



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 20, 2022

City of San Diego to Host First Cannabis Listening Session

COMMUNITY MEMBERS INVITED TO PROVIDE IN-PERSON FEEDBACK ON CANNABIS EQUITY IN SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO –The City of San Diego [Cannabis Business Division](#) and the [Department of Race and Equity](#) will host the first of eight listening sessions on Monday, May 23, starting at 5:30 p.m. at the [Sherman Heights Community Center](#). The event is free, and residents, community organizations and business owners are encouraged to attend.

Each listening session provides an opportunity for San Diegans and community organizations disproportionately impacted by past state and federal drug enforcement policies to identify hurdles and share suggestions on lowering the barriers to allow residents to participate in providing products and business ownership in the local legal cannabis market.

“The City’s goal is to hear from the community on how we can make business ownership within the cannabis industry more equitable and inclusive,” said Chief Race and Equity Officer Kim Desmond. “The community’s feedback, paired with context regarding how systemic racism exacerbated the War on Drugs, will help develop a Cannabis Equity Program that fosters opportunities for ownership and employment by decreasing barriers for those most impacted.”

[Announced in late April](#), all 1.5- to 2-hour-long listening sessions will have Spanish translation services, and most are being conducted during evenings. A Saturday and an online session are also being offered to accommodate the constraints of working individuals and families. During each session, participants will be placed into smaller focus groups where they will receive an overview of [Proposition 64: The Adult Use of Marijuana Act](#) and other pertinent cannabis laws and regulations. The roundtable meeting format will help foster engagement for participants by creating an opportunity for each person to share how disparities and challenges have impacted their personal lives. In addition, to help protect the confidentiality of participants, feedback will be accepted anonymously.

A comprehensive report analyzing listening session feedback will be presented to the City Council in September, helping meet a State of California grant deadline for the City to create its first cannabis equity program by November.

To view a calendar of upcoming listening sessions and register for each event, visit sandiego.gov/listening-sessions. Registration is encouraged but is not required to attend.

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