

San Jose Downtown Association  
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February 9, 2022

City of San Jose Planning Commission  
200 East Santa Clara Street  
San José, CA 95113

RE: [Cannabis Ordinance Update](#) (File No. PP21-002), Item 5.a.

Dear Chair Bonilla and Planning Commission members,

The San Jose Downtown Association (SJDA) has represented downtown for 35 years and together with more than 1,800 current businesses and property owners members we strive to increase the vitality of our downtown. SJDA has reviewed the staff recommendation and supports the requested amendments to the current municipal cannabis ordinances as this can help activate underutilized spaces, mitigate vacancy rates and increase activity in our community.

Since July 2014, when the Medical Marijuana Regulatory Program was initiated, we have appreciated how careful the city has been in limiting the number of permits as well as the areas cannabis establishments could locate. We believe the city has now reached the moment to safely increase the permits and allow areas like downtown to accept – and model – new retail stores in this expanding, well-regulated industry.

An important component of this process is security. Per the staff memo, based on the 16 registered dispensaries, the total average crime rate was significantly less on blocks containing dispensaries and this is due to the increased security required as well as the additional accountability of the city staff to check in with these establishments. As part of supporting the staff recommendation, we agree that more resources will need to be allocated to the planning and police departments.

While we are at it, this is also the time for the city to consider new safe social consumption policies as well, beginning with a pilot project at some of downtown's special events to demonstrate a prototype program – think San Francisco's "Grasslands" in Golden Gate Park for the Outside Lands festival.

We appreciate the planning commission's consideration for this item and look forward to working with the city and these retail establishments in our downtown.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Knies', is written in a cursive style.

Scott Knies  
Executive Director