

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR CANNABIS LAND USE ORDINANCE AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

NOTICE & PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Notice is hereby given that the County of Sonoma is proposing to adopt amendments to the County Code, Chapter 26 and new Chapter 38, to allow expanded ministerial permitting for commercial cannabis cultivation in agricultural and resource zoned areas. The County of Sonoma also proposes a general plan amendment to include cannabis within the meaning of agriculture. The proposed new Chapter 38 expands ministerial permitting of commercial cannabis cultivation in agricultural and resource zoned areas of the unincorporated county, outside of the coastal zone, sets objective standards for issuance of ministerial permits in those zones to protect public health, safety, and the environment and to promote neighborhood compatibility. It also clarifies and aligns ordinance definitions with state law. The proposed amendments to Chapter 26 are technical in nature. They are designed to align and harmonize with proposed Chapter 38 to avoid duplication concerning ministerial permitting. They also 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.

LOCATION: The affected areas are unincorporated Sonoma County, outside of the coastal zone.

CEQA: A Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed to be adopted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State and County CEQA Guidelines. 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.

COMMENT DEADLINE: Comments should be addressed to the Planning Commission c/o McCall Miller, Department Analyst, Cannabis Program, County Administrator's Office, and submitted electronically to Cannabis@sonoma-county.org; or by mail to 575 Administration Drive, Suite 104A, Santa Rosa, California 95403. **The comment period will be from February 16, 2021 to March 18, 2021**, a period of 30 days pursuant to Section 15105(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. Comments must be received no later than **12:00 PM on March 18, 2021**.

If you challenge the Initial Study and draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the County Administrator's Office (Cannabis Program) or hearing body at, or prior to, the public hearing.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: Copies of the proposed ordinance amendments, general plan amendment, and the Initial Study and draft Subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration and technical studies, project materials, and associated documents, normally available at Permit Sonoma, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403 are now available electronically through the County Administrator's Office Department Analyst, McCall Miller via email to Cannabis@sonoma-county.org. These documents are also on the Sonoma County Cannabis Program website at <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/cannabis-program/>. Contact McCall Miller for alternatives to accessing documents electronically.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: The public hearing before the Planning Commission is tentatively set for Thursday, March 18, 2021. A separate notice of the date, time, and means of accessing the Planning Commission's virtual public hearing will be issued 10 days prior to the confirmed hearing date. The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors will also hold a noticed public hearing at a later date, to be determined and noticed separately.

NOTICE PUBLISHED: Press Democrat (1/8 page ad)

DATE: February 16, 2021 (12:00 PM)