if an Ordinance does not require project-specific CEQA review, Sonoma County cannot claim “Categorical Exemptions.”*”

1. **State recommends a County-level Program EIR to focus on topics not covered in the State’s Program EIR.** Given the County has not done the Program EIR, the County cannot claim “categorical exemptions” for individual projects; and
2. **CEQA review for a permitting “ordinance” is not required only if the County Ordinance requires project-specific discretionary review.** Chapter 38 and its SMND do not require project-specific CEQA review. The SMND had minimal ordinance or cumulative impact evaluation, and given its deficiencies, is unlikely to meet this standard.
3. **Project-specific CEQA review, as done under the current Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process, is required:** Issuance of a State License is discretionary; thus, Sonoma County’s ministerial permit process does not remove the State’s project-specific CEQA requirement.

**CDFA verification of required project-level CEQA review:** On February 12, 2021, a CDFA Director verified that: “*If a county did not require project-specific CEQA review, then the Applicant would need to complete the necessary documentation for CDFA to serve as lead*”

agency.”

**Acting as lead agency, CDFA will ensure project-specific CEQA analyses, certify and then prepare the Notice of Determination prior to issuing a State License to Applicant.**

**Point I B: The Ag Resource Element amendment deeming cannabis a “crop” does not override the State “Right to Farm” law. (Government Code 3482.5)** The public is concerned that Sonoma County’s General Plan amendment may be an attempt to provide cannabis operations immunity from nuisance laws. Substantive evidence and expert testimony show that cannabis operations create nuisance noise, vineyard damaging terpene compounds, skunk-like smells and drawdown of adjacent wells. These nuisances impact grape growers, vintners, hospitality venues, neighboring homeowners, schools, parks and other sensitive receptors.

The County’s zoning code Section 30-25 states that agricultural operations must comply with State law, and generally reiterates the State’s Right to Farm law language. (endnote) Regardless, of Chapter 38 and SMND assertions, the County must comply with the State Right to Farm law.

State law text: *“No agricultural activity... shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, due to any changed condition in or about the locality, after it has been in operation for more than three years if it was not a nuisance at the time it began.”*

Neighboring property owners face timing issues to secure their right to a nuisance suit – yet, are left in limbo with un-permitted cultivation being allowed to continue operations: State law infers that a property owner must file a claim at the time a cannabis operation begins; with the owner having three years of protection from changes in operations that create a new nuisance.

**Issue 1: Chapter 38 leaves out a key phrase from the State Right to Farm law:** “if it was not a nuisance when it began.” This omission changes the meaning significantly, making it appear that a property owner has no recourse if a cannabis cultivation activity impacts their right to the peaceful enjoyment of their property.

**Page 17 of SMND amplifies the County’s intention to undermine neighboring property rights:** *“Sonoma County revised the Right-to-Farm Ordinance in 1999 to help protect, enhance, and encourage farming operations. The Ordinance requires recordation of a declaration acknowledging the right to farm in connection with certain development approvals within 300 feet of any land zoned for agricultural use and does not permit any neighboring property located on or adjacent to agricultural land to oppose any inconvenience or nuisance caused by any type of properly conducted agricultural activity on agricultural land.”*

**Issue 2: Many un-permitted Penalty Relief Program cannabis operations are creating on-going nuisance situations through their operations.** County delays in enforcement or year-long delays in scheduling BOS appeals for operations denied by the Planning Commission have placed adjacent property owners in an untenable position. Most property owners have filed complaints – yet the nuisances continue.

**Explain why this important distinction was omitted from Chapter 38 and how the language in the SMND protects neighboring property rights. And, verify when the clock starts for a property owner to file a nuisance claim.**



**Point I C: State Water Code 13149 – Water Board General Order 2017-0023- DQA:** Under State Water Code 13149, Sections 8102 and 8017, Applicants must obtain State approval and permits for waste discharge, and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (NPDES) Permits. Under the General Order, Applicants must prepare a Site Management Plan, Site Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, and a Nitrogen Management plan for cultivations over one acre.

**State Water Code 8102 requires the applicant to enroll with the State,** identifying all water sources used for cultivation, including details of well drilling reports, letters from commercial water suppliers, and evidence of direct diversion compliance.

**No cumulative Water Demand Analyses:** Sonoma County has not put a cap on the number of permits or acres of potential cannabis cultivation. Nor, has the County prepared/ released projected cannabis water demand analyses. Water demand and water availability are major concerns given cannabis uses about 1 million gallons/ acre per harvest, with mixed light hoop houses or greenhouse cultivation capable of 2-3 harvests/year.

Please release Sonoma County Water Agency's assumptions and projections of future water demand, identifying the amount assumed to meet cannabis cultivation water needs.

CA Department of Fish and Wildlife are responsible for **Streambed Alteration Agreements** to ensure diversion projects include measures to protect springs, wetlands and aquatic habitats from negative impacts of cannabis cultivation.

**Issue 1- Fish and Wildlife:** On ag and resource lands, the primary source of water is groundwater pumping. In addition to the State Water Code, the Business and Professional Code Section 26060 requires CDFA cannabis cultivation licenses to include conditions requested by the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and State Water Resources Control Board to ensure that:

*“...individual and **cumulative effects of water diversion and discharge** associated with cannabis cultivation do not affect the instream flows needed for fish spawning, migration, and rearing, and the flows needed to maintain natural flow variability. The conditions shall include, but not be limited to, the principles, guidelines, and requirements established pursuant to Section 13149 of the Water Code.”*

In 2018 and again in 2021, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA) informed Sonoma County that its processes to review and implement required well testing and hydrogeologic reports were inadequate. This deficiency is compounded by the fact that Sonoma County has not completed cumulative impact analyses, **leading to an incorrect assessment of groundwater overdraft and impact on stream flow.** (2018 and 2021 NOAA Letters).

Please verify in writing the details of how/in what ways the County has corrected NOAA identified deficiencies. Also explain permitting requirements for zone 3 and 4, and additional requirements for impaired or special-species watersheds.

**Issue 2 – SGMA GSAs:** Government Code 65350.5 Water requires, “Before adoption of any substantial amendment of a county’s General Plan, the planning agency shall review and consider all of the following...” 1) Adoption or update to groundwater sustainability plan or groundwater management plan; 2) adjudication of water rights; and 3) an order

or interim plan by the State Water Resources Control Board pursuant to Chapter 11 etc.

Sonoma County is opening up to 65,000 acres of ag and resource lands to high-water demand cannabis cultivation. As General Plan amendments must be considered by the Planning Commission, please provide documentation that the above requirements were met prior to the March 18<sup>th</sup> hearing.

Pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the Department of Water Resources administers Groundwater Sustainability Areas (GSAs). In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that a GSA is authorized under SGMA to request, *“that the county forward permit requests for the construction of new groundwater wells... to the groundwater sustainability agency before permit approval”*... GSAs further have the authority to require registration of all wells. ... and, counties and GSAs may wish to confirm their potential roles as either a CEQA lead or responsible agency.”

Sonoma County has several GSAs. A January 2021 report for the Petaluma GSA titled *Projected Water Budget and Scenario Modeling: Projected Water Demand Assumptions* proposes to complete its analysis with assumptions for a reduction in irrigated grazing land, an increase in vineyards, and **zero cannabis cultivation**. (Petaluma GSA report)

Please verify whether cannabis cultivation permits have been issued or applications are pending in the Petaluma GSA basis, and, explain why the GSA water demands omit cannabis cultivation.

The SMND poses a “Net Zero Water Plan” mitigation measure, yet provides no substantive evidence as to how it works or analyses of potential groundwater impacts from wastewater irrigation or catchment.

Please provide information and clear examples of how **Net Zero Water Plans** work – in what ways do conservation, catchment or wastewater irrigation via pipeline reduce the demand for one to two million gallons/ acre/ per harvest to zero?

**II. Non-compliance with General Plan Elements, cumulative impact analyses or required CEQA Utility Impact analyses:** CDFA allows counties to define their regulatory framework via the General Plan, Land Use Policies and Implementing Ordinances. Sonoma County is claiming the cannabis ministerial ordinance complies with the General Plan because the County amended the Ag Resource element. This circular logic, applied in other counties, has not held up to judicial review.

**Point II A: General Plan Noise and Open Space Elements:** Chapter 38 noise analyses and mitigations, even when using non-conforming measurements from the noise source to a neighboring structure, instead of to the property line resulted in noise levels exceeding the thresholds set in the Noise Element. The analyses also require future mitigations by a separate department. These findings of “no impact” must be set aside.

Significant concerns about the visual/ aesthetic impacts of hoop houses and acres of greenhouse structures on our scenic corridors, landscape units and open space lands. Compliance with the Open Space Element are not addressed in the Ordinance or its SMND.

Please explain why the Chapter 38 analyses do not use the measurement from the noise source to the **exterior property line**, as required by the Noise Element. Analyses using the

non-compliant measurement from the noise source to a neighboring structure must be set aside.

Please provide documentation as to how Chapter 38 permitting will protect our open spaces, conservation easements, scenic landscape units and scenic corridors, not just State Scenic Highways.

**Point II B: CEQA Section XIX: Utilities and Service Systems: Utility system new infrastructure and upgrade requirements place a large tax burden on Sonoma County taxpayers and utility ratepayers.** Sonoma County has not prepared or released impact analyses for its utilities and service systems even though CEQA clearly requires that the County define the need for new or expanded water, wastewater, storm water, energy, and solid waste facilities, and to make a determinations that the County has:

- Sufficient water supplies available for the project and reasonably foreseeable future developments during normal, dry and multiple dry years;
- Wastewater plant capacity and treatment processes with the ability to serve new demand as determined by multiple large and small wastewater treatment providers; and
- Solid waste landfill infrastructure to handle new waste stream, with disclosure as to whether the waste generated will impair solid waste reduction goals.

Several areas of the SMND indicated potential cumulative impacts to utility functions from increases in commercial cannabis cultivation and processing, and could not state the “no impact” standard. And, the SMND did not fully analyze and disclose the possible consequences of having to build additional water facilities, conveyance pipelines or upgrade waste treatment systems. For example, the SMND alluded to a significant impact to landfills, yet did not address the volume of potential waste such as annual replacement of disposable hoop house plastics or disposal of soil from pot and greenhouse cultivation.

Other SMND Sections without cumulative or fiscal impact assessments include, but are not limited to: I. Aesthetics; III. Air Quality; VI: Energy; VIII Greenhouse Gas Emissions; XV Public Services (police and fire), and XVII Transportation.

**Two Examples: First, the GHG section finds that,** “Although the updated Ordinance would result in greater GHG emissions from transportation, water use, and solid waste disposal, the requirement of **100 percent renewable energy would nearly eliminate increases in GHG emissions from energy use.**” The finding is not supported by substantive evidence as to how much GHG emissions are generated from transportation, water use and solid waste disposal versus how much energy will be generated on-site or offset with purchasing a credit.

Second, it’s a big stretch to find that low-income workers will use fuel efficient vehicles: which is required to make the **finding for Transportation VMT:** “State regulations such as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard would require vehicles to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels, thus reducing GHGs emitted from employees commuting to cultivation sites.”

As the SMND did not complete the required CEQA Section 15 analyses of whether the projected cannabis water, wastewater or landfill demands would require future upgrades to utility plant of public services, please prepare and release projections of the upgrades and costs necessary to accommodate future demand.

Napa County prudently completed an [Election's Code 9111 Report](#) to analyze land use, environmental, and fiscal impacts of opening its ag and watershed lands to commercial cannabis cultivation – and determined the risks and costs were too great.

**Point II C: Recent Court Cases:** At the March 8<sup>th</sup> listening session, County officials indicated they had not studied other counties. Without such benchmarking, Sonoma County is repeating many of the same mistakes made by other counties – either insufficient environmental review or permitting an over-capacity, such as Santa Barbara or Humboldt.

**Attempts by other counties to approve commercial cannabis cultivation through ministerial permits without adequate CEQA analyses have been struck down by the courts or repealed via settlement negotiations.**

Examples include, yet are not limited to:

- San Mateo County: SMC Marijuana Moratorium Coalition v. County of San Mateo, et. al. (San Mateo Superior Court Case No. 18CIV00206) – **repealed ministerial permit process**
- Trinity County: Trinity Action Association v. County of Trinity, et al., Case No 19CV001 (2019) – **required Program EIR**
- Humboldt County: FRIENDS OF THE EEL RIVER v. COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, et al. – **Negotiations led to an updated Ordinance and resolved certain issues:** “*Adverse watershed impacts associated with marijuana cultivation include increased sediment from roads, stream crossings, and grading activities; dewatering salmon-bearing streams; and introduction of toxic pesticides and fertilizers.*” **Required mitigation fund allocations.**

Plaintiffs note that Humboldt County’s “cap” of 3,500 permits may produce **twice as much cannabis as the entire state of California is likely to consume.**

**III. Ordinance Chapter 38 does not meet CEQA’s Article 19 definition of Ministerial Permitting: To obtain a County permit, discretionary decision making is required by Sonoma County’s Ag Commissioner staff.**

**A fair argument can be made that the County has not provided substantive evidence to support a finding of “No Impact” in all CEQA areas.** The extent (up to 65,000 acres) and variety in the types of land (LIA prime soils, large parcel LEA, RRD resource and watershed land, and small parcel DA zones) being opened to commercial cannabis cultivation have a myriad of unique and sensitive attributes.

The County’s proposed Ministerial process via Chapter 38, Section 12 Standards has some numerical standards, and many unenforceable Best Management Practices that can be modified or rescinded at any time by the Ag Commissioner.

The ministerial process does not meet the CEQA requirement that the County review “the whole of a project” – there is no Program EIR, little cumulative impact assessment, merely review of individual reports. This does not meet the requirement to review a project and its site conditions as an integrated whole and the County cannot make the Mandatory Finding of Significance.

**Point IIIA: CEQA Guidelines Article 19: Ministerial:** (Section 21080) and Section 15002 (i)(1) and Section 15369) Article 19 clearly defines Ministerial Permits – A Project is ministerial if: **The Lead Agency can see *with certainty* that there is *no possibility* that the activity may have a significant impact.** (emphasis added)

The Article sets specific criteria for Lead Agencies:

1. No physical change to the environment;
2. Location has no sensitive attributes (stream, wetland, steep slope, sensitive receptor)
3. Fixed standards and objective measures; and
4. Staff have little personal judgement or discretion;

**Issue 1: (Criteria 1 and 2): No physical change to environment or sensitive habitats:**

- a) By definition, projects requiring fencing, 24-hour security, lighting, water and power infrastructure and nuisance-related setbacks change the physical environment.
- b) Most locations in Ag zones and especially the RRD zone have **sensitive physical attributes** (streams, wetlands, slopes, heritage trees, etc.). It is inconceivable that the Ag Commission staff have the expertise to determine the accuracy of each report/plan or the site conditions pertinent to all the plan’s subject areas!

**The scope and fragility of the environmental resources in the Significant Impact Area are not appropriate for ministerial permitting:** Over 80 percent of Sonoma County’s land areas are either zoned Agricultural or Resource. The SMND identifies over 650,000 acres as Ag or RRD zoned land with parcels over 10 acres in size. The Ordinance then excludes certain categories of land, resulting in opening up to **65K acres of land to high-intensity cultivation**, much on previously uncultivated open space or pasture/oak woodland land.

Thus, even small acreages in certain locations will have significant groundwater and renewable energy interconnection impacts as well as the potential for nuisance odor and neighbor and wildlife-disturbing noise impacts.

With little or no enforcement, merely requiring a set of disassociated “plans,” with no discretionary analyses as to their accuracy or effectiveness will not mitigate unique, site-specific environmental impacts. The finding of “no significant impact” is not supported by substantive evidence.

**Issue 2a: Discretionary review required – BMPs and Future Mitigations (Criteria 3 and 4):** In an attempt to incorporate standards into the Ministerial process, the Ordinance and SMND identify about 20 separate reports, studies or permits required for review and approval from a State Agency or Review and Approval by County Ag Commissioner Staff either prior to or during the ministerial permit process.

Many reports and plans **do not lend themselves to fixed standards or measures**; thus, they require discretion to determine if criteria are met or measures meet the objectives – these are discretionary reviews. Some reviews are sent to Permit Sonoma for decision-making; however, merely stating “discretionary review is done by Permit Sonoma rather than the Ag Commission staff” does not make the process Ministerial – it merely proves that a Conditional Use Permit is required.

In addition, certain Chapter 38 sections define exceptions or additional requirements over Chapter 26 base zoning requirements. For example, determining the allowed acreage of cannabis new structures requires cross-referencing different elements of the zoning code and several calculations. Thus, not all areas lend themselves to yes/no standards.

Under CEQA: future mitigations are not allowed. When an impact occurs, such as HVAC equipment not meeting noise standards, the SMND defers mitigation to future actions by Permit Sonoma under Code Chapter 26, building department to specify “extra shielding.” Given noise impacts require future mitigations that must be communicated to the building department, the process requires written conditions in a Use Permit, they are not ministerial.

**And, really, three neighbors have to complain about an impact, when expert testimony exists stating to be effective, setbacks need to be 500- 1000 feet from neighboring property lines.** (Yolo and Napa county reports)

**Best Management Practices:** (BMPs) Likewise, BMPs are voluntary, not mandatory and thus are not enforceable. In addition, Chapter 38 Best Management Practices can be revised, amended and rescinded at any time by the Ag Commissioner.

**Issue 2b: The “Ministerial” process identifies a number of additional Permits, Reports and Plans** to be obtained by Applicant and reviewed by County staff. (endnote)

A project requiring nearly 20 plans and reports covering a variety of impact areas, **cannot make the finding that the project has “no possibility of environmental impact”**. And, permitting up to 65,000 acres of projects – or even the industry-proposed 6,500 acres - results in a permitting program with significant cumulative impacts. Yet, this ministerial permit process does not stand on a foundation of a Program EIR, cumulative impact assessments or even project-specific CEQA reviews.

Determinations on the findings of the reports and plans require a vast array of knowledge in different technical areas. If any discretion is used, see court decision:  
*Protecting Our Water and Environmental Resources v. County of Stanislaus.*

The Ag Commission staff must review these reports, and determine whether the application meets or does not meet certain criteria. **If there is an impact requiring mitigation, the applicant is referred to Permit Sonoma for a Conditional Use Permit – by any other name, this is discretionary decision-making.**

**Conclusion:** For the above stated reasons, supported by fact or substantive evidence related to inconsistencies with State law, **please set aside the Chapter 38 ministerial permitting process, the deficient SMND, and certain revisions to Chapter 26 of the Zoning Code.**



The County did not complete the State CDFA recommended Program EIR, and the SMND has little to no cumulative impact analysis; thus, the **documents cannot meet the Mandatory Finding of Significance.**

The Neighborhood Coalition respectfully requests that Sonoma County complete a Program EIR; then, amend the 2018 Cannabis Ordinance – a CUP-based ordinance that complies with State environmental and licensing law governing cannabis cultivation.

**Submitted by: Judith Olney Healdsburg, CA**

## ENDNOTES and ATTACHMENTS

**Verification Emails with CDFA:** From: "Parrott, Richard@CDFA" <[Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov)>  
Date: February 12, 2021 at 10:36:55 AM PST  
To: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>

**Subject: RE: More clarification**

Good morning Ms. Beytagh, **You are correct that if a county did not complete a project level CEQA review, then the applicant would need to complete the necessary documentation for CDFA to serve as lead agency.** The CDFA has worked with many local jurisdictions on a pathway for CEQA compliance and it is recommended applicants verify that there is no project level CEQA being provided by their local jurisdiction rather than attempting to provide their own project-level CEQA review. If you have questions about a specific jurisdiction I can provide information about whether or not there is a pathway in place with that jurisdiction for CEQA compliance.

Best regards, Richard Parrott, Director  
CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing Division California Department of Food and Agriculture (916) 263-0801  
[cannabis.cdfa.ca.gov](http://cannabis.cdfa.ca.gov)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>  
Sent: Monday, February 8, 2021 3:59 PM  
To: Parrott, Richard@CDFA <[Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov)>  
Subject: More clarification

*CAUTION : [External Email] - This email originated from outside of our CDFA organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is expected and is safe.*

Dear Mr. Parrott, Thank you so much for your January 29th response, and for the timely clarifications. As we read MAUCRSA and the CDFA clarifying memos, it is clear that to obtain the required discretionary State license, there are State - set CEQA compliance requirements.

Recent documents released by our county officials show they are actively working several processes that do not align with State Law, as we understand it. For further clarification: If a county's regulations permit cannabis grows without program level or project- specific review, it is our understanding that the applicant would need to complete the required project-level CEQA review with CDFA serving as the Lead Agency.

Is this understanding correct? Sincerely, Bridget Beytagh

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**From:** "Parrott, Richard@CDFA" <[Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov)>  
**Date:** January 29, 2021 at 1:44:21 PM PST  
**To:** Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>  
**Cc:** "Cornell, Margaret@CDFA" <[margaret.cornell@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:margaret.cornell@cdfa.ca.gov)>  
**Subject: RE: Cannabis classification**

Good afternoon Ms. Beytagh,

I received your e-mail below regarding changing the classification of cannabis from a product to a crop in relation to transitioning to a ministerial process, whether the state considers this legal, and plans for

the state to change the designation of cannabis to a crop. From your e-mail I understand that the **question about changing the designation of cannabis from product to crop, relates to CDFA regulations with respect to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance and impacting a local jurisdictions ability to establish a ministerial process.**

The Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA) respects local authority to establish their own process for regulating commercial cannabis activity including if the local jurisdiction wants to establish a ministerial process for CEQA purposes. The current designation of cannabis in the MAUCRSA of cannabis as a product does not prevent a local jurisdiction from establishing a ministerial process for CEQA purposes. **However, the issuance of a state license under the MAUCRSA is a discretionary process that requires CEQA compliance. Even if the designation of cannabis was changed to a crop in MAUCRSA, this would not change the requirement to comply with CEQA because issuance of a state license is still discretionary. I am not aware of any current efforts to change the statutory designation of cannabis from a product to a crop in the MAUCRSA.**

If you have any questions please let me know.

Best regards, Richard Parrott, Director

CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing Division California Department of Food and Agriculture (916) 263-0801  
[calcannabis.cdfa.ca.gov](http://calcannabis.cdfa.ca.gov)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Beytagh <[beytagh@sonic.net](mailto:beytagh@sonic.net)>

Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 2:51 PM

To: Parrott, Richard@CDFA <[Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:Richard.Parrott@cdfa.ca.gov)>

Cc: Cornell, Margaret@CDFA <[margaret.cornell@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:margaret.cornell@cdfa.ca.gov)>

Subject: Cannabis classification

Dear Mr. Parrott. I am writing to you for some help in trying to find out who to address concerns about counties trying to change the State law regarding the classification of cannabis from a product to a crop. We, in Sonoma County have very proactive cannabis industry working closely with our officials to transition to the ministerial process and declare cannabis a crop. I understand that the State does not consider that legal. Does the State have plans to make the change? Who would be the person to go to for more information on this subject?

Thank you for the help, Bridget Beytagh

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#### **ENDNOTE: State Right to Farm Law Text vs Sonoma County Ordinance**

**State Right to Farm law:** *(1) No agricultural activity, operation, or facility, or appurtenances thereof, conducted or maintained for commercial purposes, and in a manner consistent with proper and accepted customs and standards, as established and followed by similar agricultural operations in the same locality, shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, due to any changed condition in or about the locality, **after it has been in operation for more than three years if it was not a nuisance at the time it began.***

*(2) No activity of a district agricultural association that is operated in compliance with Division 3 (commencing with Section 3001) of the Food and Agricultural Code, shall be or become a*



*private or public nuisance due to any changed condition in or about the locality, after it has been in operation for more than three years if it was not a nuisance at the time it began.*

**Sonoma County Section 30-25 Nuisance – agricultural operation:** *No agricultural operation conducted or maintained on agricultural land in a manner consistent with proper and accepted customs and standards, as established and followed by similar agricultural operations in the county, shall be or become a nuisance for purposes of this code or county regulations if it was not a nuisance when it began, provided that such operation complies with the requirements of all applicable federal, state, and county statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, approvals, and permits. The provisions of this section shall not apply where a nuisance results from the negligent or improper management or operation of an agricultural operation.*

#### **ENDNOTE – Sonoma County Applicant-required Studies – Plans - Reports**

- a. **State Water Resource Control Board** (per General Order 2017-0023-DWQ) – state retained control of requirements and for water quality and stormwater review:
  - Site Management Plan
  - Nitrogen Management Plan (cannabis cultivation 1 acre plus)
  - Site Erosion and Sediment Control Plan – on Slopes 30-50%  
(Note: Ministerial permit only on slopes less than 15%)
  - Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit – Notice of Intent
- b. CA Fish and Wildlife: **Streambed Alteration Agreement** for diversion projects
- c. **Demonstrate on-site water availability** for all uses on a sustained basis
  - Letter from Retail water supplier
  - Letter from Recycled Water supplier (requires pipe interconnection – no trucking)
  - Proof of Groundwater Zone 1 or 2 and location relative to Dry Creek, etc.
  - **Groundwater Zones 3 and 4:** extensive documentation, well testing and hydrogeological report
- d. **Other Reports and Plans** – with no synthesizing CEQA document – and many without fixed standards
  1. Biotic Resource Study & Plan / Riparian Corridor Study
  2. Fire Prevention Plan – some requiring Wildfire mitigations
  3. Recycled Water Plan
  4. Groundwater Monitoring and Reporting Plan – plus GSA requirements
  5. Design Review - Structure Design Standards
  6. County Tree Removal/ Replacement Permit:  
State permit requirements for Timberland - Minor and Major timberland conversion
  7. Energy Conservation Plan
  8. Odor Prevention Plan
  9. Paleontological and Cultural Resource Study
  10. Hazardous Materials and Remediation Report – identify whether previous uses on the site used pesticides or arsenic
  11. Promotional Event Zoning Permit (not specified, yet required)
  12. Traffic Generation Report – prove fewer than 110 Avg Daily Trips (ADT)  
(or provide analysis of ADT and VMT (vehicle miles traveled) impacts)

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

**NOAA 2018 and 2021 Letters**

**Petaluma GSA January 2021 Projected Water Demand Assumptions**



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325  
Santa Rosa, California 95404-4731

August 30, 2018

Tennis Wick, Director  
Permit and Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, California 95403

Dear Mr. Wick:

This letter communicates NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) concerns regarding Permit Sonoma's current protocol for analyzing and permitting cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County, California. NMFS is responsible for conserving threatened and endangered marine species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and ESA-listed Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), CCC steelhead (*O. mykiss*), and California Coastal Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) reside within many rivers and streams throughout the County. Our concerns stem from the recent proliferation of permitted cannabis cultivation that may have undetermined impacts within watersheds important to the survival and recovery of these salmonid species.

State Water Board regulations concerning cannabis cultivation water usage contain required best management practices (BMP's) highly protective of instream flow volume and fish habitat, such as requiring summer forbearance, winter diversions, and fish friendly bypass flows. However, similar BMP's are not required by the State Water Board for cultivation sites utilizing wells as a source for cannabis cultivation. Because of this discrepancy under state law, the vast majority of cannabis cultivation applications throughout the County are opting for groundwater wells as their water source. We are concerned in particular, that wells are being drilled and pumped without appropriate analysis regarding their potential impact to surface water, especially near-stream wells that may impact groundwater/surface water dynamics and result in streamflow depletion.

NMFS appreciates Sonoma County's required hydrogeological analysis pursuant to General Plan Policy WR-2e, Policy and Procedure 8-1-14, and section 10d of Exhibit A-2 of County Ordinance No. 6189 regarding water availability in Zone 3 and 4 areas.<sup>1</sup> However, after reviewing many hydrogeologic analyses recently submitted to Permit Sonoma as part of individual cannabis cultivation applications, NMFS shares the following comments and suggestions on the analyses, and on Sonoma County groundwater issues in general.

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<sup>1</sup> Sonoma County has produced a map delineating the county into groundwater availability "zones". Based largely upon underlying geologic material. The four zones are: Zone 1 – Major Groundwater Basin; Zone 2 – Major Natural Recharge Area; Zone 3 – Marginal Groundwater Availability; and Zone 4 – Areas with Low of Highly Variable Water Yield. A copy of the map can be found at [http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/gisdata/pdfs/grndwater\\_avail\\_b\\_size.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/gisdata/pdfs/grndwater_avail_b_size.pdf)



## Specific concerns regarding the analyses conducted

Appropriate level of coordination and evaluation of cumulative impacts has occurred consistent with the General Plan. According to Sonoma County's "Procedures for Groundwater Analysis and Hydrogeologic Reports":

*"Prior to conducting the hydrogeologic study, the consultant shall coordinate with Permit Sonoma staff to determine the appropriate cumulative impact area and the projected development within that area. The determination whether or not cumulative impacts have been adequately addressed in the hydrogeologic report will be based upon joint review of the Registered Environmental Health Specialist or the Professional Geologist who responds to the project referral and the Planner, as part of preparing the project Initial Study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). If the cumulative impacts in the agreed upon Cumulative Impact Area are determined to be significant adverse impacts or if these impacts are not adequately addresses, the project would be inconsistent with the General Plan".*

In our review of the hydrogeologic analyses included in recent cannabis cultivation applications, there was no mention of coordination between Sonoma County planning staff and the consultant conducting the analysis, or documentation of any coordinated determinations made, regarding cumulative impacts, as required in your procedures. Therefore, we question whether each cumulative impact area was properly identified, and potential adverse impacts determined and adequately addressed.

### Lack of identification of existing and abandoned wells within the Cumulative Impact Area.

Incomplete consideration of existing and abandoned wells could lead to insufficient data generation when evaluating: 1) interconnections with the nearest surface water bodies and 2) pumping well interference with surrounding wells.

Lack of adherence to well pump test guidelines in water scarce areas. According to the County's "Procedures for Groundwater Analysis and Hydrogeologic Reports", test wells are required in Class 4 water scarce areas. Also, the test must be conducted from July 15 to October 1 each year or as extended by the Project Review and Advisory Committee. This time period is referred to as the dry weather pump test period. However, upon review we noted some hydrogeologic reports did not conduct the test during the dry weather pump test period, but instead during the winter/spring period. Adhering to this requirement is critical, since the period when well pumping most impacts streamflow and stream-dwelling salmonids is summer and early fall, when streamflow is naturally lowest.

Adherence to perform proper water balance assessments. Equally important is the water year type chosen for analysis. All water balance assessments should present results for a range of year, including dry years when groundwater pumping impacts are likely greatest. Several of the reviewed hydrogeologic reports present only average water year results. One report roughly simulated a drought condition by assuming 60 percent of the average yearly rainfall, but all other variables in the assessment remained the same (the assumption was not well supported in the analysis). Finally, the range of hydrologic and precipitation data used for analysis varied from

report to report; the County should consider providing greater guidance in their protocol documents. For instance, one report only utilized precipitation information from 1945 to 1970. A proper water balance assessment should be calculated with up to date, available data that can be obtained from several sources (e.g., California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS), NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, etc.) and should include an evaluation of dry, average and wet years.

Addressing impacts to interconnected surface waters and aquatic habitat. The reports do not properly evaluate significant impacts to groundwater overdraft and potential changes in summer baseflows. It is recommended to analyze the daily hydrological variability during late spring (outmigration), summer and early fall.

Assessing impacts to water temperature. Groundwater discharge provide cool-water environments that protect fish from excessively warm stream temperatures during the summer. Reducing the rate of groundwater discharge to streams by unsustainably pumping hydraulically connected groundwater can warm stream temperatures during the summer and cool stream temperatures during the winter (Barlow and Leake, 2012). The County's required groundwater analysis does not consider this important impact.

## **General comments relevant to management of ground water in Sonoma County**

### **Chronic lowering of Ground Water levels**

The hydrogeologic analysis currently required by County regulations only investigates short-term groundwater dynamics and their potential influence on streamflow depletion. A common misconception is that streamflow depletion stops when pumping ceases. Streamflow depletion continues after pumping stops because it takes time for groundwater levels to recover from previous pumping stress and for the depleted aquifer defined by the cone of depression to be refilled with water (Barlow and Leake, 2012). Analysis addressing this potential impact is required under General Plan Policy WR-2e, which states....

*Sonoma County must deny discretionary applications in Class 3 and 4 areas unless a hydrogeologic report establishes that groundwater quality and quantity are adequate and will not be adversely impacted by the cumulative amount of development and uses allowed in the area, so that the proposed use will not cause or exacerbate an overdraft condition in a groundwater basin or subbasin. (emphasis added)*

Without an evaluation of long-term trends in groundwater elevation, and how a negative long-term trend, if present, can exacerbate short-term fluctuations caused by well pumping, we question whether impacts to overlying streamflow can be completely assessed, and advise that a hydrogeologic report which fails to address these issues be labeled deficient per County policy.

## **Lack of coordination between Cannabis Permit Procedures and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act**

As alluded to above, Permit Sonoma does not appear to be considering future groundwater management required under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) when permitting groundwater use for cannabis cultivators and other water users. SGMA requires that groundwater basins that are unsustainably managed (*i.e.*, having one or more of six undesirable results caused by overdraft, of which streamflow depletion impacting beneficial uses is one) must achieve sustainability (avoiding all undesirable results) through developing and implementing a 20-year Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Currently, the County contains three basins requiring groundwater management per the Act, while three additional Sonoma County basins were recently upgraded by the State as exhibiting unsustainable groundwater use and will also require future groundwater management.<sup>2</sup>

Generally speaking, restoring these basins back to sustainability will likely include greater groundwater recharge, less groundwater pumping, or some combination of the two. That Sonoma County is considering permitting groundwater use for cannabis cultivation and other development in overdrafted basins governed under SGMA is concerning, since some of these basins likely suffer from some degree of streamflow depletion currently that is potentially impacting ESA-listed salmon and steelhead. For example, the county has received 38 applications for cannabis cultivation sites overlying the Santa Rosa Plain groundwater basin, which is currently acknowledged as suffering streamflow depletion caused by groundwater pumping. These applications represent a tiny fraction of the over 400 suspected cultivation sites in the basin (Tim Dodson, CDFW, personal communication), so many more applications are likely forthcoming in the near future. In short, adding more groundwater pumping to these basins is inconsistent with restoring these basins to sustainability in the future. In SGMA groundwater basins, Sonoma County should either delay well permitting until SGMA coordination occurs, require the use of public water supplies, or require winter pumping and storage. Moreover, continuing to expand groundwater use in over-extracted basins may create conflict in striving to achieve sustainability amongst various users if future pumping restrictions are necessary.<sup>3</sup>

### **Exclusion Watersheds**

Both Mark West Creek and Green Valley Creek watersheds high priority habitat for salmon and steelhead and support endangered coho salmon and threatened steelhead. Unfortunately, both of these watersheds are impacted by summer low flow caused primarily by groundwater pumping. A hydrology study by CEMAR (2015) concluded that groundwater pumping in Upper Mark West Creek likely results in lower summer baseflow, while low summer streamflow, partially caused by groundwater pumping, led to the State Water Board's 2014 Emergency Order restricting groundwater and surface water use aimed at protecting federal and state-listed

<sup>2</sup> The Santa Rosa Plain, Sonoma Valley and Petaluma groundwater basins are currently Medium priority under SGMA. The Alexander Valley, Healdsburg Area, and Wilson Grove groundwater basins are proposed for upgrading to Medium priority.

<sup>3</sup> Unlike surface water, groundwater in California is not governed by the "first in time, first in right" doctrine. Instead, all property owners using groundwater have the same right to the resource regardless of when they first began using the resource, and thus may share in any future restrictions.

salmonids in Green Valley Creek. Moreover, Mark West Creek is one of five California streams prioritized for future flow enhancement and fisheries recovery as part of California's Water Action Plan. Since continued groundwater development in these basins will likely further impair summer baseflows in the future, NMFS recommends Permit Sonoma limit future groundwater development in these basins until the effects of long-term, chronic groundwater depletion and its impact on summer baseflow are properly analyzed. At minimum, NMFS suggests Permit Sonoma require that future groundwater pumping be limited to winter months when streamflow impacts are muted, and that pumped water be stored for summer use (*i.e.*, no summer pumping). We cite the CEMAR (2015) report, which recommended winter storage and summer forbearance as appropriate water resource management in Upper Mark West Creek.

NMFS appreciates the opportunity to present our concerns regarding groundwater development in Sonoma County and ways to minimize its potential impact on streamflow and ESA-listed salmonids. We look forward to working with the County in recovering salmon and steelhead populations while ensuring Sonoma County's economy remains strong. If you have any comments or questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Rick Rogers of my staff at rick.rogers@noaa.gov, or 707-578-8552.

Sincerely,



Robert Coey  
North Coast Branch Supervisor  
North-Central Coast Office

cc. (via email)

Bryan McFadin, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
(Bryan.McFadin@waterboards.ca.gov) Corinne Gray, California Department of  
Fish and Wildlife (Corinne.Gray@wildlife.ca.gov)  
David Hines, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (David.Hines@wildlife.ca.gov)  
Lisa Hulette, County of Sonoma, Natural Resources Division (Lisa.Hulette@sonoma-  
county.org)  
Daniel Schultz, State Water Board (Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov)

## References

- Barlow, P.M., and Leake, S.A. 2012. Streamflow depletion by wells—Understanding and managing the effects of groundwater pumping on streamflow: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1376. 84 pages. Available at: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/1376/>
- Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration (CEMAR). 2015. Report on the Hydrologic Characteristics of Mark West Creek. Nov 14, 2014 (Updated Jan 28, 2015). 58 pages. Available at: <http://cemar.org/pdf/Report%20on%20the%20Hydrologic%20Characteristics%20of%20Mark%20West%20Creek.pdf>



PETALUMA VALLEY  
**GROUNDWATER**  
SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

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PROJECTED WATER BUDGET AND SCENARIO MODELING:  
PROJECTED WATER DEMAND ASSUMPTIONS

# Overview

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- Assumptions for projected rural residential and agricultural water demands based on practitioner work group efforts
- Update on municipal purveyor projection methodology



# Water Demand Assumptions for 50-Year Projected Water Budgets

- Considerable uncertainty in long-range projections
  - Developing assumptions for future water demands with high/low ranges helps to characterize that uncertainty
  - We will have opportunities to adjust to new information during 5-year updates
- 50-year projected water budgets will inform conceptual projects and actions that could be considered within GSP for potential future implementation by GSA
- However, prioritization and timing for future project planning and implementation will not be solely based on model projections
  - GSAs are not required to manage based on water budgets alone
  - SMC determine the need for projects and actions based on whether undesirable conditions are occurring or are likely to occur
  - Empirical data from monitoring for SMC during implementation is how we determine sustainable conditions

# Overview of process for Rural Residential and Agricultural Uses

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- Develop range of projected water demand assumptions (% growth/contraction)
  - Practitioner work groups provide expert advice and perspectives on future growth projections
  - Model will calculate projected demands for agriculture based on simulated climate conditions
- Use medium/mid-range values as model input with climate future scenario for 50-year projected water budget

# RURAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS

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# Projection Methodology

## (Recap from October AC Meeting)

- Includes rural residential development reliant on groundwater
  - Parcels with individual or shared domestic wells
  - Parcels served by mutual water companies
- Excludes service areas of “large public water systems” serving over 500 connections:
  - Town of Windsor; California-American Larkfield; the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Sebastopol
- No planning agency projections available beyond 2040
- Uses Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) Traffic model:
  - Current model horizon is 2040
  - Divides County into 900 “traffic analysis zones” (TAZ)
  - Uses projections from PlanBayArea 2040, trued-up with local knowledge

# Projection Methodology (continued)

## (Recap from October AC Meeting)

- Calculated portion of TAZ within subbasin and model areas, and outside large public water system service areas
  - For TAZs that straddle large public water system service areas, assumed most growth occurs within municipalities
- Using TAZ data, we developed 2040 projections at TAZ level for three scenarios:
  - General Plan Buildout (“low” growth)
  - PlanBayArea2040 (“medium” growth)
  - PlanBayArea2040+25% (“high” growth)
- Projected each out to 2072 based on straight-line extrapolation of 2015-2040 projections

# Results: Range and Proposed 50-Year Projections

Area	2015 Baseline Units	General Plan Buildout		PlanBayArea 2040		25% Above PlanBayArea 2040	
		Low		Medium		High	
		Annual Rate	Total New Units	Annual Rate	Total New Units	Annual Rate	Total New Units
In Basin	7116	0.2%	612	0.5%	2077	0.6%	2599
In Surrounding Watershed	5649	0.2%	560	0.5%	1734	0.7%	2170

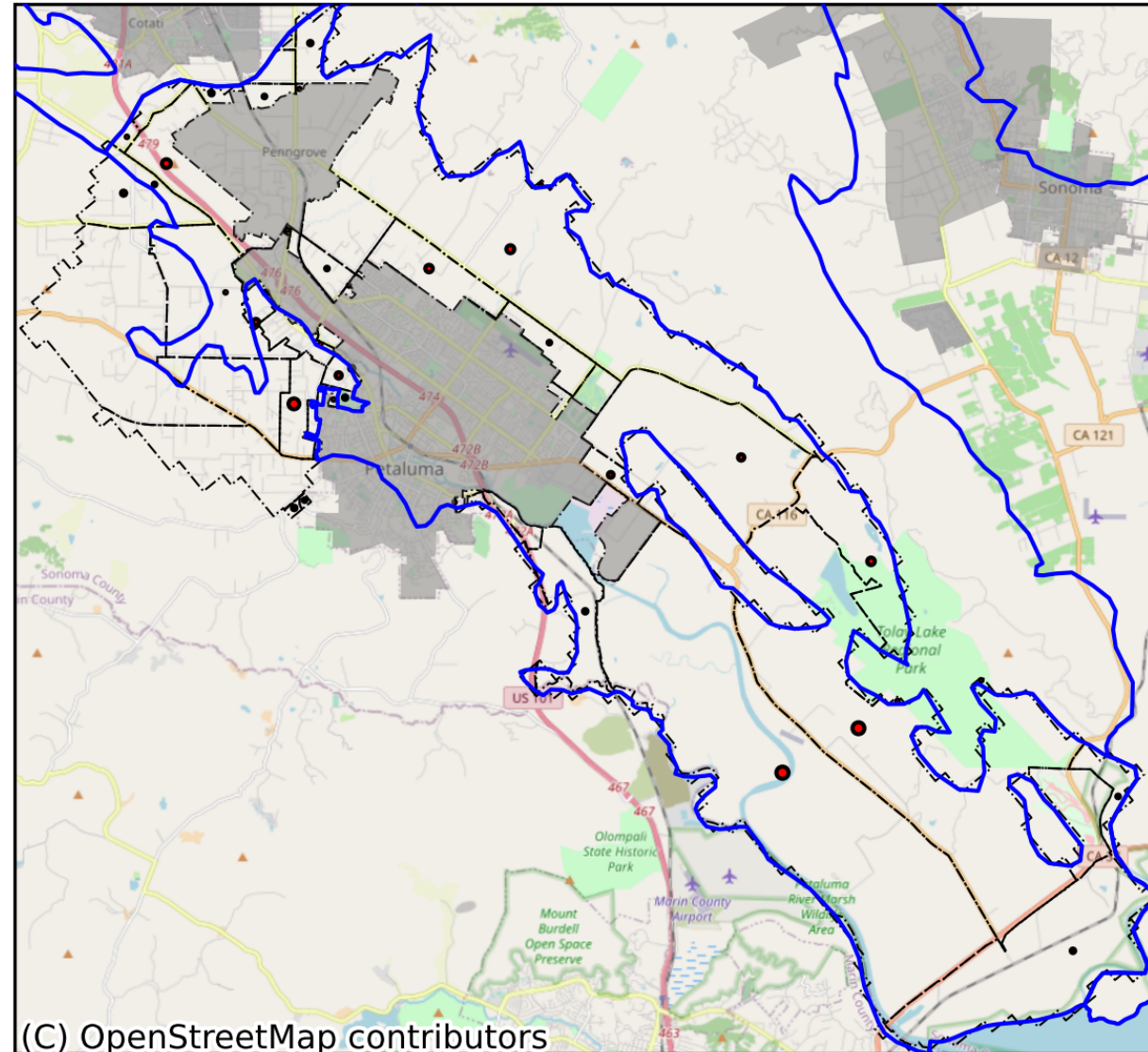
- As expected, growth in rural residential areas very low under all scenarios
- New units will be added to the model in 5-year increments distributed by TAZ
- Account for increased Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) development in model as percentage of new units (25% based on 2014-2018 data) with indoor water use only

# Recommendations for Future Updates to Projections

- Revisit and update projections for each 5-year GSP update
- Account for Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) allocations for 2022-2030 once finalized
- Incorporate any new insights and updated population and housing forecasts from County's upcoming General Plan Update
- Track permitting activity within Subbasin and contributing watershed areas at TAZ level to validate SCTA model data and improve accuracy of projections over time

Results:  
Distributing  
projected  
new units  
within  
model

## Petaluma Valley Rural Residential Growth Number of New Parcels by 2070



- TAZ
- Subbasin Boundary
- 2 new parcels
- 6 new parcels
- 12 new parcels
- 44 new parcels



# Methodology for Calculating Per Parcel Water Demands within Model

- Methodology described in [Model Update Appendix](#) (presented to AC in July 2020)
- Average per parcel (single dwelling unit) water demand currently calculated by model is ~0.42 afy (average for all parcel sized in model domain)

$$\mathbf{Q_{parcel} = Q_{indoor} + \% \text{ Irrigated} \times I_d \times P_{av}(i)}$$

$$\% \text{ Irrigated} = 2.80\%$$

$$I_d = 2.9 \text{ ft/year; Turf Irrigation Depth}$$

$$P_{av}(i) = \text{Parcel area (acres)}$$

$$Q_{indoor} \text{ (In home use)} = 0.24 \text{ AF/year}$$

# Requested Input

- Do projection ranges and proposed median values seem reasonable?
  - Yes
  - No (please provide clarification in chat)
  - No opinion - outside my area of expertise
  - I have additional questions

# AGRICULTURAL PROJECTIONS

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# Reminder of Methodology and Initial Results from October AC Meeting

- Practitioner work group considered future changes in the following crops:
  - Vineyards, Irrigated pasture, Dairies, Grain and hay crops, Truck, nursery, or berry crops (including row vegetables and field crops such as hops), Orchards/deciduous fruits and nuts, Cannabis/hemp
- Developed survey form with workgroup and distributed to members of Farm Bureau, Community Alliance of Family Farmers, Sonoma Winegrape Commission.
- Perspectives from Work group and survey respondents generally consistent:
  - General reduction of farmed acreage for majority crop types, with vineyards, cannabis/hemp and truck crops cited as most likely to undergo moderate expansion

# Reminder of Methodology and Initial Results from October AC Meeting

- Developed statistical regressions of historical county-wide acreage data for crop categories to inform bounds of projection ranges
  - Extrapolated trends are generally consistent with work group and survey respondents
- Cannabis/hemp will not be included for initial 50-year projections due to significant uncertainty associated with these recently permitted crop types.
- Develop process for distributing crop changes geographically within model

# Steps Completed Since October AC Meeting

- Developed range (high/low) of reasonable changes in acreage of each crop using regression of historical trends and survey results to help identify uncertainty in estimates
- Used midpoint of ranges to develop land-use change projections for initial future 50-year water budget and “projected baseline” model scenario
- Obtained additional input from workgroup on approach and proposed ranges
- Shared methodology and approach with GSA Board (October 22)

# Workgroup Participants Input following October AC Meeting

- Only significant input was that vineyard range of up to 48% increase was likely too high
  - Recommendation to research market trends/projections
- No quantifiable projections identified in suggested market information sources, although general finding was likelihood of lower growth due to recent flattening of demand
  - To account for this in projections we utilized lower and more recent (2008-2018) trends in historical vineyard acreage changes rather than 2000-2018 to better balance survey responses with historical trends – resulted in lowering high end of range to 36%

# Methodology for calculating ranges and midpoint

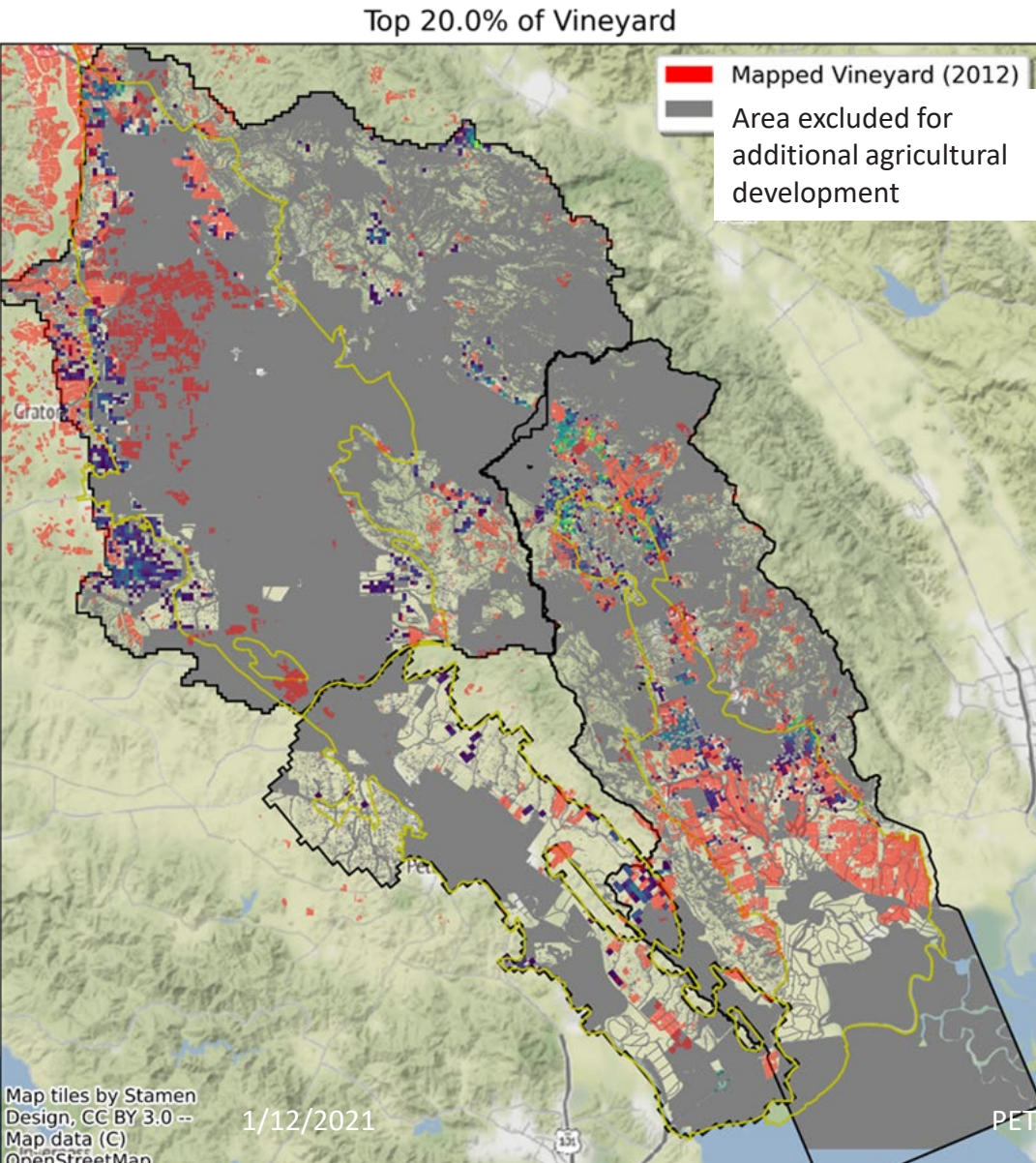
- Used a combination of the survey results and historical extrapolated data:
  - The higher (more positive/less negative) of the growth rates from the opinion polls and the historical extrapolated data is used for the high growth projections;
  - lower (less positive/more negative) is used for the low growth projections.



# Methodology for calculating ranges and midpoint

- In order to balance and help reconcile the practitioners input on projected cropping changes with the historical extrapolated data, the following procedure was followed:
  - Where the most frequent survey responses indicated expansion (positive growth), the high historical extrapolated trend was used for the ranges;
  - Where the most frequent survey responses indicated no or negligible growth, the median historical extrapolated trend was used for the ranges;
  - Where the most frequent survey responses indicated contraction (negative growth), the low historical extrapolated trend was used for the ranges.

# Methodology for distributing projected changes within model



## Determine Areas not available for future agricultural development based on:

- Developed and Urban areas (Sonoma County Vegmap Lifeform Mapping)
- riparian corridors as defined in the Sonoma County general plan
- a 50-foot buffer of streams (Sonoma County Vegmap)
- impervious areas (Sonoma County Vegmap)
- city boundaries defined by the Permit Sonoma
- critical habitat defined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- areas in the California Protected Areas Database (CPAD)
- public non-protected lands
- non-ag lands held by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- VESCO Planting level I: lands with slopes greater than 50

## Calculate probability that a parcel will be converted to a new crop based on physical characteristics:

- Slope
- Elevation
- Aspect
- Soil type
- Climate
- Location of existing crops

# Results: Range and Proposed 50-Year Projections of Crop Growth/Contraction

**Ranges of growth in 50 years  
(% Change)**

Crops	Ranges of growth in 50 years (% Change)		
	Hi	Mid	Low
Vineyards	36%	18%	0%
Truck, nursery, or berry crops (including row vegetables and field crops such as hops)	70%	38%	5%
Grain and hay crops	62%	26%	-10%
Orchards/deciduous fruits and nuts	-10%	-94%	-178%
Irrigated pasture	-10%	-65%	-138%

Extrapolated 2000-2018 Crop Report trends (high growth trend)

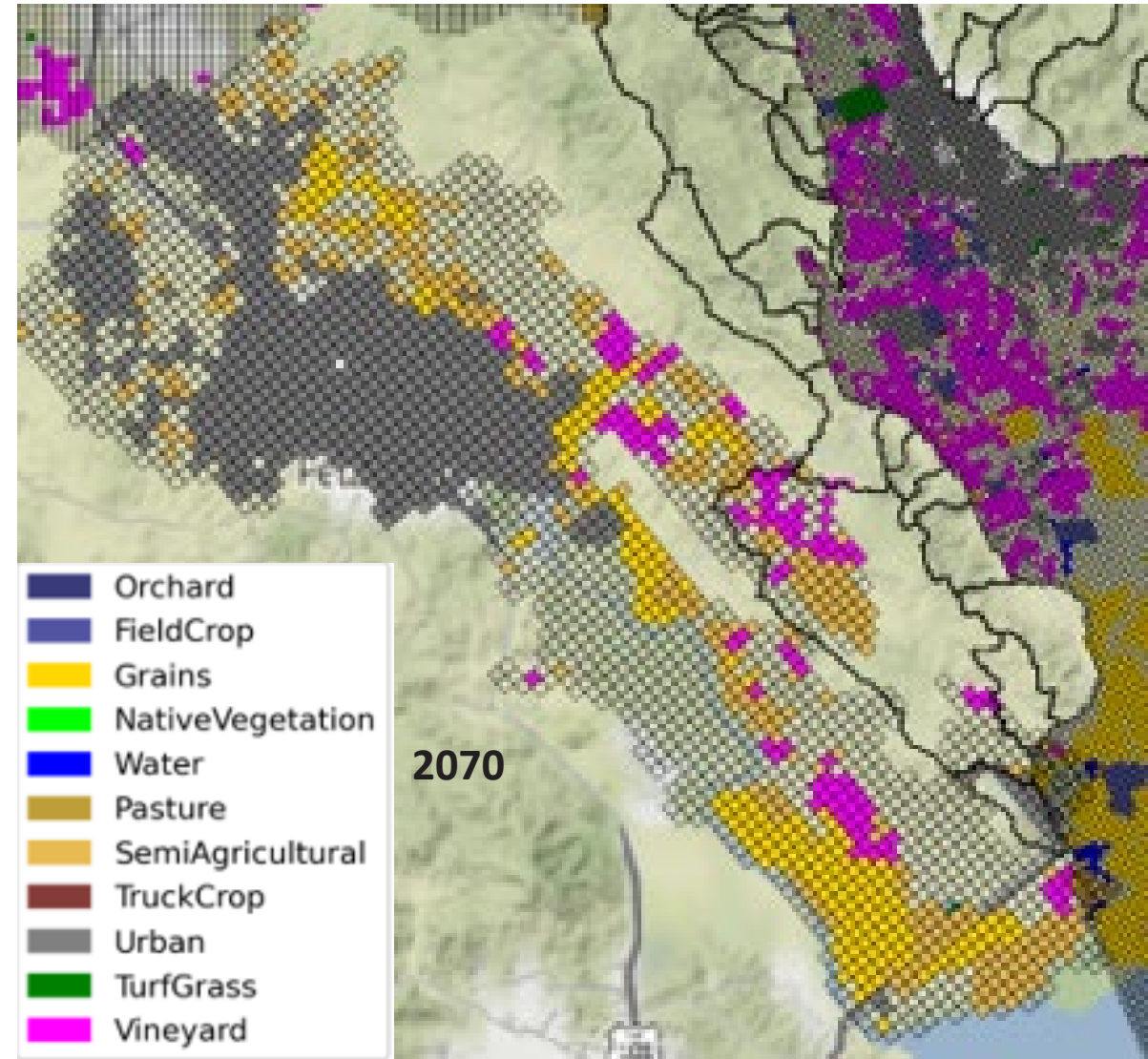
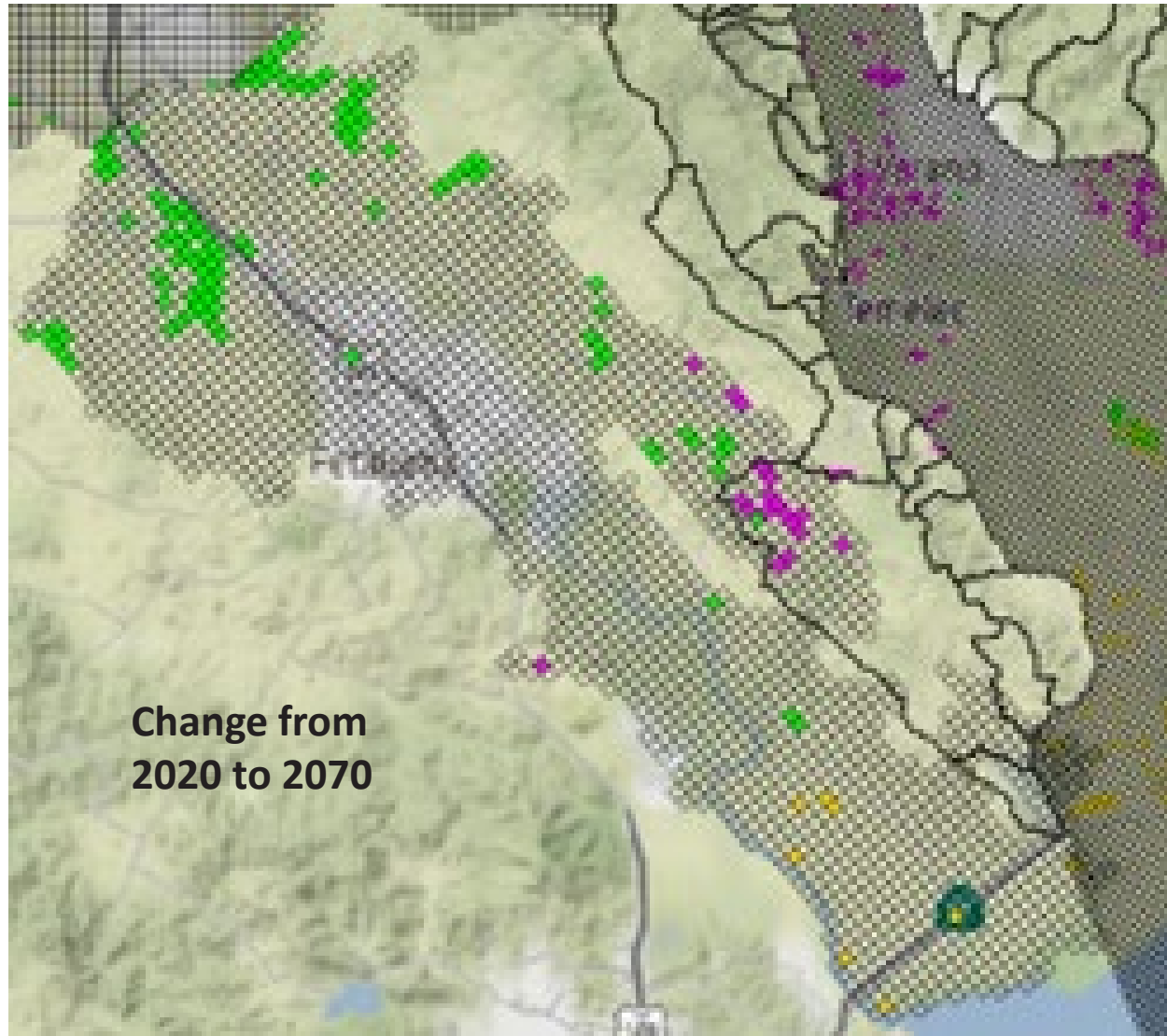
Extrapolated 2008-2018 Crop Report trends (median growth trend)

Survey Results (most frequent responses)

# Results: Projected Changes in Crops: 2020 to 2070

	Field Crop	Grains	Orchard	Pasture	Truck Crop	Vineyard
2020	0	4,563	0	2,203	0	2,025
2025	0	4,563	0	1,914	0	2,025
2030	0	4,563	0	1,692	0	2,048
2035	0	4,563	0	1,469	0	2,070
2040	0	4,585	0	1,246	0	2,070
2045	0	4,607	0	1,002	0	2,070
2050	0	4,630	0	712	0	2,226
2055	0	4,630	0	490	0	2,293
2060	0	4,630	0	267	0	2,315
2065	0	4,674	0	67	0	2,359
2070	0	4,696	0	22	0	2,404
<b>Change from 2020 to 2070</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2181</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>379</b>

# Results: Projected Changes and Crop Distribution at 2070

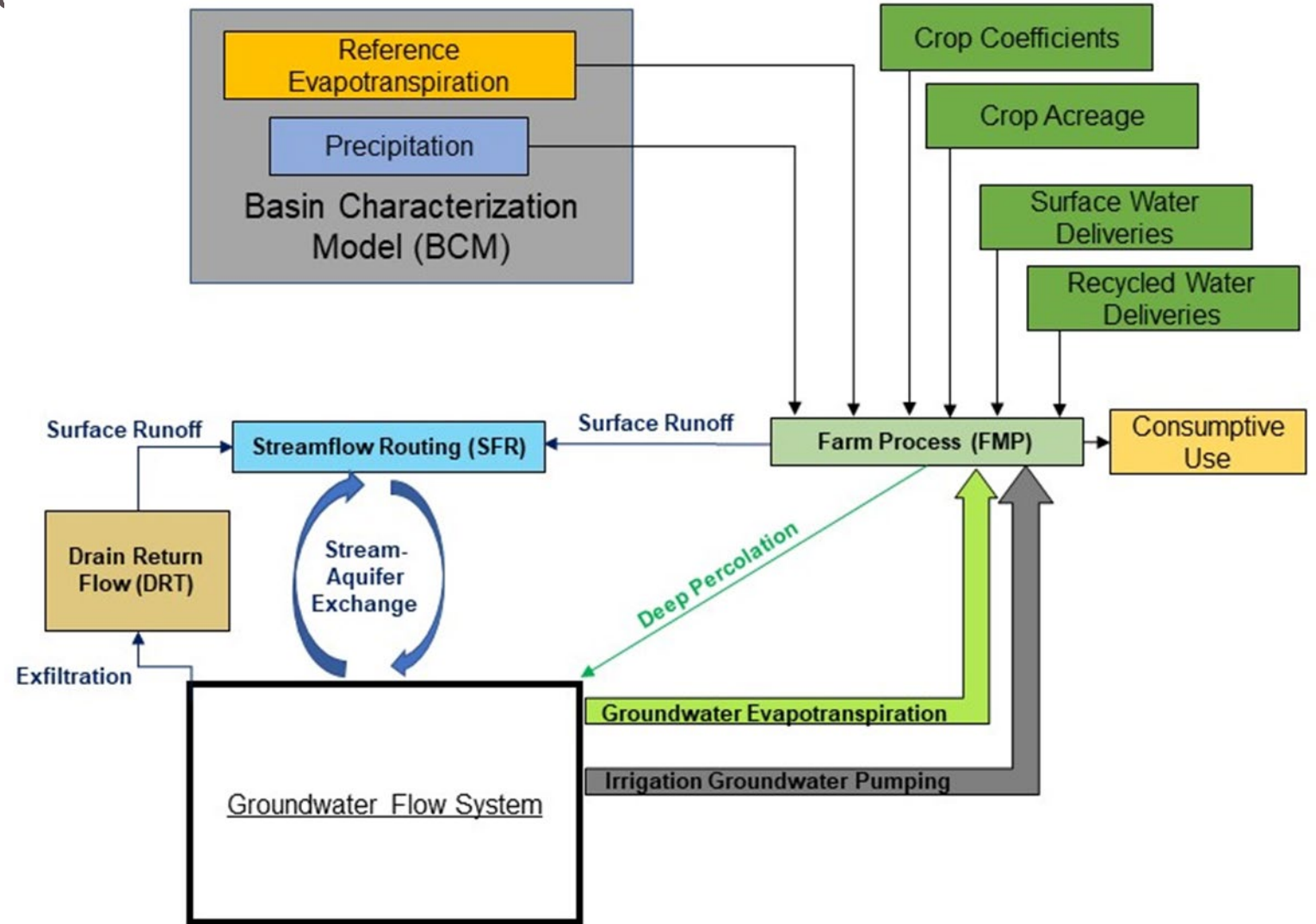


- Orchard
- FieldCrop
- Grains
- NativeVegetation
- Water
- Pasture
- SemiAgricultural
- TruckCrop
- Urban
- TurfGrass
- Vineyard



# Water Demands from Crops will be simulated by Model for 50-Year Water Budget

- Projected changes in future agricultural water demands will be estimated using model, which integrates future climate projections



# Recommendations for Future Updates to Projections

- Revisit and update projections for each 5-year GSP update
- Track changes within Subbasin and contributing watershed areas to improve accuracy of projections over time
  - Coordinate and share information on future changes with County Agricultural Commissioner and Permit Sonoma
  - Evaluate future information for cannabis and hemp

# Next Steps

- Develop model input datasets for future projected changes in crops using mid-range values
- Simulate 50-year projected water budget
- Process and compile output of 50-year projected water budget for February AC meeting



# Requested Input

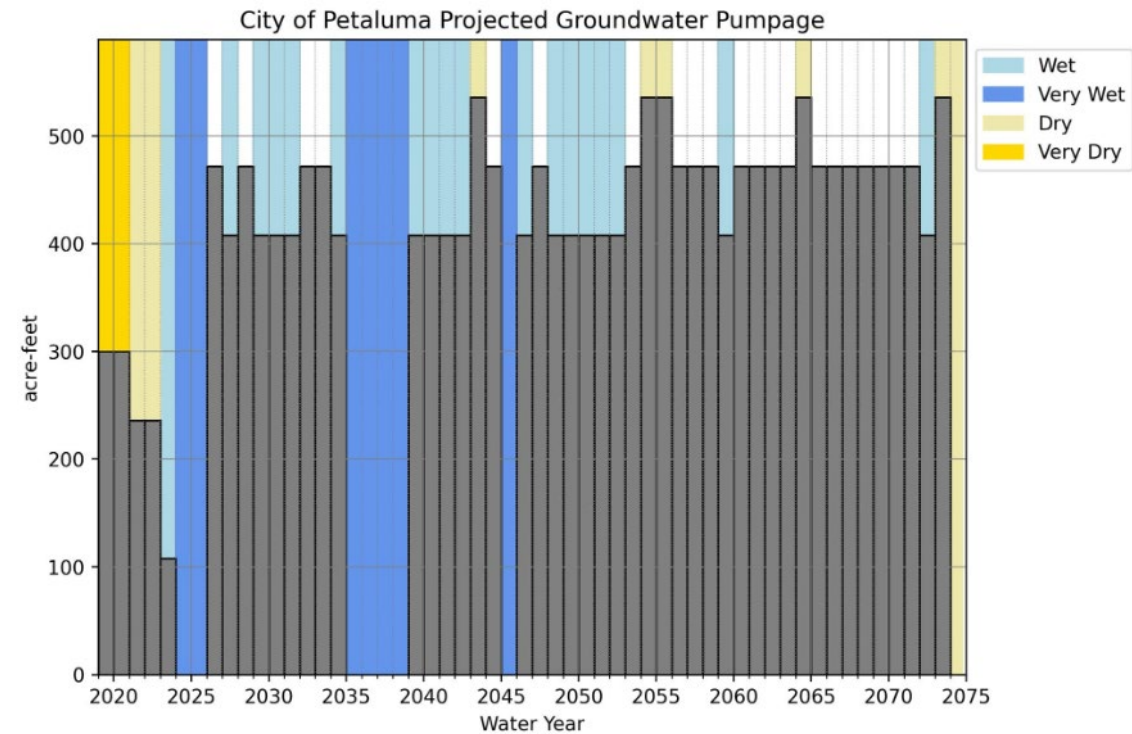
- Do projection ranges and proposed median values seem reasonable?
  - Yes
  - No (please provide clarification in chat)
  - No opinion - outside my area of expertise
  - I have additional questions

# Draft Projected Municipal Demands

- Municipal purveyors (City of Petaluma) providing range of projected demands based on combination of historical and potential future use
  - Projections include higher-end ranges for GSP planning that are generally higher in comparison with planning projections for UWMPs
- City of Petaluma initial projections:
  - Range of 0 to 300 afy (2020-2025); 0 to 600 (2026-2072)
  - Avg from current water budget period: 178 afy (2012-2018)

# Projected Municipal Demands: City of Petaluma DRAFT Example

- In order to capture these ranges and incorporate potential climate variability in the model:
  - Varying annual future pumping based on projected future climate year classifications (very dry, dry, normal, wet, very wet) using calculated standard deviation from historical pumping records – see next slide
  - Applying patterns of seasonality of groundwater production based on historical wellfield operations



# Questions/Discussion

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325  
Santa Rosa, California 95404-4731

February 26, 2021

Tennis Wick, Director  
County of Sonoma  
Permit and Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, California 95403

Dear Mr. Wick:

This letter communicates NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) concerns regarding the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) addressing the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment (Update) for cannabis cultivation in Sonoma County, California. NMFS is responsible for conserving threatened and endangered marine species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and ESA-listed Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), CCC steelhead (*O. mykiss*), and California Coastal Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) reside within many rivers and streams throughout the County. Our concerns stem from the proposed requirements for cultivators using groundwater as their water source, and how these requirements will likely be inadequate in preventing impacts to ESA-listed salmonids and their habitat.

Surface water and underlying groundwater are likely hydraulically linked throughout much of Sonoma County, and this linkage is critically important in creating seasonal habitat for juvenile salmonids. Where the groundwater aquifer supplements streamflow, the influx of cold, clean water is critically important for maintaining temperature and flow volume during summer months. Pumping from these aquifer-stream complexes can adversely affect instream habitat by lowering groundwater levels and interrupting the hyporheic flow between the aquifer and stream.

Groundwater is the predominant source of water for cannabis cultivation operations within Sonoma County. State Water Board regulations concerning surface water diversions for cannabis cultivation contain required best management practices (BMP's) highly protective of instream flow volume and fish habitat, such as requiring summer forbearance, winter diversions, and fish friendly bypass flows. However, similar BMP's are not required by the State Water Board for cultivation sites utilizing groundwater wells as a source for cannabis cultivation. Because of this discrepancy under state law, the vast majority of cannabis cultivation applications throughout the County are opting for groundwater wells as their water source. We are concerned in particular, that wells are being drilled and pumped without appropriate analysis regarding their potential impact to surface water, especially near-stream wells that may also impact groundwater/surface water dynamics and result in streamflow depletion. With those concerns in mind, we offer the following comments.

Re Page 70, Section 10(b): The MND states the following: *Future cannabis facilities in rural areas would rely on either surface (rivers, lakes, and springs) or well water sources. Accordingly, the introduction of cannabis cultivation in these areas could increase the use of groundwater. As explained above, very few rural cultivation sites are currently using surface water*



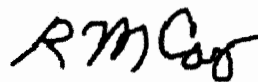
diversions as a water source, likely to work around the required BMP's mandated by the State Water Board for surface water diversions. NMFS is concerned about both surface water and groundwater diversions, as they are linked, and we believe the potential for impacts from unrestricted groundwater use is high.

Re Page 71, Section 10(b)(4)(b): This section addresses near-stream wells (e.g., "well is within 500 feet of blue line stream"), and is intended to minimize streamflow depletion impacts. According to the MND, if a well is within 500 feet of a blue line stream, the applicant must document one of three things: 1) prepare a "net zero water plan", 2) document the well is near the Russian River or Dry Creek, or 3) document the well is within the Groundwater Availability Zone 1 or 2. By including the third option, the authors of the MND seem to assume that streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely in Groundwater Availability Zones 1 and 2. However, streamflow depletion can occur within any of the groundwater zones in Sonoma County, and is largely influenced by well distance from the waterway, the pumping intensity, and the transmissivity of the underlying geology, not groundwater availability zones. Thus, the current standards and requirements appear unlikely to adequately mitigate the potential impact of streamflow depletion, making a MND inappropriate. NMFS recommends the Update require either a net zero water plan, or a hydrogeologic analysis confirming streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely, before any cannabis operation utilizing a near-stream well is approved, regardless of which Groundwater Availability zone it may occur in.

Furthermore, while we understand that the current Update applies only to cannabis cultivation, NMFS recommends the County also update their well ordinance and permitting procedures to apply this requirement (i.e., require a net zero water plan, or a hydrogeologic analysis confirming streamflow depletion impacts are unlikely) to all permit applications for near-stream wells.

NMFS appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration addressing the Sonoma County Cannabis Land Use Ordinance Update and General Plan Amendment for cannabis cultivation. If you have any comments or questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Rick Rogers at [rick.rogers@noaa.gov](mailto:rick.rogers@noaa.gov), or 707-578-8552.

Sincerely,



Robert Coey  
North Coast Branch Supervisor  
North-Central Coast Office

cc: (via email)

Bryan McFadin, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
([Bryan.McFadin@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Bryan.McFadin@waterboards.ca.gov))

Wes Stokes, California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([Wes.Stokes@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Wes.Stokes@wildlife.ca.gov))

David Hines, California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([David.Hines@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:David.Hines@wildlife.ca.gov))

Daniel Schultz, State Water Board ([Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov))

Jessica Maxfield, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
([Jessica.Maxfield@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Jessica.Maxfield@wildlife.ca.gov))



**From:** [Key West](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 11:21:08 AM

---

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.

- In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.
- I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.

After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

- Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance where applicable to state laws.
- As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.
- Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.
  - Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries
- Please create an advisory commission for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.

- Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.
- I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD.
- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
- Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.
- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis,



because they are essentially the exact same plant.

- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (Example: There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)
- Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.
- Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely, Khi Lai

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**From:** [district5](#)  
**To:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Cc:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Issue: Cannabis odor  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 10:59:04 AM

---

JW

-----Original Message-----

From: no-reply@sonoma-county.org <no-reply@sonoma-county.org>  
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 5:44 AM  
To: district5 <district5@sonoma-county.org>  
Subject: Issue: Cannabis odor

Sent To: County of Sonoma

Topic: Issue

Subject: Cannabis odor

Message: Cannabis should NOT be considered a regular crop. And it should NOT be managed by the Ag Dept. They are not managing it with the community damaging aspects it contains, bad odor, danger, and dried up water wells. These issues have not been examined at every site.

In Santa Barbara County a pot growing business was stinking neighborhood. A family decided to sell and put their home on the market. It has been two years with NO offer. Is The county prepared to adjust ALL of our property values.

The state is against tobacco smoking but they want people smoking pot. What is the effect of pot smoking on health costs?

Please vote against this cannabis draft. There are to many 10 acre parcels with small parcels surrounding them with families unprepared to deal with the stink. Andrew Smith response to the question of smell was that it is going to stink and we are going to do nothing base on the fact that other things have a smell. This is not a crop plant.

Sender's Name: Kim Roberts

Sender's Email: krgutzman@gmail.com

Sender's Cell Phone: 7079742226

Sender's Address:

CA 95472

**From:** [Kim Roberts-Gutzman](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis odor  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 7:25:51 PM

---

EXTERNAL

Cannabis is NOT a crop and should NOT be considered one. It is a controlled substance, With endless regulations, security systems to be installed to protect it. And like tobacco it can not be sold to the public. We cannot grow pot and sell it at the farmers market. This product is not a regular crop and should not be managed by the Ag Dept. We the people of this county need to be able to vote how we want it to affect our lives. The smell alone is unbearable. And the Ag commissioner when asked what will be done when people complain responds by saying various other things smell. When the county has a thousand or more complains and does nothing. Cannabis needs to be produced in warehouses where it and our neighborhoods remain safe.

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** [Lisa Lai](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [McCall Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Ordinance Suggestion  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 9:16:02 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

Sec. [#]. Transition to Chapter 38 Pathway.

An applicant who, as of the date of the adoption of this ordinance, has applied for a commercial cannabis cultivation permit under Chapter 26 and who would also qualify to submit an application pursuant to this Chapter 38 may request for their project to be reviewed under this Chapter instead (an “application track transition”). Such requests shall be granted if the requester meets the criteria for a cultivation permit under Chapter 38. The Agricultural Commissioner shall develop and promulgate specific rules to govern application track transitions, which shall include, at a minimum: (i) a description of the process and any required forms; (ii) a method for prioritizing application track transitions above new applications; and (iii) a waiver or reduction of the normal application fees to reflect the fees that have already been paid to process the original application.

A holder of a commercial cannabis cultivation permit under Chapter 26 who would also qualify for a permit under Chapter 38 shall, prior to renewal of their permit, have the option to continue with their Chapter 26 permit or to submit a request to transfer their project to be regulated according to Chapter 38 (a “compliance track transition”). Such requests shall be granted if the requester meets the criteria for a cultivation permit under Chapter 38. The Agricultural Commissioner shall develop and promulgate specific rules to govern compliance track transitions, which shall include, at a minimum: (i) a description of the process and any required forms and (ii) a method for allowing permitted operators to continue their operations while their request is considered

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**From:** [robi@odellprinting.com](mailto:robi@odellprinting.com)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment re: a new ordinance update that would move the cannabis program over to the Department of Agriculture  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 9:11:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [winmail.dat](#)

---

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and McCall Miller,

I am writing to urge you to support the businesses of small craft legacy farmers here in Sonoma County who had created a robust industry here in our county during the Prop. 215 years but have been all but forgotten after the voters made California a recreational Cannabis state. These local farmers need a pathway to permitting through the Department of Agriculture with an eye on making the requirements similar to the California Wine Industry once our national legislature votes to repeal the Scheduled drug lists for Cannabis and decriminalize the plant in every state in our United States.

I implore you to take the following actions:

Urgency - We need to immediately process the existing cannabis applications currently stalled in the process and the new ordinance must prioritize these operators.

Economy - Supply and demand show that California cannabis consumers want more Sonoma County cannabis. There is a huge opportunity to support more local farmers, stimulate jobs in the industry, and increase sales tax revenue by modernizing this ordinance. The cannabis industry also supports ancillary businesses like hardware stores, hydroponic stores, garden supply stores, and more.

Cannabis is Agriculture - Moving cannabis cultivation permitting to the Department of Agriculture is the right move in order to streamline permitting and reduce the barrier of entry to the program. The county should be treating cannabis like any other agricultural industry!

Cannabis is important to me because – it is a healing plant and plays a major role in the human endocannabinoid system to keep us healthy. This plant has been suppressed by greed and we have all but missed the study and research of this healing plant for nearly a century. Please help provide us with a way to bring better health and more prosperity to our hometowns as we have an opportunity to once again lead the national to a better tomorrow.

Thank you for your time!

Robi McGavin  
California native and Sonoma County local for 30 years

[cid:image001.png@01D7158A.BBE11700]

Robi McGavin  
Account Manager | Odell Printing

p: 707.585.2718

5460 State Farm Dr | Rohnert Park, CA 94928

[www.odellprinting.com](http://www.odellprinting.com)<<http://www.odellprinting.com>>

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Warning: If you don't know this email sender or the email is unexpected,  
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**From:** [Vivien MacDonald](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#)  
**Subject:** Marijuana Ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 2:32:53 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

**The supervisors Marijuana Ordinance Is a disgrace. As a resident of Bennett Valley I am wholeheartedly against this ordinance.**

The draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration has found that the proposed ordinance amendments and general plan amendment as written will not have a significant effect upon the environment.

This statement is so ridiculous it proves beyond doubt that the county of Sonoma supervisors care nothing for the quality of life for the residents. The supervisors will do anything for a little easy money, in this case from the marijuana industry which I think may have written this proposal. How could adding 65,733 acres of outdoor cultivation and over 8,000 acres of greenhouses possibly not affect our environment and daily lives in a negative way?

We have a illegal grow across the road from us with the most frightening looking collection of "employees" that we are all afraid. Presently the county operates by allowing grow operations like this to have 'Permit Pending' status for years so that they do not have to deal with the multiple infractions that would stop a legal permit for business. Please note that the county is happy to collect fees during this "permitting" process. It is a win win for them. The supervisors are already acting irresponsibly with the grow operations now in place..

This ordinance will force many residents to smell marijuana terpenes 4-6 months each year. The set backs are unacceptably small and do nothing to mitigate these terrible smells.

The plants are very greedy with water and should be grown in areas that have much higher rainfall than California which is prone to drought.

Marijuana is not like any other crop it is more like manufacturing and should

therefore be grown inside in already industrialized areas, not in agricultural areas of great natural beauty.

Yours respectfully,  
*Vivien MacDonald*  
*5525 Bennett valley Rd.*  
*Santa Rosa*  
bebemacd@aol.com

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**From:** [milk](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis not being in our neighborhood anymore!  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 2:18:06 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

My name is Deborah Moreda and I am speaking out on behalf of myself and my family (which there are lots of us) and we have been in the Two Rock and Chileno Vly area for over 100 years. It's extremely important to keep agriculture growing but not with cannabis. We have worked hard to have what we have and we are very proud to continue with having a dairy with fresh air, green pastures for the cows to eat and the little water we have and know how to operate with limited water. If cannabis isn't stopped this area will be destroyed with lower water levels, less pastures for the cattle and unwanted people plus the smell that already floats down through Spring Hill Rd to my house where our family along with my grandchildren ages 4,3 and 2, and a new born have to smell the god awful stench. It's hard enough keeping children away from drugs, so why have this in Sonoma county and in my backyard? That smell doesn't stop at my door, it goes thru the house and you can't get away from it. The money we could make if I allowed it on our property would be way more then what I get paid to operate our dairy, so why wouldn't I want it, well, no more water, no pastures and unwanted vehicles and people are not what we need!! Please ask yourself if you'd like them in your back yard? Hell NO

Deborah & Donald Moreda Jr  
[Dairywoman1@aol.com](mailto:Dairywoman1@aol.com)  
707-338-1330

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** [Deb Preston](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** cannabis draft ordinance  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 12:33:34 PM

---

## EXTERNAL

I'm a longtime Sebastopol resident, Lone Pine Road area. I'm affiliated with Wine & Water Watch and Save Our Sonoma Neighborhoods and am writing to oppose the new draft ordinance. I do not oppose cannabis *per se*. Given that County of Sonoma has chosen to ignore the lessons of other jurisdictions, it does not appear that you are taking the apprehensions of residents seriously.

The County has seemingly rolled out the red carpet for cannabis growers but has given residents few if any, options to voice their concerns. My personal concerns are listed as follows:

1. WATER: Sonoma is once again in a drought year. Cannabis is a notoriously water-hungry crop and this year's levels of precipitation haven't brought the aquifers up to sustainable levels. Given climate change we must carefully conserve our water use, not encourage it. In addition, "net zero usage" means my neighbor growing cannabis subtracts water from our aquifer, and from me.

2. CRIME AND LACK OF ENFORCEMENT: My neighborhood has been directly affected by cannabis-related crime. In December 2015, my next-door neighbor, who was growing a large number of plants, experienced five armed men in his bedroom in the early morning hours. They stole not only ten pounds of pot but 47 guns. Last year, a hash grow-house near my home burst into flames, endangering the entire neighborhood in these dry times. To allow ministerial cannabis permits in neighborhoods places all residents at risk. Yes the ones mentioned here were both illegal grow situations but law enforcement and Permit Sonoma do little to enforce those, let alone problems with permitted grows.

3. LIGHT & NOISE POLLUTION: Those of us not farming for a living who reside in rural and semi-rural areas do so largely out of a desire for quiet and for escaping the high illumination levels of city and suburban neighborhoods. Cannabis grows employ 24/7 fans, cameras, lighting and fencing and will alter noise and light levels.

4. EFFECT ON PROPERTY VALUES: Property taxes increase every year and mine will soon catch up to what my home might sell for. A number of real-estate entities have reported on commercial cannabis' deleterious effects (nearly 10%) on property values.

5. CANNABIS TOURISM: See #3, above. I oppose cannabis tourism in any form.

6. 100 FT PERSONAL RESIDENCE SETBACKS & 10-ACRE MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE: A 1,000-ft setback exists for schools, parks and bike trails. I support the same setback for my home and everywhere else. The County is offering cannabis growers more advantages than residents. 100 feet is nothing! Residents are entitled to "quiet enjoyment of the premises". The draft ordinance encourages our homes and properties to be inundated with the inescapable reek of pot, as well as the aforementioned light and noise. Personally I have heard from many

families who don't particularly oppose cannabis but who cannot tolerate its smell.

WHAT I DO SUPPORT:

1. 1000-ft setbacks for schools, parks, bike trails, **and** homes.
2. 20-acre minimum parcel size
3. One-year permits, not 5. In 5 years their operations will have cemented while the County wasn't paying attention.
4. Stop orders for growers not in compliance
5. Protect home values from declining due to large nearby grows

Finally, you are proposing that we homeowners give up many of the enjoyments and protections of living in this county, and for what? What are we receiving in exchange? Cannabis is not a necessary ag crop like food. It is a DRUG and should be regulated as such.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Preston  
5391 Lone Pine Rd, Sebastopol

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**From:** [edward\\_neal](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Cannabis Ordinance  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 11:41:09 AM

---

## EXTERNAL

This letter is written in opposition to the proposed ordinance to allow cannabis farming in the region of our residence which is located at 2331 Mill Creek Lane bordering millcreek! We depend on the creek for our water needs! We are surrounded by vineyards that impact our environs already depleting our supply for a period each year. Cannabis farming in our neighborhood would further effect our region in a major negative way! I am a retired family physician and have grave concerns about health effects such an ordinance would have! as well! Thank You for your attention to our serious concerns!!!! Edward M Neal MD

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**From:** [Fred Allebach](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** 3/12/21 Cannabis meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 6:54:25 AM  
**Attachments:** [Groundwater-Availability-Class-Boundaries.pdf](#)

---

## EXTERNAL

Fred Allebach  
Vineburg, CA 95487  
3/11/21

### **Public Comment on county cannabis permit streamlining**

Hello,  
This is my feedback on streamlining cannabis permitting.

Sonoma County has three SGMA (Sustainable Groundwater Management Act) at-risk groundwater basins where three GSAs (Groundwater Sustainability Agencies) and currently working hard to produce GSPs (Groundwater Sustainability Plans) that will account for future sustainable groundwater use.

Cannabis is a high-water use crop that will be irrigated with groundwater.

The more straws that go in, the reality is, the less water in the future per straw. Expensive supply augmentation projects, in a time of austerity, are realistically not in the cards. Stakeholders will likely not be able to voluntarily conserve without mandatory measures and well metering. Making cannabis cultivation easier will add to groundwater unsustainability issues.

Yet here is the county wanting to streamline permitting of high water use, cannabis cultivation. Is there anything wrong with this picture? In my mind, yes. Cannabis permits should all be discretionary and the impact on groundwater accounted for permit by permit.

In the Sonoma basin, I strongly suggest that Permit Sonoma re-do the 1980 Groundwater Availability map attached, and reclassify ASAP the two basin, deep aquifer system depletion areas as Class 3. This will at least protect these areas and make any new well there conform to a discretionary process. It would be wrong to use a 1980 map to ministerially permit 2021 use, especially with the county General Plan Water Resources Element calling to not withdraw groundwater at rates faster than recharge.

Zero net use for cannabis could be an option. Cultivation from shallow

aquifer system wells could be streamlined, as the shallow system is more naturally sustainable. If you have to streamline, I suggest only for small, verified local farmers under a certain acreage and annual production, so as to separate out and deny industrial ag speculators a ministerial process. Keep streamlining to shallow aquifers and out of Sonoma basin depletion areas. If the land falls out of local hands, make the permit so it needs to be re-anted, to prevent buy-outs by industrial ag whose only goal is to max profits.

In the Sonoma Valley groundwater basin, ag uses just over 50% of total groundwater. With a potential open season on cannabis, and big money to be made by out-of-county conglomerates only interested in money, the impact on groundwater will be a net negative. This in a time when the state SGMA law is calling for groundwater sustainability.

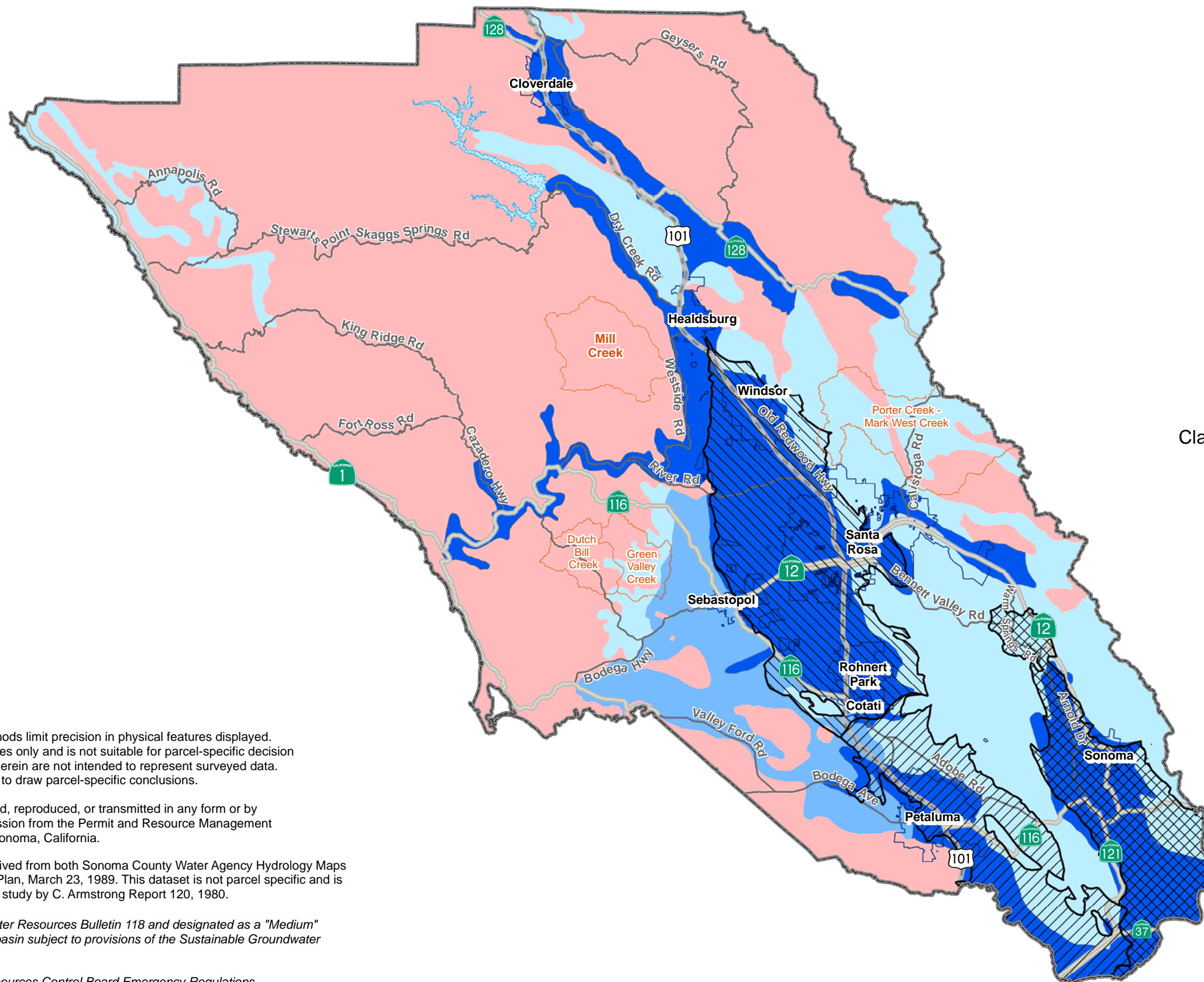
It seems to me the county is wanting to make easier a potentially and likely deleterious groundwater activity. IMO, the right thing to do when faced with this cannabis tide coming in, is to hold the line based on groundwater conservation. How many times has "the market" ruined the environment already? When can we learn to thoughtfully protect our "back 40?" Don't cave to speculator pressure.

My suggestion. Keep almost all cannabis permitting discretionary, require groundwater studies, manage our common pool resources for the long and not the short game. Voluntary conservation can start at the level of Permit Sonoma, by not streamling a use that will negatively impact groundwater.  
Fred Allebach




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


# Groundwater Availability



## \*Priority Groundwater Basins

- Petaluma Valley 
- Santa Rosa Plain 
- Sonoma Valley 

## Groundwater Availability Classifications

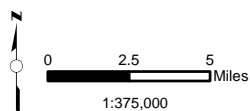
- Class 1 - Major Groundwater Basin Area 
- Class 2 - Major Natural Recharge Area 
- Class 3 - Marginal Groundwater Area 
- Class 4 - Low/Highly Variable Water Yield Area 

## \*\*Critical Habitat Area



## Base Map Data

- City Limits 
- Lake Sonoma 
- US Federal Highway 
- State Highway 
- Street 



Map scale and reproduction methods limit precision in physical features displayed. This map is for illustrative purposes only and is not suitable for parcel-specific decision making. The parcels contained herein are not intended to represent surveyed data. Site-specific studies are required to draw parcel-specific conclusions.

No part of this map may be copied, reproduced, or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD), County of Sonoma, California.

The original boundaries were derived from both Sonoma County Water Agency Hydrology Maps and County of Sonoma General Plan, March 23, 1989. This dataset is not parcel specific and is based on surface geology from a study by C. Armstrong Report 120, 1980.

\*As defined in Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118 and designated as a "Medium" or a "High" priority groundwater basin subject to provisions of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

\*\* As defined by State Water Resources Control Board Emergency Regulations.





**From:** [Jo Bentz](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Proposed Cannabis Ordinance and SMND  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 12:13:45 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cannabis Comments Planning Commission 03112021.docx](#)

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EXTERNAL

Please accept the attached comments.

Thank you- Jo Bentz, Graton

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Date: March 11, 2021

To: Sonoma County Planning Commission  
McCall Miller, Department Analyst, Cannabis Program, County Administrator's Office

Subject: Proposed Sonoma County Ordinance and Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration for Cannabis Cultivation

Please accept the following comments and questions on the proposed Sonoma County Ordinance and Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (SMND) for Cannabis Cultivation.

Cannabis as an Agricultural Crop-

Significant impacts will result from Sonoma County's proposed determination of cannabis as an agricultural crop. Sonoma County's determination is not consistent with State cannabis policy. The State of California does not classify cannabis as a crop, but as a commodity.

Sonoma County has decided to classify cannabis cultivation as agricultural activity and issue permits to cannabis growers through a ministerial process overseen by the Agricultural Commissioners Office. However, this classification does not take into account that cannabis cultivation is not like regular agriculture. The proposed cannabis ordinance requires security requirements and a security plan. What other "crops" in Sonoma County are required to have security requirements, including a security plan? Security measures could include attack dogs, motion sensor night- lights, audible alarms, 24 -hour security guards, and razor wire fencing. Does Sonoma County think that these required measures are all part of "regular" agriculture?

Setbacks to Sensitive Populations-

Significant impacts will result from the proposed setbacks of cultivation sites to residential properties.

The proposed ordinance policy is inconsistent. It protects sensitive populations in schools, parks, daycares, and drug rehab facilities with a 1,000 foot setback, but allows a setback of only 100-300 feet to residences, where those same sensitive populations live, including children, persons undergoing drug rehab, the elderly, and persons with medical conditions.

The proposed setbacks to residences and residential properties (100-300 feet) are insufficient. Odors are an issue and not easily monitored or mitigated. Security measures, including night-lights, audible alarms and guard dogs can cause nuisance.

A 1,000-foot minimum setback to residential property lines from outdoor and mixed-light cannabis cultivation is needed to protect the rights of residents to enjoy a nuisance free environment in their own homes and yards.

Setbacks to Biological Resources-

Sonoma County's proposed setbacks to biological resources are inconsistent with and in conflict with State cannabis cultivation regulations. California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) certification is required for all cannabis cultivators in California. Setbacks proposed in Sonoma County's ordinance are significantly less than those required in the scientific review portion of the required CDFA certification.

Sonoma County setbacks to biological resources administered under agriculturally issued ministerial permits will result in significant negative impacts to the environment. Sonoma County's proposed agricultural setbacks do not meet State policy. Since State policy is designed to avoid

negative impacts to the environment, potential significant impacts will result from implementation of the proposed ordinance.

Riparian, lake and wetland setbacks proposed by Sonoma County for cannabis cultivation are significantly less, typically by half, than those required by the State of California Cannabis Cultivation General Order WQ 2019-001-DWQ.

General Order WQ 2019-001-DWQ includes many more protected waterways, including ephemeral and intermittent watercourses, and wetlands, than those included by Sonoma County in the proposed ordinance. The State prohibits ground/soil disturbance within their setback buffers, as well as storage of chemicals or waste, which could wash into waterways.

Most of the wetlands in Sonoma County are not “designated” in the General Plan and only blue-line streams are recognized. Sonoma County uses Section 26, Article 65 of Chapter 26 and Section 36 of Chapter 36 for determination of setbacks for outdoor and mixed light (hoop house) cultivation.

Examples between Sonoma County’s proposed setbacks and State cannabis regulation are provided. The State requires a 100-foot setback to ALL wetlands regardless of their “type”, while Sonoma County requires only a 50-foot setback to “assessed” wetlands. Assessed wetlands comprise the majority of wetlands in Sonoma County (i.e. they are not “designated” in the General Plan). Setbacks to ponds or springs in General Order WQ 2019-001-DWQ are 150 feet, while Sonoma County’s setback to ponds range from 25-50 feet. Setbacks allowed by Sonoma County for streams are also significantly reduced compared to State setbacks. General Order WQ 2019-001-DWQ requires a no soil disturbance setback of 150 foot for perennial, 100 feet for intermittent and 50 for ephemeral streams and creeks (watercourses). Sonoma County only requires a 25-foot setback for agricultural disturbance (grading) of “blue-line streams”, and a 25 setback for agricultural grading for “all other streams”.

In addition, all biological setbacks proposed in the ordinance can be lessened even further by “determination of the Agricultural Commissioner.”

#### Rotation of Cannabis Cultivation Areas-

The draft ordinance will “allow the cannabis cultivation area to rotate around a parcel as shown on an approved site plan. “ How will the movement of the cannabis cultivation areas be regulated with respect to setbacks? Will the State be notified of the new cultivation areas? This is not addressed in the ordinance or the SMND.

How will the Agricultural Commissioner ‘s Office enforce the requirement for growers to submit a site plan every time they want to move cannabis operations on their parcel?

#### Night Lighting-

Significant impacts will result from the exception to night lighting allowed in the ordinance.

The proposed ordinance will “revise lighting requirements at night unless needed for security purposes to reduce potential wildlife and night sky impacts” The ordinance requires the growers to have a security plan. If a grower indicates that they need “night lighting” for security, then the cultivation site will have night lighting. This exception is so large and vague that all growers could chose to have night lighting if they want to. Night lighting would destroy the rural residential character of neighborhoods, cause a serious nuisance to neighbors and significantly negatively impact wildlife.

Conflicts with Existing Grows-

Many cannabis operations already exist under Sonoma County's penalty relief program. These grows have not be subjected to environmental review and may conflict with State environmental regulation contained in the CDFA permit, including those of the Division of Water Quality, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Division of Water Rights. In fact, current cannabis operations may also be in conflict with Sonoma County's own proposed regulation.

How will Sonoma County correct the environmental damage which has occurred as a result of these existing grows? This potential problem is not addressed in the ordinance or the SMND.

Timing of Permits Required To Operate-

What is the timing of CDFA and Sonoma County permit issuance? Will cannabis cultivators who have received a ministerial permit from Sonoma County be allowed to operate even though they do not hold a required CDFA permit? How will the differences in environmental regulation between the County and State affect the issuance of permits? Contingencies for these problems are not addressed in Sonoma County's proposed ordinance or the SMND.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments-

Jo Bentz, 9990 Graton Rod, Sebastopol, CA 95472

**From:** [Chelsea Holup](#) on behalf of [PlanningAgency](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** FW: cannabis ordinance  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 11:54:18 AM

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**From:** Jane Newman <janewashere@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 9:54 AM  
**To:** PlanningAgency <PlanningAgency@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** cannabis ordinance

## **EXTERNAL**

Good Morning: I am writing with regard to the upcoming debate for the cannabis culture ordinance.

My greatest concern is the drain on the watershed-impacting the salmon and wild life. If cannabis is a greater consumer than grapes, I fear the future of this valuable resource. We live on Eastside Road in Healdsburg. We live there for the beauty of the land. It is frightening to think of the disruption to the rural identity that this cannabis ordinance will create with fields of hoop houses draped in plastic. Other counties complain about the odor- what will this mean to the birds and native animal populations?  
Please reconsider passing this ordinance.

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**From:** [Andrew Smith](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Klein](#)  
**Subject:** FW:  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 12:23:36 PM

---

**From:** Ron Ferraro <[ron@elyoncannabis.com](mailto:ron@elyoncannabis.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:45 AM  
**To:** Andrew Smith <[Andrew.Smith@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrew.Smith@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd:

## EXTERNAL

Please see below, for clustering, this makes sense for everyone even sos groups



**Ron Ferraro**  
**Founder | CEO**  
**A** 5355 Skylane Blvd Ste A Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
**P** 707.312.3328  
**E** [ron@elyoncannabis.com](mailto:ron@elyoncannabis.com)  
**W** [www.elyoncannabis.com](http://www.elyoncannabis.com)



Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Joe Rogoway <[JoeRogoway@rogowaylaw.com](mailto:JoeRogoway@rogowaylaw.com)>  
**Date:** March 10, 2021 at 10:33:54 PM EST  
**To:** Ron Ferraro <[ron@elyoncannabis.com](mailto:ron@elyoncannabis.com)>

You beat me to it! The below is from Mendo and could be adapted for Sonoma:

(F) Permit Density. Multiple permits shall be allowed on parcels that meet the requirements of the zoning table attached as Exhibit A so long as the total canopy permitted on any such parcel does not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total acreage of the parcel as measured in square feet. For avoidance of doubt, this provision allows for, among other things, the issuance of multiple permits to a single person or permittee for the same parcel and for different parcels. Total acreage of contiguous parcels under common ownership may be aggregated for purposes of determining allowable canopy. The cultivation site(s) for all aggregated contiguous parcels under common ownership may be concentrated on one or more of the commonly owned contiguous parcels with total canopy not to exceed 10% of the aggregate acreage.

(I) Multiple Permit Processing. Multiple cultivation permit and building permit applications shall be processed concurrently. An applicant may submit a single permit application for all permit types under the jurisdiction of a single office/department but is not required to do so. Multiple cultivation permits may be issued to a single person. There shall be no cap on the maximum acreage or square footage of canopy a single operator may cultivate within the county.

--

On Wed, Mar 10, 2021 at 7:11 PM Ron Ferraro <[ron@elyoncannabis.com](mailto:ron@elyoncannabis.com)> wrote:

Hey joe don't forget to send



**Ron Ferraro**  
**Founder | CEO**  
**A** 5355 Skylane Blvd Ste A Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
**P** 707.312.3328  
**E** [ron@elyoncannabis.com](mailto:ron@elyoncannabis.com)  
**W** [www.elyoncannabis.com](http://www.elyoncannabis.com)



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**JOE ROGOWAY**  
*Managing Partner, Rogoway Law Group*

**A** [115 4th St., Second Flr, Ste. B | Santa Rosa, CA 95401](#)

**P** (323) 202-2980

**E** [joerogoway@rogowaylaw.com](mailto:joerogoway@rogowaylaw.com)

**W** [www.rogowaylaw.com](http://www.rogowaylaw.com)

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California law, Federal law prohibits the production, possession, sale and transportation of cannabis. Nothing in this correspondence or accompanying legal services is intended to assist with violation of any applicable law. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

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**From:** [district5](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Issue: Cannabis odor  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:50:15 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: no-reply@sonoma-county.org <no-reply@sonoma-county.org>  
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 3:51 AM  
To: district5 <district5@sonoma-county.org>  
Subject: Issue: Cannabis odor

Sent To: County of Sonoma

Topic: Issue

Subject: Cannabis odor

Message: Cannabis is not a regular crop plant. We can't grow it and sell it at the farmers market or where it grown. It's not compatible or comparative to our other crop. It is not just another plant give the danger element and the stink. It should not be managed by the Ag Dept. Producing this product in neighborhoods will destroy our way of life. We will no longer be able to enjoy our outdoor space. The odor can travel up to 10 miles. In Penngrove a family has already moved to Montana because a pot production farm moved in.

We can see the negative impact this has had in Santa Barbara County. A pot farm moved into a neighborhood and was so disruptive to a families life they decided to move their home I has been on the market for two years. They have no offers.

What will be the process be for all of us in that ten mile radius to have our property values reappraised?

Kim Roberts

Sender's Name: Kim Roberts

Sender's Email: krgutzman@gmail.com

Sender's Cell Phone: 7079742226

Sender's Address:

CA 95472



**From:** [district5](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Cc:** [Leo Chyi](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Cannabis Support Letter  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 1:46:33 PM

---

**From:** mbenziger@aol.com <mbenziger@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 7:14 PM  
**To:** Lynda Hopkins <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>; district5 <district5@sonoma-county.org>  
**Subject:** Cannabis Support Letter

## EXTERNAL

Dear Lynda,

The cannabis industry has created an incredible opportunity for Sonoma County to thrive economically, create good high paying jobs and position our county as the premiere agricultural experience anywhere. In attempts to control and make safe the cannabis industry we have over regulated it and over taxed it stifling the potential contributions cannabis can make in many areas of our county. The public has now had a couple of years to observe how the industry has proven itself and it is now time to trust it. If cannabis is allowed to thrive Sonoma will thrive too.

Sonoma County is probably the most diverse agricultural county in the USA. From salmon to olives, from wine to weed we are unmatched in what we can offer our visitors and our locals who live here. **Agriculture** and **Tourism** are the backbone of this county.

That said as leaders of this county we can not rest on past laurels and pass up this critical opportunity to define our future success. As the demographics of this county and country change from Boomer to Millennial so will change the experiences we need to provide to attract them. No doubt Boomers loved great wine and food but competition is global and the experience is not new anymore. Millennials like good wine and food but they also want a wider experience they can call their own. This experience includes craft beer, craft spirits, organic foods, authentic cheeses and now artisan cannabis. With enlightened management from the BOS we can position this county as an agricultural mecca that will assure success for the next generation of Sonomans. The trend is that people want to see what they are going to eat before they eat it, see how their drinks are made before they drink it and see what they are going to smoke before they smoke it.....where else but Sonoma County.  
Thanks very much.....mike benziger Glentucky Family Farm.

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**From:** [Rich Fenske](#)  
**To:** [Cannabis](#)  
**Subject:** Chapter 38 Draft Ordinance  
**Date:** Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:44:13 AM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Staff,

We hope this finds you healthy and safe. We appreciate your attention to the below amendments to the Sonoma County Cannabis Ordinance Draft.

You released a draft copy of the zoning regulations and an amendment of the general plan, but they contradict each other.

- In the zoning regulations under the definition of "crop production" please remove "except cannabis" to match the General Plan amendment.
- I support and appreciate the change in the General Plan to classify cannabis as agriculture.

After reviewing the Chapter 38 draft ordinance, I have the following comments:

- Please align the Sonoma Cannabis Ordinance where applicable to state laws.
- As state laws continue to evolve, the Sonoma County ordinance should change with it.
- Nurseries should be prioritized as there is a local supply chain shortage and traveling and spending monies outside our county. That is money that is leaving our county and creating unnecessary carbon impact. Let's keep our money and our farming in Sonoma County.
  - Please clarify that the new ordinance removes the sqft. cap on nurseries
- Please create an advisory committee for cannabis or agriculture in general. There must be more transparency between county staff and the industry.
- **Please create a pipeline for the original applicants that have been stuck in**

**line at PRMD. Give priority to them without additional fees. They were supposed to have a head start and get priority processing, but are stuck in the queue. Now you are allowing 10% canopy without getting them permits first.**

- I support 5-year permits and the allowance of ministerial permits in LIA and RRD.
- I would like to see RR and AR added back, as a right to farm in Sonoma County. (Small farming is essential in our agricultural county.)
- Please release the site-specific environmental documents that will be used to satisfy CEQA at the state level.
- The state already has strict enough restrictions for water use. Please remove the new water restrictions you have added and treat us like other agriculture commodities.
- Please don't put caps on propagation. If it is used on-site, it should not be limited by square footage. Plants grow very quickly and must be held until they are used. We have strain banks and Mother Stock that must be kept alive. This requires extra space.
- Regarding the language around forests in 2016, please allow an exception for areas deforested via wildfires. These areas no longer have living trees on them and should not be disqualified.
- Please link interactive maps for the "Important Farmlands" and "Critical Watersheds" so those areas are known and easily referenced in the Sonoma County Code.
- Please remove the requirements for plant screening of Cannabis farms. (Other crops are not subjected to this) They draw attention to the fact that there is a cannabis farm behind a fence as opposed to a horse or dog, they cost extra money, and they use extra water.
- Please remove the requirement of carbon/air filters for indoor, greenhouse, and nurseries on ag and resource properties. These smells are already mitigated by large parcel sizes. Also, many if not all of these properties will be eligible for

outdoor growing making the filters a moot point. They are expensive and a waste of carbon and energy resources. Lastly, hemp is now allowed and also smells the same as cannabis, because they are essentially the exact same plant.

- Please remove the requirement for an emergency to be government declared (**Example:** There may be a power outage on a single parcel that will still create an emergency for that farmer. They must be able to pump water or turn on lights to save their crop.)
- **Please treat us like other ag and don't threaten us with misdemeanors.**
- Don't give "Stop Work" orders unless there is due process. This may allow a whole year's worth of crop to be lost over a misunderstanding. This should only occur during the most serious offense and after arbitration.
- We should be allowed to truck in recycled water to reduce pressure on groundwater. It should actually be encouraged. Water catchment systems should also be incentivized.
- Please remove the plant count (25 Plants) for cottage outdoor permits. - Align with the state which has removed the plant count.
- How will the county deal with the Board of Forestry's new Fire Safe Ordinance? Will farms be required to have 20 foot wide roads? Will that only be required if there is new construction? Or are you changing the zoning code to classify us as an agricultural crop?
- Will Self-Transportation be allowed for cultivators?
- Will Self-Transport be allowed for Nursery Operators?
- How will renewals be handled?

Thank you for the considerable staff time it took to organize and edit these documents. I look forward to continuing to advocate for the cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

Rich Fenske

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