

Dear Friends,

An ordinance outlining regulations for cannabis businesses in Novato is being presented to our City Council at their next meeting on

A final resolution is expected to be adopted within the next couple of months, prior to the expiration of the current moratorium in November, 2019.

One key is whether to grant licenses to commercial cannabis businesses for non-medical recreational use.

Below are a few reasons for opposing a retail cannabis storefront in Novato and a critical time to speak up.

- Residents already have access to both medical and recreational cannabis. Also, there is a medical storefront in Fairfax and there are delivery options throughout the county.
- If Novato allows a retail cannabis business, it will be the only town in Marin that has a storefront for recreational cannabis sales. No other jurisdiction in Marin has an ordinance that will allow storefronts. Most towns are moving slowly as the public health impacts are weighed and the state brings its regulatory standards and enforcement up to date.
- Restricting storefront sales is not inconsistent with voter intent. A yes vote on Prop 64 did not automatically mean a vote for retail storefront sales. The language of the proposition was principally focused on decriminalization and regulation. It is possible to be "pro-cannabis" and prefer to allow recreational delivery only due to the potential unintended consequences (traffic, tourists, odor, etc.) that can come from a brick-and-mortar business. If you voted yes on Prop 64 but do not want a retail cannabis business in town, please let your councilpersons know.
- Novato is under no obligation to give commercial marketing leverage to corporations like Altria (Phillip Morris) and Constellation Brands (Corona) – who have heavily invested in cannabis companies. (Investors.com) Cannabis is a big, profitable business and we encourage caution in opening the door to the same industries that created the alcohol and tobacco model of targeting young consumers to create lifetime customers. The industry has moved away from the "plant" which has historically contained 2- 12% THC, and is now marketing edibles, beverages and concentrates that can contain up to 99% THC. These new products are particularly appealing to youth who use the THC concentrates in JUUL-like devices like Pax. (In 2008, vaping concentrates outpaced flower as the most popular method of consumption in CA.)
- We know that cannabis use is already normalized in our community which decreases the perception of harm by young people – and the less harmful it is perceived, the more likely youth are to use it (Monitoring the Future).
- There is no guarantee that the city will profit from cannabis revenue. Cities with limited staffing resources need to consider the costs of processing applications, performing inspections, gathering records and enforcing cannabis-related ordinances. The expense of regulations and oversight could easily outweigh any tax benefit.

We are encourage everyone who has concerns regarding cannabis policy in Novato to do the following:

1. Write a brief email to the town council (see contacts below).
2. Request a meeting with Councilmembers – They are hearing from the cannabis industry. They need to hear from their local constituents.
3. Attend the city council meetings which are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Look for the Council Agenda in which cannabis will be discussed which is publicized on the Friday prior to the meeting on the City's website.
4. Take part in the process by speaking at the City Council meeting. There is time for public comment at each meeting.

Thank you for your interest in this issue and staying in the loop. Please share this information with anyone you know who shares your concerns.

Sincerely,

Name

City Council email addresses:

Eric Lucan, Mayor	elucan@novato.org
Denise Athas	dathas@novato.org
Pam Drew	pdrew@novato.org
Pat Eklund	peklund@novato.org
Josh Fryday (position expires 8/31/19)	jfryday@novato.org

CC City Staff:

Regan Candelario, City Manager	rcandelario@novato.org
Russ Thompson, Asst. City Manager	rthompson@novato.org
Michael Antwine, Asst. City Manager	mantwine@novato.org