

Please confirm receipt and let us know when you can connect by Zoom. Looking forward to it.

Respectfully,

Isaac

**Isaac Kos-Read** | [Kos Read Group, Inc.](#) | [REDACTED]

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**From:** Griffen Dempsey <GriffenD@sanpabloca.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 5, 2025 12:00 PM  
**To:** Isaac Kos-Read [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Libby Tyler <LibbyT@sanpabloca.gov>  
**Subject:** Cannabis inquiry

Hi Isaac,

It was great talking to you today; we are happy to hear of your interest in potentially bringing Catalyst Cannabis to San Pablo. For more information about the proposed ordinance to facilitate retail cannabis businesses in the city, please refer to the Planning Commission agenda packet from last week:

[City of San Pablo - File #: PC24-34](#)

Note that the ordinance may still be subject to change.

The ordinance will be going to City Council on February 18<sup>th</sup>. The city will be putting together the RFP process later this month, with outreach to potential operators likely beginning in March. I will make sure that we have your email as part of that outreach.

Please feel free to follow up if you have any further questions!

Best regards,

Griffen Dempsey  
(he/him)  
Assistant Planner



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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[1000 Gateway Avenue, San Pablo, CA 94806](#)

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Website: [www.sanpabloca.gov](http://www.sanpabloca.gov)

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Public Counter Hours:

Monday thru Thursday – 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, closed Fridays.

**Effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Building, Planning and Public Works will have new fee schedules.**  
**For more information and to view the new schedules, please visit our website at**  
**<https://www.sanpabloca.gov/906/Master-Fee-Schedule>**

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**From:** [Nabila Sher-Oliver](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission Meetings](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Agenda item PC 24-34  
**Date:** Monday, January 27, 2025 10:54:56 AM

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Dear Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Alcohol, Marijuana, and Prescription Drug Coalition (AMPD), I would like to express our deep concern regarding the potential proximity of future cannabis-related businesses to areas frequented by youth and families. While we recognize the economic and regulatory goals behind these zoning amendments, it is vital that the health and well-being of our community—particularly our young people—remain the top priority.

AMPD strongly urges the City of San Pablo to include strict provisions in the proposed ordinance that ensure all cannabis-related businesses are located at least 1,000 feet away from schools, residential neighborhoods, places of worship, and any locations where youth gather, such as parks, libraries, and recreational facilities.

Our youth already face immense challenges navigating environments saturated with messaging and access to substances that can harm their development. Introducing cannabis businesses in close proximity to their schools, homes, and gathering spaces only increases their exposure to these substances, normalizes their presence, and creates additional risks for use and misuse.

Research has consistently shown that environmental factors, including the visibility and accessibility of cannabis-related businesses, influence youth attitudes toward cannabis use. Normalizing cannabis through its physical presence near schools and other youth-centric spaces sends the wrong message. It undermines the work of prevention coalitions like AMPD, which strive to educate and protect our youth from the long-term impacts of substance use.

We respectfully ask the City Council to prioritize the protection of our young people by implementing and enforcing a robust buffer zone policy that will safeguard their environment. By doing so, the City of San Pablo will demonstrate a firm commitment to creating a safe, healthy, and youth-centered community for generations to come.

Thank you for considering this critical issue as part of your decision-making process. AMPD is available to provide additional data, resources, and support to ensure our shared goal of a healthier San Pablo is realized.

Sincerely,  
Nabila Sher-Oliver  
Alcohol, Marijuana, and Prescription Drug Coalition (AMPD)

Nabila Sher-Oliver  
Alcohol and Other Drug Policy Coordinator  
Alcohol, Marijuana, and Prescription Drug (AMPD) Coalition Coordinator  
Bay Area Community Resources  
11175 San Pablo Ave  
El Cerrito, CA 94530  
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1220 Morello Ave | Suite 101 | Phone: (925) 335-3340 | Fax: (925) 335-3311  
cchealth.org

January 28, 2025

City of San Pablo Planning Commission  
1000 Gateway Avenue  
San Pablo, CA 94806

Dear San Pablo Planning Department,

My name is Jorge Flores. I am from Contra Costa Health and serve as the Cannabis Prevention Program Manager. I am writing regarding the Planning Commission Resolution PC24-34.

Safeguarding youth from the sale of Cannabis in The City of San Pablo is a significant step forward in deterring youth from cannabis use. Use of substances at a young age, when the brain is still developing, can lead to a lifetime of addiction. When youth protections are set in the ordinance, there will be fewer young people who have access to these harmful substances because they are not being exposed to them.

Implementing and maintaining robust youth protections as part of the city's cannabis retail policy development ensures that cannabis businesses operate responsibly and without undue influence on youth, which is critical to safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of the community.

Best practices in protecting youth from Cannabis use are as follows:

**1. Restrict Advertising and Billboards**

To minimize exposure to cannabis-related advertising, it is recommended that the city prohibit or strictly limit cannabis-related billboards and other outdoor advertising. Research shows that such advertising can normalize and glamorize cannabis use among young people, increasing the risk of early use.

Sarvet AL, Wall MM, Fink DS, et al. Medical marijuana laws and adolescent marijuana use in the United States: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Addiction*. 2018; **113**: 1003-1016.

Smart R, Pacula RL. Early evidence of the impact of cannabis legalization on cannabis use, cannabis use disorder, and the use of other substances: findings from state policy evaluations. *Am J Drug Alcohol Abuse*. 2019; **45**: 644-663.



## **2. Maintain Appropriate Distance from Youth-Sensitive Areas**

It is vital to enforce strict buffer zones between cannabis retail dispensaries and youth-sensitive areas such as schools, parks, daycare centers, and recreational facilities. This ensures that these establishments do not become easily accessible or visible to minors.

## **3. Density and Oversaturation Controls**

Another critical step is to limit the number of dispensaries within close proximity to one another. Oversaturation can lead to normalized exposure and increased visibility of cannabis businesses, particularly in areas frequented by youth.

By incorporating these protective measures, the City of San Pablo can create a balanced approach to cannabis regulation that supports adult access while shielding young residents from undue influence.

Contra Costa Health Cannabis Prevention Program is readily available to provide technical assistance and resources to city staff.

Sincerely,  
Jorge Flores  
Cannabis Prevention Program Manager  
Contra Costa Health



January 28, 2025

City of San Pablo Planning Commission  
1000 Gateway Avenue  
San Pablo, CA 94806

Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item No. PC24-34

Dear San Pablo Planning Commission:

My name is Eyana Rodgers, and I am a Senior Health Educator with Contra Costa Health's Tobacco and Cannabis Prevention Programs. I am writing regarding the Planning Commission Resolution PC24-34.

Young people are vulnerable to the risks associated with cannabis use, and it is crucial that we take proactive steps to protect them from the harmful effects of cannabis use. It is imperative to prioritize their health and safety through stronger local policies and increased education on the topic. The work being done by The City of San Pablo to amend the zoning code and land use standards is a necessary step towards implementing vital protections for our youth and young adult population. I'd like to share a few additional recommendations to contribute to this discussion.

- ***Limit high-potency THC products***

Research has shown that cannabis use among adolescents, particularly products with high THC levels, is linked to mental health impairments, dependency, and an increased likelihood of using other controlled substances.<sup>1</sup> It is vital to imbed protections (especially for youth) as they may be unaware of harms and risks associated with high-potency cannabis products.

- ***Increase restrictions on advertising and billboards***

Increasing restrictions to cannabis-related billboards and outdoor advertising can be useful in minimizing and de-normalizing adolescent exposure to cannabis. While youth cannabis use is not solely dependent on advertising, research indicates that frequent exposure to cannabis marketing is associated with more regular use of cannabis among youth who already use it.<sup>2</sup>

- ***Prohibit flavored cannabis products***

Flavored cannabis is known to target younger audiences and lower the perception of risk by making products more appealing and fun. Restriction is necessary to aid implementing protections for adolescents.

Contra Costa Health's Tobacco & Cannabis Prevention Programs are readily available to aid city staff, share resources and findings, and provide customizable resources on cannabis law. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
**Eyana Rodgers**  
*Senior Health Education Specialist*  
Tobacco Prevention Program

<sup>1</sup> Hines LA, Freeman TP, Gage SH, Zammit S, Hickman M, Cannon M, Munafó M, MacLeod J, Heron J. Association of High-Potency Cannabis Use With Mental Health and Substance Use in Adolescence. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2020 Oct 1;77(10):1044-105

<sup>2</sup> Firth CL, Carlini B, Dilley J, Guttmannova K, Hajat A. Retail cannabis environment and adolescent use: The role of advertising and retailers near home and school. *Health Place*. 2022 May;75:102795.



1220 Morello Ave | Suite 101 | Phone: (925) 335-3340 | Fax: (925) 335-3311  
cchealth.org

February 18, 2025

City Hall / Council Chambers  
1000 Gateway Avenue  
San Pablo, CA 94806

Dear Mayor Cruz, Vice Mayor Pabon-Alvarado, Councilmembers Xavier, Pineda and Ponce,

My name is Jorge Flores. I am from Contra Costa Health and serve as the Cannabis Prevention Program Manager. I am writing regarding the AGENDA ITEM No. 25-038.

Safeguarding youth from the sale of Cannabis in The City of San Pablo is a significant step forward in deterring youth from cannabis use. Use of substances at a young age, when the brain is still developing, can lead to a lifetime of addiction. When youth protections are set in the ordinance, there will be fewer young people who have access to these harmful substances because they are not being exposed to them.

Implementing and maintaining robust youth protections as part of the city's cannabis retail policy development ensures that cannabis businesses operate responsibly and without undue influence on youth, which is critical to safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of the community.

Best practices in protecting youth from Cannabis and 2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Smoke are as follows:

**1. Restrict Advertising and Billboards**

To minimize exposure to cannabis-related advertising, it is recommended that the city prohibit or strictly limit cannabis-related billboards and other outdoor advertising. Research shows that such advertising can normalize and glamorize cannabis use among young people, increasing the risk of early use.

Sarvet AL, Wall MM, Fink DS, et al. Medical marijuana laws and adolescent marijuana use in the United States: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Addiction*. 2018; **113**: 1003-1016.

Smart R, Pacula RL. Early evidence of the impact of cannabis legalization on cannabis use, cannabis use disorder, and the use of other substances: findings from state policy evaluations. *Am J Drug Alcohol Abuse*. 2019; **45**: 644-663.



- 2. Maintain Appropriate Distance from Youth-Sensitive Areas**  
It is vital to enforce strict buffer zones between cannabis retail dispensaries and youth-sensitive areas such as schools, parks, daycare centers, and recreational facilities. This ensures that these establishments do not become easily accessible or visible to minors. Such as 1,000 ft. from other retailers, schools, churches, youth service facilities, recreation facilities, substance abuse recovery centers
- 3. Density and Oversaturation Controls**  
Another critical step is to limit the number of dispensaries within close proximity to one another. Oversaturation can lead to normalized exposure and increased visibility of cannabis businesses, particularly in areas frequented by youth.
- 4. Onsite Consumption**  
Ideally, 100% smoke-free/vape-free indoors
  1. Ventilation systems are not sufficient to address the health concerns of indoor smoking
  2. Barriers with plexiglass or semi-permanent structures are not adequate to address health concerns with secondhand marijuana smoke
  3. Provide an outdoor space for smoking that is unenclosed and out of public view
  4. If not restricted to outdoor use only – MUST BE located in stand-alone buildings as to avoid drifting secondhand smoke into adjacent businesses or residences in the same building
  5. Stand-alone buildings should not be multi-use with other businesses or residences in the same building
  6. Set a cap on the total number of licenses available for venues to allow on-site consumption
  7. Narrowly define cannabis consumption establishments to only permit on-premises use of devices that are sold or owned by the establishment. This prevents non-cannabis retail or hospitality venues like restaurants or bars from allowing on-site consumption by claiming to be cannabis consumption lounges.
  8. Food and alcohol sales or consumption are not permitted. Food and alcohol sales blur the lines with restaurants and bars and can result in a de facto rollback in longstanding smokefree protections.

By incorporating these protective measures, the City of San Pablo can create a balanced approach to cannabis regulation that supports adult access while shielding young residents from undue influence.

Contra Costa Health Cannabis Prevention Program is readily available to provide technical assistance and resources to city staff.

Sincerely,  
Jorge Flores  
Cannabis Prevention Program Manager  
Contra Costa Health

**From:** Isaac Kos-Read  
**To:** Griffen Dempsey  
**Cc:** Libby Tyler; Damian A. Martin  
**Subject:** RE: Cannabis inquiry - feedback/input and meeting request  
**Date:** Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:48:01 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

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Griffen:

I'm writing to provide some input on the draft ordinance and to request a meeting to discuss – we could even make this afternoon work (4 PM?) and certainly have flexibility tomorrow, especially in the morning (10 AM?).

Looping in Damian Martin, co-founder of Catalyst, copied here, who is a recognized expert in the state on local cannabis ordinances. He put together the following points that hopefully you'll find helpful:

1. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.F.2, is the provision that all cannabis retail businesses must be located “[a]t least 1,000 feet from any other another commercial cannabis business” meant to apply during the operator permit application process such that the highest ranked applicant would “buffer out” any lower ranked applicant within 1,000 feet of the highest ranked applicant’s location?
2. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.F.2, (1) are the State law default (B&P 26054) sensitive use buffers of 600 feet from day care centers and 600 feet from youth centers meant to apply to cannabis businesses in San Pablo and (2) if so, how should those buffers be measured (the State law default is parcel line to parcel line)? . . . if so, that should be clarified.
3. What is the intention behind the proposed Section 17.62.130.G.8? . . . (1) offensive litigation falls within an applicant’s and its owners’ constitutional right to free speech / petition the government, (2) defensive litigation not fully adjudicated falls within the presumption of innocence, (3) investigations typically occur without the knowledge of the person being investigated, and (4) license suspensions / revocations are not even a grounds for denying an operator permit application under the proposed Section 17.62.130.H.4.
4. What is the definition of “owner” (i.e., investors in the applicant required to provide electronic fingerprint images and related information under the proposed Section 17.62.130? . . . for reference, please see B&P 26001 for the State law definition of “owner”, which places the threshold for background checks at 10% ownership or direction, control, or management.
5. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.G.10, certificates of insurance are generally not issued to not yet operational businesses like most, if not all, the applicants for an operator permit will be . . . will a letter of intent from an insurance company saying the insurance company will provide the insurance required under Section 17.62.130.I.4 suffice to satisfy the requirement under Section 17.62.130.G.10 for the purpose of an operator permit application / during the operator permit application process?
6. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.H.4.b, the phrase “an offense that is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties, of the cannabis retail business for which the application is made” is a term of art from B&P 26057, such that the proposed Section 17.62.130.H.4.b should reference B&P 26057 . . . to illustrate, “an offense that is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties, of the cannabis retail business for which the application is made’ as that phrase is defined in Section 26057 of the State Business & Professions Code.”
7. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.I.3.d, the State law requirement for retaining surveillance video is 90 days . . . see Section 15044 from the State Department of Cannabis Control regulations . . .  
[https://cannabis.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/08/dcc\\_commercial\\_cannabis\\_regulations-1.pdf](https://cannabis.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/08/dcc_commercial_cannabis_regulations-1.pdf).
8. Regarding the proposed Section 17.62.130.I.10, like other retail businesses, cannabis retail businesses have staffing changes regularly, basically weekly, such that the Chief of Police may find it administratively onerous to receive notice of every staffing change, rather than simply doing background checks on any new employee.