

ORDINANCE NO. ()

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, TO AMEND CHAPTER 26 OF THE SONOMA COUNTY CODE PERTAINING TO CANNABIS CULTIVATION AND ACCESSORY USES, CANNABIS VISITOR SERVING USES, CENTRALIZED PROCESSING, LABORATORIES AND MANUFACTURING FOR THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY OUTSIDE THE COASTAL ZONE, AND ADOPTING A MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, State of California, ordains as follows:

Section I. Purpose and Authority. The purpose of this Ordinance is to amend the cannabis land use and zoning ordinance to clarify and streamline permitting requirements to reduce barriers to entry and promote participation in the legal industry, to treat cannabis more similarly to other agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses, to increase business opportunities in the cannabis industry for the benefit of the broader County economy, to ensure cannabis uses are compatible with areas of concentrated residential uses, and to maintain or enhance environmental protections to ensure cannabis businesses operate in a manner that maintains and enhances the public health, safety, and welfare of each community and the county as a whole. This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to California Government Code § 65850 and § 25131.

Section II. Findings

- A. The Board restates the findings adopted in Resolution No. 25- adopting amendments to the General Plan Agricultural Resources Element. This ordinance is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan as amended because it treats cannabis production as an agricultural use while imposing certain use-specific restrictions and development standards in recognition of its controlled federal status and the varied public sentiment.
- B. The agricultural sector in Sonoma County is fundamental to the County's economic prosperity, and the County Code contains longstanding provisions in support of agricultural uses on agricultural land. Opportunities for commercial cannabis business are important to promote agricultural diversity and a robust and sustainable local economy.
- C. Providing opportunities for cannabis cultivation sites to vertically integrate and incorporate accessory uses like processing, propagation, research and development, manufacturing, and packaging and labeling is consistent with uses allowed for other agricultural operations and critical for the viability of the industry as paying third parties to perform these functions to ready an agricultural product for market can be cost prohibitive.

- D. Allowing agricultural promotional opportunities and direct to consumer sales is important to the success and viability of any agricultural industry, including cannabis, and has a beneficial impact throughout the local economy.
- E. Cannabis cultivation is analogous to other forms of plant agriculture and where other agriculture currently exists, providing a ministerial pathway for swapping out one form of agriculture with another is critical to enabling crop diversification, which supports the long-term sustainability of our local agricultural industry.
- F. Establishing clear regulations to guide land use permitting for commercial cannabis uses and simplifying personal cultivation regulations is essential to encourage legal cannabis market participation, discourage illegal market participation, and ensure commercial cannabis uses are appropriately designed and located to provide diverse business opportunities while minimizing impacts on the environment and residents.
- G. Cannabis remains a Schedule 1 drug under the federal Controlled Substances Act. While many states have legalized personal use and cannabis businesses, it remains a deeply dividing topic. It is an important component of this Cannabis Program Update to increase setbacks from residential areas to decrease the potential for incompatibility between these uses and recognize the varied public sentiment around the crop.
- H. The permitting process for existing cannabis operators and applicants has been costly and time-consuming. While the County has received 204 use permit applications since 2017, only 66 have been approved with 58 of those operating. Some permits have taken five years or longer to obtain and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in consulting costs and permit fees. Site development adds more costs on top of this. Sites with approved permits largely operate without significant complaints and while the Board desires to amend certain setbacks to reduce future potential for incompatibility and recognize public sentiment, it is important to allow existing businesses and applicants to continue, modify, and expand despite these changes where such uses have already been or will be subjected to site-specific review, environmental mitigation, and conditions to ensure they remain compatible with surrounding uses.

Section III. Repeal Cannabis Permit Standards.

- A. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) Section 26-88-250 (Commercial Cannabis Uses) is repealed.
- B. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) Section 26-88-252 (Enforcement) is repealed.
- C. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) Section 26-88-250 (Commercial Cannabis Cultivation) is repealed.
- D. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) Section 26-88-258 (Personal Cannabis Cultivation) is repealed.

Section IV. Definitions. The definitions in Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 4, Section 26-04-020 are amended, deleted, and added as provided in Exhibit 3-A, attached and incorporated by reference.

Section V. Agricultural and Resource Zones Allowed Uses. The “Commercial Cannabis Uses” and “Cannabis Cultivation Personal Use” lines of the land use table in Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 10, Section 26-060-030 are repealed and replaced to read as follows in alphabetical order in accordance with the existing land use table and specified land use categories:

Land Use	LIA Zone	LEA Zone	DA Zone	RRD Zone	TP Zone	Use Regulations
Agricultural and Resource Based Land Use Category						
Cannabis Cultivation	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	-	26-18-020 and 26-18-115
Cannabis Visitor Serving Uses	C	C	C	C	-	26-18-270
Centralized Cannabis Processing	C	C	C	-	-	26-20-025
Residential Land Use Category						
Personal Cannabis Cultivation	P	P	P	P	P	26-18-115

Section VI. Residential Zones Allowed Uses. The “Cannabis Cultivation, Personal Use” line of the land use table in Chapter 26, Article 8, Section 26-08-030 is repealed and replaced to read as follows in alphabetical order in accordance with the existing land use table and specified land use category:

Land Use	AR Zone	RR Zone	R1 Zone	R2 Zone	R3 Zone	Use Regulations
Residential Land Use Category						
Personal Cannabis Cultivation	P	P	P	P	P	26-18-115

Section VII. Commercial Zones Allowed Uses. The “Commercial Cannabis Uses” line of the land use table in Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 10, Section 26-10-030 is

repealed and replaced to read as follows in alphabetical order in accordance with the existing land use table and specified land use categories:

Land Use	CO Zone	C1 Zone	C2 Zone	C3 Zone	LC Zone	CR Zone	AS Zone	K Zone	Use Regulations
Agricultural and Resource Based Land Use Category									
Centralized Cannabis Processing	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	26-20-025

Section VIII. Industrial Zones Allowed Uses. The ‘Commercial Cannabis Uses’ line of the land use table in Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 12, Section 26-12-030 is repealed and replaced to read as follows in alphabetical order in accordance with the existing land use table and specified land use categories:

Land Use	MP Zone	M1 Zone	M2 Zone	M3 Zone	Use Regulations
Agricultural and Resource Based Land Use Category					
Cannabis Cultivation	P/C	P/C	P/C	P/C	26-18-020 and 26-18-115
Centralized Cannabis Processing	P	P	P	P	26-20-025

Section IX. Agriculture and Resource Based Use Standards.

- A. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 18, Section 26-18-020 (Agricultural Crop Production and Cultivation) is modified in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-B, attached and incorporated by reference.
- B. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Section 26-18-115 (Cannabis Cultivation) is added to Article 18 in numerical order, according to the provisions in Exhibit 3-C, attached and incorporated by reference.
- C. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Section 26-18-270 (Cannabis Events) is added to Article 18 in numerical order, according to the provisions in Exhibit 3-D attached and incorporated by reference.
- D. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Section 26-88-215 (Farm Retail Sales) is modified to remove, “and cannabis products” from Section 26-88-215(b) (Applicability).

Section X. Industrial, Manufacturing, and Processing Use Standards.

- A. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Section 26-20-025 (Centralized Cannabis Processing) is added to Article 20 in appropriate numerical order, in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-E, attached and incorporated by reference.
- B. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 20, Section 26-20-040 (Laboratories) is amended in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-E, attached and incorporated by reference.
- C. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 20, Section 26-20-080 (Manufacturing/Processing, Medium) is amended in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-E, attached and incorporated by reference.

Section XI. Recreation, Education and Public Assembly Use Standards. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 22, Section 26-22-120 (Periodic Special Events) is amended in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-F, attached and incorporated by reference.

Section XII. CX Combining District. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code) Article 81 is added in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-H, attached and incorporated by reference.

Section XIII. Parking Regulations. Chapter 26 (Zoning Code), Article 86, Section 26-86-010 parking regulations specific to cannabis medical dispensary is modified in accordance with the provisions in Exhibit 3-I, attached and incorporated by reference.

Section XIV. Cannabis Consumption. No cannabis consumption associated with cannabis visitor serving uses, or periodic special events is authorized by this ordinance unless and until it is expressly allowed by Chapter 14 of the Sonoma County Code. Cannabis consumption must also conform to Chapter 32 of the Sonoma County Code.

Section XV. Environmental Determination.

- a. Certification of Final Environmental Impact Report. This Ordinance was environmentally reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Cannabis Program Update Environmental Impact Report. By separate Resolution (No. 25-), incorporated herein by reference, the Board of Supervisors certified that the Final Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Comprehensive Cannabis Program Update project: (a) reflects the Board's independent judgment and analysis, (b) was presented to and reviewed and considered by the Board of Supervisors, and (c) was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.) (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., Title 14, §15000 et seq.) and the County's local CEQA Guidelines. By the same resolution, the Board of Supervisors further adopted findings of fact and a statement of overriding considerations for the project.
- b. Adoption of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The Mitigation Monitoring and Report Program (MMRP) attached as Exhibit 3-J is hereby adopted and incorporated by reference. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines

Section 15126.4, the mitigation measures identified in the Cannabis Program Update Environmental Impact Report have been incorporated into the project and made enforceable through this zoning ordinance, and in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15097 adoption of this MMRP as part of this ordinance will ensure implementation of all measures imposed to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects.

Section XVI. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance and every section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

Section XVII. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be and the same is hereby declared to be in full force and effect on July 1, 2026, and shall be published once before the expiration of fifteen (15) days after said passage, with the names of the Supervisors voting for or against the same, in *The Press Democrat*, a newspaper of general circulation published in the County of Sonoma, State of California.

In regular session of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, introduced on the 28 day of October, 2025, and finally passed and adopted this X day of X, 2025, on regular roll call of the members of said Board by the following vote:

SUPERVISORS:

Hermosillo: Rabbitt: Coursey: Gore: Hopkins:

Ayes: Noes: Absent: Abstain:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the above and foregoing Ordinance duly adopted and

SO ORDERED.

Chair, Board of Supervisors
County of Sonoma

ATTEST:

M. Christina Rivera,
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors