

## B. PUBLIC SAFETY

If Measure M is approved by voters and two cannabis retail storefronts established under the specific terms of the ordinance, public safety in the area surrounding the retail establishments and the overall community would be impacted.

In the most favorable of comparisons, the business model of a retail cannabis storefront could be compared to a package liquor store or a convenience store. In each of these licensed operations, high pedestrian and vehicular traffic is experienced, and it is very common to see customers who purchased products at these businesses consuming the products nearby, but not immediately on the property of the business. With Measure M, nearby consumption is a serious concern because the ordinance does prohibit onsite cannabis consumption.

### Nuisances and Crime Associated with Cannabis Retail

The existence of a cannabis retail outlet has been associated with increases in nuisance-related crimes. A recent study published in the Journal of Regional Science and Urban Economics estimated that in census tracts with marijuana dispensaries relative to other census tracts, nuisance-related crime reports increase by about 4.2 per 10,000 census tract residents (2021).

The Hermosa Beach Police Department HBPD is not equipped to handle an increase in crimes without additional resources. When a crime is committed, the impact is not limited to the response of an officer but also includes the investigation of crimes, handling of paperwork, and processing of arrested individuals. The work hours and employees required to address additional crime reports would be significant.

A similar study published in the Journal of Qualitative Criminology found a statistically significant increase in property crimes in the area surrounding retail outlets (2021). According to this study, the analysis "shows some evidence that opening a retail marijuana outlet is associated with an increase in crimes reported within the immediate area specifically for property crimes, violent crimes, and robberies." The increase in crime, particularly robberies, is partially due to the fact that cannabis retail operations are almost completely a cash business. Another factor contributing to the increase is that cannabis is a highly desirable product

with a high resale value on the black market. The value of the product makes retail storefronts more susceptible to afterhours burglaries.

The authority of onsite security for a cannabis retail operator is limited to protecting the business itself and does not extend to surrounding properties.

Therefore, the Hermosa Beach Police Department and the City's Code Enforcement officers would be called upon to maintain community safety by responding to crimes impacting the retail operator, as well as quality of life issues and other crimes in the surrounding area.

#### City Would have Increased Licensing Enforcement Responsibilities

If passed by the voters, Measure M would also create a low-level misdemeanor crime if unlicensed operators moved into Hermosa Beach and tried to open. This would create a situation where the licensed establishment would call and ask for assistance from the City in investigating the legality of the unlicensed operator and would be a challenge from a legal and resource perspective. Enforcement of illicit businesses would have a significant impact on the City and would require additional staffing.

Because every cannabis licensee must have a California State license to operate, the State Department of Cannabis Control would provide some level of enforcement resources. However, the State agency would rely heavily on partnership with local law enforcement to uphold California's commercial cannabis laws and regulations.

The Hermosa Beach Police Department and Code Enforcement Division entrusted with protecting community safety are small teams that strive to be accessible to our residents, visitors, and business. Proactive patrol, high visibility, and responsiveness are important parts of the City's public safety services. Without local control and the ability to regulate, improve, or enforce safe practices at cannabis retail storefronts, any increase in calls would create a drain on the City staffing resources and reduce the City's ability to maintain the current level of public safety throughout the community.