



CITY OF CITRUS HEIGHTS

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 11, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council Members
Ashley J. Feeney, City Manager

FROM: Casey Kempenaar, Community Development Director
Meghan Huber, Economic Development and Community Engagement Director

SUBJECT: Cannabis Dispensary Outreach Update and Council Direction

Summary and Recommendation

At the December 14, 2023, City Council meeting, two members of the Council requested that staff bring options forward to consider modification of existing regulations related to cannabis dispensaries for the Council's consideration within 60 days.

At the February 8, 2024, City Council Meeting, the Council directed staff to conduct community outreach related to cannabis ordinance modifications and report the findings from the outreach to the City Council. The intent of this report is to share the findings from the community outreach and seek direction from the City Council.

City Council Strategic Goal/Objective

This staff report aligns with the following Citrus Heights City Council Strategic Plan Objectives:

Goals:

- Diversify for a vibrant economy
- Maintain and enhance fiscal stability

The City Council discussed this topic as part of the March 28 Strategic Retreat and included the following objective and is pending adoption of the one-year strategic objectives at tonight's Council Meeting:

Develop and present a cannabis regulatory program for the City Council's consideration and include revenue approaches to fund critical City needs.

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Fiscal Impact

Costs of preparing necessary regulatory documents as directed by the City Council, will be absorbed by the existing budgets for Community Development, Police, Economic Development, Administrative Services, and the City Manager's Office.

Costs associated with the processes to evaluate and/or approve new cannabis businesses would be subject to a fee schedule that ensures full cost recovery for staff activity.

The scope of any future cannabis regulations directed by Council is unknown at this time. As a result, there is not enough information to provide accurate estimates of the revenue potential of the proposed business types. If directed to move forward, additional information will be provided to the Council as the scope of any future regulatory framework is developed.

Background and Analysis

The [February 8, 2024 Cannabis Study Session](#) reviewed state and local regulations related to cannabis and presented options for the City Council to provide direction and next steps. At the meeting the Council directed staff to conduct community engagement related to potential cannabis ordinance modifications and report the findings from the outreach to the City Council. The intent of this report is to share the findings from the community outreach and seek direction from the City Council.

Since February, the following outreach activities were utilized to collect and measure community sentiment:

- Implemented a multichannel outreach plan to promote the workshop and opportunities for feedback to ensure awareness and inclusion (article in newspaper, social media, header banner on City's homepage, email to neighborhoods, flyers, etc).
- Issued a Flashvote survey requesting feedback on allowing retail cannabis in Citrus Heights and collected statistically valid community sentiment data.
- Created and continue to maintain a project webpage to provide public outreach information including workshop information, outreach plan, and background information along with a feedback form to ensure equitable and inclusive community feedback access.
- Hosted a Community Workshop on April 3rd to allow the public to share their point of view and engage in informal discussion regarding cannabis retail operations.

Summary of Flashvote Findings

Flashvote is a polling tool utilized by the City on a regular basis that captures scientific data to understand community sentiment towards a variety of topics. Statistical validity is achieved in part because Flashvote users must register in advance and provide a verified Citrus Heights residential address for access. The City's Flashvote currently has 740 subscribers, and 342 residents responded to this survey. According to Flashvote, the data derived from the survey represents a statistically valid measure of community sentiment within a +/- 5% margin of error.

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Two survey results links are provided below along with the survey questions summary takeaways provided by Flashvote. The first link presents the results of the Flashvote survey. The second link presents the results of the Flashvote survey using Question 1 (In general, do you support legalize cannabis for adult use?) Using Question 1 as a filter allows subsequent answers to be segmented by support versus nonsupport. This analysis tactic was recommended by Flashvote to identify trends in both categories where, if aligned, would indicate community consensus.

- [Flashvote results on Cannabis](#)
- [Flashvote results on Cannabis](#) using question 1 as a filter for questions 2 through 4: denoted as “filter” survey in takeaways below)

Following are the survey questions that were sent along with analysis takeaways of the above linked survey versions provided by Flashvote experts:

Q1. In general, do you support legalized cannabis for adult use

- 59% Yes vs 32% No

Q2. Please rate how much you would support having retail cannabis stores in Citrus Heights?

- 49% Support vs. 48% Opposed (this is tabulated by adding Strongly Support and Somewhat support, and adding Somewhat Oppose and Strongly Oppose)

Q3. If retail cannabis stores were allowed, where would be the best places to locate them in Citrus Heights? (choose all that apply)

- 41% of those surveyed supported retail cannabis stores in any non-residential zone
- 32% of those surveyed supported retail cannabis stores in only commercial centers directly adjacent to I-80
- 42% of non-supporters identified the best place to locate cannabis stores is in commercial centers near the freeway (filter)
- 16% of non-supporters identified any non-residential zone but not near schools or parks (filter)

Q4. Should retail cannabis stores move forward, city staff may recommend that a maximum of two licenses be made available. What restrictions would you support if any? (choose all that apply)

- Almost 2-to-1 preference on 2 or less permits vs. three or more permits
- 36% of non-supporters would support 2 permits or less (filter)
- 2.5-to-1 ratio in favor of collecting a tax

In addition to survey questions, the Flashvote survey also provided fields for responders to leave comments. Staff encourages review of the comment responses in Question 3 and Question 4.

Summary of April 3, 2024 Community Workshop

On April 3, City staff hosted a community workshop at City Hall to facilitate community feedback related to the consideration of cannabis businesses in Citrus Heights.

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Approximately 60 members of the public participated in this workshop. Attendees had diverse interests and feedback related to the consideration of modifications to the existing cannabis regulations. The workshop provided a positive environment for discussion of the various concerns and interests of the public.

At the beginning of the meeting, City staff provided an overview of the intent and purpose of the workshop. After this overview, attendees were given the opportunity to speak their thoughts with the group. Following oral comments, attendees were asked to identify their aptitude to allow cannabis dispensaries within the City of Citrus Heights using stickers on poster boards. Options ranged from 1 (Not interested) to 5 (very interested) and Not Sure. Attendees were then asked to provide any written comments that they would like to share about the potential change in regulations and submit a feedback card for direct inclusion in this report. Attachment 1 is a tabulation of comments received at the workshop.

Summary of Online Feedback Form

On March 2nd, City Staff updated the Cannabis Ordinance Updates website with a link to an online form to solicit feedback related to the consideration of retail cannabis businesses in Citrus Heights. This form was created to ensure easy and inclusive access to feedback channels for all residents.

The form was open until April 3rd at 7 p.m. and received 35 submissions. The questions included on the form were:

- Are you a resident of Citrus Heights?
- Please rate how much you would support having retail cannabis stores in Citrus Heights
- Any other comments or suggestions about cannabis in Citrus Heights?

Attachment 2 is a tabulation of online feedback toward cannabis and comments received.

Attachment 3 includes comment letters received prior to publication of this staff report.

Potential Timeline

The February 8, 2024, staff report included a potential timeline for implementation of retail cannabis regulations. At this point in time, the Community Engagement portion of the work is complete. Should City Council continue with next steps, community feedback opportunities would be provided at each public meeting. Depending on the City Council's direction, staff will proceed with the next steps. The timeline below outlines major steps and tentative dates for consideration as outlined in the February 8 staff report:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| • March-April | Community Engagement |
| • May 8, 2024 | Planning Commission Review of Ordinance(s) |
| • June 13, 2024 | City Council Review (First Reading) |

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- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| • June 27, 2024 | City Council Second Reading |
| • July 1- July 30 | Application Window for Use Permit submittal |
| • July 11, 2024 | Council Action on Ballot for Cannabis Tax Measure |
| • August 1-31 | Staff Review of Applications |
| • September 25, 2024 | Planning Commission Review of Applications |
| • October 24, 2024 | City Council Review of Applications |
| • November 5, 2024 | General Election for Cannabis Tax Measure |
| • Early 2025 | Implementation of Cannabis Tax Measure |

Attachments

1. Summary of Data from Cannabis Workshop
2. Summary of Online Cannabis Feedback Forms
3. Comment Letters Provided prior to publication

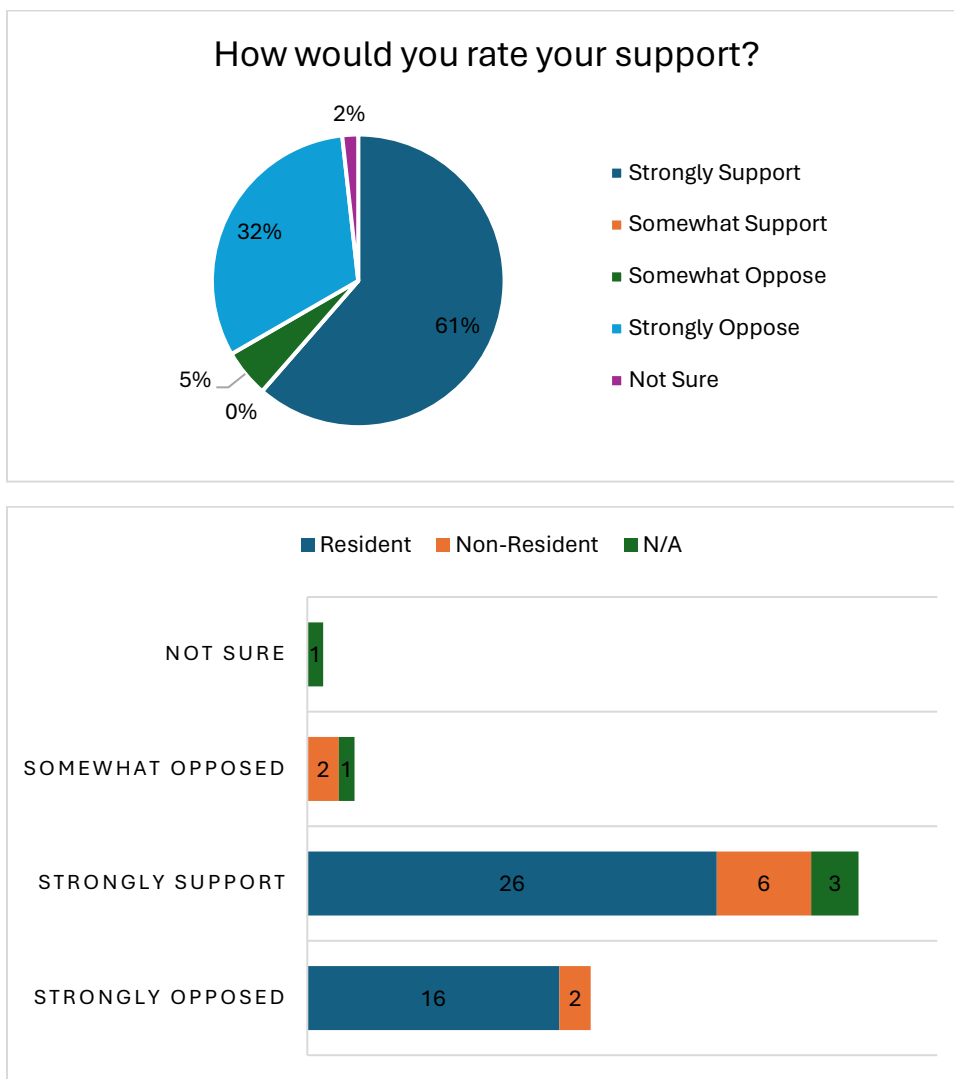
Summary of Data from Cannabis Dispensary Workshop

Hosted on April 3, 2024

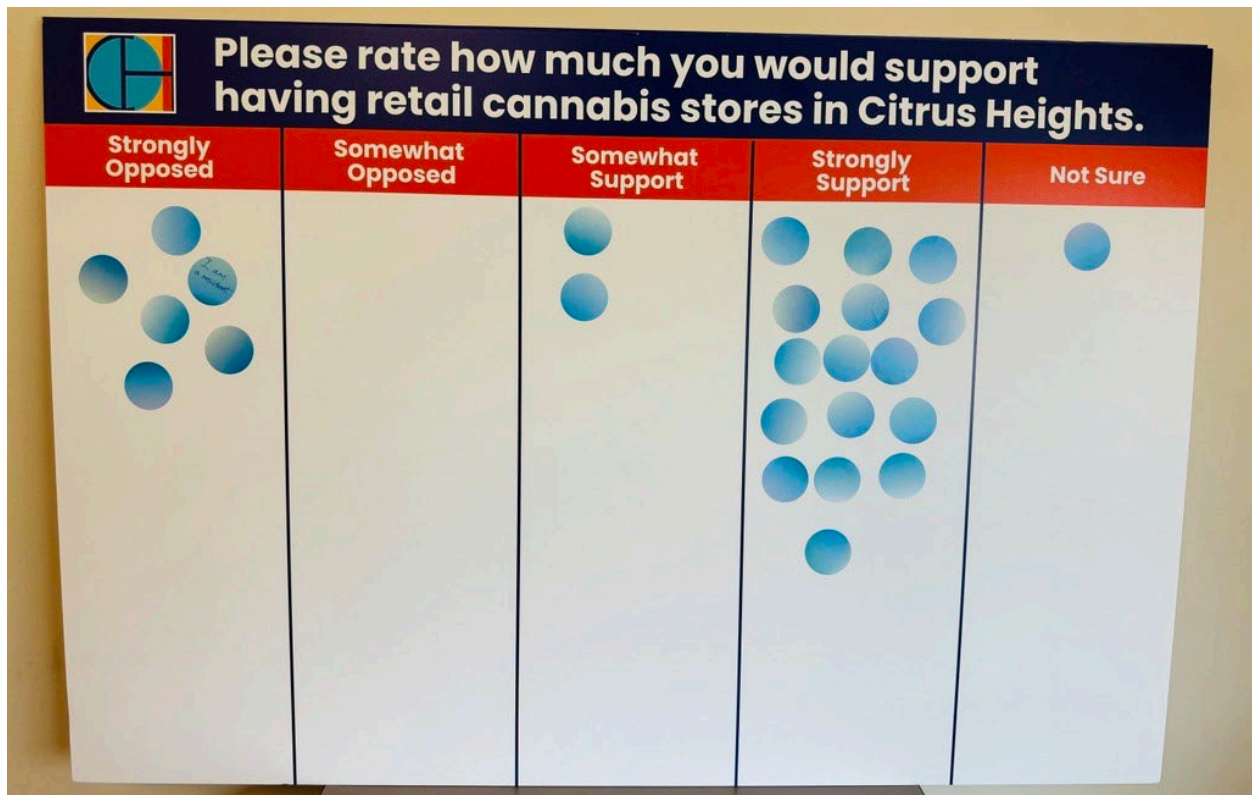
The City received **57** feedback forms from the Cannabis Community Workshop.

72.4% of feedback forms were from Citrus Heights residents. **12.07%** of respondents preferred not to answer if they were a resident.

61% of feedback was rated in support of cannabis retail operations in Citrus Heights.



Workshop residents were invited to add a sticker to a board representing their level of support.



Comments**(1) Strongly Opposed**

- This was an interesting, one sided presentation. All speakers were cannabis operators who obviously want this to pass. To base a decision on this issue based upon tonight's "presentation" this should be placed on the ballot for community vote. Your blue dot vote is not representative of our city- it's a poster for the industry people present.
- How could this possibly make our city a better place to live? Other than bringing \$\$ in for the city's use what good is this? This idea of inviting the business of cannabis into our city is the worst possible way to make money for the city. It's an invitation for more problems in our city.
- I understand the tax benefits of this however, I feel it will degrade out retail spaces and adversely affect other business. These areas are already somewhat blighted, I agree with the comments re: reserving some of the revenue for education.
- Please maintain the current ordinance. I-80 at Antelope and at Auburn are visible gateways to our city. If our goal is to beautify our city, the presence of pot stores is counterproductive. The anticipated tax revenue cannot buy back the negative image cannabis marketing will bring. The area of I-80 an Antelope is already impacted by campers, RVs, a gambling hall, and high traffic. There is already access via delivery, and other business areas. If approved, limit sign size, prohibit use of words "City of Citrus Heights" in business names
- If the issues is no controversial, do we as a city need to make a decision now
- My personal experience is a negative reaction to cannabis
- This event was no a workshop. It was uncontrolled comment. I was hoping for a presentation and responses. The "Blue Dots" serve no purpose . All of the people in the "industry" out the dots in strongly support box. How many are residents? Why would you ask for opinion of non-residents?
- Consider: Deliveries within the city will continue and may increase. Black market is believed to be 2-3 marijuana sales a dispensary or 2-4 in CH will not change that and may increase think of the adults buying beer for high school kids. Any guarantee the revenue will meet or exceed projections? How about a vote of all citizens of CH?
- There are no such shops in Folsom, Rocklin, Roseville and Rancho Cordova. Multiple studies prove crime increased around such businesses. Our police department already stretched, closest such stores are not 25 minutes away, use Google Maps, the medicinal benefits are very questionable Google it. Across the country cities see the negative impact on marijuana use additive, cardiovascular, impacts many negative health effects. These kinds of businesses do not add to our community vision.
- For years the city have been opposed to cannabis. Why all of a sudden was it needed to be brought up again. How many people attending the meeting are residents of the city. How many people are from the industry?
- Let the citizens decide cannabis is available outside the city.
- I believe there won't be enough law enforcement with Sunrise Market development delay, there has to be a better tax revenue option.

- For residents there is delivery, there is no need for a dispensary Google how close they really are.
- We are already known as the Heights, let's improve our image, not down grade it. Ask local businesses if they would want one next to their business.
- There is no benefit to the community for having a retail cannabis operation(s) within Citrus Heights other than generating tax revenue from sales made. The city needs to focus on its current problems before adding new ones, i.e.; homeless, violence, theft, law enforcement response, the need for substance abuse programs.
- Like tobacco and alcohol, marijuana is part of our society and probably will continue to be in the future But like tobacco and alcohol, marijuana is not without its set of problems both in society an individually. My primary concern with marijuana is the well-documented impact on the brain development of teens and young adults. There is also some evidence emerging that the stronger strains now marketed have a potential for a level of addition in the user. Regarding opening a dispensary in Citrus Heights: Some of you know my role in the battle to become a city. We wanted to make thing better. I don't believe a dispensary will make thing better. The problems I see are several: 1. Conflicts between local and federal regulations. 2. Lack of banking services- federal banks do not do business with dispensaries. The cash generated creates difficulties. 3. Benefits to our community are marginal at best. I believe that income generated from a dispensary operation will be more than offset by increased law enforcement. I don't for a moment believe that the income will fix our potholes. 4. Like bug tobacco, may of the dispensaries are owned and operated by large corporate entities who have no record of contributing to the communities in which they operate. By and large, the dispensaries are not "mom and pop" operations because of the capital investment involved. Just look at the City of Sacramento. Most dispensaries are owned by large corporation. Sacramento County has seven incorporated cities. Two of they allow dispensaries- Isleton and the city of Sacramento. There is only one dispensary in Placer County in Colfax. If we open a dispensary here, we will be drawing from a large radius, and I doubt those people will be shopping in Citrus Heights for other items. I believe that would put additional load on our Police Department. I urge you to table this matte, and leave it there.

(2) Somewhat Opposed

- *No comments*

(3) Somewhat Support

- *No feedback forms with this selection*

(4) Strongly Support

- Limit to two locations. You need two locations to serve the population.
- I believe opening retail cannabis stores in Citrus Heights is a great opportunity for the city and residents.
- Fair Oaks
- I have been in the dispensary industry for over 10 years the crime scene no different than any area in Sacramento. Amazing jobs can come from it, as well as tax revenue opportunities.

- My name is India Haynes and I am the general manager of a cannabis retail storefront in the Sacramento area. I fully understand the concern associated with bringing cannabis into the city but strongly believe that providing access to the medicinal consumers is important.
- It will be regulated- the product, the business location.
- Need education about uses and benefits
- Local control maybe on advantage with good resolutions
- I am here to represent my grandmother, an 83 year old Citrus Heights resident. Having a location near her would allow her to access her medicine easier. I currently support her obtaining products for pain management and it is approved by her Kaiser provider in lieu of other pain prescriptions. Additionally a UC Davis study found counties with more retail access had reduced rates of opioid ordinances. Another study conducted by CA educators found that from 1990-2007 suicide rates declined in states where medical legislation was approved compared to non-legal states.
- Cannabis is already accessible, with cannabis shops, cannabis will be regulated, tested and will lower crime on the streets of cannabis sales.
- I whole heartedly support cannabis as it isn't about the stigma most people may think it is. Cannabis is a medical thing as well and has been what has helped me with my medical condition, to be able to sustain a decent lifestyle free from chronic pain and inflammation.
- I have worked at a cultivation/dispensary and distribution. I have not seen an increase in crime at any of these sites due to the heavy regulations set in place. I have provided cannabis as medicine to my grandma and mother in law who have found medical benefits to cannabis. Cannabis is in this city and will continue to be. Regulating cannabis will provide access while being a safe option to street sales.
- It's time for a change. Been a resident my entire life, I don't want to keep going so far for my medication. This will help the city and the community. Statistics show crime does not increase the way many claim.
- Cannabis saves lives. The access to it needed all over the city.
- I strongly feel like a lot of education for cannabis is 100% needed. There is so much mis-education of this medical plant. It isn't the "gateway drug". Research has shown decrease in crime in areas.

Not Sure

- I have so many questions. How will you ensure that all taxes are paid? Is cannabis sales all cash? How can sales be tracked? Will there be audits? What is the cost to our city to perform the audits? How much money does CH estimate to collect per year? Will crime increase? What kind? Will there be cost of more policing? How will licenses be awarded? What % of CH budget will be from cannabis- projected? I want to know about the projected costs and benefits. How will you ensure that licenses not all end up in the hand of a few business owners (wasn't that a problem in Sacramento)?

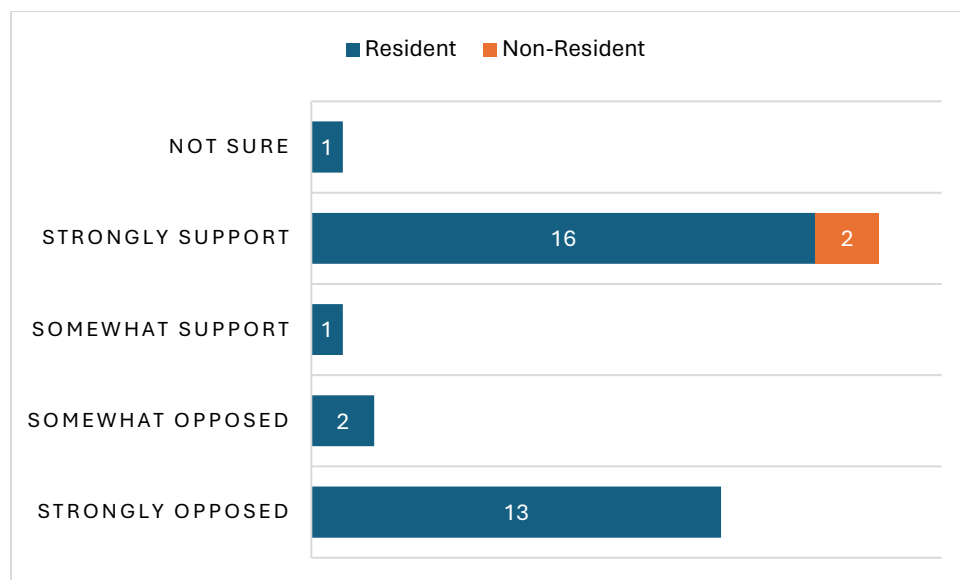
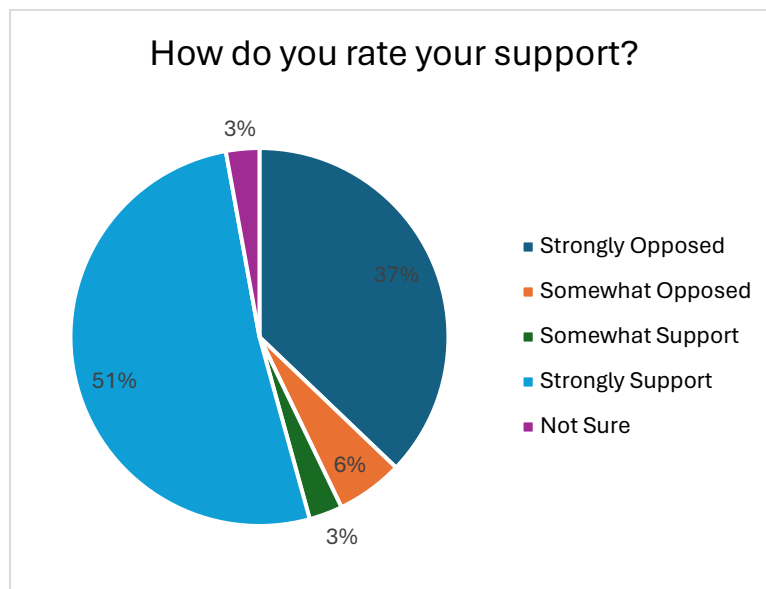
Summary of Data from Online Cannabis Feedback Form

Hosted on Website from March 15 to April 3, 2024

The City received **35** online feedback forms from the Cannabis Community Workshop.

94.2% of feedback providers identified as Citrus Heights residents.

54% of feedback was rated in support of cannabis retail operations in Citrus Heights.



Comments

(1) Strongly Opposed

- Not in our city I am a home owner and have lived here my entire life. This will ruin our city that we are trying to improve now homelessness and other issues are already out of control don't make it worse

- It will make no difference what we want you are going to approve of this for the money. I have lived here 80 years and the first Council did not approve it and I am sad the new counsel will! Carol L. Alexander
- Please do not open cannabis shops in Citrus Heights. We have too many vape stores, smoke shops, liquor stores, pawn shops, cash advance shops as it is driving our property values down and increasing undesirable actors to the area. Look at Auburn Blvd, Antelope, Greenback and Auburn for a preview of what these retail stores bring to our community. The cannabis stores downtown already deliver to our area and they can keep their downtown problems. Any revenue created from taxing cannabis sales will not cover the cost for increased police and clean up projects. I strongly urge you to not allow these stores in Citrus Heights.
- I don't think smoking marijuana should be encouraged and allowing sale of cannabis in CH would encourage its use due to easier access. My grandchildren had to come inside from playing in their backyard because the neighbor was in his backyard smoking it and the smoke was coming directly into my grandchildren's yard. It's legal to smoke it on private property, so there was no recourse other than to bring them inside and shut the windows. I think selling it in CH would likely increase the number of times neighbors are impacted by neighbors smoking marijuana. The strength of cannabis today is so much greater than before, that you have to be concerned about smoke that comes into your yard or house uninvited, particularly when you have kids.
- "Please don't move forward with this. It's going to hurt the integrity of our City. The ban was put in place for several reasons. I encourage the council to think about all the unintended consequences that will come as a result of allowing cannabis dispensaries in our community. We have a current council who voted down a very good housing project by a well-respected national builder that would have brought a highly desired housing option for folks who desire a certain lifestyle along with tax dollars & more support for local businesses. It seems to be we have a council who wants to grab tax dollars from an industry that dulls minds, creates crime & will discourage & deter people & families with integrity from moving to Citrus Heights & will encourage folks who currently live here who have integrity to leave, including myself. I bought in Citrus Heights in 1998 soon after the incorporation with the hopes of being part of the solution to some of the problems that have plagued this community for years & up to this point I've been encouraged & happy with the positive progress, if the council moves forward with this it will be the beginning of another set of problems for our police department our mental health providers.
- Citrus Heights already has a terrible homeless population and drug use is rampant. The city is spending \$1B to fix a dilapidated Sunrise Mall which already no one wants to go to because it reeks of being unsafe (unlike the malls in Rocklin which I'll take the time to travel to via I80 instead). Again due to homeless and unsavory characters roaming the area. So you think you've got problems now? They will increase dramatically if you allow more substances to be sold in the city. Strongly opposed.
- There are plenty of other sources in the area for cannabis, including home delivery. Dispensaries tend to attract people that can cause disruption and repel clients from neighboring business. Our current problems of homelessness, drug abuse, alcohol

addiction and other similar issues are already overwhelming. Let's not add to our city burden by inviting additional problems.

- The only people that want to sell cannabis in Citrus Heights are dispensaries. If someone wants to buy cannabis they can drive to Sacramento or have it delivered.
- Let's keep Citrus Heights clean and not allow cannabis stores in our City.
- We do not need to encourage more drug use in our community.
- Too many comments, not enough time to respond. Just happened to catch this in the Sentinel online. I doubt most of the community is aware you are considering changing our community. From Just say NO campaign to let's give kid's instant access in their cities. Higher crime, thefts, accidents, police monitoring of sites. Our schools already rank below average, below 50% of CA public schools. If someone needs medicinal cannabis, there is a store in Rancho Cordova, 4.5 miles away. Most cities around us said NO. Fair Oaks is now having to fine landlords and try to undue their decision to allow this. It is still a Federal crime. Banking, renting, business licenses are not usually accessible. Business only take Cash. That should work out really good. Driving home the other night, homeless by post office, community center, behind businesses, will not go to the park and green space by me once it starts to get dusk. You will bring more of the same to our community. Was in Walgreens and an alarm went off. We all froze and looked at each other, do we run, duck for cover. You should open your eyes and see what is happening in our community. If you allow this change, I want the high costs it will bring to come from your paycheck, not mine. Agree with statements, Not My City, NO, Do not do this to our Community. Find another tax revenue. People who want or need the service have plenty of options. Not here.

(2) Somewhat Opposed

- Until there is a roadside test for cannabis, I am opposed.
- my common sense and bottom line concern is that the operation of a cannabis dispensary in citrus heights will change the social and perhaps cultural dynamic of our town; we already have enough of a problem with vagrants and homeless people who occupy our green belt open spaces. do we really want to increase this demographic in our community. and while a cannabis dispensary may bring in additional income, is it really worth all of the residual side effects this sort of business will also cause or bring in? i say that with all things considered, its better for those who choose or need to smoke weed, to find some other place to go buy it

(3) Somewhat Support

- too many people will complain, maybe in a few years more residents will accept having a dispensary. There are delivery companies already delivering cannabis products to CH. Allowing dispensaries will reduce sales for those companies. If approved, a dispensary should be central to all of CH so that people from all corners of CH have a small commute. allowing dispensaries on the outskirts of town would not be beneficial to a customer or the store. Also limit the number of dispensaries so there are fewer complaints. Require that the dispensary remain clean, clean surroundings, brightly lit parking, etc., in order for customers to remain safe.

(4) Strongly Support

- It would be a huge increase in tax revenue for Citrus Heights

- I'm forced to pay taxes to the City of Sacramento when I don't even live there, because that's where the closest dispensaries are. Please let me keep my tax dollars in Citrus Heights. People from Roseville Granite Bay, and Folsom will come to dispensaries here. At least let delivery services operate out of Citrus Heights, it's 2024 and the voters made a decision on this almost 6 years ago.
- "From what I've read in the flash vote, it seems that people are not as educated as they need to be about the laws surrounding recreational and medical marijuana in CA. There is no research that shows any type of increase in crime in areas that put legal retail dispensaries in. Dispensaries are required to follow a very long list of rules to obtain licensing to sell as well as how clients can behave while in and around a dispensary. Most dispensaries want to be good neighbors and will do what is necessary to ensure their clients are following all state laws regarding marijuana (no smoking or edibles to be consumed on property or in parking lots or nearby parks). The city can require that the dispensary they allow make their clients sign an agreement as to how they will behave on and off the property after their purchase.
- As a medical patient of marijuana for over 20yrs and a recreational user from 16-30yrs old, I am disabled and have to travel 30minutes in each direction to get my medicine from Midtown. This is a huge stressor for me and a lot of wear and tear on my vehicle.
- I believe the best type of dispensary to have in CH is a compassion or medical dispensary. They take recreational and medical. Medical offers a discount to patients that are on SSDI or vets, while the recreational helps cover the discount the medical receives (usually only about 25-30%). Also, think about a smaller business that won't have a large amount of clients coming and going.
- The Antelope corridor is absolutely the wrong area for this type of business. There is already enough crime issues in that area that we hear almost every night on Van Maren.
- Allowing dispensaries in Citrus Heights would provide the city extra funds and create more jobs within the city. The lack of dispensaries in citrus heights doesn't keep cannabis use (or any other drug for that matter) out of the city. Having a safe, legal place for residents to buy cannabis makes it so people don't have to visit the local dealer who will offer more than just cannabis. Cannabis has never been a gateway, the method to which people have been forced to by it is the gateway. Legal dispensaries come with a safe and regulated environment that cuts out the risk of being sold laced cannabis or pushed to buy hard drugs. Not only would dispensaries improve funds and employment, they would also deter some of the hard drug use that has been rampant in Citrus Heights for years.
- I think retail in Citrus Heights is a great idea! Cannabis is in Citrus Heights with retail dispensaries or not via delivery companies and the black market. Retail at least the city benefits.... it doesnt bring more cannabis to CH.
- It is time for Citrus Heights to reap the benefit to its community services by regulating the legal cannabis marketplace, and offering a safe, clean atmosphere for residents to purchase medicinal and recreational products. The only way to displace the illegal market is by supporting the regulated market. No minors are able to purchase cannabis from a dispensary, unlike the illegal dealers currently within our schools. Maintaining the ban on commercial retail dispensaries serves no one except for them -- illegal drug

dealers. Let's move forward into the 21st century and learn from our peer jurisdictions in California to enact a sensible ordinance for Citrus Heights.

- If Liquor stores are a part of our Community then Cannabis stores should also be allowed. We should also be able to grow our own...in areas where retail cannabis was available, opioid overdoses and use saw a decline - 2021 UC Davis study.
<https://www.ucdavis.edu/curiosity/news/counties-more-cannabis-dispensaries-show-reduced-opioid-deaths>
- Patients deserve safe access to medicine
- I am 83 and use gummies for pain.
- I strongly support centralizing more commerce and economic activity within Citrus Heights. People are using cannabis, and will continue to do so. We should aspire to have those cannabis dollars spent locally.
- I get cannabis delivered to my home in CH but a local dispensary is even better as budtenders help novices get the right products and teach them the correct way to use it. Then you take the product home and use it in the safety of your home. If you have never been in a dispensary, you would be surprised how upscale most operations are and you would see all types of people in the store, from young working adults to senior citizens.
- I whole heartedly support bringing cannabis to the community.
- A Fair Oaks resident & believe dispensary location is key but strongly believe they can safely add to our local economy.

Not Sure

- I would like to see statistics of any issues that have come up in other communities that have retail cannabis stores.



Mission Statement: The Weed for Warriors Project is a social justice lifestyle brand supporting holistic rehabilitation for veterans through community based projects, proactive care advocacy, cannabis education and compassion. WFWP urges change for the empowerment of the people.

April 3, 2024

To Citrus Heights City Counsel & Community Members,

WFWP was founded in 2014 by three US veterans. They all attribute cannabis as an essential tool to saving their lives after service; using it to heal what they could and cope with the rest of their service related injuries. With the reported veteran suicide rate at more than 22 per day, they decided to share the plant with as many of their brothers and sisters as they could. A foundational point in WFWP's advocacy voice has always been increased accessibility to cannabis medicine.

A 2014 mathematical analysis of data sets from 1990-2007, regarding national mortality rates showed that in states where medical cannabis was legalized, the rate of suicide saw a decline as opposed to the non-legal counterparts.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4232164/>

A 2021 UC Davis study found that in counties where more cannabis retailers were present, the incidence rate of opioid overdoses declined as opposed to other areas.

<https://www.ucdavis.edu/curiosity/news/counties-more-cannabis-dispensaries-show-reduced-opioid-deaths>

The subject of accessibility is what prompts this communication. WFWP was initially supported by local cannabis businesses throughout California, who provided safe locations to connect with veterans in our community, although we would eventually gather elsewhere as the veterans quickly overwhelmed the small shops. With the changes in legislation from medical (Proposition 215) to recreational (Proposition 64), these same businesses have continued to support the communities' veterans through events and outreach as much as possible.

While there are many positives in the current proposal becoming a reality, two locations being a highlight, there may be potential setbacks if allowed to proceed as is. The current outline lists two locations that are very close in proximity to each other, essentially serving the same geographical area and thus the same patient/consumer base. This design would be leaving parts of the community at a further disadvantage than those closer to the current proposed locations.

Why does this matter? In epidemiology, barriers to access are the most common deterrents for individuals pursuing positive change in their health. Without access to safe legal cannabis in their area, consumers are more likely to utilize the illicit or black



Mission Statement: The Weed for Warriors Project is a social justice lifestyle brand supporting holistic rehabilitation for veterans through community based projects, proactive care advocacy, cannabis education and compassion. WFWP urges change for the empowerment of the people.

market, as opposed to traveling to purchase from legal dispensaries, for the simple fact that it is easier to access. As an example, the same principle is applied to concerns found in food deserts - not having access to safe and affordable fruits and vegetables leads disadvantaged people to settle for something that will meet their immediate needs (satisfying hunger), but not essentially serve their long term goals (overall health and longevity).

An improvement in the current plan would be to implement a location closer to the Interstate 80 corridor. Additionally, the proximity to the interstate would allow non-residents that are passing through Citrus Heights to conveniently obtain their medicine and support the community through those purchases. This small adjustment would help not just Citrus Heights residents, but also our neighboring communities, many of whom still lack access to retail cannabis options. As the "Sacramento" chapter events often turned out one of the larger crowds out of all of the events WFWP hosted, there have been many locations tried and errored in the effort to provide safe space for veterans to learn about and access plant medicine. Location is a powerful tool for progress of an initiative and key when it comes to accessibility of resources. WFWP thanks you for keeping this conversation open and hope you take our recommendation into consideration for the sake of veterans and patients alike.

Best regards,
The Weed for Warriors Project

DAVID WARREN
 [REDACTED]
 Citrus Heights, CA 95621
 Telephone: [REDACTED]
 Cellular: [REDACTED]
 Fax: (916) [REDACTED]
 Internet: [REDACTED]

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via e-mail
 avan@citrusheights.net

City Council
 City of Citrus Heights
 6360 Fountain Square Drive
 Citrus Heights, CA 95621

Re: Cannabis discussion

Council members:

At the outset, I find it concerning that, as is now being realized in Oregon, that there is a push to remove the stigma over the abusive use of controlled substances. As a professional, I have seen the downside of substance abuse, and legalizing possession has aggravated the problem. But as the Women's Crusade. Populist Party. Women's Christian Temperance Union founded by Annie Wittenmyer. Frances Willard. Carrie A. Nation. Anna Gordon. And Pauline Morton Sabin learned after their success in the adoption of the eighteenth amendment to the United States Constitution in 1919, and then repealed in 1933, prohibition cannot succeed. This applies to cannabis in the same way it previously applied to wine, beer and spirits.

Fast forward to 1970 when the use of cannabis became illegal pursuant to the Controlled Substances Act which was then followed by the Nixon administration's announcement of the "war on drugs" in 1971 which fifty years later proved to be just as ineffectual concerning the use of cannabis as the prior prohibition on the use of alcohol. It is only now that there is a realization that the war on drugs is and was an abject failure.

Unfortunately, regardless of the fact that the sale of cannabis by a person not licensed to do so is illegal, it has not stopped, or even slowed, the sale of cannabis by drug dealers. As a resident of Citrus Heights, I ask that the City Council accept reality rather than live with a fantasy of a world for which substance use and abuse does not exist, and that the illegal sale of drugs can be stopped.

For the above reasons, I ask that the City Council approve the sale of cannabis within the city for the following reasons and restrictions:

1. Regardless of the city's decision to allow cannabis dispensaries within the city, cannabis will still be available to residents, either via dispensaries in Sacramento or drug dealers within the city. There is no protocol available to the council members or the Citrus Heights Police Department ("CHPD") to prevent access to cannabis by residents from adjacent areas;

2. The city has an opportunity to diminish the illegal sale of cannabis within the city limits by providing legal access. Regretfully, I have personal experience concerning the violent disputes associated with illegal substance sales market share disputes. The risk of that type of violence coming to Citrus Heights is greater than crime associated with licensed cannabis dispensaries. Legal sales of cannabis will reduce the amount of illegal cannabis being sold in the city;

3. Licensing cannabis dispensaries creates no greater risk to public safety than licensing businesses that sell package liquor as both are easy targets for individuals who wish to violate the law, and both cause certain types of individuals to congregate. One need look no farther than the Safeway located at the corner of Sylvan and Greenback to find habituated, mentally ill, and the homeless congregating. As recently as last week, I watched a couple walk out of a national chain store with a shopping cart full of two-liter liquor bottles without paying for them. Crime is the result of bad actors, not the nature of a business;

4. By licensing dispensaries, the CHPD can focus upon those individuals who are selling cannabis and other pharmaceuticals illegally.

5. Individuals who want to use cannabis will find and use it. As the use is no longer illegal, religious or cultural objections should not bear upon the city's decision. Government must operate in a non-sectarian manner. Access to cannabis in the city is a direct extension of current law.

6. The objection that cannabis sales in the city will adversely affect the children in our community is meritless. It is a parental responsibility to assure that children do not use cannabis or any other drug illegally. Government should only intervene when parents fail in their role to properly rear a child. A child who illegally uses cannabis is the consequence of inadequate parenting, not a societal failure. As a child unfortunately can today purchase cannabis on a street corner, licensing dispensaries will have little impact on the issue of juvenile access.

7. Contrary to staff recommendation that the dispensaries should be located at locations solely with freeway access, the city should approve four

locations within the city. The dispensaries should be at locations convenient to residents, not only for non-residents. The city can easily divide the city into four quadrants and in each quadrant, place a store among the numerous vacancies available for rent. The sole limitation on location should be approval by the CHPD and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District based upon emergency access to minimize response time should it become necessary, along with a reasonable distance from public schools and parks.

8. My greatest fear involving the unlicensed sale of cannabis is reports that unlicensed individuals have sold cannabis which contain chemicals which are life threatening, i.e., herbicides, growing chemicals, or drugs such as fentanyl. The city must assure public safety when using legal drugs or alcoholic products. I cannot imagine the city removing approval of the sale of package liquor in order to ban the sale of moonshine. The metaphor is applicable.

9. Based upon the City of Sacramento statistics, calls for service to the police for dispensaries is no different than that for stores which are licensed to sell package liquor. The argument that dispensaries are a focal point for crime is disingenuous.

10. Any revenue generated by licensing fees should be directed specifically to (1) education programs within the local schools to prevent substance abuse starting in the primary grades for programs to be administered by the CHPD and (2) to supplement the CHPD's budget to investigate and arrest individuals involved in either the direct or indirect sales of illegal substances. The revenue should not be used as part of the city's general fund.

11. The city should create a board, similar as that established as the planning commission, that (1) assures that the dispensaries are in compliance with all directives from the city, CHPD and the Metro fire and (2) to assure and set the amount for the license fee/municipal tax upon the dispensaries to not cause the cost to sell the cannabis to exceed market rates (illegal sales price). If purchasing the cannabis from a dispensary costs more than purchasing from an illegal source, sales of legal cannabis will be reduced and vice versa. This board should have the authority to adjust the tax/licensing fees to assure that the legal sales price as confirmed by the CHPD is at least the same, if not lower, than that of illegal sales.

As an individual, I oppose the excessive use of cannabis, drugs or liquor is a public safety hazard. So are the sales of fireworks for individual use on the 4th of July and the personal possession of firearms. Yet, this city council does not act to ban either of the latter. Statistically, more people are injured by the use of fireworks and firearms than at cannabis dispensary locations. I am not enough of a hypocrite say that the city can ban the former but allow the latter.