

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

HELENA MORENO
MAYOR

ROBERT RIVERS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 20, 2026

Honorable Aimee McCarron, Councilmember, District A
City of New Orleans
1300 Perdido Street, 2nd Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112

RE: CANNABIS, TOBACCO AND NICOTINE STUDY

Dear Councilmember McCarron:

At its meeting on April 14, 2026, the City Planning Commission adopted the Cannabis, Tobacco and Nicotine Study that was initiated by former District A Councilmember Joe Giarrusso. We are pleased to transmit the Study for your review in accordance with Section 5-402(3)(f) of the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans.

The City Planning Commission staff, in consultation with the City's Department of Health, the Zoning Division and the Law Department, have identified zoning amendments to address the lack of local oversight on the retail sale of Cannabis, Consumable Hemp, Tobacco and Nicotine products. Although the City Code includes the Smoke Free Air Act - which prohibits the sale of tobacco products within 300 feet of any school, library, park, childcare center or place of worship - this regulation is not mirrored in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO), and is therefore not enforced.

Currently, the retail sale of cannabis, tobacco and consumable hemp products are defined within the overarching retail goods establishment category in the CZO. To create specific use permissions and standards for these types of sales, drafting their own use permissions and use standards is necessary, similar to how the retail sale of packaged alcohol use is written into the zoning ordinance.

Three new use categories are proposed for inclusion in the CZO: Marijuana Retailer, Smoke Shop, and the Retail Sale of Tobacco, Nicotine, Cannabis or Consumable Hemp. Each new use will have its own definition, use permissions and/or use standards as required. For each of these uses, the study proposes a distance requirement from any operating school, childcare center, place of worship, public library, public park or public recreational facility. The Study also recommends regulating the hours of operation, signage and lighting.



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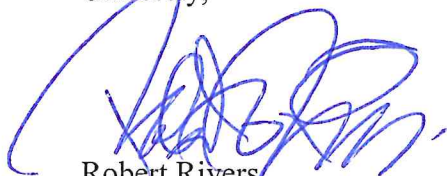
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The City Planning Commission, in its adoption of the study, included four amendments to the staff recommendations:

1. Limit the hours of operation for Medical Marijuana and Smoke Shop retailers.
2. Establish a distance requirement between the location of Medical Marijuana and Smoke Shop retailers from residentially zoned areas.
3. Increase the distance from child-oriented public places (schools, churches, parks, etc.) from 300 feet to between 500-1,000 feet for all new uses.
4. Ensure careful consideration of potential disparate impacts in certain neighborhoods if the distance limitations are increased.

As always, we look forward to working with your office, the City Council, and the community to continue this important work.

Sincerely,



Robert Rivers
Executive Director, City Planning Commission

Attachments: Cannabis, Tobacco and Nicotine Study, April 2026.

CC: Hon. J.P. Morrell, Councilmember At-Large, Council President
Hon. Matthew Willard, Councilmember At-Large, Council Vice-President
Hon. Leslie Harris, Councilmember, District B
Hon. Freddie King, Councilmember, District C
Hon. Eugene Green, Councilmember, District D
Hon. Jason Hughes, Councilmember, District E
Ashley Becnel, Executive Council, City Council
City Planning Commission

