

ATTACHMENT C – Summary of Public Comments on the Draft SECP

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Background & Context

In response to requests from stakeholders, the County of San Diego published the public comments received on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Socially Equitable Cannabis Program (SECP). The comments were posted on the [SECP's Engage San Diego County webpage](#). Responses to these public comments will be published when the Final PEIR is released.

The Draft PEIR, the draft Zoning Ordinance, and the draft Regulatory Code were released for a 60-day public comment period from January 30, 2025, to March 31, 2025. Copies of the Draft PEIR were made available at 12 unincorporated County libraries and electronically on the [County's CEQA webpage](#) and the [SECP's Engage San Diego County webpage](#).

Staff held five public meetings to receive comments, including three virtual public meetings on February 5, 6, and 12 and two in-person open house workshops at the County of San Diego Lakeside Library Branch (February 25) and the County of San Diego Valley Center Library Branch (February 26). Additionally, staff received comments through email and the SECP Engage website.

Summary of Comments

During the public comment period, staff received 357 public comments from 215 unique commenters. Major themes of the feedback include:

- **Environmental Impacts:** Commenters expressed concerns about the potential impacts to wildlife, light pollution, and air quality.
- **Odors:** Commenters expressed concerns about odors from cultivation facilities, consumption lounges, and temporary cannabis events. Commenters expressed opposition to allowing outdoor cultivation.
- **Sensitive Uses and Buffers:** Commenters had differing views on buffers and sensitive uses. There were commenters who expressed support for mirroring the state buffer distances and recommended the removal of expanded sensitive uses with limited public impact, specifically trails, residential care facilities, places of worship, parks, and preserves. However, there were also commenters who supported the expanded list of sensitive uses and buffers outlined in PEIR Project Alternatives 3-5.
- **Public Health:** Commenters expressed concerns about the potential negative health impacts of cannabis use, such as addiction, heart and lung health, and increased emergency room visits. Concerns specific to youth cannabis use, such as brain development and youth mental health, were also discussed in comment letters. Additionally, commenters expressed opposition to permitting consumption lounges and temporary cannabis events due to

concerns about second-hand smoke. Commenters expressed support for providing safer access to cannabis for patients with chronic conditions.

- **Cannabis Product Safety and Testing:** Commenters were concerned about the potential contamination of cannabis products with pesticides and banned chemicals.
- **Code Enforcement and Crime:** Commenters questioned whether the County had sufficient resources for Code Enforcement Officers to address a potential increase in complaints relating to odor, noise, and other health and safety concerns. Additionally, commenters were concerned about a potential increase in crime surrounding cannabis facilities.
- **Community Notification:** Commenters emphasized the importance of being notified of proposed cannabis facilities in their communities and having opportunities to provide input during the permitting process.
- **Overconcentration of Facilities:** Commenters recommended a cap on retail and cultivation facilities in each community planning area in order to mitigate concerns that facilities would be concentrated in their communities. Commenters also expressed support for a limit on the total number of cultivation licenses.
- **Consumption Lounges and Temporary Events:** Commenters expressed opposition to consumption lounges and temporary events. Commenters highlighted that locating temporary events and consumption lounges in rural areas that lack public transit and rideshare services could increase the number of impaired drivers, resulting in traffic crashes. Additionally, commenters expressed concerns about increased traffic in their communities due to cannabis uses, particularly temporary events. Commenters also cited public health concerns from secondhand smoke from these uses.