

City of Sonoma

No. 1 The Plaza
Sonoma California 95476-6690
Phone (707) 938-3681 Fax (707) 938-8775
E-Mail: cityhall@sonomacity.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: David Goodison
dgoodison@sonomacity.org or 707-933-2201

City Announces Cannabis Town Hall Meetings

*City encourages community members
to attend and provide input on cannabis options for Sonoma*

The City of Sonoma is hosting two Town Hall meetings for members of the community to come learn more about potential cannabis regulation and cannabis business options under consideration for the City of Sonoma.

The purpose of the Town Halls is to review and discuss potential regulations regarding Proposition 64 “The Adult Use of Marijuana Act” (AUMA). AUMA authorizes cities to “reasonably regulate” cultivation of cannabis/marijuana inside a private residence, and regulate or completely prohibit outdoor cultivation, cannabis/marijuana retailers, dispensaries, delivery services and other cannabis businesses.

The City Council is considering what types of cannabis businesses and associated regulations, if any, are suitable for Sonoma. Specifically, the City Council is seeking public input regarding whether to allow cannabis/marijuana businesses with a specific focus on medicinal dispensaries, testing facilities and manufacturing facilities.

The City will hold two workshops in March/April to provide information from the public and to hear the community’s input. After the workshops in April/May, the City Council will discuss and decide what regulations and/or cannabis businesses to allow or prohibit in Sonoma.

Below is information on each Town Hall.

Cannabis Town Hall #1 – Wednesday, March 28, 2018 6:30-9:00 PM

Location: Sonoma Community Center, Andrews Hall

This Town Hall will focus on background information -- state regulations, overview of dispensaries, testing and manufacturing facilities; and options/issues for municipal regulation. There will be a question/answer portion, an exercise for attendees to give specific feedback, and a public comment period.

Cannabis Town Hall #2 – Wednesday, April 11, 2018 6:30-9:00 PM

Location: Sonoma Community Center, Andrews Hall

This Town Hall will focus on answering questions from the prior Town Hall, distance requirement options and other regulatory options for specific cannabis businesses, and potential taxing, fee and other administrative issues. There will be a question/answer portion, an exercise for attendees to give specific feedback, and a public comment period.

In order to comply with the State of California's Brown Act, which provides transparency and rules regarding public meetings, these Town Hall meetings will be agendized as City Council meetings in order to allow the City Council to attend in person and listen to feedback from the community. The City Council will not be actively participating in the meetings, since the structure for these meetings is to focus on public dialogue and no decision making will occur by the City Council until future meetings.

Each of the Town Hall community meetings will be taped and televised live on Sonoma Valley Community Television's Channel 27 and also posted afterwards on the City's Civic Web Portal and linked to from the City's Cannabis Key Initiative web page which can be found at <https://www.sonomacity.org/cannabis-regulation/>.

The City strongly encourages the public to come learn more about the cannabis industry and regulatory options available to cities. Public input on this important policy decision is important to the City Council as they make their decision regarding what regulations and what cannabis businesses to allow or prohibit in Sonoma in the next few months.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Sonoma City Council has taken a series of actions establishing interim moratoria (a temporary ban) on indoor and outdoor cultivation of medicinal and nonmedical cannabis (except as described under Personal Cultivation below), as well as on commercial cannabis activities within City limits, with the exception of medicinal cannabis deliveries from licensed dispensaries located outside of City limits. The current moratorium ordinances allow the City Council time to learn, review and discuss what cannabis businesses to allow or prohibit in Sonoma.

The City Council also provided direction to staff regarding the development of permanent regulations, including exploring potential options for allowing a medicinal dispensary within the City, as well as testing and manufacturing facilities. These options are being researched and will return to the City Council for action/implementation.

The City Council has approved certain cannabis activities in the City which are outlined below.

Personal Cultivation

- *Indoor:* Personal cultivation of up to six marijuana plants per residence is allowed, subject to restrictions. Applies to both medicinal and recreational grows. Limited to residential properties. A handout detailing the limitations and requirements associated with personal cannabis cultivation is being developed.
- *Outdoor:* The outdoor personal cultivation of cannabis is prohibited. This prohibition applies to both medicinal and recreational cannabis.

Commercial Medicinal and Recreational Activities (Including Cultivation)

All commercial cannabis activities are prohibited, except for deliveries of medical cannabis from dispensaries located outside of city limits. To qualify, the business must have a location outside the city and be fully State-licensed and locally permitted. The business must be “locally permitted,” meaning that the business will have to have obtained permits or approvals from the municipality/public agency that it is situated in. Additionally, the business must apply for and obtain a Sonoma business license and pay the requisite tax. At the time of applying for the business license, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the above-mentioned restrictions.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit our website www.sonomacity.org to see upcoming meetings and agendas, project updates, news and more.

You can follow the City’s progress on cannabis at this Key Initiative web site --
<https://www.sonomacity.org/cannabis-regulation/>