



City of Visalia

# City Council

Monday, May 5, 2025

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**Cannabis Business Ordinance Design Review**



# Cannabis Business Ordinance Next Steps

On March 3, 2025, the City Council authorized staff to proceed with drafting a cannabis ordinance, but during the adoption process setting the number of businesses permitted to zero.

Staff is seeking input from Council on ordinance criteria. This will be a two-part process.

Staff will return, as needed, to continue the review process before presenting an ordinance for possible adoption.



# Ordinance Design: Location in VMC

1. Where in the municipal code should the cannabis business ordinance be placed?

Recommendation: Place entire cannabis ordinance, including moving Chapter 5.66, into one of the reserved titles “(i.e., Title 4, Title 7, Title 11, or Title 14).

This would alleviate having to research multiple sections of the municipal code to understand rules and regulations governing cannabis businesses.



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

2. Which uses or business types does the City want included or excluded? What zones would the City like to allow the various business types in?

1. Cultivation	2. Manufacturing
3. Distribution	4. Testing laboratory
5. Retail	6. Microbusiness
7. Event	



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

1. Cultivation: This includes various sub licensee types pertaining to the growing of cannabis.

Recommendation: Outdoor cultivation is likely not the highest and best use of developable land and indoor cultivation may require high water and energy demands. Do not allow cultivation types except perhaps the 'Processor' license holder.

Zoning Considerations for 'Processor' facilities: Service Commercial, Light Industrial, or Industrial



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

2. Manufacturing: This pertains to cannabis containing products as opposed to 'raw' cannabis itself; consists of several sub-types of businesses.

Recommendation: Allow these types of uses given our potential competitive location and concentration of food packaging/food processing companies in the region.

Zoning Considerations: C-S, I-L, or I, though Type 7 (volatile solvent manufacturing) license holders may be more appropriate only in I zone.



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

3. Distribution: pertaining to the movement and storage of cannabis products.

Recommendation: Permit distribution uses, particularly given our competitive strategic location in the state and the potential to serve fulfillment center type operations.

Zoning Considerations: C-S, I-L, or I



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

4. Testing laboratory: This use is associated with laboratories that test cannabis goods prior to sale of these products at a retailer.

Recommendation: Allow laboratory uses, as it could occupy Business Research Park or other vacant office parks.

Zoning Considerations: Medical laboratories are permitted in C-MU, D-MU, Office, and Business Research Park, with manufacturing labs allowed in the BRP, I-L, and I.



## Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

5. Retail: Per SB 1186, the City is mandated by the state to permit delivery only (non-storefront) of medical marijuana retail. Other cannabis businesses would include storefront retail, storefront medical only, and retail delivery only (non-storefront).

Recommendation: Permit retail/medical storefront and non-storefront uses and provide staff with any input pertaining to how many eventually to allow.

Based on HdL's estimated level of revenue for Visalia stores (\$18 mil/yr), HdL believes this could support between 5 to 7 retailers.



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

City	# Allowed
Hanford	3 storefront, 2 non-storefront retail, no known limit on other use types
Lemoore	No more than 1 storefront per 12,000 residents, no known limits on other uses
Woodlake	1 plus an additional storefront per every 5,000 residents, no known limits on other uses
Farmersville	3 storefronts exist, no known limits
Tulare	Up to 5 storefront, no other uses allowed
Porterville	2 plus an addtl. storefront per 25,000 residents, no limit on other uses

## Zoning Considerations:

- Storefront: Commercial and mixed use zones only (retail)
- Smoke shops: C-MU and D-MU
- Liquor stores (not within 300' of resi/public use):  
conditionally permitted in C-N, C-R, and C-MU and  
permitted in D-MU
- Non-storefront: I-L, I, or C-S



# Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

6. Microbusiness: For businesses that do at least three of the following activities at one location:

- Cultivation – up to 10,000 total square feet
- Manufacturing – use of non-volatile solvents, mechanical extraction or infusion
- Distribution or distribution transport-only
- Retail – storefront or non-storefront

Recommendation: Permit microbusiness uses that do not include cultivation, other than the 'Processor' cultivation license type.

Zoning Considerations: I-L, I or C-S



## Ordinance Design: Use Types and Zoning

7. Event: Temporary cannabis events are multi-day events where people can sell and consume cannabis. These events last from 1 to 4 days at a location approved by a city or county.

There are two types of event licenses:

- Event Organizer – for the person hosting cannabis events
- Temporary cannabis event – for the event itself

Cannabis events can only be held by a person with an event organizer license

Recommendation: Don't allow Events, at least initially



## Ordinance Design: Sensitive Use Buffers

3. What sensitive uses would the City like to identify, and what size buffers?

City	storefront buffer residential	storefront buffer all others	Non-storefront buffer residential	Non-storefront buffer others
Hanford	200'	600'	200'	600'
Lemoore		600'		600'
Woodlake		1000'		1000'
Farmersville	(churches) 300'	1000'	(churches) 300'	1000'
Tulare		600'		
Porterville		600'		



# Ordinance Design: Sensitive Use Buffers

## Recommendation for Sensitive Land uses:

- Existing schools, licensed day care facilities, libraries, parks or other recreational facilities where minors congregate
- Any existing or planned parks or other recreational facility where minors congregate
- Any land that carries a general plan land use designation that contains the words residence or residential within its title
- Any existing church or religious institution, located either inside or outside of the city limits

Recommendation for Buffer Distance: 750-ft, which is consistent with Section 17.62.



# Ordinance Design: Hours of Operation

## 4. Hours of operation restrictions?

City	Hours of operation
Hanford	storefront retail - 9am -9pm
Lemoore	according to underlying zone district and city's noise ordinance
Woodlake	between 6am and 9pm (non-storefront until 10pm)
Farmersville	between 6am and 9pm
Tulare	between 8am and 8pm
Porterville	storefront - between 10am and 10pm weekdays, and 9am and 11pm weekends



# Ordinance Design: Hours of Operation

Recommendation: Seeking Council input, but here are several considerations:

- The recommended residential land use sensitive use and buffer should limit potential disruptions to this sensitive use after typical business operating hours
- DCC restricts retailers from selling cannabis goods before 6:00 a.m. and after 10:00 p.m. with delivery drivers returning to the retail premises no later than 10:00 p.m.
- Non-retail operations such as distribution or manufacturing typically operate swing shifts or 24 hours/day and are typically located away from sensitive uses



# Ordinance Design: Security Measures

## 5. Additional security measures?

Recommendation: For uses that may allow for customer access, consider requirements that include:

- Thorough verification measures of age of customer
- Security or staff monitoring locked access to the retail portion only, with separate reception/lobby area
- Customers only having access to retail portion of facility
- Require onsite security personnel during operating hours
- Security cameras monitoring POS area able to capture facial features of customers



# Ordinance Design: Security Measures

Additionally, for laboratory testing uses, or distributor and manufacturer uses that utilize laboratory testing services, require a chain of custody protocol that the appropriate business will establish and have approved by the VPD for all transfer or transportation of products for testing.



# Ordinance Design: License Term

## 6. Term of license?

One year is standard for these types of licenses. See chart below for verified stated license terms for neighboring communities. Staff recommends annual term expiring June 30.

City	Term of license
Hanford	expire Dec 31 annually
Lemoore	no more than 1 year
Woodlake	expire Dec 31 annually
Farmersville	Annual
Tulare	expire Dec 31 annually
Porterville	expire Dec 31 annually



## Ordinance Design: Questions for Next Session

7. What kind of business application and selection process is preferred, and does the City want to define it within the ordinance or by resolution?

8. Who would approve the licenses (Planning Director, City Manager, City Council)?

9. Who would hear appeals?



# Cannabis Business Ordinance Next Steps

Staff will return to the next Council meeting to review questions #7 through #9 in detail.

Staff will continue to work with HdL to format and structure ordinance and business application / selection process.

Staff will also review the apportionment policy suggestions.

Staff will also seek input from several business group partners and CAC.

Staff will return to Council at a later date for further review of these materials.





Any additional input?  
Comments/Questions?