



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES CHICAGO'S FIRST ZONING REQUIREMENTS FOR  
LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS**

*Following community engagement meetings, the substitute ordinance modifies City's  
downtown exclusion zone in which no cannabis sales are permitted*

**CHICAGO** — Following a series of citywide community engagement meetings and working group sessions with community advocates, aldermen, business leaders, policy experts and cannabis professionals over the past month, City Council today approved Mayor Lightfoot's ordinance that establishes Chicago's first zoning regulations for the sale of adult-use cannabis. The new substitute ordinance passed today modifies the City's downtown exclusion zone, strengthens regulations on residential, business, commercial, downtown and industrial zoning districts, and expands community input to ensure residents can petition against new dispensaries applying to establish in their neighborhood.

"These strengthened regulations reflect the voices and input of Chicago's aldermen, local businesses advocates and residents from across the city as part of our shared vision to ensure that safe, responsible and equitable cannabis legislation become law," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Zoning is the first step in a broader process of working in lockstep with community leaders and residents to ensure meaningful opportunities for all communities - including those that shouldered the burden of unjust drug policies have — to benefit from this new industry."

As part of the ordinance, the City's downtown exclusion zone bans cannabis sales north of the Chicago River from Lake Michigan to the east, State St. to the west and Division Street to the north. South of the Chicago River, cannabis sales are banned from Lake Michigan to the east, the Chicago River to the west and Van Buren Street to the south.

Additionally, following Jan 1, 2021, the City will conduct a comprehensive land-impact study as part of an effort to analyze the environmental, economic and social impacts of dispensaries in various communities and determine in consultation with City Council whether adjustments to the designated cannabis zones and caps are needed.



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"Ensuring Chicago's central business district and lucrative commuter corridor have access to this new market is essential to maximizing the economic opportunities created by this emerging industry," said Alderman Brendan Reilly, 42nd Ward.

As part of Mayor Lightfoot's efforts to ensure residents have a voice in the implementation of legalized cannabis sales in Chicago, the ordinance also establishes requirements for all new cannabis business establishments to host community engagement sessions as part of their application through the Zoning Board of Appeals. Additionally, residents can ban dispensaries from establishing within their precinct of the city if more than 25% of residents sign a petition within 90 days demanding that the applying dispensary establish elsewhere.

"We know that Chicago's black and brown communities have been hit hardest by the unjust marijuana enforcement policies of our past, which is why I look forward to working with Mayor Lightfoot and my fellow aldermen throughout this process to right those wrongs by ensuring those communities are the first to benefit from the legalized cannabis policies of our future," said Alderman Jason Ervin, 28<sup>th</sup> Ward and Chairman of the Black Caucus.

Today's ordinance comes after more than 500 community members from across Chicago attended community information sessions hosted by the Mayor's Office and the City Council Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards last week to provide public input opportunities on the City's proposed zoning regulations for recreational cannabis sales.

"Over the past three community engagement meetings, we've heard residents from across Chicago express their enthusiasm, concerns and feedback on the implementation of legalized cannabis," said Chairman Tom Tunney, Zoning Committee and Alderman of the 44th Ward. "Through working with community members, businesses, city leaders, and other partners over the past month, we've built on our smart and effective cannabis regulations to ensure Chicago's health and safety are at the forefront of this new industry."

The zoning regulations represent the City's first step towards implementing legalized cannabis throughout Chicago. Over the next couple months, the City will continue to work with City Council, local businesses and community members to develop the rules and regulations to guide the licensure and cannabis consumption upon its legalization on Jan. 1, 2020.



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Additional meetings with the industry and community chambers of commerce will be held across the City to gather public input on the licensing, consumption and additional factors of the new industry.

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