

Cannabis Advisory Task Force (CATF)

Next-Step Deliverables & Mission Aligned Work Plan

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cannabis Advisory Task Force is to serve as a balanced advisory group to City Council regarding cannabis consumption, sale, manufacturing, and cultivation, with respect to public safety, zoning, community, business, and education concerns.

Purpose

This document outlines the phased advisory priorities of the Cannabis Advisory Task Force (CATF) in direct alignment with its mission to provide balanced recommendations to City Council concerning cannabis consumption, sale, manufacturing, and cultivation, with specific attention to public safety, zoning, community impact, business considerations, and education.

Each phase is designed to clarify municipal authority, assess local impact, and provide structured recommendations within the City's scope.

This work plan is intended to clarify municipal consideration and does not duplicate or replace regulatory functions assigned to the Cannabis Control Authority (CCA).

Phase I: Zoning & Land Use (February)

Mission Alignment: Zoning, Community, Public Safety

Primary Advisory Question:

What zoning considerations are appropriate for cannabis businesses within existing municipal authority?

Refined Focus

1. Review current zoning classification and permitted uses.
2. Evaluate buffer distances in context of legal defensibility and equity.
3. Assess alignment with Comprehensive Plan goals.
4. Identify potential unintended consequences of over restriction
5. Clarify limits of municipal zoning authority relative to state law

Deliverable to Council

A zoning advisory memorandum outlining:

1. Legal guardrails
2. Options within municipality authority

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3. Risk Considerations
4. Recommended approach grounded in public safety and fairness.

February Meeting Deliverables

1. Discussion with Hannah Sabo, Zoning Administrator
2. Recommendations Framework for Council consideration (Headed by Zoning Subcommittee)

Phase II – Municipal Readiness & Public Safety Considerations (March)

Mission Alignment: Public Safety, Consumption Concerns

Focus: Shift the tone away from creating enforcement systems and toward clarifying roles

Primary Advisory Question:

What is the appropriate municipal role in public safety and enforcement as it relates to cannabis?

Refined Focus

1. Clarify enforcement responsibilities between state and locality.
2. Discuss impaired driving education and awareness initiatives.
3. Review municipal readiness and resource implications
4. Identify what falls outside of CATF or City Authority

Deliverable to Council:

A public safety advisory brief outlining:

1. Municipal responsibilities
2. Education opportunities
3. Budget considerations
4. Areas requiring state level coordination

March Meeting Deliverables

1. Radar check with Patrick Duhaney, City Manager
2. Recommendations Framework for Council consideration

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Phase III – Community & Education (April)

Mission Alignment: Community, Education, Youth Protection

Focus: Anchor in advisory capacity, not program creation.

Refined Focus

1. Define scope of parental and public education
2. Distinguish between City supported messaging and state led campaigns
3. Identify prevention best practices
4. Consider funding alignment within fiscal constraints

Deliverable to Council

A community education advisory framework including:

1. Definition of “parental education”
2. Education model options
3. Public safety considerations
4. Funding observations

Phase IV – Market Structure & Business Environment(May)

Focus: Refocus away from regulating structure and toward impact analysis.

Primary Advisory Question:

How might state defined market structures impact local stakeholders and economic participation in Virginia Beach?

Refined Focus:

1. Clarify terminology such as microbusiness and MSO as defined at the state level
2. Identify potential impacts on local entrepreneurs
3. Consider economic equity within municipal authority
4. Ensure recommendations avoid duplicating state regulatory functions.

Deliverable to Council

A market impact advisory memo outlining:

1. Terminology clarification
2. Local economic considerations
3. Observations regarding potential impacts on existing Virginia Beach businesses
4. Policy considerations within municipal scope.

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Cross-Cutting Considerations (Ongoing)

To remain aligned with the CATF mission, all phases will:

1. Operate strictly in an advisory capacity
2. Avoid duplication of state regulatory authority
3. Identify budget feasibility within current fiscal year
4. Clearly distinguish between City authority and state control.
5. Acknowledge potential future legislative developments such as consumption venues and identify when municipal planning discussions would be appropriate.

Final Outcome

At the conclusion of these phases, CATF will deliver a consolidated advisory report that is:

1. Phased and deliberate
2. Grounded in public safety and youth protection
3. Respectful of municipal authority limits
4. Supportive of fair economic participation
5. Clearly aligned with the CATF mission