

## C. HEALTH

Cannabis has a substantial impact on the health of our youth and young adults.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that youth are susceptible to the substantial effects of cannabis (2021). In the short-term, cannabis commonly causes an increased heart rate, anxiety, and memory impairment. It also causes the impaired ability to perform complex tasks, difficulty thinking and problem solving, decreased alertness and impaired ability to drive. In the long-term, human brain development continues into an individual's twenties, and exposure to cannabis can alter the brain's normal communication mechanisms and the brain's reward pathway.

The Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is a healthcare district focused on preventive health that serves the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach, and Redondo Beach. Based on medical evidence, BCHD recommends that youth and young adults under the age of 21 abstain from the use of substances such as alcohol, cannabis, vaping, and unprescribed prescription drugs in order to protect their developing brains and optimize healthy brain development.

### Cannabis Retail Establishments Would be in Areas Highly Visible to Youth

If approved by the voters, Measure M would require the issuance of two retail cannabis business licenses along the major throughfares of Pacific Coast Highway and Artesia Boulevard. In a small community like Hermosa Beach, visibility and proximity are unavoidable. Of concern is the visibility and proximity to our most vulnerable population, youth.

Based on the map of possible locations for cannabis retail operations (Attachment 2), one of the possible locations is along Artesia Boulevard, which is designated as a Safe Route to School that leads to and from Mira Costa High School. The other possible locations, near the south end of town on Pacific Coast Highway, are near the school crossing guard location at 5<sup>th</sup> street.

These locations near areas young people frequent are concerning because of the findings in recent studies. A 2021 statewide survey regarding recreational marijuana legalization and use among California adolescents found that recreational marijuana legalization in California has been associated with

increases in the likelihood of adolescents having used marijuana in the last 30 days, as well as lifetime use of marijuana. Further, a research report regarding associations between young adult marijuana outcomes and availability of medical marijuana dispensaries and storefront signage found more frequent use among young adults who live near medical marijuana dispensaries in the Los Angeles County (2019).

### Cannabis Retail Establishments Could Increase Youth Access to Cannabis

While Measure M does limit the sale of cannabis products to persons over 21 years of age, Beach Cities Health District's survey has found that beach cities youths under the age of 21 have found ways to obtain cannabis despite these limitations. Placing two dispensaries in Hermosa Beach likely would increase Hermosa young people's access to cannabis products.

The 2022 Beach Cities Health District California Healthy Kids Survey found 22.4 percent of beach cities 11<sup>th</sup> graders report obtaining marijuana from an adult acquaintance and 22.5 percent reported purchasing the products at a dispensary.

How do most kids at your school who use marijuana usually get it? (Mark all that apply)

	Beach Cities 2022 (11th graders)	California 2017-2019 (11th graders)
At school	11.5%	29%
At parties	33%	37.7%
At concerts or other social events	13.5%	19%
At their own home	18.5%	25.1%
From an adult acquaintance	22.5%	23.8%
From friends or another teenager	35.5%	44.4%
Buy it at a marijuana dispensary	22.5%	19.3%
At bars or clubs	2.5%	5%
Other	8%	11.3%
Don't know	58.5%	49.6%

Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2022

The Healthy Kids Survey also found that by 11<sup>th</sup> grade, as many as 16 percent of our local beach cities youth reported using marijuana in the past 30 days:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	L.A. County (2017-2019)	California (2017-2019)
7th grade	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	4%
9th grade	13%	11%	6%	4%	4%	10%	10%
11th grade	27%	24%	19%	15%	16%	13%	16%

Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2018-22

California and Los Angeles County data are provided by the Biennial State California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) Report, based on a randomly-selected representative sample of secondary schools surveyed over a two-year period. The most recent available data is from 2017-2019.

Measure M cannot control for the "shoulder tap" method of obtaining products by standing outside of a cannabis storefront and asking adults to buy them cannabis.

The Decoy Shoulder Tap Program is an enforcement program that California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and local law enforcement agencies use to detect and deter shoulder tap activity related to the sale of alcohol. During the program, a minor decoy, under the direct supervision of law enforcement officers, solicits adults outside of licensed stores to buy the minor decoy alcohol. Any person seen furnishing alcohol to the minor decoy is arrested for furnishing alcohol to a minor. The California Department of Cannabis Control does not currently have a shoulder tap enforcement program and the HBPD would not be able to undertake such enforcement activities.

## CONCLUSION:

Given the diversity of viewpoints on this policy matter, this report is intended to focus on the considerations pertaining to Measure M itself and not on the individual merit of cannabis retail operations.

If voters reject Measure M, the residents of Hermosa Beach may continue to legally order cannabis products without City limitation or restriction.

If approved by the voters, Measure M would become the prevailing City policy and could only be modified by a costly special election. As written, the ordinance: