

Community Survey on Cannabis Storefront Retail

March 24, 2026, 12:00 PM

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Community Survey on Cannabis Storefront Retail

Help shape the City's regulations related to cannabis storefront retail

Introduction

The Novato City Council is considering future cannabis storefront retail — and we want to hear from you.

Cannabis storefront retail refers to a physical, brick-and-mortar location where cannabis, cannabis products, and cannabis accessories are sold directly to customers. Your input will help inform and shape the City's policies and regulations regarding potential cannabis storefront retail.

Please take a few minutes to complete our survey and share your thoughts by 11:59pm on Monday, March 23, 2026.

Additional information is available at novato.gov/cannabis.

Establezca el idioma de la encuesta: Puede completar esta encuesta fácilmente en el idioma que prefiera. Simplemente seleccione "Set Language" en la esquina inferior izquierda de la encuesta y elija de la lista de idiomas disponibles.

Set Your Survey Language: You can easily take this survey in your preferred language. Simply select "Set Language" in the bottom left corner of the survey and choose from the list of available languages.

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Summary Of Responses

As of March 24, 2026, 12:00 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 943
Responses: 796
Hours of Public Comment: 39.8

Topic Start

February 20, 2026, 3:37 PM

Topic End

March 23, 2026, 11:59 PM








QUESTION 1

Are you a Novato resident?

		%	Count
Yes		80.5%	641
No		19.5%	155

QUESTION 2

What is your age group?

		%	Count
21-29		4.5%	36
30-39		10.6%	84
40-49		16.0%	127
50-59		24.9%	198
60-69		22.6%	180
70-79		17.8%	142
Over 80		3.6%	29

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QUESTION 3

In general, do you support or oppose allowing cannabis storefront retail businesses in Novato?

		%	Count
Strongly support		53.9%	429
Somewhat support		10.6%	84
No opinion/don't care		0.9%	7
Somewhat opposed		4.5%	36
Strongly opposed		30.2%	240

QUESTION 4

What potential operational issues, if any, would concern you about a cannabis retail storefront operating in Novato? Please select all that apply.

		%	Count
Odor		22.9%	182
Security or crime		42.2%	336
Traffic or parking		18.2%	145
Noise		7.3%	58
Loitering		28.5%	227
Public consumption		34.7%	276
Store hours		8.2%	65
Events		12.4%	99
Signage		14.1%	112
Lighting		6.4%	51
None of these concern me		39.7%	316
Other		16.0%	127

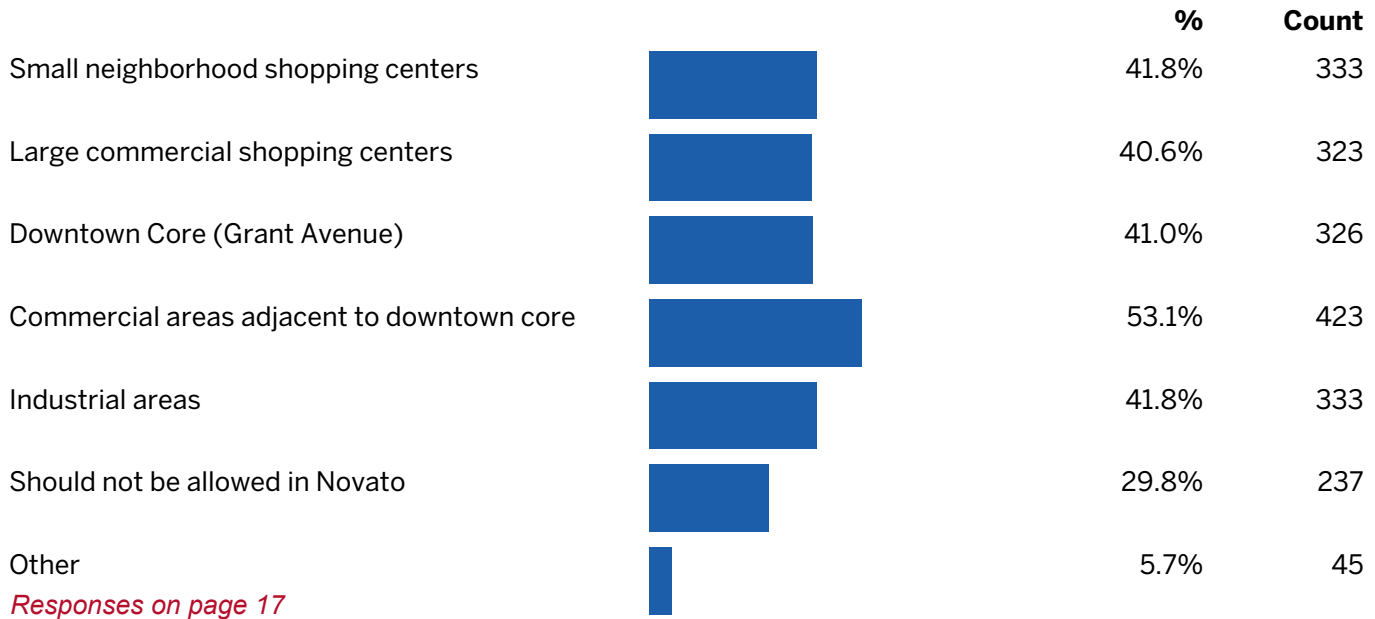
Responses on pages 9-16

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QUESTION 5

Where should they be allowed? Please select all that apply.



QUESTION 6

Do you agree or disagree that the City should limit (cap) the number of cannabis storefront retail permits issued?

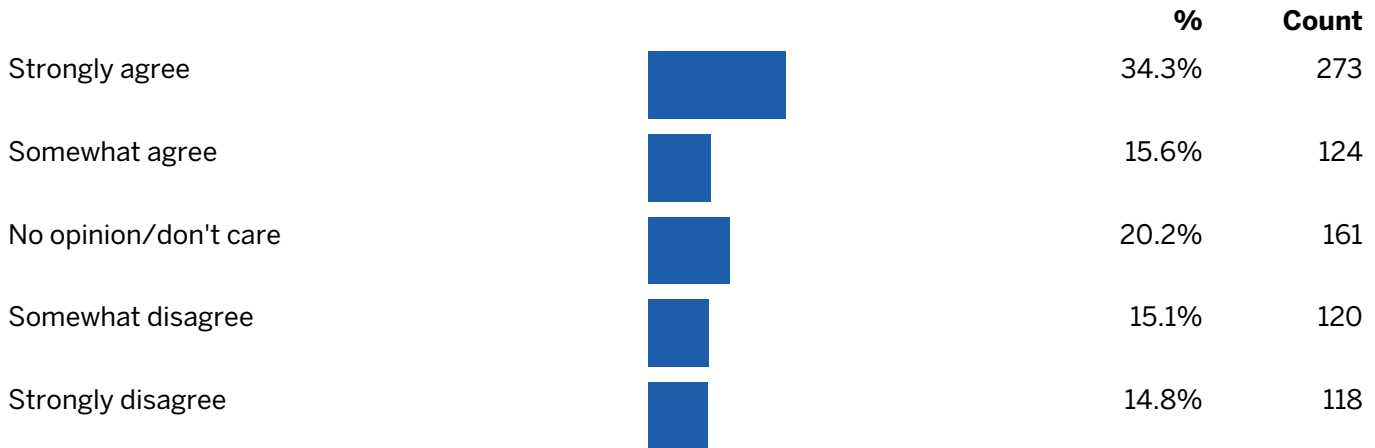


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QUESTION 7

Do you agree or disagree that the City should require cannabis retail storefronts to pay a local community benefit payment (an additional financial contribution to the community)?



QUESTION 8

The state requires a 600-foot buffer between a cannabis retail storefront & a "sensitive use" (defined as K-12 schools, day care centers & youth community centers), unless the distance is changed by the City. Should the City increase, decrease or leave the distance the same as the state requirement?

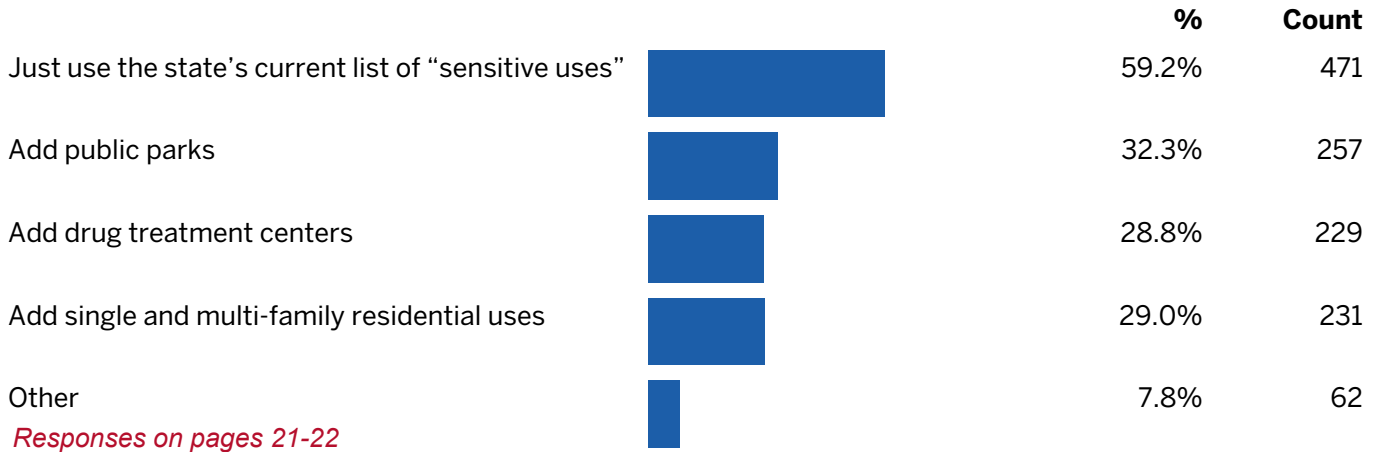


Community Survey on Cannabis Storefront Retail

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QUESTION 9

Should the City maintain the state's current list of "sensitive uses" or add additional sensitive uses? Please select all that apply.



QUESTION 10

Do you agree or disagree that there should be a buffer required between one cannabis retail storefront and another?










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QUESTION 11

Which of the following business activities would you be comfortable allowing in licensed cannabis retail storefronts in Novato? Please select all that apply.

		%	Count
Retail sales only (no on-site consumption or use)		57.9%	461
On-site consumption and consultation room (similar to doctor's office)		28.1%	224
On-site commercial consumption areas (similar to a lounge or café)		32.5%	259
Educational events (e.g. classes, product education, wellness topics)		46.5%	370
Community events (e.g. art shows, music, social gatherings)		41.2%	328
None of these		25.3%	201
Unsure		3.3%	26

QUESTION 12

Please provide any additional comments you may have regarding the local regulation of cannabis retail storefronts in Novato.

Answered	355
Skipped	441

Responses on pages 23-69

Question 4: What potential operational issues, if any, would concern you about a cannabis retail storefront operating in Novato? Please select all that apply.

Other - Pot is a gateway drug "

Other - A negative impact on your youths. Allowing public sales could lead to some kids assuming it's OK to consume if it's sold on their neighborhood. "

Other - Perception. My impression is that the vast majority of these retail operations draw an unsavory audience. The proliferation of these are also draws for teens who seem to be issued ""medical marijuana cards"" for any ""ailment"" they proclaim."

Other - Influence on kids. Having a storefront legitimizes pot while more and more research is showing the concerns with its effects on the

Other - Cannabis is an addictive substance and my main concern is the epidemic of adolescents using and experiencing permanent brain impacts, as well as mental health issues. "

Other - The strong smell is noxious. Isn't Novato a family friendly city? "

Other - Harmful Messaging to our youth"

Other - I lived in Eugene, Oregon and cannabis shops are part of what made a downtown of 157,000 people near useless. Too many homeless and students sitting on sidewalks to even get around."

Other - demographic it would attract"

Other - Address mail services, condition their payment for security; perhaps a district if you are going to allow more than one; consider income and taxes to city; what other businesses will be drawn to compliment business"

Other - Damage to youth sends wrong message Gateway drug"

Other - Novato City Council deliberately breaking ranks with all other jurisdictions in Marin to profit from the market opportunity. Further normalizing cannabis consumption. Youth getting access to harmful cannabis products directly and/or indirectly "

Other - Patrons coming from outside the area and posing safety concerns

Other - The police. Especially those that believe that pot is a killer ""drug"" and should not be allowed in the city. They could be problematic. It's NOT a drug IT'S A PLANT!!"

Other - Fire hazard. Just like cigarettes, blunts combined with decreased decision making ability will lead to negligently discarded embers outdoors during fire season."

Other - Proximity to locations where minors will be exposed to the criminal element that accompanies this type of business. "

Other - Giving or creating for Novato , traditionally an upstanding low crime town, a less than respectable image, reputation, and desired standing amongst all the other communities of Marin County. Allowing Retail sale of POT, weed, etc., will damage our Reputat"

Other - I'm anti marijuana as a long recovered addict and am not interested in making it more available locally

Other - Allowing storefront sales for nonmedical use sends a message to youth that cannabis is safe. It is not, especially for youth. The city should not contribute to already increasing cannabis addiction."

Other - Encouraging our youth and making seem normal. "

Other - No hobo encampments, no trash/littering"

Other - the exposure to youth in the city and the county

Other - do not want them in primary areas of downtown"

Other - Whether it will financially benefit the City.

Other - Exposure to youth "

Other - our youth"

Other - Location"

Other - A reduced perception of harm by youth who see adults purchasing and consuming intoxicating cannabis locally.

Other - NOT healthy for the residents of Novato"

Other - I think it will change the tone of our town"

Other - A terrible use of space that very few in the community benefit from. Like a real estate office, it just takes up public space. "

Other - Underage usage and purchase "

Other - Exposure to teens"

Other - My old neighborhood in the city started allowing cannabis places in town all it did was bring in crime and robberies. We already have ossus with randoms just wandering downtown. The city won't even consider bars but cannabis sure come on in "

Other - harm to kids"

Other - promotion of a dangerous chemical especially to youth"

Other - Increases risk of driving while intoxicated"

Other - Addiction risk, impaired driving and public safety threats, harm to families, kids & mental health"

Other - More teenage access for drugs. It is also a gateway drug "

Other - Ensuring kids can't access

Other - Maintain proper distance from schools. 600 feet is two football fields - not far enough "

Other - Health consequences

Other - youth access and impaired driving and unregulated medical advice

Other - Not too close to playgrounds or schools

Other - Access for our 7000 students in our schools "

Other - Increased youth exposure"

Other - The known effects of the new cannabis on children's brain development make this a dangerous drug, and Novato should not consider this."

Other - This encourages use by those under age 21

Other - I support adult use of cannabis, and am also concerned about youth misuse of cannabis. "

Other - Risk to children, increased use-rates in an already high use population, will affect kids across marin, there are already safer options for cannabis in Novato"

Other - The increase in availability of cannabis and vaping products to Novato youth."

Other - Impaired Driving - also non-operational city expenses with increased legal and medical issues. AND HARMS TO YOUTH."

Other - I've been in lots of places traveling with retail Cannabis stores. It's non-family friendly vibe. "

Other - physical presence increases access and increased risk to youth"

Other - Cultural shift and increase usage for teenagers and young adults.

Other - Normalizing the use of this and making it easy to buy is bad. "

Other - Teen access to cannabis"

Other - Visibility to kids, encouraging kids to use"

Other - Teen access"

Other - Very concerned about down the line impacts on the mental health of our citizens.

Other - Too Easy access to teenagers"

Other - Concerned for teen exposure & consumption "

Other - Studies show that when cannabis storefronts are located closer to young people, youth cannabis use tends to increase. (AJPH, October 2024)"

Other - makes cannabis more accessible to everyone including teens and young adults who are especially at risk vs developed brains"

Other - Access for middle and high school students "

Other - Normalizing, to our youth, dependence on mood altering substances."

Other - The optics of it says to our kids: "It's ok to smoke pot". Its a pass - if the adults are doing it...

Other - As a pediatrician I see the negative effects of cannabis on my teen patients.

Other - Very Bad for Young generation"

Other - Potential sales to minors"

Other - Effect on youth"

Other - impact on youth"

Other - normalization to youth"

Other - under-age access"

Other - Needs to have a classy professional appearance "

Other - Respiratory issues and any odor exacerbated "

Other - Increased cannabis access for youth"

Other - Influence on population to use or not to use."

Other - Don't encourage drug use"

Other - Effect on minors, that this is OK."

Other - Unlawful sales to juveniles "

Other - Most storefronts look terrible and would spoil the charm of our downtown "

Other - Underage buyers"

Other - Most cannabis stores these days are nice and can't be any worse than the corner liquor stores, one even previously on grant.

Other - Students using cannabis. Have you read about what has happened to some high schools in the bay area?"

Other - liter"

Other - littering"

Other - We just don't need this in Novato. Plain and simple.

Other - Tendancy to attract ""riff-raff"". "

Other - There have been repeated peer reviewed studies proving that cannabis can cause significant harm to youth including psychosis, depression, and anxiety. Data also shows that youth use increases with cannabis retail availability. "

Other - Increased ER visits, teen usage, physical and emotional harm to the family of users, intoxicated driving, can't believe the city would put profits before safety "

Other - Easy access for youth "

Other - Neon lights and tacky decor, I don't want a pimp looking store, keep it classy looking.."

Other - More opportunity for youth"

Other - Cannabis is an addictive substance like alcohol and should be included in the limit of alcohol permits"

Other - Abuse by minors"

Other - Young people having greater access

Other - It is 2026. It is legal in California. There should be no reason why we have to drive all the way to Sonoma county. It's not fair. I use it medically. "

Other - youth access, although the REAL problem is digital dealing via Snapchat!"

Other - Worried that flavored vapes at 60% to 80% THC concentrate is geared towards young people. Having a storefront makes this product easier for youth to buy. Prefer that if youth want to smoke weed, they can get by delivery.

Other - It will absolutely exacerbate mental health issues in adults & children & lead to all sorts of unintended consequences, including massive increase in traffic accidents, violent/gang-related crime, homelessness, other drug use, blackmarket in drugs, etc. "

Other - Contributing to people believing use of cannabis is safe and endorsed by government."

Other - Dangerous for people under age 30 with high potency oroducts that addict so many people. "

Other - Safety & health concerns "

Other - I don't like liquor stores either. Having stores selling products that harm children is not a good choice for the face of a community. It's not good for other businesses and it's not good for property values. Make them all delivery service. "

Other - Novato should follow modern science which clearly shows that today's high potency THC products present a danger to teen and young adult brains. What is not needed is greater access and normalization.

Other - Increased teenage use of cannabis/ marketing to underage

Other - These types of business belong in cities, not the burbs. They also attract a certain type of element that is not conducive to a nice, peaceful neighborhood town"

Other - Attracting people, young and old, with an addictive product that can cause serious mental health issues; public health and safety issues"

Other - Mental health to consumers. After watching my son at 23 have a psychotic break and had to be placed in mental facility, So sad. He such a hard worker..iron worker. This stuff has changed him. Breaks my heart. This is NOT old school weed. Gov do better.

Other - This experiment in California has failed.Why would you want to do this to your beautiful city? The money isn't worth it in the end. More intoxicants = less human flourishing. It's horrible for families and youth. Ask: who is pushing this and who benefits?"

Other - Character of the Town"

Other - Impact/influence on kids

Other - Increased use of cannabis"

Other - Normalization of cannabis is the issue. Cannabis is not harmless to vulnerable people, particularly youth & young adults. Protect the next generation and families."

Other - none

Other - The only concern I would have is allowing too many retail operations in our small town. Two would be my max."

Other - Affect on teens"

Other - Encourages use of a dangerous drug. I know I became addicted. They said it couldn't be done. I did it just about ruined my life."

Other - Kids will be allowed plus crime arrond

Other - Making it easier for kids to access marijuana"

Other - Youth are more likely to use when cannabis storefronts are around them. Marin's youth already have cannabis use 3x higher than the state average. Kaiser has done research to show the links to cannabis use doubling the risk of psychotic disorders.

Other - Youth consumption

Other - increase of drug addiction, increase of youth use and safety as a pedestrian and biker with more impaired drivers

Other - See comment below, the city should regulate marketing, product types (especially those attractive to kids or excessively potent), location in relation to residences and youth, equity in licensing, and tax"

Other - See comments below. Mostly increased risk of youth and harmful use."

Question 5: Where should they be allowed? Please select all that apply.

Other - Near the Police station

Other - anywhere is fine

Other - I feel they should be treated like any other occupant for commercial space. I'd rather have a dispensary than a liquor store.

Other - None of the above

Other - Suggest you do not allow at all

Other - Near the cvs and loop

Other - Any place is acceptable as it will be regulated so minors can not buy anyway

Other - Doesn't matter where it's located. Its just like any other business.

Other - Anywhere

Other - Mailorder only. No signage or foot traffic.

Other - Away from schools & colleges

Other - Not near a school

Question 8: The state requires a 600-foot buffer between a cannabis retail storefront & a “sensitive use” (defined as K-12 schools, day care centers & youth community centers), unless the distance is changed by the City. Should the City increase, decrease or leave the distance the same as the state requirement?

Other - Set zoning standards that limit locations to select industrial areas.

Other - Ask yourself why the state would require this buffer. The buffer should be 600 ft from our city limits.

Other - Increase to 1200 feet

Other - Damage to youth sends wrong message Gateway drug

Other - There is no buffer zone between sensitive use and the ability to purchase alcohol and tobacco.

Other - 60,000 ft buffer

Other - The Township/city of Novato should NOT permit any CANNABIS RETAIL STOREFRONTS to Operate IN THIS CITY, PERIOD..But if Novato does permit them to exist here , the distance should be greatly increased above and beyond that of the State's requirement.

Other - The city should apply common sense and stop bowing to a small minority.

Other - No cannabis outlets ANYWHERE

Other - should not be allowed in Novato

Other - 1-2 miles (10,000+ ft)

Other - No cannabis in Novato

Other - Do not allow

Other - They should not be allowed at all.

Other - Treat it the same as a liquor store

Other - Don't allow a cannabis retailer anywhere in Novato

Other - Should not allow storefronts! We don't need the taxes ao

Other - Should not allow cannabis retail at all to prevent additional harms to Marin youth who are already 3.6x higher users over the rest of California youth.

Other - It shouldn't be allowed in Novato. But 600 feet is completely inadequate as a state requirement.

Other - we should just NOT have it! not good for a family town

Other - Prohibit all stores in Novato

Other - Far away from children/teen access as possible!!

Other - I am strongly opposing any storefront!

Other - none

Other - IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED

Other - No distance is safe, especially with teenagers zipping around on ebikes.

Other - Don't allow these stores. Period.

Other - No storefront. Sonoma County has plenty

Other - Don't have a retail store in the first place

Other - Do not allow cannabis in Novato

Other - Again, doesn't matter. Just like any other business...

Other - need to hear ramifications before deciding

Other - That would do nothing, the problem is the individuals who provide access to the THC, not the brick and mortar store

Other - Keep them out of the city.

Other - Don't allow them

Other - It should be no where near where our children walk or go to school. They have bikes and e-bikes and can travel. It should not exist in the first place, but it must be HARD to find if it does exist.

Other - DO NOT allow in Novato! We do NOT need nor want this type of store in town

Other - Should not allow at any distance

Other - Make it the same as what alcohol retail establishments are

Other - Eliminate all together. Protect our youth and society. Look at the bigger picture..is it worth it in the end.

Other - Should never near any of those schools for at least a mile away

Other - No drugs allowed non business cannabis

Other - Yes, a buffer zone is needed, including around parks and youth centered businesses. Novato is a family oriented town. We don't need more impaired drivers. Look at the DUI rate in Marin. #1 crime prosecuted in the county. Drug impaired driving is problem

Question 9: Should the City maintain the state's current list of "sensitive uses" or add additional sensitive uses? Please select all that apply.

Other - No idea what this question is asking

Other – don't understand the question

Other - Damage to youth sends wrong message Gateway drug

Other - Not sure what those uses are

Other - This is a terrible question w/o reference to the definitions of "sensitive uses"

Other - The buffers are ridiculous

Other - no opinion on this

Other - No cannabis outlets ANYWHERE

Other - No cannabis in Novato

Other – Don't know

Other - Not sure

Other - not sure all the city's sensitive uses

Other - Add playgrounds

Other - Should not allow.

Other - The city should not allow cannabis retail given 11 delivery services already to Novato residents, so that harms to youth are mitigated

Other - IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED

Other - my house

Other - Don't allow these stores. Period.

Other - No use per proven health risks.

Other - need more info

Other - Outlaw in Marin County

Other - Unsure of the question

Other - Provide recovery programs for youth who are cannabis and nicotine addicted

Other - Keep them out of the city.

Other - Don't allow them

Other - Don't understand question

Other - I do not know what this refers to

Other - This question is not posed clearly for the layman. What do you mean by 'sensitive uses' and in what form are you asking to add locations/uses?

Other - I am unclear on what this means

Other - Nowhere in our town

Other - Retail cannabis expansion has delivered the opposite of its promises: rising youth use, retail shops concentrated in poor neighborhoods, and an illicit market that's crushing legal businesses.

Other - All medical use should be guaranteed. Ergo landlords should not be able to ban their tenants from use. Medical users should likewise be allowed to choose their optimal route of use (smoking, edibles, etc) without input from government, landlords, etc.

Other - Non drugs business

Question 12: Please provide any additional comments you may have regarding the local regulation of cannabis retail storefronts in Novato.

Pot sales should not be allowed in Novato no matter what they say it will do for the city. It should be illegal all over the state

Please support this struggling industry.

Since cannabis is legal and used for many medicinal reasons, I think it should be available to buy locally, but under strictly regulated circumstances. The use of it should be in the purchasers homes or other private places. There should be age restrictions on purchase, just like with alcohol.

I am fully against cannabis retail storefronts in Novato. I think the minimal benefits (much of which I believe are exaggerated) are severely outweighed by the damage to mental health, the high rate of addiction and overall productivity of those that partake. Novato is a family friendly town, should the council want to move Novato in the direction of cities like Ukiah and Santa Rosa (go visit these downtowns) they should approve cannabis storefronts in order to expedite the decline of struggling retail areas... like Grant Ave.. and many other strip malls in town.

Please take the moral high ground and deny access. We need more restaurants and shops, not dispensaries. There is not even a Kaiser pharmacy in Novato anymore. Families who need urgent medications from Kaiser need to go to San Rafael. Let people get their cannabis in San Rafael too.

I think this will be a great addition to Novato.

This would be upsetting. We moved to Novato because we thought it was family friendly. This and other reasons are making us consider moving.

We are a community and this will bring unnecessary out of towners, and potentially crime, to this city. As a member of the law enforcement community, and with small children. We don't need this in our city.

Let's focus on housing and abandoned properties slated for development that have been sitting for years!

As a member of the law enforcement community, I implore you not to consider this. Focus on housing, properties abandoned, businesses, etc.

This substance frequently leads to psychosis and bipolarity. This substance also leads to apathy and acceptance of mediocrity and low productivity. This substance leads to use of other drugs. This substance leads to driving under the influence. This substance is bad for the health of our people. This substance is harmful to the male reproductive system and lowers testosterone levels.

It's time

It should be regulated not unlike that of a liquor license.

I suggest talking to folks in Eugene govt and perhaps SF - city council/city manager to get their input.

very much strongly opposed to any cannabis retailers in novato. we have long marketed ourselves as a family oriented community and this undermines that. further, we are trying to encourage a more family-friendly environment to attract more people to visit. this jeopardizes that goal by bringing an element to this community that is in direct conflict to our goals. despite having voted for increased buffers in the survey, that was out of a need to select an answer rather than being accepting of any cannabis retail in this community.

Talk to other cities about trends and impacts

Novato should really consider having one.

I do not support adding a cannabis storefront in Novato at this time. While cannabis is legal in California, our community is already dealing with substance use challenges, including both recreational and non-recreational drugs. Expanding retail access risks further normalizing drug use in a town that has worked hard to maintain a safe, family-oriented environment.

Retail storefronts increase visibility and perceived social acceptance, particularly among youth. Research shows that when young people perceive lower risk and greater social approval, use tends to increase. Given that Novato has many families and schools, we should be especially cautious about introducing additional exposure.

There are also concerns about impaired driving, enforcement burdens, and whether potential tax revenue would meaningfully outweigh possible social and public health costs. For these reasons, I do not believe a cannabis retail storefront aligns with the long-term character and well-being of our community.

It will bring great tax revenue to our city

How is this even a discussion in 2026? I thought Novato was a family town supporting family and kids? Shame on you you. So irresponsible Novato. Desperate for funds after decades of mismanagement? Pot = Damage to youth..sends wrong message.. Gateway drug. Have you been following the recent data? Apparently not. You can't be serious. Do your research. You people who support or indifferent are idiots and complicit in the dumbing down of your City and poisoning our youth. Utter loonacy. And the only ones profiting are unregulated illegal operators. Wake up!

I live in Marin, and I am a parent and a UCSF researcher studying substance use. Novato is not an island; we are all impacted in Marin by what Novato does. Novato should be a reliable responsible partner with all the other jurisdictions in Marin County and not break ranks by attempting to exploit a market opportunity created because all other jurisdictions in Marin voted to not allow recreational storefront cannabis businesses. In response to the question Do you agree or disagree that the City should limit (cap) the number of cannabis storefront retail permits issued? I answered "No opinion" because I do not support any licenses being issued. Cannabis is addictive and can cause psychosis in young people. There are very few proven medical benefits from consuming cannabis. Cannabis has been shown to be a harmful substance to smoke (as bad as cigarettes), vape, and ingest. THC vapes addict kids who get them through shoulder tapping. THC gummies poison children. Cannabis production causes substantial environmental damage, and post consumption cannabis product waste is toxic. Cannabis testing has largely been a failure (see the LA Times investigation). Cannabis industry lobbyists do not work for the public's interest. I think the City of Novato should not become addicted to cannabis sales tax revenue and community benefit payments. The economic and social costs of having cannabis retailers in Novato will far outweigh the revenue.

Cannabis stores could occupy some of our many vacant stores in downtown Novato and generate tax revenue.

There should be the same regulation on cannabis retail stores, as there is for Bars and other retail stores. This matter is not going away nor should it.

Cannabis is less addictive and less dangerous than alcohol and it's time to treat it that way.

Downtown Novato is struggling to maintain retail businesses. Cannabis stores may serve as an anchor. It would help to have more data about existing Cannabis storefront retail and how it has impacted nearby communities like Santa Rosa.

The city needs data not opinion.

Novato could use the revenue of this type of business. It's time to enter the 21st century. Crime will not go up, it will more than likely go down

We voted overwhelmingly to allow for retail sales. Please stop over regulating this industry and let them freely join the capitalist system

Why should I have to drive to another COUNTY, - (for God's Sakes), just to purchase some Cannabis ? It is a disgrace that we do not yet have a retail Cannabis store in our city. Novato, and Marin in general , is missing out on a lot of revenue by not allowing a retail Cannabis Store, - thus far.

I don't believe Novato needs ANY cannabis businesses here. This is off topic, but may have a connection to the sleazy looking store front massage businesses in Novato. Please do your due diligence on the numerous massage businesses in our town.

Dispensaries and cannabis stores rapidly degrade the area around them. They bring in the lowest of individuals from all the surrounding areas, ushering in new wide-spread drug use, foul odors throughout the day, and a lack of protection to children. Opening one in Novato would be a farewell to the peaceful, warm, and safe town that we know.

Use of cannabis products help common ailments of the elderly and travelling to other cities is problematic for many of us. Would be beneficial to have one in town

It is a mistake to allow this type of business in Novato. It sends the wrong message to our young people. Weed is dangerous and should be discouraged.

Pathetic that the city council can't find other ways of generating funding without creating health and safety concessions. Recreational use and allowing cannabis distribution in our city is a sell out and does nothing to improve our community. You are mindless fools and should be ashamed of yourselves for even proposing this.

I shop at Mercy Wellness in Cotati.

It is very well run. I always feel safe in the parking lot and inside the shop. As long as the security is in place I feel the shops should be allowed.

I believe that the shops should be in small strip malls or areas where tobacco shops are now in business.

I would feel better about giving my cannabis sales tax money to Novato than Cotati!!

There is nothing wrong with allowing cannabis shops in Novato.

Totally against!!! We have too many gang violence and that will increase our crime

I've lived in Sonoma county previously and watched them completely mismanage the cannabis program. Look into what they have done. You might think you'll make a profit from this but if you do your research and even just look at Sonoma county you'll realize it's not profitable. Sonoma county also couldn't enforce the many complaints and violations. Where is your plan for enforcement? How will you manage the events and associated liability such as impaired driving etc? I have young children at home and live near the town. Where is the buffer from residences? 1,000 ft is not enough. If you put this next to my home and children, as well as other families, are you saying you're ok with community members who are opposed having to suffer health effects from this such as breathing issues etc? Are you prepared for lawsuits from residents whose property values are affected by this or whose families suffer health effects as a result? In Rohnert park several of these grow cannabis in store despite it not being allowed (No enforcement). There are plenty of other places people can go to get cannabis outside of novato.

Economic activity benefits the City and residents of Novato. A regulated retail cannabis storefront would generate local tax revenue, create jobs, and keep dollars in our community instead of pushing residents to neighboring cities or unregulated sources. Cannabis use is already a reality across society. The question before us isn't whether it exists, but whether Novato chooses a controlled, legal framework—or leaves access to the unregulated market. A licensed retailer comes with strict rules: age verification, security requirements, packaging standards, and enforcement mechanisms. That's exactly how you create guardrails that reduce illegal sales and help keep cannabis out of the hands of children.

A family-friendly community and regulated cannabis retail are not mutually exclusive. Cities across California have shown these can coexist when sensible regulations are in place. This issue requires a decision grounded in public safety, responsible governance, and practical outcomes, not fear, ignorance or the denial of situational reality.

Cannabis is consumed by most seniors. Novato and Marin have a high population of seniors and many either have it delivered or have to go to Sonoma County or SF, which is a loss of tax revenue to Novato. This is safe and nothing to be afraid of.

The research has increased in clarity over recent years with regard to the negative cardiovascular and neurological effects of modern cannabis (including withdraw in approx. half of frequent users). Modern cannabis is not the darling member of the drug family you have been led to believe. Keep in mind the strains and concentrations of items sold in this store will be far beyond what people grew up with decades ago. The mere consideration of a cannabis store demonstrates how behind the times the city of Novato is and how misguided they are with priorities needed in our city. Don't take my word for it, do your own research.

No weed in Novato. It's a magnet for crime and losers.

Marin County has not allowed cannabis retail up to this point, and yet here is Novato playing dumping ground just like we do with housing that doesn't get approved elsewhere in the county. We're dealing with enough traffic in this town that we're not conditioned for, and surely a cannabis storefront would bring it in to one of our many messy parking lots if it were allowed in any sort of commercial shopping center.

Do not allow cannabis storefronts in Novato.

Really, I'm not comfortable having any Cannabis Retail Storefronts located in the Novato Township/City Limits, period! It will give OUR TOWN A "BLACK EYE" AS FAR AS PUBLIC IMAGE OR REPUTATION IS CONCERNED, IN THE COUNTY OF MARIN, ULTIMATELY.

The common misconception is that crime rises where there are cannabis storefronts. This is a police department talking point but the statistics do not back up this claim. The most common crime is burglary which occurs at night when the business is closed. This type of crime is given media attention because of the type of business but commercial burglaries are common in many cities. The voters of California have made cannabis legal and all of us in Novato can get cannabis delivered but delivery makes it much more expensive. For convenience, residents of Novato should be able to buy cannabis like they buy alcohol or cigarettes.

STRONGLY STRONGLY AGAINST THIS

If Novato takes a position of being an "anti smoking" community, why would they even think about promoting such a conflicting activity. I feel one position or the other must be maintained. There are too many mixed signals for the younger people. Vacating the anti smoking ordinance would be appropriate in the event retail marijuana sales becomes a reality here.

Our city needs the tax revenues that is now being given to other cities and counties.

I don't personally use cannabis products, but I believe a limited number of well-regulated storefronts would be reasonable. State law has already removed the criminality around cannabis, and outright bans only push sales back into the illegal market. That doesn't make communities safer. It also forces people, especially those who rely on cannabis for medical reasons to travel farther, which increases traffic and inconvenience. Allowing a small number of local dispensaries strikes me as a balanced approach.

Registering cannabis in Novato will increase the depression, job seeking motivation, and lack of societal integration of the under 30 population

Nonmedical cannabis users already have options to access the drug through delivery services. The city should be doing everything possible to discourage cannabis use. Allowing nonmedical retail sale normalizes use of a substance that is easily abused by youth. The city needs to prioritize public health over commercial profits.

Run the city as effective as possible. Stop trying to push new boundaries and take care of our streets, and public safety. The city does not need this kind of retail, it does not enhance our quality of life and is a desperate revenue source that you should be ashamed of. Have a back bone when negotiating your labor agreements and do not commit resource and benefits that the city cannot afford! Run it like business, and respect taxpayer dollars.

Strongly in support of this new type of business in Novato.

Consumption of cannabis is legal, although heavily regulated. Any retail cannabis should be allowed and regulated. We allow liquor stores, but we regulate them and this is no different.

You need to provide more information on security. What steps will be taken.
Parking is always a problem where ever you go in novato.

Allowing this to happen will allow tax revenue to be realized in Novato, rather than all of the communities in Sonoma County that get all of the Marin business right now.

Reinforce medical usage of cannabis for chronic disease and sleep. All products must be allowed by state rules as in other towns of California.

I hope the Novato City staff are aware that there are about a dozen cannabis retail storefronts in Sonoma County. My wife and I (we are 69 and 71 years old) travel to Sonoma County twice a month to buy cannabis. Nothing bad has happened in Sonoma County because of the cannabis stores. Please stop acting in a vacuum.

I drive to Cotati currently for cannabis purchases, workshops, and consultations. I strongly support Novato approving this, and it will generate additional tax revenue for our community.

Should be treated similar to any alcohol sales/consumption guidelines.

I have been in a few cannabis establishments and have always been surprised how nice they are. Nevada, (Marin-Fairfax), Sonoma, Contra Costa & San Francisco.

I was particularly surprised at the consumption place I went to in San Francisco. We didn't know that we were going to a consumption/lounge place. We were going to hear a musician play. 🍷 it was really nice.

I would think the revenue would be good for Novato. Cannabis isn't a problem for responsible adults.

While I understand the potential for tax revenue, the hidden costs of cannabis storefronts—specifically regarding crime—outweigh the benefits. Given the current trend of 'smash-and-grab' incidents and retail theft in our area, adding dispensaries puts a bullseye on our shopping districts. I am concerned that the increased need for police presence and the potential for spillover crime into neighboring shops will diminish the quality of life for everyone. We should be focusing on securing our existing businesses, not introducing new risks.

I'm excited for a new place to pop up in Marin

Cannabis vendors integrated into city centers have only proven to enhance the areas they are in. There are always going to be NIMBYists, for anything, but a large majority of people use cannabis in one form or another; it's a proven therapy; it brings people together, which Novato desperately needs. Agreed that there needs to be a strategy to opening this up, making sure it's safe, responsible and lucrative; and done well. Yay cannabis!

Novato NEEDS a brick & mortar pot store!!!

Every time I drive up to Petaluma to purchase weed, I wonder why Novato is so out of date in its limiting of a cannabis storefront. Why not get money from that rather than from allowing the mega gas station at Costco to be built?

People should not be allowed to loiter outside meaning they're either coming or going but they're not sitting on a bench out in front they're not hanging out and gathering there otherwise we're gonna have a big freaking homeless issue again.

Take a cue from the pot shop by the 711 in Santa Venetia. Driving by there I have never seen anybody there hanging out in the front making a community blight.

If we can have bars - we can have cannabis.

I strongly believe that we need to bring this money that is currently being spent in other counties (Sonoma and SF mostly) to Novato. Cannabis is a big business and the business I support in other counties are wonderful. They do not attract "riff raff" but bring business to our town and surrounding businesses.

While I think there are more appropriate places for them than others in the town, I do not believe adding Cannabis Retail location to beNovato will detrimental in any way. I would love to spend this money right here in my hometown.

I am an occasional recreational cannabis user. I do not care for delivery dispensaries, now the only way to obtain cannabis in Marin, because I don't want people coming to my house. So currently, I have to drive to Cotati, about 25 minutes away. I fully support a dispensary in or near downtown Novato. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this topic.

It's hard to answer these questions because I don't think there should be any retail storefronts in Novato or anywhere in Marin. The exposure to youth and the dangers that cannabis use has on the developing brain including increase risk of bipolar disorder and/or psychosis should be reason enough to not have storefronts. More and more research is coming out showing that there isn't any medical benefit for anyone using cannabis with THC higher than 10% and we know most of the products sold at storefronts are higher than that. Very dangerous and not necessary. Please don't do this. I grew up in Novato, attended public schools, and I just feel this would be so bad for the community.

With delivery options available, the need for retail stores is outdated.

Though the community benefits idea is attractive, the enormous taxes already placed on cannabis convinces me that this is too much to expect the customer to pay. We don't do it for restaurants or food stores, etc.; why add this burden to another equally legal commodity?

We'd hoped this issue was dealt with in the past. We DO NOT need any cannabis stores in Novato. Cannabis is a step closer to stronger drugs. Our children are most important to us. If a cannabis store is in Novato, it is certain children will have easier access to cannabis and its use.

I strongly oppose allowing this in Novato. If we need tax revenue let's do something that will bring a positive aspect to our community. I understand people like and may want this but this does not serve to increase a family environment in Novato. Please do not allow this in Novato.

My largest concern is not having them along Grant Ave -- in the core of downtown.

Generates tax revenue.

Allows consumers freedom of choice, convenience

I strongly feel like there should be an option for in-person cannabis sales in Novato. My suggestion would be to check with local government in Sonoma Co. to see what they have learned about storefronts and how we can adapt our program to benefit from their experiences. There should be a requirement for the doors/storefronts to be secured with rollong gates during closed hours and they should be required to maintain a certain level of security surveillance and alarms.

I don't use marijuana in any form but the medicinal uses are valid. By not allowing these kinds of businesses in Novato, you are forcing residents to utilize businesses in other cities and counties when those tax dollars could be going back into the community.

A FAMILY ORIENTED TOWN DOESNT NEED THIS YOU CAN SEE OTHER CITIES HAVENT BENEFIT OF THIS TYPE OF BUSINESS EXAMPLE OAKLAND MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT BREAKINS AT CANNABIS STORES

It is tragic that in Marin, where there was over 65% support for decriminalizing marijuana, that there are still so few brick and mortar stores (and not a single one in Novato!?!). It is akin to the populace saying that the marijuana laws are bad, but the elected officials saying that the people don't know what they want... so we will prevent people from purchasing at a storefront. Either it is legal, similar to alcohol sales or it is not. There was even a problem with deliveries out of a house in San Marin. Where there wouldn't be any walk up sales, just deliveries. So Novato has been moving slowly to implement meaningful access to cannabis for which its citizens voted.

Legal Cannibis is here to stay and having a retail outlet in Novato would be good for the community

People from outside Novato will be coming here to buy. This community is a family community, not a community looking to party. Look at how bars have been closing. There is no reason to let this in our community. It will have zero positive impact and only invite negative activities.

Emerging science shows that no level of cannabis use is good for brain health. This would be a detrimental addition to our downtown offerings. Thank you.

Please do not move forward with supporting this sort of business in our community.

I don't see how a cannabis store would add to or help our community grow. There are so many other stores or restaurants that could be allowed in the city that the community would support.

Please do not allow these drug stores in our city. It makes kids hope they can go one day and regulates everyone to the idea that marijuana is ok. It is a gateway drug. Stop it before it starts!

I am strongly opposed to having a storefront in Novato. My biggest concern is for young adults who have not yet developed their brains enough to not be permanently impacted by using cannabis. Please review the link included.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychiatry/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2025.1644105/full>

Cannabis is a drug. Having a retail center invites increased drug use among all citizens and it sends the message to children that it's okay to use. Having a "drug" dealer in Novato degrades the quality of living and lowers property values.

No cannabis in Novato

There is absolutely no need for a cannabis retail storefront in Novato - we are family-focused with many teens and the last thing we want is to have our kids and families exposed to this. There are plenty of cannabis storefronts in SF and Sonoma County - leave Novato alone!

Novato work on getting true businesses and not more smoke shops or retail front cannabis clubs. We have zero food here except for fast food. Our downtown is beginning to look like a deserted shanty town we cannot do any better than a cannabis club?

There is no need for cannabis retail or otherwise in Novato. The surrounding areas have plenty of retailers to satisfy the demographic consumption. I believe those of us that reside in Novato appreciate being able to walk downtown and in most areas of Novato without the stink of marijuana nor the addictive aberrations that come along with such consumption.

The City of Novato has a golden opportunity to capture this business. Currently, thousands of consumers drive from Marin, right through Novato, and on to Petaluma, Cotati, or Sebastopol to get their cannabis products. We have an opportunity to capture all of that business here and receive community benefits. We should allow more than one license to foster competition. We should not place additional restrictions on business locations because finding a suitable location with regards to zoning, set backs, and landlords/lenders that permit cannabis businesses will be the largest impediment to opening a shop. Lets no let another opportunity pass us by.

To my knowledge there are no storefront cannabis retail stores in Marin. Delivery only, which is a impact to our carbon footprint. It should be considered that this would be the first in Marin which will attract county residents to our town, where they might do other shopping.

Keep cannabis retail stores out of Novato.

Would love to see this downtown, but ultimately, it should be allowed wherever public sales of alcohol and/or tobacco are allowed. It is a controlled substance in a similar way, and as such, should get the same treatment. Wherever this goes, it will help revitalize the area. It's a high traffic retailer that will greatly benefit surrounding businesses.

Communities with cannabis stores have increased public usage and increased drug related dui offenses. We should not support or promote drug use in Novato. Recent studies show cannabis has long term detrimental effects. We do not have a community need for this type of store. We should be promoting businesses that encourage healthy activities. Do not approve this use in Novato.

Allowing a cannabis store in Novato is a terrible idea. We do not need to give easier access to anyone with the desire to consume. It is a nuisance and I am thoroughly disgusted that Novato is considering this plan. We can't clean up the homeless population, and we are considering allowing drug use and sale in town? Despicable.

The recreational use of any mind altering substance is a practice that I believe we should be discouraging. Society in general does not benefit by enabling the use of substances which alter the judgment of the user.

A great source of tax dollars for the city/community.

We're losing out on a bunch of sales tax

As a 20 year resident of Novato I've waited for something, anything to breathe life into Downtown. Old school building owners who won't allow things like a fryer or hard liquor are forcing residents who want to give their tax and entertainment dollars to Novato out of the area. Give Novato the opportunity to embrace the future and open its arms wide open to new possibilities instead of staying mired in the past.

If we can have wine bar after wine bar after brewery after brewery in Novato, put in a dispensary so we can atleast get more income.

There is only 1 cannabis store in Marin and that is in Fairfax.

Novato adding a cannabis store can bring in soooooo much revenue for the city and cannabis users don't have to travel over an hour to get cannabis!

Also pleeeeeeease!

If you are hoping for tax revenue, the negatives of having these store fronts in our town far outweigh any revenue. Cannabis is a gateway drug and the harder it is for first citizens to get hold of it, the better it is for the health of our community.

I grew up in the San Geronimo Valley where pot was the gateway drug to other drugs. I saw lives ruined, fellow students walking around like zombies, driving while stoned and ruining the air for others. Do you see Pot businesses in Kentfield or Ross?

I think of cannabis similarly to alcohol - as long as it's responsibly approached, retail businesses can provide great economic and community benefit. The time is past to treat cannabis as an illicit substance. Providing a welcoming economic environment for cannabis businesses can create an opportunity for small business development in Novato as well as an atmosphere of diversity and creativity.

No

Don't get this started please

The lounge idea sounds fun though driving from there is somewhat concerning. That said, I feel that way about alcohol as well. I think of cannabis as a better option than alcohol.

I strongly encourage Novato to embrace cannabis dispensaries. If you have ever been to a dispensary then you would know how they conduct business and what a great addition to the community they are. If we allow liquor stores then we should allow dispensaries. I welcome the tax money it will bring to the town.

Are the estimated sales taxes worth it? I am not against consumption - and don't want to be a hypocrite. However, location matters.

Numerous deleterious health consequences are associated with marijuana's short- and long-term use, including the possibility of becoming addicted. Frequent marijuana use can seriously affect short-term memory. It can impair cognitive ability (why do you think people call it dope?) and lead to long-lasting depression or anxiety. While many people smoke marijuana to relax, it can have the opposite effect on frequent users. And smoking anything, whether it's tobacco or marijuana, can seriously damage your lung tissue.

Novato over 21 have no problem accessing cannabis. The risks outweigh the benefits. Please see latest Kaiser study (February 2026) about increased psychosis, bipolar, anxiety and depressive disorders in youth.

Please make it happen. I'm tired of having to drive up to Sonoma County for cannabis and would rather give/pay my taxes to my home County.

Please allow some retail storefronts for cannabis in Novato. There is only one in the county. It will bring lots of business and tax money to our city.

Novato can remain proudly family-friendly while allowing a regulated cannabis retailer. This is not a dichotomous choice. Regulations and guideline have already been put into place to address traffic, safety, minors, etc... since 2016. The propagation of outdated stigmas or fear-based narratives have no place in this discussion. This should be a discussion of how to we make cannabis stores work in our community. Categorically denying their existence in Novato is ignorant and short sighted. A licensed store supports consumer choice, keeps local dollars in Novato, and helps our economy without compromising community values.

No cannabis in Novato!

San Rafael isn't that far away to go buy it there.

And drop the pitching talk about the sales tax/financial benefits—look at the long term & future results to our wonderful city and young people,

This is a great opportunity to bring more income to Novato. People are already driving to Sonoma County and supporting those communities. Let's give consumers the choice and allow Novato to profit.

Novato has had this opportunity before and shut it down, let's continue to build our city and move forward instead of always saying no.

Dispensaries have been around for decades; this is not a new business. Alcohol has no medicinal value, yet we have multiple liquor stores. Many people use cannabis to manage nausea from chemotherapy, pain, sleep issues, and anxiety. Being able to ask someone questions to help determine the best product for their need is a valuable resource. This is a service that can be a valuable asset to our economy.

Prefer to personally shop locally instead of having it delivered.

Needed for pain. Thank you.

I am in support of cannabis items being sold in Novato.

I think this would be a fantastic boon to our city. It would bring in more jobs and taxes that benefit us. Also wouldn't have to drive all the way to Santa Rosa or San Francisco to buy, which would be convenient. Fully support!

Some of my responses are just gut feelings as I have not studied the issue enough to have a firm opinion other than I see no reason to limit sales here.

as a person with a disability cannabis can be a helpful tool for pain management, spasticity, tremors. It can allow patients being treated with chemotherapy improvement in appetite which improves their health and recovery. I realize a lot of Novato's population still sees cannabis as a gateway drug, but if you read the studies you will learn this isn't completely true. People will not be loitering around all the time outside. Most cannabis users just want to get what they need and go home. Not buying from dealers on the street can save lives due to the fentanyl issues in our country. People in this town would be surprised by the "types" of people who use cannabis, it is not just people living on the street, they are Doctors and lawyers, business owners and retail workers. The other important thing, the city will not be losing the precious tax dollars that many Novato residents contribute to Sonoma County via their dispensary locations.

Cannabis is a highly effective medicine for many ailments. It is far less harmful than alcohol. Decreasing stigma, increasing education and increasing access to our community is important.

Please keep cannabis storefronts out of Novato.

You allow massive multi-tenant structures in a suburban community, refuse the permits of GOOD restaurants, and now want to allow weed stores?? Elected officials, your days are numbered.

I think it's a shame we can't go to an actual store in Novato instead of going to another county--would some of their taxes go to the city?

We do not need this in Novato. Put our time and money toward businesses that add vibrancy to our community.

No amount of revenue coming into the city would compensate for the very real human cost to families who experience cannabis-induced psychosis, bipolar disorder, depression or anxiety in a young person. Adults already have access to cannabis through local delivery services. There is no compelling reason to expand that access through storefront sales. Just this week, new research from Kaiser Permanente — involving nearly half a million adolescents — found that cannabis use during adolescence is associated with a doubling of the risk of psychotic and bipolar disorders, along with increased rates of anxiety and depression. This study adds to a growing body of scientific evidence documenting serious mental health risks.

At the same time, investigations by The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, and many other news organizations have reported on mounting concerns about the health effects of today's high-potency marijuana. These reports describe links to cardiac complications, lung injury, gastrointestinal problems, addiction, and severe mental health outcomes. Modern cannabis — FAR MORE POTENT than in previous decades — is not the harmless product it was once portrayed to be.

Research also shows that increased cannabis availability, particularly through proximity to brick-and-mortar retail stores, leads to higher rates of youth use. When retail outlets become part of the neighborhood landscape, normalization and access increase — and young people are affected.

For similar public health reasons, Marin County once led the nation in restricting the sale of flavored vape products. At that time, we recognized that protecting young people must come before retail expansion and tax revenue.

Expanding storefront cannabis sales in Novato would move us in the opposite direction of emerging science and growing public awareness. Public policy should reflect the best available evidence and prioritize community health — especially the well-being of our children.

Let's protect our youth and keep things the way they are with delivery-only and no storefronts, just like the rest of Marin.

We should not poison our young people just for the taxes. That is crazy,

It's 2026, adults should be able to purchase cannabis if they want to. Don't discriminate against a dispensary- they're no different than any other business. It is known that alcohol is so much worse for the body and society and there are no surveys like this for a liquor store or bar. Get with the times Novato and stop making it so difficult to bring businesses to the town.

I think this is a bad idea and other Marin communities have agreed with this opinion. Delivery only is just fine and works with adult consumers.

I have so far been proud of Novato for maintaining a wholesome small town environment. Allowing cannabis retail storefronts will likely increase loitering and public consumption and traffic. Please city council, find some other way to bring in revenue that is in keeping with the character of this town - peaceful, safe, quiet, and family friendly.

Time to generate some tax revenue for the city.

This survey is significantly flawed, given the business focus of the questions. The answers assume everyone taking the survey supports dispensaries in Novato, without answer options against if you are not in support of cannabis. Also, Novato does not have a fence around it, so this will affect other communities, not only Novato residents. There are many ways for Novato residents to get cannabis in Novato, including many delivery services. To date, all other Marin jurisdictions have focused on the human and health concerns and voted against adding cannabis storefronts, and have supported delivery and only Fairfax' medical dispensary.

While cannabis is legal for adults, commercial retail expansion – especially of high-potency THC products – raises serious public health concerns for youth::

- Today's products, including flavored cannabis vapes, are far more potent and designed to be appealing to youth. THC can exceed 95% (versus 6% 20 years ago.)
- According to the California Healthy Kids Survey, Marin County 11th graders use cannabis at 3.6 times higher than the state average.
- A new study by Kaiser links teen cannabis use to doubled risk of psychotic and bipolar disorders, even after accounting for prior mental health conditions. Depression and anxiety also increased in adolescents. (JAMA, February 2026)
- Studies show that when cannabis storefronts are located closer to young people, youth cannabis use tends to increase. (AJPH, October 2024)

Personally, I am a tireless advocate against youth harms from today's high potency cannabis; my forever 18 year old son Trevor's death was tied to his diagnosed cannabis use disorder. Please do not consider adding cannabis retail storefronts in Novato, for the well-being of our youth.

I am opposed to another cannabis dispensary opening in Novato because I believe it could further contribute to the growing mental health challenges we are already facing in our community. While marijuana is legal, research has shown that frequent or high-potency THC use can worsen anxiety, depression, and in some cases increase the risk of psychosis — especially among young people. At a time when mental health resources are stretched thin, I question whether expanding access is the right direction. Additionally, do we really need another dispensary in Novato when services like “Nice Guys” already deliver THC products directly to residents throughout Marin? Increasing storefronts may normalize and expand use rather than addressing the root issues affecting our community.

Please finally allow this!! Would be so cool to not have to go to other cities to shop.

Don't take my "strongly agree" on the Cap, Community Benefit, and Buffer questions as being in any way supportive of cannabis. Cannabis is federally illegal to possess, cultivate, distribute, or use for any purpose (yes, I know there are limited exceptions for research). It's already hard enough to go for a walk anywhere outdoors in Novato without encountering the smell of marijuana. Please don't make it worse. I know Novato needs tax income, but please...find alternatives to storefront Cannabis.

Please reconsider having ANY of these stores in Novato.

I feel the negative impact of opening a cannabis store front outweighs any benefits to Novato and its residents. Cannabis is readily available via delivery and this helps reduce youth exposure. Having a storefront advertises and normalizes availability. Marin has a very high rate of underage substance use and we all need to do everything we can to create barriers. Please reconsider this idea and lets all protect our young people.

There are numerous unattractive opportunities to indulge in cannabis as it is. Why tempt and add to this problem? Novato is a family town. Retail cannabis destroys this character.

Please do not open any form of cannabis retail storefront in Novato. Our teenagers are already surrounded by the substance. Please don't leverage financial or economic gain at the expense of our young people.

It seems that these storefronts for Cannabis experience crime in cities that have them. Also, loitering can occur. Hours of operation if a storefront set up is allowed in downtown Novato should be carefully considered as limited open hours may help to prevent both of these issues. Positioning a storefront like this in a bigger setting like Vintage Oaks might be better rather than in a smaller downtown area. There's ample parking there.

I have a teenager who spends time in Novato with friends, and am concerned about exposure to cannabis

Kids in Novato will be affected. We shouldn't encourage or normalize cannabis in our town.

I really dislike cannabis.

My son got addicted to cannabis which led him to mushrooms, all of which were easily purchased through storefronts in SF. We do not need to make these products easy for our teens to purchase.

Not an expert on the last items but making sure it's more medically aesthetic seems prudent (doctors office for patients over 21 using it for untreatable cancer pain for example seems beneficial)

Research says that the use of cannabis increases the possibility of mental health problems for human beings, so as a mother of two teenage boys, I totally opposed this kind of business in our city.

This exposes teens and children to easy access to cannabis in different forms, increasing the chance of addiction and many health issues both mental and physical. This puts our children at immense risk.

Studies show that when cannabis storefronts are located closer to young people, youth cannabis use tends to increase. (AJPH, October 2024)

A new study by Kaiser links teen cannabis use to doubled risk of psychotic and bipolar disorders, even after accounting for prior mental health conditions. Depression and anxiety also increased in adolescents. (JAMA, February 2026).

Today's products, including flavored cannabis vapes, are far more potent and designed to be appealing to youth. THC can exceed 95% (versus 6% 20 years ago.)

According to the California Healthy Kids Survey, Marin County 11th graders use cannabis at 3.6 times higher than the state average. (CalSCHLS)

Studies show that when cannabis storefronts are located closer to young people, youth cannabis use tends to increase. (AJPH, October 2024)

A new study by Kaiser links teen cannabis use to doubled risk of psychotic and bipolar disorders, even after accounting for prior mental health conditions. Depression and anxiety also increased in adolescents. (JAMA, February 2026).

cannabis is already easy to obtain and there are even delivery companies who will deliver. The idea of this being a money maker is not well thought out, the increased costs to the town for enforcement, security, crime and treatment will cost far more than revenues brought in. I suggest you not go down this route

No cannabis stores in Marin!!

The science has been coming in for some time (ask any ER doctor) -we seem to have overcorrected with legalization and I don't believe we need more pot stores in our communities. If an adult needs weed, and it's legal, stick with discreet home delivery. The way pot stores have been targeted for crime should be another red flag for any neighborhood where this is being proposed.

With or without a future robbery of a dispensary, we are foolish to allow storefront and billboard advertising, and normalization messaging, that reaches our children and youth: It is abdicating our responsibility to our communities as adults, parents, leaders and more.

My son has a psychotic break due to smoking marijuana (no other drugs). He is thankfully on the other side of this now but it took a toll on him and our family. We are a very strong family. he always had lots of support and connection from his parents. We had the resources to get him the help he needed. I often see kids on the street who seem to be struggling. I wonder if their families have the support/resources to get them and their kid the help they need. What do they do if they can get the support they need. We know smoking pot is NOT good for a developing young brain. Why even tempt the kids, why tell them through the presence of cannabis stores that cannabis is ok. Are we more focused on who benefits from this (business, town of Novato) vs the mental health of our kids? Not worth the risk. NO CANNABIS STORES

There are many delivery options. Youth cannabis use increases the risk of anxiety, depression, bipolar and psychotic disorders. When cannabis storefronts are located closer to young people, youth cannabis use tends to increase.

This is very bad idea for a beautiful city.

2 items above are not clear and are forced to "No opinion/don't care" should have another option to oppose

Please consider the effect on youth consumption. The risks to youth are greater than to older adults.

We currently use cannabis products that are delivered to our home for medicinal, mainly sleep, aid. Novato could benefit from the tax revenue instead of it going to other counties that provide the service.

Cannabis is a natural medicinal for many of us who wish to avoid pharmaceuticals and should be treated as a viable alternative for adults. Since it does affect our neurology, it should be restricted to home or lounge use, just as alcohol is. Public intoxication is not safe for the community.

I recommend limiting the number of retail storefronts to two in Novato for several reasons: 1) limit in-town competition because we want these stores to be financially successful - these legal retailers are already saddled with a heavy burden of taxes and fees and are competing with the black market that pays no fees. 2) it's tacky for a town the size of Novato to have more than two. 3) quality of their operation matters - if we limit the number of retailers, we can be selective - select retailers with operational experience and excellent reputation - ideally in the North Bay - the Sebastopol and Rohnert Park retailers are good examples of professionalism and excellence.

Stores should be designed with the utmost architectural design.

Strongly oppose this idea and hope it isn't approved. It will erode one of the strongest attractions of Novato which is being family friendly.

No cannabis retail storefronts in Novato!

It would bring a lot of good income to he city, we need it.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO ALLOW A STOREFRONT, WHICH A SINCERELY HOPE YOU DON'T, IT SHOULD BE IN SOME REMOTE LOCATION AWAY FROM EVERYTHING ELSE OR NEXT DOOR TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Not on grant ave

I believe cannabis will eventually come to Novato and the city can take this as an opportunity to raise funds for vital community supports!

As a licensed, Clinical Psychologist, with a private practice in Novato, I have some concerns about the introduction of Cannabis storefronts, (unless limited to the industrial/commercial business parks, and providing education for the public). I have been practicing since 1996. Even though cannabis is touted as harmless, I have seen otherwise in my practice. Cannabis has it's place in helping those dealing with dreadful illnesses like cancers. Like other addictions though, the frequent use of cannabis alone, can cause such harmful difficulties as severe memory loss, carelessness in just showing up for the in's & out's of day-to-day responsibilities, and even (dare I say) psychotic states of being. Especially when one attempts stopping the use of it. This isn't meant to scare anyone. It's just the reality of what I've been faced with, in treating clients over these past 30 years.

I welcome cannabis in Novato!

If the City of Novato is smart, it could make this a huge success for our City. I believe the City of Cotati in Sonoma County has a special City Tax on all their cannabis receipts.

I would much feel better spending my tax dollars in my own city rather than driving to Cotati.

Im a 65 year lifelong resident of Novato.

I already live next to a Cannabis (unauthorized) selling shop on Grant Ave . My neighbors and I have plenty of experience with the smoke, the loitering (that the Novato police do nothing about) the garbage that is thrown over the fence and into our yards, the vandalism of the fence and the fire potential (we've had two fires in this location) - Please come and visit our homes for a personal tour of the actual experience of those who live next door to a cannabis selling shop.

Added cost/fee should be commesuarate with any reputable statistic on potential crime rate increase - to fund increased public safety, plus. Novato needs to grow this city and expand our identity and culture. Classy/novel establishments only. Any licenses issued should be done so with focused purpose! If we cannot yet be the Paris of Marin, perhaps we might look to Amsterdam.

Please don't do it.

The cannabis retail storefronts in the town of Sonoma and Cotati are nice, clean establishments with no trouble and very well regulated, secure and safe. Cannabis storefronts have a stigma when they don't need to be.

llll

We live in BMK and strongly urge Novato NOT to allow any cannabis retail storefronts in the quiet industrial area of BMK. There is not enough law enforcement, as it is, in this unincorporated area. It would introduce unintended issues, we are sure.

Pluses of allowing this business does not out weigh the negatives.

It's ridiculous that other North Bay cities get the Novato residents business. This can bring good money to Novato. If someone disagrees, I invite them to go to Mercy Wellness in Cotati for an example of a well run store, with security, extremely knowledgeable and friendly employees, clean facility and a wide range of products. We need to bring what residents want to Novato instead of letting neighboring towns get our revenue.

I am glad to see the City of Novato is considering this and I pleased you are seeking public input prior to making a decision.

It really depends on the application. If it is a respectable, high end, or medically focused establishment that focuses on wellness, senior citizen pain relief, and would add to the community then I would consider it. However, most look absolutely terrible and would be a disgrace to the downtown area. I am also concerned they could take up space in already terrible abandoned storefronts, like the CVS on south novato blvd. That would make that shopping center even worse. Bottom line- this must be additive to the community to even be considered. But I strongly feel it should be a no.

TAKE TWO PUFFS IN THE MORNING...

Today's THC is far more dangerous on kids and adults. Overall I do not support a cannabis store in Novato.

I support legalized cannabis, even though I don't use it myself.

Reality is, people use weed and rarely do you see anyone high causing trouble. If done right, it can be a nice add to the community. Even elders are using weed to help with sleep and aid health.

It's about time! Novato needs to be open to new business. It's a highly regulated industry from the state. Don't reinvent more rules and make the already struggling industry more difficult to start a business. So many retail spaces off Grant that need to be utilized creatively.

More and more research is showing how dangerous cannabis is. The AMA (American Medical Association) took out a full page ad in the Wall Street Journal to make the public aware of the growing body of research that shows the dangers of cannabis use. Many of these dangers were not understood when cannabis was legalized. Now we know.

These businesses provide a service that there is a market for. Novato should benefit from the taxes generated, but this type of storefront should not be located in the core downtown area. It's not a good fit for the family friendly atmosphere the city is trying to promote downtown.

I feel that the store would bring in people who are better off not using cannabis, and would promote loitering in and around the area.

Many seniors use marijuana products medicinally. Right now we have to drive all the way up to North Petaluma or San Francisco. This could be a great revenue generator for the city. There is a gun shop very close to Loma Verde school where our children went. This is a heck of a lot less risky than that.

As long as it's not in a residential area/schools and closely monitored, I feel it would be an asset to our town.

We have enough problems with 7-11 and grant ave bums why add more problems

There are currently only two cannabis adjacent operations in Marin county. It's ridiculous that Marin county residents have to drive to Sonoma county, San Francisco or the East Bay or rely on delivery services or illegal vendors in order to secure cannabis for health and mental treatment. Marin county citizens deserve equal access to legal cannabis.

Should not be allowed.

I feel like our money is moving into Sonoma County with the absence of Novato-based storefronts. I'd like to see that business remain in Marin. Many of the Southern Sonoma storefronts (Petaluma/RP) are thriving in their respective communities.

As it relates to the last question - no on-site consumption, commercial consumption areas, or events of any kind.

Please do not allow this. Life is already complicated enough for most people. This will only complicate life more for many people.

I work is substance use prevention for middle and high schools, as well as substance use treatment at a residential rehab near Novato. Cannabis poses serious health risks for adolescents and young adults. Data shows that the laws to protect them have not been sufficiently enforced (e.g. Hemp Bros who is now Sweet Leaf has been selling illegal THC products in San Rafael for over 2 years despite youth picketing and ongoing community demand for enforcement with the City.)

Please read:

1. The Wall Street Journal: High Schools Are Losing the Struggle to Block Pot—Even During Class (3/4/26)
2. National Public Radio: A huge study finds a link between cannabis use in teens and psychosis later (2/21/26)
3. National Institute of Health: Cannabis dispensary exposure and smoked, vaped and edible cannabis use among young adults: Comparison of web-scraped and government-maintained registries (2/18/26)

Cannabis sales are already widely available in cities near Novato. Let's not allow this retail option here too. Novato has enough problems already and not enough of a county tax base to handle existing issues. Easy cannabis purchases locally will be a liability, no matter how harmless some folks think cannabis is.

Cannabis shops are the way of the future! Marin County is already progressive, so having a cannabis shop in Novato would be fitting. Though I don't consume it myself, I can see the physical and mental benefits it brings to so many people. I do not, however, think that customers or staff should be allowed to consume or use cannabis inside or right outside of the shop. Studies show that in Los Angeles and Denver, opening cannabis shops did not increase crime rates. (Still, to be cautious, the store should get good security cameras for crime prevention.) In comparison, bars, liquor stores and late-night convenience stores are far more likely to raise crime rates. The cannabis shop/s should have a strict door monitor to ensure that every customer who walks in has a valid ID confirming that they are 21+. The number of cannabis retail shops in Novato should be limited to 1 or 2 intelligently-run, high-quality establishments.

As a senior that has been prescribed cannabis for medical use it is difficult to purchase. Currently delivery is the only option, requiring me to stay home for deliveries.

I find that in San Francisco and other cities in the area most persons purchasing at a retail outlet are typical citizens and not disruptive. I have never seen anyone smoking in the doorway or nearby on the street.

Also I believe that educational events are needed especially for older people that can benefit from cannabis.

The presence of a retailer increases access for teenagers, with research indicating youth in close proximity to stores are more likely to develop cannabis use disorders.

Edibles are often designed to look like popular candies or snacks, leading to rising rates of accidental, sometimes dangerous, poisonings among toddlers and young children who mistake them for treats.

A retail storefront in our small, tight-knit community signals that cannabis is harmless, contrary to evidence showing it can hinder brain development, increase anxiety, and cause addiction in teens.

Modern, legal, high-potency cannabis products are increasingly causing emergency room visits for severe intoxication, panic attacks, and psychosis, affecting both young people and adults.

A local storefront creates more opportunities for impaired driving. Even legal, recreational users may drive while impaired, increasing the risk of accidents.

Research indicates that the presence of dispensaries is associated with a rise in local neighborhood crime and disorder, particularly in areas with high density.

A retail cannabis shop changes the character of our small, family-focused town, potentially creating "clusters" of, or easy access to, substances that are not aligned with a community-oriented, safe environment.

For these reasons, the risks associated with a storefront—specifically endangering children, burdening our emergency services, and risking traffic safety—far outweigh potential revenue benefits.

I hope the city council will never have to feel a parent's pain if their child's life is lost, direct through usage or indirectly due to an accident, because the council issued a license to a cannabis store front in our town.

It's 2026. This has been long overdue.

By not allowing cannabis retail stores in Novato, we're giving away sales tax to other cities/counties. It's legal to use and should be purchasable in our town.

Please do not allow cannabis shops in Novato. I have seen the blight they have brought to other communities and states and do not want that to happen here. Please do not sell out to the cannabis industry. Drug use is a serious problem and should not be aided by the city government.

No se permita el consumo como en parques, eventos públicos, cerca de escuelas, guarderías, juegos deportivos, centros comerciales, apartamentos- seria genial, tiendas, restaurantes

[Consumption is not permitted in places such as parks, public events, near schools, daycare centers, sports facilities, shopping malls, apartments - it would be great - stores, restaurants]

Cannabis is a legal product for adults and it can be delivered to your door now. i would like to see a few stores in Novato that provide education to the public about their products medicinal use. At one time early in this process Solful from Sonoma gave a presentation to the Novato city council and I was impressed with their commitment to education.

I dont want to provide any public consumption areas or use areas..I dont oppose people selling it in industrial areas for people who need cannabis for their health.

Novato needs to get with the program if we have someone interested in bringing the store to our city. The taxes that we could benefit from are significant. Sign a 1-year lease if nervous. There are some really nice looking cannabis businesses these days. A lot of people use it, a lot more should! Those that don't, won't. Make a good decision please. (Ahem, we don't need Dutch Bros Coffee, what??)

Cannabis business are no different than any other businesses.

Novato absolutely needs this. We can't exist solely on Mexican restaurants and nail salons.

I am a cannabis consumer to deal with chronic pain and would welcome this great addition to Novato.

please. i need it for medicinal reasons, and driving 35+ minutes for the closest dispensary is insane. it's better to have a licensed shop than getting it from illegal random unsafe plugs.

This is long overdue in Marin county.

Cannabis brings in a ton of revenue. It's naive to think people aren't using cannabis. We are traveling to Cotati and East Bay to get it. I think liquor stores are worse. The alcoholics wait for the stores to open and are a danger to road users. Most cannabis users take their goods home to use.

Novato will get buyers from throughout the county and Petaluma, which should benefit other local businesses. Also sets the tone for the county.

Novato NEEDS a cannabis storefront. Right now, we all MUST travel up to Cotati or Santa Rosa... Novato is missing out on tax dollars

I think a legal cannabis retail storefront would benefit Novato. As a county, we are currently very limited with the amount of legal dispensaries. Dispensaries give back to the community, offer a safe way to buy marijuana, and adhere to local laws.

none

The more diverse retail and dining we add over the next few years will determine our sustainability as a city. We should be forward looking and open to different opportunities to keep Novato community focused and thriving.

I think that Bel Marin Keys industrial area is the best area for a dispensary.

Retail establishments selling marijuana should be treated the same way that liquor stores are treated.

This is no longer an industry that conducts business in a dark ally. These are clean and professionally run establishments that provide many forms of cannabis, not only for recreation but for medicinal purposes as well. Not to mention the benefit to the community with donations to non-profits, increased tax income for the city as well. We all know about the budget constraints Novato faces. I think this is a great way to serve many purposes.

please let Mercy Wellness open a store in Novato, so I don't have to drive to Cotati, as gas is thru the roof.

The Mercy Storefront on Cotati is well run, professional and aesthetically pleasing. One such as this would be a boon to downtown Novato or surrounding area.

Just regular sales tax or people will buy on the black market. Don't be stupid.

I support retail cannabis. A cannabis store is not substantially different than a liquor store or a tobacco shop.

A retail environment provides a shopping experience that online shopping can't replicate. The city can use more money coming in. Currently empty storefronts could, once again, be filled.

The gas I would save not having to drive to Cotati is significant.!

It's about time for a retail cannabis store in Marin, as the delivery costs more and restricts the sale enough to allow black market sales to take over, cutting out the tax and control.

I am a military veteran with a 100% disability rating from the VA. I had never used cannabis until I was 56 years old, after consulting with my doctor and trusted friends. During the pandemic, I earned a certificate in "Cannabis Fundamentals", offered free-of-charge, that covered a very broad and extensive overview of cannabis. I have found that the medicinal use of cannabis has been remarkably effective in mitigating the constant pain and discomfort in my lower pain and sciatic nerve. I have also had five surgeries (one knee, three hand, one tooth extraction/implant) since discovering cannabis and, with consent of my surgeons, opted to use it for post-surgical pain rather than opiates. I also know of many local veteran friends who rely upon cannabis for pain and PTSD mitigation. A storefront in Novato would be most welcome. Thank you.

We need the tax income

On the community benefit payments, this is a tough business, and I believe they provide a community benefit by existing so no additional (extortion-type) fees should be required. I encourage decision makers to visit Mercy Wellness in Cotati and see what a beautiful addition their store would be to Novato!!
Thank you for considering my input. Have a nice day!

I would be happy to NOT have to drive to Sonoma county for my sleeping aids. Keep it in Marin please.

Two different brands of gas stations can exist across the street from each other and sell alcohol and cigarettes all day long. Cannabis dispensaries should be allowed the same opportunities as any other business.

Numerous cities in California operate these businesses safely in a well regulated manner. There is ample market for the product in the area and no specific reason that Novato shouldn't have a storefront compared to other cities.

We and our neighbors have been traveling up to Cotati for our cannabis for many years. Once we retired it was okay and we'd make a date out of the excursion. But especially given gas prices and even though we have a hybrid car, it would be really nice to have a walk in dispensary here.

It would be nice not to have to drive to Cotati to shop at a dispensary. My experience at the 2 in Sonoma is that they are perfectly fine businesses, with a pleasant atmosphere. I have not experienced problems with noise, smells, or rowdy people. Nor have I seen people admitted who were too young, nor were they hanging out in the parking lot. It's helpful to be able to access the various products at the store rather than on the website. Websites can be wonky and hard to interpret, whereas at a store the tenders can help and make suggestions, answer questions and show you what is in stock. Any alarmist thinking or concerns about these retail outlets is not a reflection of the reality of modern cannabis shopping. I hope Novato can benefit from the foot traffic, the boost to other retail and the taxes generated by legal cannabis products. But please don't overburden them with additional taxes or fees, many of these retailers are already struggling to stay afloat against the black market competition. I vote yes for retail storefronts in Novato!

It is absurd that a progressive place like Novato (and Marin County) with so many medical and recreational cannabis users have no cannabis storefronts. NIBY at its worst.

It's 2026, not 1926. Be a leader, and do it with fidelity and community input, but don't let the inherent 30%ish of people who will always stand against cannabis punish the majority that would love a storefront in Marin. I will add that if a cafe model like Amsterdam were approved, I would personally be interested in investing in/opening a cannabis cafe - it's a dream of mine only because of legal restrictions. Let's make it a reality!

Novato is a charming city that does not need a cannabis store. There are plenty of cannabis stores in the Bay Area for folks to go to, no need to have one in our city.

Hope this happens it helps many people for many different reasons

Former Novato resident for over 15 years, work full time in Novato/Hamilton. Currently have to visit cannabis retailer in Cotati, having local storefront will be great benefit.

Mercy in Cotati has a great set-up having its own 'area' near a highway exit and other shops but does infringe on any of those spaces. There must be a space in Novato with similar attributes.

There are bars everywhere and grocery stores selling liquor 20 of 24 hours, 7 days a week. Alcohol can be deadly and is associated with many crimes of aggression. Cannabis is the least of your worries.

In my experience, cannabis stores and the people working there have been very nice, peaceful, and caring

Novato is missing out on much needed tax money. Take a ride to mercy in Cotati and see how much business they have. People coming and going from open til close.

Mercy is a professional establishment, Novato is missing out on revenue and foot traffic it brings. Those fearing bad characters hanging around need not worry, it's not like that. Mercy is secure with on staff security guards, check in process etc. and brings jobs and young professionals to the area. Let people who enjoy cannabis products spend their money in their own town, it benefits everyone.

If they can sell liquor they should be able to sell cannabis.

Driving to Cotati to get supplies is silly. Many of us in this great city would benefit from a local dispensary. Speak with your peers in Cotati for guidance on how to do it right. Please, and thank you. :)

We can do this in a way that is not in your face, etc., but still allows for safe passage of this legal product. I am not a Novato resident, but San Rafael if it matters. Thank you for looking into this concept.

Marin has waited too long for this. It's a huge source of tax revenue and a boon to many folks who suffer a range of ailments, and far less dangerous than alcohol and tobacco sold everywhere. Let's bring some tax revenue to Novato - we'll come up from San Rafael!

It's time to remove the stigma attached to cannabis purchases. The law allows use, but antiquated city statutes make acquisition difficult. Please, be the change Marin needs!!!

Due to the large amount of empty business locations, The city should be considering absolutely anyone who wants to open a business in novato which includes cannabis businesses. The city should be actively fining landlords who hold empty locations for extended periods of time as a tax write off or poorly maintained businesses.

I'd like to hear the possible ramifications to each intended category.
City council might announce such a meeting which I would plan to attend.

I am very happy that Novato is considering this. And I do hope that it happens. I have been using a dispensary in Cotati (Mercy Wellness) for a long time , back to when it was medical use only. To my mind they represent what a well run dispensary should look like. It would be nice to stay in Novato, spend my money in Novato, and maybe even go to a music event at a cannabis cafe. One I could walk to.

The cannabis industry is already heavily regulated. Don't forget these are small business owners too. They already pay a ton of taxes and don't need to be fee'd to death. I hope this passes, cannabis is great alternative to alcohol and drugs!

Thank you for the survey. We need the tax revenue

The current closest licensed cannabis storefront is Mercy Wellness in Cotati. It would serve the people of Novato and North Marin to have our own cannabis storefront.

Everyone in Marin county is driving to Sonoma county to get weed. We are losing tax money to other counties. Legalize the sale of cannabis here. We need the tax revenue. But you can't tax the heck out of it or you set the business up to fail.

This would be a wonderful addition to the community!

Please approve!

Most people now days smoke weed recreationally. They just have to drive 20 miles to get it. Dispensary's do not allow minors and have regulations on what they sell. People cannot die from weed but they can walk to the bar or any store basically and drink themselves to death.

All for the basic idea ... retail presence is part of socialization. But low-key and tasteful, in locations that work to address stated concerns. Can be done well.

I really want one!!

Please try to get Mercy (as in Cotati) if one is coming to Novato. They are professional and helpful

Cannabis is an addictive substance and can cause symptoms for which users can be cited and arrested for, such as driving under the influence. Any licenses should be included in the count and regulations pertaining to the issuance of alcoholic beverage licenses. I think we already have enough bars and liquor stores and don't think the City should increase the number of similar businesses such as retail cannabis outlets or storefronts anywhere in the City.

As a person with health issues that uses cannabis as medicine this would limit my driving time to Cotati. N

Extremely concerned about the sale and use of kratom in all forms often available in smoke shops and cannabis shops. Very dangerous substance, with disastrous fallout.

The number of cannabis shops in North Beach of San Francisco has changed the neighborhood and made it a less desirable place to live.

There is no need to add additional cannabis dispensaries in Nevada

I believe a retail storefront is advantageous to delivery services from outside the city, the tax and revenue increase.

In general, I would rather not have cannabis retail stores in Novato.

People that really wanted can use a mail order service.

I'm strongly opposed to this. Cannabis is a gateway drugdrug. It dumbs you down and attracts weirdos and criminals. In Sweden where I'm from it's classed as a heavy drug and strictly illegal. look at the population. The succesful, healthy and ambitious they are . The streets smell good and you don't see people in jammies outside cannabis stores having no work. Not to talk about the unbearable stench. Novato should become MORE FAMILY FRIENDLY NOT LESS

Again, there is no storefront. Since I use it medicinally I need a storefront please. It would be much easier and beneficial for my life

As the parent of an African American son in this county, I am deeply concerned that we are focused on the wrong solutions. Regulating storefronts is a 'red herring' when our kids are ordering high-potency vapes on Snapchat and from individual dealers with zero regulation. Information-only programming and signage do not stop active use. We have a massive gap in youth recovery tools. Instead of a survey that focuses on the physical environment, Novato should be leading the charge in funding a tripartite pilot that involves real parent coaching and student recovery support. We don't need more pamphlets on why THC is bad; we need the skills and restorative care to help our kids who are already using to kick the habit. Let's stop addressing the adjacent problems and start addressing the actual addiction crisis.

The problem is that local storefronts target to kids. The cannabis that you can nowadays buy is so potent that we should really prevent any child to have access to it. Since we as adults can get cannabis products through mail-order, there is no need for a storefront.

I think it's time to allow a cannabis store front. Having worked in the industry in the past, a LOT of Marin use cannabis and cannabis infused products. Some that don't have any psychoactive effects at all, like topicals. I believe it would be very beneficial to Novato.

The THC levels in Cannabis today is highly addictive and can cause psychosis, schizophrenia and other mental health issues. It should not be allowed in any part of Novato or elsewhere. Cannabis has destroyed our family as well as thousands of others!

I think this is an absolutely horrible idea. In fact, given the proven harms of cannabis, the state should reverse its legalization.

Here is a series of interviews providing information about harms that every state employee should watch: <https://dougbopest.com/cannabis-series/>

As the mother of my son whose suicide note read "My soul is already dead. Marijuana killed my soul + ruined my brain," I support all who want to limit ALL promotion of retail cannabis. There is far too much risk and harm in the products to be encouraging use, especially for those under age 25 when the brain is mature enough to resist addiction.

Crime will rise if these are allowed. Crews rob these stores all the time in San Francisco

My home city has multiple cannabis shops within single plazas. The most being 3 shops and one lounge out of 11 storefronts in a single plaza building . This particular plaza is problematic with frequent crime in the immediate area.

The substance has been shown to cause impairment and Colorado insurers noticed an increase in claims related to cannabis impaired drivers after that state legalized it. Use at home exclusively won't eliminate this because of chronic impairment, but at least you won't have people thinking after their use at a lounge, they are fit to drive.

The shops in my home city are not displaying their product in such a way young people can see it and you must be an adult to enter.

Alongside legal merchants you should expect illegal ones like the clerk at a convenience store who sold to my 15 yo sitter and his friends.

The best way to keep this drug from young people, is model its harmful. This means not marketing or selling it, like its harmless. My experience with my sibling has shown me different.

Marijuana as well as all drugs are not good for anyone especially people under age 30 when the brain is most vulnerable to harm. Dispensaries just make it seem ok to use marijuana which it is not for so many people with the high potency products only available today.

My family paid a very high price for my son's treatment

I do wish what we went through for no one

Please do not allow cannabis products

I am writing to you today to urge you to not allow cannabis brick and mortar retailers in Novato

This is not a step toward a more "equitable" and mature market, I'm writing to share the devastating human cost of removing the guardrails that currently protect citizens.

As the mother of a son whose life was shattered by today's high-potency cannabis, I have seen firsthand that these products are not "medicine"—they are industrialized, high-concentration substances that can permanently alter the brain. My son, who had no prior mental health history, suffered a catastrophic psychotic break after using ultra-high-potency products recommended by a budtender. He now lives with a lifelong psychotic illness and has spent years in and out of facilities like Yale and Silver Hill.

The cannabis industry often claims that potency caps and bans on public consumption impede social equity. However, the evidence suggests the opposite:

Minority and disadvantaged communities have historically been the target of predatory marketing for addictive substances. Expanding access to marijuana does not empower these communities; it floods them with high-addiction products that lead to higher rates of Cannabis Use Disorder and psychosis, further entrenching cycles of poverty and illness it invites I protect driving - exposure of speaking marketing tactics to minors and further normalizes use.

Meaningful social equity is achieved through expungement of records, access to low-interest capital, and community reinvestment—none of which require the sale of 90%+ THC concentrates or public consumption of beverages

Prohibiting on-site consumption of THC predicts is a vital public safety measure. These products have a delayed onset and, when mixed with alcohol, significantly increase the risk of impaired driving. Banning public consumption protects all neighborhoods from normalized, high-risk use in shared spaces.

Robust research indicates that any therapeutic benefit of THC plateaus at 1%–10%.

Anything beyond that serves only to increase dependency and profit for large corporations.

Furthermore, in states without caps, we see a 1,800% increase in ER visits among seniors who are caught off guard by the potency of modern products.

Oppose the expansion of public consumption for THC products

Prioritize the health and brain development of our emerging adults over the expansion of industry profits.

We have an opportunity to lead with science and compassion . Please do not allow industry talking points to override the safety of our children and our communities. I'm attaching a link to the most recent research out of Yale relevant to teen and young adult use. The largest category of users.

I'm also including a link showing California ER visits of older adults increased over 1,800% from due to increasing THC potency -leading to overconsumption and intoxication. This

generation often believe this is the marijuana of decades ago. Visits included confusion, panic attacks, heart symptoms, falls, dizziness. These adults often turn to THC products buying into the narrative that it is medical. There is zero FDA approved use of medical marijuana. In fact, research is showing the opposite. Marijuana is increasing PTSD, anxiety, and depression symptoms. Chronic pain benefits most from THC potency of 1-10%. Violence is increasing.

High potency THC isn't just impacting one set of our populations it's having extreme negative impact on public health

https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/psychosis-after-cannabis-legalization/?utm_source=beatrix_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Psychiatry%2540Yale_03-02-26

<https://journal-veterans-studies.org/articles/10.21061/jvs.v11i1.582>

<https://health.ucsd.edu/news/press-releases/2023-01-09-cannabis-related-emergency-department-visits-among-older-adults-on-the-rise/#:~:text=Study%20shows%20a%20high%20risk,with%20psychoactive%20substances%2C%20including%20cannabis.>

Most people do not realize how dangerous today's marijuana is to the teen brain. Even when making it legal for adults we are expanding access and supply and teens will gain greater access and teen use will go up. We live in Northern California and we learned the hard way when our teen son, who was excelling academically and athletically, broke his leg his senior year and his dream of playing a D1 sport ended. He self medicated with STIIIZY vapes and developed cannabis induced psychosis which transitioned to schizophrenia. This is happening with greater frequency in our communities due to the lack of regulation and higher potency of today's marijuana. It is very dangerous. Do a simple Google search and you will understand the risk opening retail storefronts in Novato present to Novato teens. It is absolutely devastating.

As Dr. Erik Messamore, M.D., Ph.D., an expert in the fields of psychopharmacology, complex mood disorders, and schizophrenia has stated:

There are 109 human genes that carry the risk of schizophrenia. It's not one gene or innately a genetic risk. There is in fact a 75% risk of having one of these genes and 25 % chance of having two of these genes. THC (especially today's high potency THC products) pulls forward the risk of developing schizophrenia.

Not everyone who smokes weed will develop a serious mental health disorder, but the risk has gone up dramatically with today's marijuana.

Please, please, please put public healthy and safety over profits and vote no.

Marijuana sale & use should follow the same rules as the sale and consumption of alcohol.

I have to wait to get my cbd products from my daughter in long Beach or my sister in Nevada. Having a retail store here would be very beneficial. Many people use cannabis for pain management and it should be more accessible to us that live in marin.

Cannabis stores in a city devalue property and encourage teen use, making them believe it is safe and acceptable. Cannabis has caused an epidemic of psychosis and serious mental health problems in many young people. The products these retailers sell are dangerous and literally cause damage to young, developing brains, seriously affecting quality of life for the user and their families. Legalization was a major mistake and no city should encourage this for their residents.

While I am not a Novato resident, I work nationally in early childhood prevention and have seen firsthand the impact of high-potency cannabis on individuals and families. One of the most overlooked concerns is cannabis-induced psychosis, particularly with today's concentrated products.

If the City chooses to allow storefront retail, I encourage a balanced approach that includes proactive prevention. Research consistently shows that the most effective time to build resilience is during early childhood, before patterns and coping behaviors are formed. Integrating early, brain-based prevention—focused on emotional regulation, decision-making, and understanding how substances affect the brain—can significantly reduce long-term risk and better protect both individuals and the broader community. Communities that pair policy with prevention are not only addressing access, but also safeguarding future public health. Elle Constantine

I strongly oppose cannabis retail storefronts in Novato.

Novato has put a TON of resources, time and money into bringing back downtown and the surrounding areas. DO NOT lower ruin the sweet, safe and family friendly feel of Novato by have a weed shop in town. This in NOT what is needed or wanted. Marin is NOT the right place for these types of storefronts and especially Novato...People can door dash, booze...they can door dash weed.

I'm all for trying to generate revenue to support my local city and community. I think there are ways to show accountability/transparency with regards to attracting additional businesses, granting licenses, etc that do NOT include cannabis retail. What is being done to attract other businesses? What is Novato doing about all the vacant storefront properties and what does the communication look like with the property owners? Really, how difficult is it to obtain a business license without greasing palms? In my humble opinion, really scraping the bottom of the barrel by trying to entertain a weed store. Sincerely, Concerned Parent and long-time Novato resident (Second Generation).

Please make it easier for people to get their medicine

Not having a collective in Marin County has been very hard on those of us who depend upon medical marijuana to maintain health. Some of us are poor so the more money you add to the cost of doing business, the more money it costs people to actually do business.

Safe access to cannabis is important so that people do not resort to dealers who may unknowingly have laced products. People who want to use cannabis will use it regardless, so you might as well make it safe. I do not think there should be a lot of signage, however, and that the building should be subtle (but not unmarked of course because that would be sketchy).

Retail cannabis stores denote a sense of town or city deterioration.

Mercy wellness is good to have here in novato. I trust them.

My son who did not start using cannabis until he was an adult suffered from cannabis use disorder and cannabis-induced psychosis. Making cannabis products more available for purchase in a city also makes them more accessible to our youth. The harms for both youth and adult brains are too great and not good for this city or for our country. The science is clear on this. Please follow the science and the truth and do not increase the availability of cannabis in any way.

I am from Pa and this poison almost killed my son not because of overuse's but because it's poison. It was prescribed by his PCP and I am not sure he will ever recover. Although he's very sick because of this poison, at least he is still with me. I know many it has destroyed. Please reconsider any type of promotion.

It is beyond time for Marin to move forward on this issue. Thank you for paving the way!

I am participating in this survey because I have a personal and tragic story around cannabis induced psychosis (CIP) - which my beautiful son developed in college. He was an honor student, club president, athlete and social justice activist, and he started smoking pot in college. But the marijuana of today is totally concentrated and dangerous - it is not the marijuana I voted to legalize. I had not idea it would eventually ruin my sons life, lead to other illicit drug use, homelessness and eventually death from overdosing. If you care about the youth of your community and not contributing to drug addiction and homelessness, you will not be enticed to let this billion dollar toxic, addictive drug industry into the beautiful city of Marin. Thank you, Barbara Gates - Jack's Mom (died Jan 2023)

I know you will look at allowing these stores as a money maker for our town Look what it has done to other cities If you need money get it somewhere else and DONT become a dealer

If you want to sell THC..regulate it so people can't get products that are 80-100% THC. I'm not saying it's not benifical for some...and old school recreational marajauna was like 8% THC..that was the strong stuff. Now it's not only no longer a "grass" it to strong causing all sorts of issues. You know what medical research is out there but no one cares. Why? And if you want legal marajauna..why not just sell good old grass. I never thought I would be against it. I smoked it here and there in my day but when I watch someone I love change mentally. It's so sad..I'm a mom. This is my baby...government is failing him by allowing this. I read..it's harder to quit THC when addicted than it is to quit Meth. Because THC is fat soluble, and sticks to your brain. Where Meth is not (water I believe). Yep...keep it legal..makes sense.

Before Novato legalizes cannabis, ask Santa Barbara's Mayor one question: Has it made your city better or worse?

As a Santa Barbara resident who fought this for two years—and lost—now has 16 years of evidence: it made things worse.

The promised tax revenue didn't materialize. The ordinances can't be enforced. Cannabis retail and public use created a net loss to quality of life. The winners: the weed industry and frequent users. The losers: everyone else. Don't assume Novato will be different. Learn from those who went first. This isn't ideology—it's lived experience. The cost isn't worth the promise.

This would be great for the Novato community! Great way to bring in more people and it's a great business opportunity, currently lacking in Marin County.

Novato does not have enough police force to attend this calls when trouble , the police departments doesn't even attend regular calls if they do is hours later so this will be a free will for criminals to operate with out been closely watch

I would rather buy locally in Novato rather than drive to Cotati.....

This is long overdue in Marin, Novato should lead the way!

Both Mercy Wellness and Solful have been good neighbors in Sonoma county for years.
Best, Mike C

Don't make me drive out of Marin. Gas is too expensive and adds more traffic to 101

Novato should know that more marijuana will definitively hurt our children. The city will never realize the taxes it believes it will receive juxtaposed by the harm it will bring to the community. In Redding, and COR, who will hide the fact it has brought murder, robbery of dispensaries, multiple burglaries of dispensaries, higher DUI as tracked by respondents in victim dui classes, higher youth use through straw purchases-where most youth get their marijuana, and a multitude of other crimes spreading into the county area-whose illegal grows will feed the dispensaries with toxic pesticide laden pot. Government should never facilitate more intoxication of its citizens. It never ends well and all the promises by the pot industry will never be realized

Assuming that cannabis storefronts become legal in Novato please consider restricting any advertising that would appeal to youth and young adults e.g. signs in the colors of local pro sports teams

Recreational and medicinal Cannabis use is legal in CA. A storefront retail offering should be approved in the city. OK to regulate per ordinances similar to alcohol. Please do not be restrictive. Thank you

It's about time Novato has retail cannabis..other cities are benefiting from the taxes and Novato should too..

I think having good legislation in this matter is a long time coming. I hope that the communities naysayers don't raise more objections than the pleasant majority. Regardless I think maximum protection of particularly medical cannabis use should be guaranteed as a freedom in our community.

I believe that anyone's medical health should be between them and their doctor without the government's oversight or interdiction.

The people using cannabis storefronts, buy their cannabis and leave the establishment. No one is smoking inside or outside of the storefront. There is no smell outside. No one knows it is a cannabis shop without the signage on the building. Many cannabis storefronts are friendly with their neighbors. You need an ID to get into these shops. No one under 18 is allowed. As cannabis is LEGAL in California, it makes sense for people to be able to purchase their supplies at a storefront. It is more difficult to order/purchase cannabis online as you don't have the wisdom of the sales people helping you out.

I would love to have a mercy wellness in Novato instead of driving to Sonoma county. And or other dispensaries clubs the one is Fairfax is terrible

My wife has cancer, and the edibles provide essential relief and comfort during her treatment. Having a local storefront would greatly improve our access, reduce travel burden, and promote safe, regulated purchasing within our community. Currently residents like myself must travel to nearby cities such as Rohnert Park to access medicinal edibles, which are vital for managing pain associated with serious health conditions. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Let's DO this Novato! It is LEGAL and far less damaging than alcohol!
We currently have to drive to Sonoma County to purchase - no reason why Novato residents don't deserve a store within city limits.

I am a medicinal user of cannabis. I have had ten Orthopedic surgeries in the past ten years and do not tolerate pharmaceutical pain relievers and muscle relaxers. Im completely fused from the top of my spine to the middle area of my lower back. I require the use of muscle relaxers and nerve relief because of this. I have been using medicinal cannabis for years to help me replace the Pharmaceuticals I can not tolerate. There need to be so much more information out there about the medicinal use of these products. If more people understood the benefits of cannabis vs opioids etc we would have many less people addicted to thees pain relievers they were exposed to after a surgical or other medical interventions. Additionally, I am active in my community, I exercise daily, I play golf two to three times a week and am otherwise in very good health.

My experience is that currently successful cannabis businesses already regulate themselves, provide excellent security and keep 100% of minors out of their dispensaries. Many liquor stores could do well by adopting some of their standards. Novato needs this additional income, but dispensaries should not face tax burdens other businesses do not share

This is a family small town. I personally have 4 children and I don't want to see advertisements of cannibis stores around my town. I don't want my kids seeing it also. I also don't want to walk around the town with people smoking it around the town, like in bigger cities and it smells. I know there is going to be a big influx of people moving to our town and that is going to add to the population and if we had a business like this, it could raise the possibility of cannibis usage around town. No Please!

Na

Please allow cannabis in Novato. This would make it much easier than driving to Cotati.

Please. Don't do it. If need be, I am happy to publicly testify.

My ultimate vote would be for Mercy Wellness to have a store in Novato. They are a great cannabis store. Lots of security and protections to make sure no one under age goes into the store.

A new study reports that about 37% of Californians consume cannabis. There is no good reason to have more stringent regulations for cannabis sales and use than we do for alcohol. Note that alcohol is toxic to all human tissue and causes vastly more health and societal harms, and yet dozens of establishments in Novato sell booze.

I've been driving to Cotati for my purchases. It would be great if Novato had dispensaries .)

Are we that desperate for business in downtown Novato? I think you can put your thinking caps on and come up with some other ways to generate tax revenue.

I first acquired my medical recommendation for the use of cannabis in October of 2004. I remember a time when there were storefronts in Marin County, I would like to go back to those days. You did not have to rely on overpriced delivery with no consultation/help, or having to travel outside of the county, across a bridge, which incurs additional tolls on top of gas. I do travel to Rohnert Park to visit Mercy wellness which has an incredible and knowledgeable staff willing to help and educate you, with your needs.

I'm tired of my tax money to Petaluma and Santa Rosa dispensaries. Keep the tax money here. We need it.

Muchas personas aran trampa para poder obtener esto y los adolescente podrían adquirir mas fácil por medio de otras personas es un riesgo
[Many people will cheat to obtain this, and teenagers may acquire it more easily through others; this is a risk.]

Kids have been spouse to Mariguana and other drugs please no business allowance on California should be free for people who is dieing people with cancer or so caused more damage only is good for the big corporations \$\$\$\$%\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

No estoy de acuerdo sobre estas ventas

Don't open one in novato.

Con todo respeto hacia la comunidad de Novato pero mi familia y yo no estamos de acuerdo con esas tiendas minoristas ya que solo es una fachada y luego son centros más grandes de distribución y es perjudicial para los jóvenes y las familias.

[With all due respect to the Novato community, my family and I do not agree with these retail stores, as they are merely a front for larger distribution centers, and this is harmful to young people and families.]

I think a cannabis storefront would be a great addition to Novato for several reasons. One of them being generating income.

Stay with delivery only. People who want it can get access to it. It's easy and fast to be delivered. I've done it myself. Adding events and retail stores WILL increase use and add to a continuing public health issue, not to speak of safety problem. DUIs are already causing people to be killed in Novato. Why would adding an addictive product like cannabis be helpful to this current issue? People will drink AND use cannabis. Even Amsterdam had to create bans on cannabis use as public intoxication and disorderly behavior became problematic. Why would you want to add a public health and safety issue to worsen in Novato? Dec 6, 2024 Marincounty.gov press release quoted "Impaired driving is a growing problem, particularly with drivers suspected of operating a vehicle under the influence of both alcohol and drugs". There were 1,032 DUI cases in 2023. Do NOT cave to the pressure of the industry. Tobacco companies are aligned with cannabis industry. They follow the same playbook...to get customers young - they advertise to them - flavored vapes and it works. Profit for addiction model is NOT needed and will have negative consequences for years to come. It will degrade Novato. And yes the industry folks will always say 'but there is access to liquor', so why not cannabis? There is access and it's working. Novato should court other types of businesses not drug companies.

I am not against cannabis use, I even use it myself, but it is already so easy to purchase through the mail and in other cities that I don't want it coming to Novato. I don't see the "good" it would bring our town honestly.

You should not value profit over the health and safety of our children.

It is a hardship to only have delivery options in Novato. It costs more to have things delivered, including tips to the driver. There is no good reason not to have retail outlets in Novato. It would better serve our citizens and contribute more tax dollars for our city.

As a mother of 2 young children in NUSD and a long time, tax-paying resident, I strongly oppose the approval of a cannabis store(s) opening in Novato. Some of my concerns, include the following:

1. Youth Exposure & Normalization

Increased visibility of cannabis storefronts may normalize use for teens.

Research has shown mixed results, but some communities report higher youth perception that cannabis is “low risk.”

You can argue that even with age restrictions, increased access and advertising can influence underage attitudes and behavior.

As a community that prioritizes children and schools, we should be cautious about normalizing substances that can impact developing brains.

2. Public Safety Concerns

Concerns about increased impaired driving (DUIs related to cannabis).

Potential for increased petty crime near retail locations.

Difficulty for law enforcement in measuring impairment compared to alcohol.

Even if impacts are debated, the burden falls on local law enforcement to manage new risks with limited tools.

3. Quality of Life / Community Character

Odor from nearby businesses

Changes to the “family-friendly” feel of neighborhoods

Storefront aesthetics or clustering in certain areas

Novato has worked hard to maintain its character as a safe, family-oriented community—this change could shift that identity.

4. Proximity to Schools & Youth Spaces

Even with buffer zones, cannabis stores may still be relatively close to:

Schools

Parks

Youth centers

We should err on the side of protecting spaces where children learn and gather.

5. Uncertain Economic Benefit

While cannabis stores generate tax revenue, you can question:

Whether revenue outweighs enforcement, regulation, and public health costs

If profits mostly go to outside companies rather than local residents

Our family respectfully opposes the approval of a cannabis retail storefront in our city. Research from multiple municipalities in California and other states has shown that areas with higher concentrations of cannabis retail locations often experience increases in nuisance complaints, including loitering, odor, and public consumption, even when stores are operating legally. Studies have also found that greater retail availability is associated with higher rates of youth access and normalization of use, which remains a concern for public health.

In addition, local governments frequently face increased administrative and enforcement costs related to permitting, inspections, and compliance monitoring for cannabis businesses. These costs are not always fully offset by tax revenue, particularly in smaller communities.

Given these considerations, I believe our city should take a cautious approach and prioritize land uses that have fewer potential impacts on neighborhoods, families, and local infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mainstream media, including CNN has written articles on studies to show the issues with cannabis such as this last week. <https://www.cnn.com/2026/03/16/health/marijuana-mental-health-wellness>

Novato should be thinking about the increase of addiction of cannabis use disorder and not add to the high level of use especially with youth who access via 18 year olds who can easily get a medical card (on line). Not to speak of the increase in impaired driving. It's a public health and safety risk you are opening up. Novato does not need a storefront. Please don't be swayed the the industry lobbyists.

We live in San Rafael and we have to go to Cotati to get our meds and it's a long way to go. I trust Mercy Wellness and I would support them having a business in Novato. They seem like very responsible people - business.

Should not be a concern when referencing outcomes from surrounding counties. Most individuals use cannabis for health reasons, including simply relaxing for health purposes (and generally walk around with peace and love in our hearts). It has never been a drug that causes someone to be a violent criminal, other than armed criminals profiting on illegal drug trade, which is being eliminated by legalizing and controlling the sale of drugs by removing their funding sources (as a retired DEA undercover agent who dealt with millions dollar cocaine deals in Florida once told me was the simple solution).

The presence of a dispensary will increase what is already an extremely high level of youth use in Marin. Our published research with Kaiser on Northern California has already demonstrated higher youth use rates, higher youth cannabis use disorder, high rates of youth mental health disorders - including psychotic disorders, and higher rates of harmful prenatal use where storefront sales are legal and where people live in greater proximity to storefront retail. Novato already allows legal sale by delivery. That is quite sufficient. It scored only 13 points out of 100 on its approach to regulating the issue on the 2025 Cannabis Local Policy Scorecards. The city has not adequately addressed the many issues involved like limiting marketing, limiting more harmful products, taxing and using the revenue for youth. Because Novato has already failed to develop a strong model of regulating delivery, I would be extremely reluctant to see additional venues for sale. Any need for legal access to undercut the illicit market is already accomplished. By opening stores at this point you only increase the risk for increasing harmful use and you will face pressure to allow cannabis cafes and clubs, undermining progress in smoke-free air. Nationally, the harmful pattern daily use by young adults has quadrupled, now affecting one in ten 19-30 year olds, and many older adults. Issues such as cannabis induced psychosis, cannabis hyperemesis syndrome, cannabis poisonings of children, and cannabis associated cardiovascular disease and other problems have skyrocketed. Our recently published paper in JAMA Health Forum this month found that teens reporting any use of cannabis had subsequent doubling of rates of psychotic and bipolar disorder and an increase of one third in depressive disorders and one quarter in anxiety disorders by age 25 in a longitudinal study of 463,000 Northern California teens, who did not have the diagnosis before use. The city should focus on improving its regulation of existing legal cannabis access by delivery. Marin County is one of the areas leading the nation in tobacco control. Don't go backwards by further expanding the for-profit cannabis industry. If in the future the city insists on opening a store, use a public store model (like Quebec) or a single contracted nonprofit, selling a limited selection of less harmful products, not attractive to youth, excluding the industry's trend to vastly augmented potency, and refraining from the aggressive marketing that characterizes this industry in our state. If you allow a for profit store despite these recommendations limit activities to retail sale of cannabis only, with out on-site consumptions, cafes or events. Despite certain valid medical uses, cannabis is not a wellness product, it is the leading substance of abuse in our nation, causing large scale harms. Public policy should not be based on cannabis as an engine of economic growth, tourism, or tax revenue, but rather on ending criminalization of use.

I support on-site consumption as long as there is proper control of second hand smoke, if necessary.

Novato already allows delivery of cannabis. This meets any need for legal access and there is no urgent need to open a storefront, especially a typical for-profit California store. It has not yet done a good job of regulating that market, scoring only 13 of 100 on the 2025 Public Health Institute Local Cannabis Policy Scorecard, failing to regulate products attractive to kids, those with excessive potency, or to tax, for example. Our research on hundreds of thousands of Northern California residents with Kaiser Permanente found that adolescent cannabis use, cannabis use disorder, and serious mental health problems including psychosis, and harmful prenatal use, increased where storefronts were allowed and in proportion to proximity to retail storefronts. Marin County already has very elevated youth cannabis use rates. Our recent longitudinal study of 463,000 California adolescents in JAMA Health Forum found that reporting any cannabis use was associated with subsequent doubling of rates of psychotic and bipolar disorders, one third increased in depression and one quarter in anxiety by age 25. While teens cannot buy at storefronts they still appear to be strongly affected by their presence in the community. Rates of harmful daily use in young adults quadrupled nationally since the 1990s, now affecting one in ten US 19-30 year olds, and tripled in middle aged adults. Daily use of cannabis now far outstrips daily use of alcohol. While cannabis does have some valid medical uses, it is not a "wellness" product, it is the leading substance of abuse in the nation. Public policy should focus on ending criminalization of possession and the illicit market, but not on promoting its use or viewing cannabis as an area of economic development, tax revenue, or tourism. If Novato does allow a storefront, it should consider alternatives such as a public store model like Quebec's successful model, or a single contracted nonprofit with a less harmful product selection and no marketing. Activities should be limited to retail sales and not cafes or clubs that undermine smoke-free air progress. It should tax sales (even now by delivery) based on THC content and use that revenue for youth. Marin County has been a leader in tobacco control. It should not go backwards by embracing another for profit industry of addiction that sadly is doing its best to imitate tobacco industry practices, taking a botanical product and transforming it into a vast array of industrialized, high potency, more addictive products designed to attract youth. Go slow and carefully in how you regulate this complex product to protect your youth for the long-term. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

I hope you will choose to FINALLY allow cannabis storefront retail businesses in Novato. I don't use cannabis, but I'm fine with there being stores here. Just like I don't drink alcohol (which is also a drug), but I'm fine with all of the bars, wineries, breweries, liquor stores, restaurants, etc. that serve or sell alcohol... and often near "sensitive areas." It's time! Thanks!
