

Eastern Shore Community Services Board

Marijuana Use Community Readiness Assessment



Prepared by The Planning Council
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Introduction

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is a 70-mile strip of land that is located just off the mid-Atlantic coast. The Shore is surrounded by water on three sides and is the southernmost point of the Delmarva peninsula (Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia). The Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay surround the Eastern Shore, while it is connected to Virginia Beach by the 17-mile Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel.

The total population of both counties of the Virginia Eastern Shore – Accomack and Northampton – is just under 46,000, with 73% living in Accomack County. The Eastern Shore population makes up just 0.6% of the total state population.

Females make up just over half of the population in both counties. Racial demographics of both counties show: 63-68% White only; 29-34% Black/African American; 0.8-1% Asian alone; approximately 2% Two or More Races; and over 9% Hispanic in both counties.

Median household income is lower than neighboring counties, just over \$47,000. Both counties host a much higher poverty rate than the state of Virginia – Accomack: 17.6, Northampton: 16.2%, Virginia: 9.2%.¹

Community Input on Marijuana Use on the Eastern Shore

The Eastern Shore Community Services Board, as directed by the Office of Behavioral Health Wellness within the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, conducted a Marijuana Use Community Readiness Assessment in March 2022. The Planning Council was engaged to conduct Stakeholder Interviews and/or Focus Groups, research, and reporting.

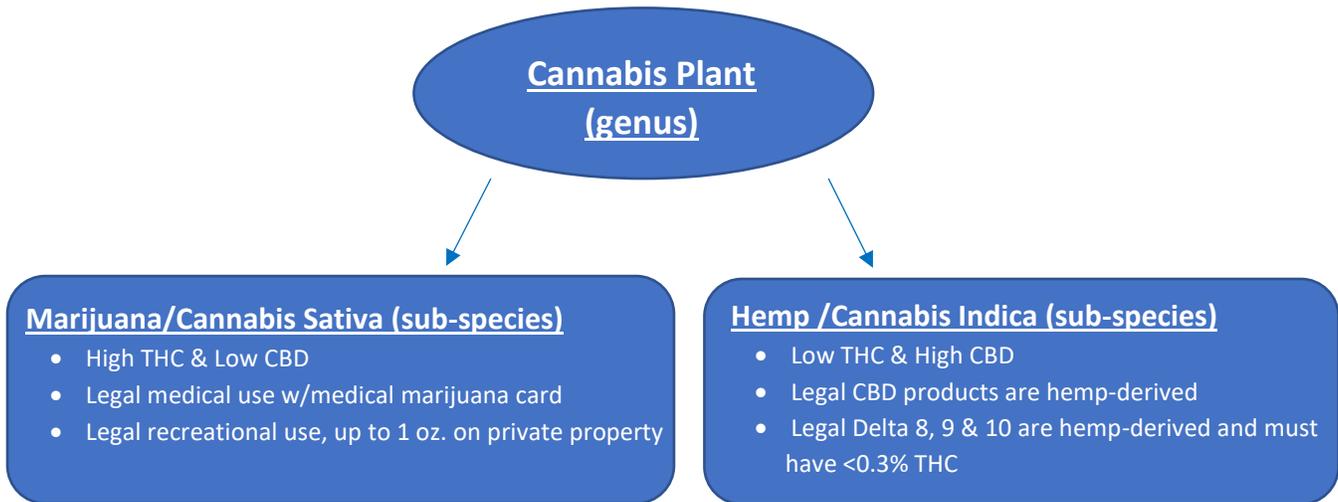
The purpose of the interviews is to capture community attitudes and perceptions around 1) marijuana use, 2) the legalization of recreational marijuana in 2024, and 3) potential community resources needed as marijuana use increases. Data collected, including that from the conversations with residents across Virginia, will develop a larger strategy around prevention and treatment programs. The Planning Council visited businesses and recruited various individuals for interviews, conducting one focus group with 6 human services case managers, a mini focus group with 2 participants, and five individual stakeholder interviews.

Cannabis Overview

There are several names for marijuana and its products that are often used interchangeably by the public, but there are important differences between each plant and its uses. *Cannabis* is a plant genus with two main cultivated species: *Cannabis sativa* and *Cannabis indica* (a third species, *Cannabis ruderalis*, is considered a weed and is rarely cultivated). Each species has a different ratio of THC (the compound that provides the “high”) and CBD (the cannabinoids

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, population, and income estimates. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US>

which do not produce a high). Marijuana is still categorized by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration as a Schedule 1 drug, which means 1) it has no currently accepted medical use, and 2) it has a high potential for abuse.² The graphic below illustrates the difference between Cannabis Sativa and Cannabis Indica.



What is Legal in Virginia

Medical Marijuana. In 2017, Virginia legalized the use of cannabidiol (CBD) or THC-A oil specifically for those suffering from severely debilitating epilepsy. In 2018, the law was expanded so that patients with *any* medical condition could purchase these products as medical treatment. By 2020, Virginia had established a comprehensive medical marijuana law.³ In Virginia, medical marijuana is currently only available at a state-registered pharmaceutical processor. Patients must have a doctor’s referral to get a medical marijuana card and then apply to the state Board of Pharmacy to receive the card. Having this card, however, does not necessarily come with information about dosage, how to use, or type of product to use. Some patients may still need guidance from a cannabis nurse to know when, how often and which product will best treat their condition. Companies that are approved to grow, process, and dispense medical cannabis in Virginia are known as “pharmaceutical processors,” and there are currently four such companies in the state.⁴ For the Hampton Roads region, which is in Health

² U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration website, Drug Scheduling. Accessed March 14, 2022, at [Drug Scheduling \(dea.gov\)](https://www.dea.gov)

³ Virginia’s Medical Cannabis Law website, accessed on February 22, 2022, at [Virginia's Medical Cannabis Law \(mvp.org\)](https://mvp.org)

⁴ Cannabis in Virginia website, accessed February 20, 2022, at [Cannabis in Virginia | Cannabis.Virginia.gov](https://cannabis.virginia.gov)

Area V, the processing company is Columbia Care Eastern Virginia, LLC, located in Portsmouth, Virginia.

There are also smoke and vape shops on the Eastern Shore and across Hampton Roads that sell legal hemp-derived CBD products and legal THC products that have less than 0.3% of THC on a dry weight basis. Products include edible gummies, vape cartridges, teas, lotions, and tinctures among many others. This interview process revealed that staff at the stores are extremely knowledgeable about the laws and are eager to participate in public education efforts about the products they sell.

Recreational Marijuana. On April 7, 2021, the Virginia General Assembly legalized the possession and/or consumption of up to one ounce of cannabis sativa for recreational use by adults 21 years and older *on private property*, and the home cultivation of cannabis plants (up to four plants per household) for adults 21 years and older. Retail sales are scheduled to begin on January 1, 2024, giving the state a three-year timeframe to create comprehensive regulations. As such, it is currently illegal for any person or business to *sell or distribute* marijuana, marijuana seeds, clones, flower, or any other part of the marijuana plant in Virginia before 2024.⁵

In early 2022, legislators and other stakeholders debated moving the timeline for legalizing retail sales of marijuana from 2024 to September 2022. However, the bill to move the date to 2022 did not pass and many lawmakers voiced the need for more time to develop a regulatory framework.

Part of this legal framework includes a Cannabis Control Authority established to regulate the marijuana industry. The purpose of this Authority is:

*“To control the possession, sale, transportation, distribution, and delivery of retail marijuana and retail marijuana products in the Commonwealth,”
in order to “promote the health, safety, welfare, convenience, and prosperity of the people of the Commonwealth.”⁶*

The Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council was also created to advise the Authority on public health issues. Both entities have begun meeting to craft guidance around the following considerations of the new law:

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Cannabis Control Authority, Board of Directors Meeting, September 9, 2021, accessed February 22, 2022 at [Virginia cannabis control authority vcca - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

- **Prevention and Education.** The Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council will develop prevention measures, especially around youth access and advertising that targets youth. The Council will also promote public awareness campaigns and guidance on school curricula. The new law will allocate 25% of marijuana tax revenue toward substance abuse prevention and treatment and an additional 5% to public health programs.⁷
- **Social Equity and Criminal Justice Reform.** The Cannabis Control Authority will regulate the marijuana industry with an eye toward social equity and criminal justice reforms for communities and persons disproportionately harmed by marijuana use and possession laws in the past. This authority will be the entity that issues business licenses once retail sales become legal.⁸

The new law will allow for expunging records of those with marijuana offenses to eliminate barriers to diverse participation in the marijuana industry.⁹ In Virginia between 2010 – 2019, the Black/African American arrest rate for marijuana was 3.5 times higher than for whites, and the conviction rate was nearly four times that of whites.¹⁰ According to a report by the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, “In other states that have created commercial marijuana markets, relatively few Black individuals have benefited from the establishment of commercial marijuana markets. Industry statistics show the vast majority of current marijuana business owners are white, and there are few Black-owned marijuana businesses. To redress past disproportionality in marijuana enforcement and ensure Black Virginians have an opportunity to benefit from the new commercial market, Virginia could implement several “social equity” initiatives.”¹¹

A Cannabis Equity Reinvestment Fund will receive 30% of all tax profits (estimated at \$26 million in Year 1 and \$128 in Year 5) to invest in communities that have experienced disproportionate harm from prior marijuana laws. An Equity & Diversity Support Team will assist qualified retail applicants and address barriers faced by small, women, minority-

⁷ Cannabis in Virginia website, accessed February 20, 2022, at [Cannabis in Virginia | Cannabis.Virginia.gov](https://www.cannabis.virginia.gov)

⁸ Cannabis in Virginia website, accessed February 20, 2022, at [Cannabis in Virginia | Cannabis.Virginia.gov](https://www.cannabis.virginia.gov)

⁹ Cannabis Control Authority, Board of Directors Meeting, September 9, 2021, accessed February 22, 2022 at [virginia cannabis control authority vcca - Search \(bing.com\)](https://www.virginia.gov/cannabis-control-authority/vcca-search)

¹⁰ Virginia Joint Legislative Audit And Review Commission (JLARC), Report to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia: Key Considerations for the Legalization of Marijuana, November 16, 2020. Accessed on February 22, 2022, at [Rpt542Sum.pdf \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.virginia.gov/rpt542sum).

¹¹ Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), Draft Report to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia: Key Considerations for the Legalization of Marijuana. November 16, 2020. Accessed on February 22, 2022, at [Rpt542Sum.pdf \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.virginia.gov/rpt542sum).

owned businesses in communities negatively impacted by marijuana laws.¹² However, several lawmakers are sponsoring bills that would instead funnel the 30% of tax profits to schools and to the state's general fund.¹³

The Impact of Recreational Marijuana Legalization on Public Health

As more states legalize recreational marijuana, researchers are gathering and publishing data on potential effects of legalization on public health. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) reviewed several studies on the use patterns of marijuana after legalization and found that the results varied too much to draw any conclusions at this stage of research.

Risks and Benefits: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has licensed three synthetic drugs based on cannabinoids for patients suffering from nausea from chemotherapy and AIDS patients experiencing wasting syndrome.¹⁴ In addition, there is substantial clinical evidence that medical marijuana reduces chronic pain and eases symptoms associated with multiple sclerosis; and some evidence that it helps treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Tourette's Syndrome and sleep disorders.¹⁵ However, the National Academies of Science states, "Unlike other controlled substances such as alcohol or tobacco, no accepted standards for safe use or appropriate dose are available to help guide individuals as they make choices regarding the issues of if, when, where, and how to use cannabis safely and, in regard to therapeutic uses, effectively."¹⁶

Given that marijuana has clear medical benefits, like any substance, it may also carry the risk of overuse for some people. The Yale School of Medicine defines marijuana use disorder as "the continued use of cannabis despite significant negative impact on one's life and health."¹⁷

¹² Cannabis in Virginia website, accessed February 20, 2022, at [Cannabis in Virginia | Cannabis.Virginia.gov](https://www.cannabis.virginia.gov)

¹³ Denise Lavoie, Associated Press, Legalization of Recreational Marijuana, January 29, 2022. Accessed February 10, 2022, at [Virginia Republicans push for changes in marijuana law | AP News](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2022/01/29/virginia-republicans-push-for-changes-in-marijuana-law/)

¹⁴ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on the Health Effects of Marijuana: An Evidence Review and Research Agenda. The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 12. PMID: 28182367. Accessed on March 17, 2022, at [The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28182367/)

¹⁵ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on the Health Effects of Marijuana: An Evidence Review and Research Agenda. The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 12. PMID: 28182367. Accessed on March 17, 2022, at [The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28182367/)

¹⁶ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on the Health Effects of Marijuana: An Evidence Review and Research Agenda. The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 12. PMID: 28182367.

¹⁷ Yale Medicine, "Cannabis/Marijuana Use Disorder Fact Sheet," Accessed March 17, 2022, at

Regular long-term use can lead to dependence in some people, which includes the typical withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, restlessness, and sleep disturbances. Addiction may be diagnosed if a person meets specific criteria such as the inability to stop using marijuana and relationship/social problems.¹⁸ The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) reports, “In 2015, about 4.0 million people in the United States met the diagnostic criteria for a marijuana use disorder; 138,000 voluntarily sought treatment for their marijuana use.”¹⁹

Interestingly, many of the key stakeholders interviewed for this project tended to disagree that there exist any significant negative effects from marijuana use. The difference between public and scientific perspectives is summed up by Keven Hill, an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School when he states, “There is a growing body of literature on the therapeutic use of cannabis and, similarly, we’re learning bits and pieces about the problems associated with cannabis use. But our increased knowledge pales in comparison to the intense public interest, so one of the issues we often encounter is a ***growing divide between what the science says and what public perception is.***”²⁰

As marijuana becomes more accepted for its health and recreational benefits, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation policy brief notes a few specific areas of concern to monitor after recreational marijuana is legalized:²¹

- Studies need to examine the legal marijuana supply, looking at the cost, product type, potency, quality control, dosages, and sourcing. High potency products and new formulas/extracts will certainly alter the health implications. Edibles must also be examined as people may tend to favor that over a smoked product.
- Hospitalizations for marijuana abuse, dependence or injuries may increase after legalization.
- Although states promote social equity, there is evidence that dispensaries are sometimes concentrated in minority communities, thus creating additional potential risk for youth in those neighborhoods.
- Car accidents may increase, although this tends to be a concern of those not in favor of legalization.
- Health officials remain concerned about whether marijuana will increase the use of other substances such as tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and opioids.

[Cannabis/Marijuana Use Disorder > Fact Sheets > Yale Medicine](#)

¹⁸ Yale Medicine, “Cannabis/Marijuana Use Disorder Fact Sheet,” Accessed March 17, 2022, at

¹⁹ National Institute on Drug Addiction, “Is Marijuana Addictive?” Accessed on March 17, 2022, at [Is marijuana addictive? | National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\) \(nih.gov\)](#)

²⁰ Alvin Powell, The Harvard Gazette, February 24, 2020, “What We Know and Don’t Know About Pot.” Accessed on March 16, 2022 at [Professor explores marijuana’s safe use and addiction – Harvard Gazette](#).

Community Readiness Reflection of Stakeholder Interviews

There were 13 individuals interviewed for this assessment. This included one small group interview and 11 individual interviews. Participants were all adults varying in ages from early 20s to late 60s; most were working, a few were not, some were store owners and others were employees, several were practicing in the social service field providing direct services to clients. Interviewees lived in different communities across the Eastern Shore and were racially diverse. Participant descriptions are below:

- Case Manager for a Non-profit
- Retailer Employee
- Coffee/Sandwich Shop Employee
- Self-professed Users of Marijuana
- Smoke Shop Owner
- Smoke Shop Employees (two of whom participated in the small group interview)
- Residents/Citizens of the Eastern Shore

1) What is the overall average score of the Community Readiness Assessment?

The average score for The Eastern Shore is **4.2**.

- a. What stage or level is this at? Select the closest, most relevant response.
- iv. **Preplanning:** There is clear recognition that something must be done, and there may even be a group addressing it. However, efforts are not focused or detailed.

2) What is the average score for each of the domains?

- a. **Community Knowledge of the Efforts: 4.5**
- b. **Leadership: 2.6**
- c. **Community Climate: 4.5**
- d. **Community Knowledge about the Issue: 5.8**
- e. **Resources Related to the Issue: 3.5**

3) In reflecting on the overall Community Readiness Assessment score, and each individual domain score, please share your thoughts on how this represents the community's approach to gaming and gambling, or marijuana, at this time. Do these scores seem accurate? Or do they seem higher or lower than you expected?

Based on the input from this group of area residents and employees, the overall score of 4.2 placing the area in the stage of Preplanning seems quite accurate. Most residents responded that they were in favor of legalizing marijuana. Many also readily admitted to smoking it or growing it or knew somebody who did. A few retailers offer groups for the purpose of educating residents about marijuana use and several social service agencies were prepared to offer support should it be needed. There was also an upcoming local

festival that has been organized to celebrate marijuana and its many uses. Overall, there did not appear to be a large amount of coordination between agencies and retailers although there was some.

a. Community Knowledge of the Efforts: 4.5

Based on the responses to questions 5 and 9, community knowledge on the Eastern Shore is squarely between the stages of Preplanning and Preparation. Residents recognize that something must be done and there are some groups addressing those issues but the efforts are not focused. Several individuals have taken leadership roles in addressing the community in regard to education surrounding marijuana growth and its use and the community as a whole offers modest support of those efforts. It is important to note that there are two split groups that have different goals. One group is highly supportive of the legalization of marijuana and believes it offers many health benefits and is not dangerous. The opposing group believes that marijuana can be harmful and is invested in treating those that are negatively affected by its use. No one in the opposing group was against the legalization of marijuana per se but they believe it comes with some negative consequences. Most everyone interviewed was aware that marijuana had become legalized in some capacity, but their understanding as to the exact laws was very inconsistent. Only one person interviewed believed that the police were enforcing the laws surrounding marijuana and its use and had a fairly traumatic story involving a raid using guns and having children taken by CPS. The general consensus was that police are reluctant to enforce any laws while they are undergoing change and that use and possession of marijuana are not a crime. Most everyone was aware of some type of resource that could be used to treat an individual with a marijuana use disorder. A few stated that treatment could be rendered by using a pre-existing group addressing other addictions.

b. Leadership: 2.6

Leadership received the lowest score of any of the individual domains by almost an entire point. It fell halfway between the Denial and Resistance stage and the Vague Awareness stage. Most responders had never heard a community leader address any of the issues related to marijuana use in their community. Most of those who responded seemed to feel that even if leadership feels positively about the legalization of marijuana, many are reluctant to push forward with additional legalization efforts until they are able to see how the efforts would affect them - both professionally (by maintaining favorable public opinion) and personally (waiting to see if they could perhaps benefit financially from the efforts). The shop

owners were adamantly against all of the additional taxing that seemed to be attached to making the sale of THC products legal. They felt that the extreme taxing measures would counter any benefit to making sales legal and that customers would just return to the black market if it was more affordable.

c. Community Climate: 4.5

Based on the answers received, it appears that community members of the Eastern Shore are leaving the Preplanning phase and are headed towards the Preparation phase where marijuana sales and use are fully legal. Those currently using marijuana both recreationally and medically and those selling products associated with marijuana use are ready for it to be more fully legalized. They believe that the community is ready and is generally supportive of legalization efforts. Most felt that use was occurring regularly and fairly openly and that prosecution surrounding the issue was rare. Those providing human services were not as positive and realize that marijuana use can potentially have negative behaviors associated with its use.

d. Community Knowledge about the Issue: 5.8

Based on the answers to questions 4 and 6, this was the domain that received the highest score. Most everyone in the community feels that marijuana products and plants are readily available to anyone in the community that wants them. Most felt individuals would know where to go and who to ask and that use is rampant. Although knowledge about the laws was varied, no one seemed to feel “at risk” of prosecution for its use. An upcoming festival (with tickets ranging from \$60 to \$100 for VIPs) is going to be a popular way to obtain products and for folks to meet other users. The sale of products such as a festival tickets, t-shirts or other paraphernalia appears to be a creative way to circumvent its current illegal sale. Folks can purchase these items and are “gifted” amounts of marijuana in return.

e. Resources Related to the Issue: 3.5

Eastern Shore respondents scored higher on this domain than several of the other communities that have been assessed. Most everyone was aware of some type of program that could be used to treat marijuana use disorder even if it meant just going to the hospital for treatment. Not everyone was ready to admit that a marijuana use disorder really exists, but everyone seemed to agree that abuse of the substance existed. Everyone felt education around the issue was needed and that an informed user was a better user. Ads were not reported as being prevalent even on social media. Several individuals reported that driving high was like

driving under the influence of alcohol and shouldn't be done and one shop had a printed notice of the warning on the shop countertop.

4) What do the scores tell you about next steps to take for marijuana prevention work?

All of the smoke shop employees and owners were adamant about providing education but only offered a pro-use perspective. Everyone agreed that education is necessary if the legalization is going to proceed and if individuals are going to use it responsibly and effectively. Nearly everyone interviewed did not feel like marijuana prevention was an option or even necessary but that awareness of the effects and consequences of using it is vital. Most everyone recognized that certain individuals could have a problem associated with marijuana use and knew of a place to at least start having them receive treatment should it be needed.

Community Readiness Assessment Process

5) Share any successes that were encountered implementing the Community Readiness Assessment.

This assessment was received positively by nearly everyone we interviewed. Most everyone was eager to share their experiences with marijuana and they are eager to see it legalized more fully. Every place visited was friendly and open to questioning and it was easy to see that this is an issue that affects people of all ages, socio-economic statuses, and races.

6) Share any challenges that were encountered implementing the Community Readiness Assessment.

The Virginia state bill to move up the legalization of the sale of marijuana was rejected last month (March 2022). The bill will still be considered in 2024 and legalization is expected to begin in September of that year. Community responses were inconsistent as to what current policies and laws are in place. Although the perceptions seems to be that marijuana use is not being prosecuted criminally, most users were obtuse in their answers when it came to their own personal use (especially in the areas of growth and sales). To the store owners, the fact that the legalization of marijuana is not recognized on the federal level is confusing and causes all sorts of financial issues since they are unable to use FDIC insured banks. The largest challenge, however, is that although respondents recognized that individuals could over use marijuana, no one seemed to recognize marijuana use disorder as a viable problem and therefore justifying programs to treat it will be more difficult.

7) What would be helpful for future Community Readiness Assessments?

In-person interviews conducted by a team of two who could follow-up on responses seemed to be the most effective in getting comprehensive participation. Once legalization allows for the sale of marijuana and it has been legal for a period of time, it would be beneficial to conduct another assessment to see what has changed regarding the community's perceptions and to see if there are additional resources available tailored towards treating its misuse.

Last Reflections

8) Describe the major learnings or takeaways that you, staff, the CSB or coalition, will remember and take with you all moving forward.

Education will be vital moving forward. Clear rules are also needed. The financial impact of legalization is worthy of in-depth study. Overall, participants did not feel as if marijuana use was harmful but recognized that the issue is multi-layered and needs to be explored further.

Score Sheet – Eastern Shore Community Services Board

	Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3	Interview #4
Community Knowledge of the Efforts	7	8	6	3
Leadership	3	5	1	1
Community Climate	4	3.5	6	3
Community Knowledge about the Issue	7	7	6	6
Resources Related to the Issue	6	6	4	4

	Interview #5	Interview #6	Interview #7	Interview #8
Community Knowledge of the Efforts	4	3	3	3
Leadership	1	3	3	8
Community Climate	2	5	4	4
Community Knowledge about the Issue	4	6	4	6
Resources Related to the Issue	4	2.5	1	6

	Interview #9	Group Interview #10	Interview #11	Interview #12
Community Knowledge of the Efforts	1	7	4.5	4
Leadership	2	2	1	1
Community Climate	3.5	8	3	8
Community Knowledge about the Issue	7	6	4	7
Resources Related to the Issue	1	6	1	1

AVERAGE SCORES:

Community Knowledge of the Efforts	4.5
Leadership	2.6
Community Climate	4.5
Community Knowledge about the Issue	5.8
Resources Related to the Issue	3.5

COMMUNITY READINESS SCORE: 4.2

Appendix A:

Stakeholder Interviews

Interview #1

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share how you are connected to marijuana-related issues in our community? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community?

Personally, I am against it, professionally I understand it's imbedded in the community and especially with those suffering from trauma. My role is to help them either get off of the substance or to find legal assistance if they need it.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Almost every uses it

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?

Due to lots of poverty and generational trauma, it is super easy to get, there is a lack of education surrounding it and lot of folks self-medicate.

- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

Middle to lower class

- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Most who grow, grow for personal use. It has become more common with the decriminalization of it. More folks have gotten plants whereas before they were going to dealers.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio.

I have not heard it on the radio. It pops up on phone advertisements or on social media a lot

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?

Geared towards the millennials and younger crowd.

- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

That it is a risk-free drug – no risks and everyone does it.

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Yes, so easy, you can just go to their neighbors. It's like borrowing sugar.

- a. Why do you think this?
During High School, everyone used it, it was passed under the cafeteria tables. I know so many folks both professionally and personally who do it. There is no secret about it.
- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
A few stores sell CBD oils. We have smoke shops on every corner. Here there is a strip where there are 20 stores in a mile radius.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

That you can have 2 plants and grow for personal use, that there is a limit to how much one can travel with and that it is still considered a DUI if you are caught driving while using it

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?
Here even the police officers use it. They would only charge you if they tested for it and that rarely happens.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community? Very

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

They are ecstatic for it, want it, want more of it.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.
Yes, the upper class – the “come heres” who retire here are more dissident than the local community
- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?
They are unaware. There is little to no education about use or what it is.

8. What is your perception of community leaders’ attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

They see it as another thing to tax.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?

Yes. Some community leaders are against it but don't know how to talk about it and are drowned out by those that do know

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

The prevention team at the CSB. They will address how to use it responsibly and if someone has a problem how to work and recover from it.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
See above

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I really want education around the issue. If we empower everyone with education and information, they will make their own informed choices.

Interview #2

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I don't use it, but it's been around me all my life.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Fairly common. There are quite a few people who use it. Honestly considering that we just legalized it, I think it's more the recreational use.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?

I mean I'm gonna assume for various reasons. I would say as a coping mechanism, or a social item, and then some truly need it for medical purposes.

- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

I know growing up here it was something to do to challenge the law but not get in much trouble for. Currently all age groups, from teenagers to seniors. Given a choice some prefer marijuana over tobacco because it does have some medicinal value. Usually, it starts around late teen years or early college years, and either continues or fades after that.

- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

I know people who do it for both purposes. Mainly though it's just for personal use because it saves money and they don't have to participate in the illicit market. But I'm pretty sure there are some people who probably growing to sell.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio.

I would say word of mouth is the best way to promote around here. more than strict advertising. Mostly about products and ways to consume (edibles, etc.). CBD is promoted here.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
 - b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?
4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

That depends on your circle. If you are from here, you can probably find it. But if you are a “come here” it would be more difficult. People have mixed emotions about strangers and make it harder to acquire.

- a. Why do you think this?
- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

We do have a couple of tobacco outlets that double as unofficial accessory sales. Some convenience stores also sell some, and private retail stores. The tobacco outlets are the most used for that purpose.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

Around here, as long as you are discreet, and law enforcement is as well. If anyone is doing anything excessive, with recent law changes, they haven't focused on pot as much. We do have problems with the harder drugs like meth, fentanyl, heroin. They are pursuing the drugs that are doing more harm.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

They are loosely enforced. Law enforcement is using good judgement about when to enforce. They would rather deal with a marijuana smoker than a crack head. And we never know what is in synthetic drugs so they can be more dangerous than a plant.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

It's all in your circle. Being from here and popular, I know a lot of people who engage in the activity. Now that it is on the verge of being legal, many people would like it to be regulated, but they will still continue to use without having to look over their shoulder.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

That varies in different ways.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Older people from the 70s who used it feel it was never harmful. Some now are regurgitating what they learned in school, that it's bad and a gateway drug. It depends on how you were raised and what you learned about marijuana. Several people would love to change from tobacco to pot, but it's still perceived to be against the law to use in public.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

I think it's all in which leaders you talk to. Some leaders advocate for its medical use and benefits. Depends on whether they are talking about hemp or THC. THC is a calming mechanism for anxiety, and also helps glaucoma. But since it was illegal for so long, people don't really know where the boundaries are. People who use it now are happy that the laws are relaxed, but there is still confusion and no clear rules.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I think first things first. You have to identify that someone is having that type of problem so someone could help. I'm pretty sure if someone said they had a problem and it was interrupting their normal life, I think they could go to the hospital. I think we do have some resources here for that. It's hard for someone to turn themselves in, but I do think we have addiction resources. It would be an embarrassment to admit you had a problem so many are gonna stay in their routine unless they can't function. Some

people can get hallucinations, some get nauseous, some just get tired. But never heard of someone dying from it.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
Many agencies I work with through my job like Health Department, Social Services, CSB would be able to help. We also have local counseling agencies too.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I'd honestly love to see education out there so that it's not hidden. The more you tell people not to use something, they will just keep doing it or trying it to test the boundaries. I would love to see the community embrace it. It's coming, but it won't be fast or easy for everyone to accept. There will be people who only know of the negatives and don't accept the benefits. With proper and honest education and not trying to make it overly cool, let kids know what it's about. Acceptance of marijuana will take time because many have been programmed to think of marijuana as illegal. Needs to be done on the federal level.

California was one of the first to legalize and have dispensaries, but the taxes are costing regulators illicit sales are booming because they are half the prices, same quality and don't have to go through regulations. Many CA owners have a foot in both sides just to stay afloat.

We have many veterans and elderly who need medical marijuana and if it could be in an edible form, it wouldn't have the stigma of being a "drug" but a medicine. I would encourage our state government not to follow CA in making taxes so high that retailers can't survive. That basically endorses the illicit market. To me it feels like states are money-grabbing with no accountability on where the application monies go, and what the timeline is for getting a reasonable response. I know they are in the process of building regulations, so find out what works in other states and what doesn't work. I think it's going to be a big money grab in the next few years as people try to apply for dispensaries with that \$10,000 non-refundable fee.

Consider illicit vs legal sales. If we don't have a way to make it competitive, we are killing opportunities for people who want to work while endorsing the illegal market. For our area, to greatly benefit, we need education, look at the full spectrum of things, and make this a true equal opportunity. The gatekeeping of high-risk high reward, the process is not accounted for. The state keeps talking about promoting minority opportunity but I don't see it. Communication will really help when the transition comes. Many people just don't know enough about marijuana and the legal process.

Regulation will help prevent lacing marijuana with toxic substances. Perception with law enforcement – if they smelled it, they could check your vehicle, but there is no way to

quantify how much you have used. Someone could be under the influence but law enforcement wouldn't really know. It isn't a fair evaluation to criminalize someone who smoked marijuana 2 weeks ago but have THC show up. We have chicken farms everywhere, so why not marijuana farms? I think the community here would be more accepting of growing it over time.

This could be a great thing for our community, providing jobs and easing pain for those who need it. I know lots of people who use it for ease of mind in knowing they are no longer breaking the law and improving their quality of life.

The less attention we give it, the less people are tempted to do it. Like Las Vegas, people are walking down the street but it's normal, not enticing as in states where it is illegal. As we become more accepting as a culture, this will become more normalized. People will have the option but don't need to crave it because it's always there. It will be hectic at first but will calm down.

Our local radio station is great but isn't always listened to because it doesn't offer the music people want to hear. The less hype around it, the easier it comes into the fold so it becomes normal. Use 4/20 for education. Here there will be a cannabis celebration on 4/20 (mostly CBD not THC). Educate the difference between THC and CBD – they smell the same, the only difference is the percent of THC. To switch from tobacco to marijuana, you will at least get the health benefits if you want to smoke.

So many norms set for decades so law enforcement will need to say they are no longer there as punitive anymore regarding marijuana. Provide training for law enforcement on how to handle the transition to legalization.

Truly explain the laws so there is no wiggle room for law enforcement and regular citizens.

Interview #3

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I'm not affiliated with kind of business that sells it. I don't personally use it but have family members who have. My brother has a medical card. He lives in Maryland and medical marijuana has done wonders for him. Before my dad passed away, he used marijuana to increase his appetite because he was a cancer patient. After chemo, he wasn't eating at all.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Very, very common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?

More for recreational use than people say. You always hear about people smoking weed. People are talking about it more now that it is legal. When I was growing up, it was always looked at as a bad thing. Now that it is legal, some people think it's ok now. I always talk to my mom about it because she was against it when my dad used it. She has back pain, and is taking a ton of pills for it, so I asked her if she'd use marijuana for pain. Her doctor told her he would stop treating her if she tried marijuana for her pain, so I sense that they are trying to control its use, or maybe the doctor just didn't know enough to guide her.

- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

You hear a lot of young kids using it. You still see that, but you'd also be surprised how many other people smoke weed and are ok with it. Both the young and elderly smoke it now. The older ones are more responsible with it. Youth do it because it's cool.

- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

I'm pretty sure there are people growing weed now that it's legal. Especially in a rural area like this. Especially now that you don't know what might be in it. The ones I know, always use it for a certain medical reason. A friend had a car accident and ended up with traumatic brain injury and used it then and now.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio. I see ads in Maryland. There's a dispensary in Ocean City that has ads that has fliers. You can see stickers on telephone poles in MD. I see lots of CBD ads here though.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
Just words, no images.
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

I'm pretty sure they would.

- a. Why do you think this?
People have connections.
- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
There are a couple of gas stations here that sell bowls, bong, etc. I also see CBD and smoke shops that sell accessories.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I work for DSS and when it came out in the paper that it would be legal, we had a lot of questions. For example, what do you do if a parent tests positive for THC but not the child? There is a gray area. If a minor tests positive, that use will still be illegal. If you use at home, it will still be in your system on the job. The state is working out the regulations – you don't hear about it because there are big legislative issues. It's still up in the air. I haven't seen any concrete legislation about it. What will be company policies now regarding marijuana. Employees don't want to take a chance using it for medical reasons because they don't know what will happen.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

I think if police officers catch someone the law will be enforced. Technically marijuana is legal, but if you are underage, you will get into trouble. If you get stopped with it, you still get a ticket but it's not jail time. We are still in the beginning stages and I think a lot more regulations will be coming out. I would love to have my own dispensary, but it's insanely expensive. It won't be allowed for just anyone to operate a dispensary. They won't allow a large group of people to run them, maybe just 35 cultivators across the state and that is kind of crazy. I looked at the research and in order to start this up it takes a major investment. But on the other hand, if there aren't a lot of regulations, there will be abuse. Legalization will actually have a lot of positives for the state. States that have legalized it have lots of taxes for the state.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

I think they are more familiar with the illegal part. They still look at it as illegal. If you are in this business, you will do very well, and it's a booming industry. I've been investing in medical marijuana already, but right now, people only have a general idea of selling and don't know the details about selling on a large scale.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

You will have mixed reviews. You might have some fully supportive, and some who still look at it in a negative way because all their lives it was wrong. What's been instilled in our minds is marijuana as a gateway drug and that still stands. The mix of opinions is based on individual experiences. If someone has a friend who got strung out, they'll still think it's bad. But those who use it medically like it. Rx opioids are still a major issue here – all the side effects of legal Rx can be negative. Medical marijuana can be an alternative, but it doesn't get attention. There are a lot of positives to it. I know of a child with cerebral palsy and the family moved to another state where it was legal. I've heard the good, the bad and the ugly. Some people still view medical marijuana as bad. Anything can be abused. Alcohol and cigarettes are legal but look how many people abuse those. Our bodies naturally have THC receptors so there are some positives to having marijuana. It may be better not to smoke it, that can hurt the lungs. There is a lot of research but it hasn't been put out there by the pharmaceutical industry. It is still controlled by the government because the average person can't afford to start up a dispensary. I read that they want to prioritize applicants from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, but if you didn't go there, you don't get prioritized. When I talk to

people, I realize they haven't done any reading or research, but if they knew the positive effects, they would probably be open to it. The positives just are not publicized.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

I've had several friends who are state police and local county deputies. It's kind of shocking that they don't think it's that bad. Sooner or later, it will be legal, so they don't worry about it now.

Some people want to go on record with their doctors saying they have pain so that they can legally use marijuana.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?
See above.

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

No, I haven't heard one person talk about it. I want to get a local leader's input soon so I'll talk to them. I've met business owners who thought that legal marijuana is the best thing that's happened in a long time. They invested in medical marijuana, and I have invested in it.

Have a look at the models in states that have legalized it.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I can tell when my brother smokes and doesn't smoke. How long can he go without? He says he needs it daily or gets mood swings. Some people smoke too much and get paranoid and go to the hospital – it goes away but scares them and messes with them psychologically.

Indica is more relaxing for pain relief and sativa is more high producing. With any kind of medication, if it's not used correctly can have negative effects.

I would rather have my mom eat edibles than have all the negative side effects of her pain meds. I have heard of people dying from opioids, but never heard of really bad side effects from someone using weed.

But it will open the door for people abusing it. My mom is right about that because everyone isn't responsible. I think it's a risk for anyone and not necessarily just youth.

A lot of drugs kids are using now are much stronger than marijuana. For some folks, it may be a gateway drug but not for everyone. It depends on their environment, what they are seeing at home and in their lives.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
I know you can end up in the hospital if you smoke too much and get sick and paranoid.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I support it because I've seen the benefits of people in my life. But it needs regulations for safety and age restrictions. Everyone won't be responsible. In Incan temples in high altitudes their oxygen levels decreased, but cacao leaves would increase their oxygen. But now that cacao leaves are used for cocaine, you see it's a gift and a curse. A lot of legislation that needs to be looked at. They are changing the course of history now. If it's legal to have 4 plants, I guarantee that people have more than that.

I have a conceal and carry license. But you cannot have a medical marijuana card and conceal and carry – one or the other. Why is this? Maybe that is a sense of control.

More people need to be educated. Need clear guidance for families in DSS – need to know how to process people if they test positive for THC. There are a lot of people out there very interested but don't know how to get information. I'm neutral – I've seen the good and the bad, but we need more research and public information. It will allow people to make better decisions on their own than being influenced by what they hear.

Interview #4

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I'm not connected to the sale of it but I use it for medical and recreational use.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Very common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?

To help with many different health reasons, for medical sue.

- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

No

- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

I don't know.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio.

Prevalent

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?

Anyone listening

- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

That depends on the individual

- a. Why do you think this?

It's about local knowledge.

- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

There's one called India Depot

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I know it's legal to harvest and to gift (*this might be in MD, but not in VA*)

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

No

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

Extremely aware.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Most definitely.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

I don't think they care too much

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

It's not discussed.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No

- 9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.
None
 - a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
Counselors, doctors, etc.

- 10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?
Accepts its benefits and educate the public.

Interview #5

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

No connection.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

I believe it's very common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?

Honestly, I don't know anyone specifically who uses it medically. But it's been a problem recreationally. I hate to say this, but it stems from teen years it's boredom, it just becomes a habit.

- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

I think it's the younger group, 17-25 years. Teens nowadays don't have anything to do. When I grew up, we had movie theaters and skate parks, but they have gone away.

- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

I know a few people who are growing it now that it's legal. And it's more for personal use.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

I haven't seen much, but I have seen in regular stores like Food Lion and Dixieland there are bong and accessories for sale. And CBD is right there in front of you.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?

They are mostly at the front register, so they are for all groups.

- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

I don't know because I'm not in that group. I don't know how people get it. I know people sell it but I don't know how you find them. Probably word of mouth.

- a. Why do you think this?
It depends on who you associate with.
- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
I've seen them in vape stores because I do vape to stop smoking.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I've just been made aware that it's legal to grow 4 plants. I know it's coming up to have dispensaries by 2024.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?
Don't know

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

I think they are very aware because it's legal. Now I can walk into any store and I can smell it on people. It's in your face.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

I guess that depends on who you talk to. Some people believe it should be legal for medical reasons. And some are against it. There are positive reasons to use it medically. I won't go against anyone who wants to use it recreationally.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

I think it may vary by age. And law enforcement think it's working against what they are trying to do. It's legal now, so people can't get busted, but high drivers can still hurt someone. Law enforcement see it as tying their hands.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?
See above.

- 8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?
Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

I have not heard anything

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?

- 9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I am not aware of any ways to promote responsible use. I know that there are groups out there like AA who help someone get off of it.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
CSB. I guess within the juvenile system there would be help as well.

- 10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I would like it to be legal, but I'm on the fence and realize there are some downsides.

Interview #6

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I don't think I am connected in any way. I do read in the news and hear about it.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

I think it's pretty much a recreational thing. I don't know anyone with a medical marijuana card.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
Probably because on the Shore, there aren't many things to do, not many forms of entertainment.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
I think probably younger people use it more, and also those in poverty.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Not that I'm aware of, but with it being legal, I'm sure it's definitely happening, but probably not too common.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

I haven't seen any ads but I do see a lot of ads for CBD products and Delta 8 ads.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
I feel like it's mostly the medical perspective.
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?
People with pain and medical issues.

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

I don't know. It's word of mouth.

- a. Why do you think this?
I'm pretty sure that if you use it, you know where to find it.
- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
Only one I know of is a new vape shop that has bong and all that stuff.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I read the news articles when it was legalized so I know what the bill said. And I googled Delta 8.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?
No, I haven't heard anything.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

I think in general everyone knows it's legal. There is a lot of chatter about it, especially since we are the first southern state to legalize it. Everyone knows the basics but probably not the specifics of the law.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

The only thing I heard was at a Chincoteague town meeting people were not happy with the idea of a dispensary. It was word of mouth that they were unhappy.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Yeah, I think there is a large portion of older who are spilt – some did it when they were young, and others in that age group are against it. Most in 30's look at like alcohol, we don't mind. If you want it, fine, if you don't, fine too.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

I think most people have actually seemed pretty open about it. That small group of older people are very displeased but everyone else thinks it's fine. If it's taxed and helps the community then it's seen as positive.

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?
Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.
Again, by word of mouth, I heard that Chincoteague leadership were not happy with the idea of a dispensary.

a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
Not directly, just by people talking about it.

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

No, I haven't heard anything other than the law is treating it like alcohol – can't use in public, you should drink responsibly, can't drive while using it.

a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
I don't think so unless you went to your doctor or the ER.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I think I'd like to see them treat it like alcohol -without stigma. As long as you use it responsibly, it's ok. I'd like to see the community come together and embrace it. People are going to do it whether it's legal or not.

Interview #7

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

An uncle uses medical marijuana. I dabble in recreational use – I'm all for it.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

It's incredibly common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
Studies have shown that it's a good way to relax safety, and that it help reduce pain.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
No, one of the surprising things I find is that professionals use it. All ages use it.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Not that I know of.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

Ads are not very prevalent because it's not fully legal yet.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Not in general.

- a. Why do you think this?
- b. I only know where to get it because I work in the restaurant business and that is a group that uses it.

- c. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
There are a few stores here. One is Love and Canna, and one is Like a Sailor. Both are in Cape Charles.
5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?
You can possess up to a certain amount, have some plants at home, and in 2024 it is scheduled to be legal to buy and sell.
 - a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?
Out here, they aren't enforced.
6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?
People know it's going on. But maybe not in Cape Charles because that is mostly rich old white people.
7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?
 - a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Older people are stuck in old thinking and have negative associations with it. Younger people are more for it. By the time I was in college, it was normalized to use marijuana.
 - b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?
I don't think that is the worry. People don't think it's harmful.
8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?
Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

The older demographic are worried about it. When I worked for local government and the legalization was announced, people freaked out like it was Reefer Madness. They don't understand marijuana and are worried about how people will use it.
 - a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
Yes, when I worked at local government.

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I don't know of any resources for that. There is a use disorder as with anything. You can feel a little off it you stop using it.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
I don't know of any.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?
I'd like it to be decriminalized and regulated by the state like the ABC stores so that there are regulations in place.

Interview #8

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

No, I don't have any connection.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

There's a lot of people who do.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
It's been both recreational and now that it's legal it's also medical.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
Younger people use it more. I'm hearing more now about older people because of medical use.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?
I don't know but I've heard. It's for personal use.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

No, I've heard people talk about it but haven't seen or heard ads.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Yes, easy to find.

- a. Why do you think this?
It's common around here.

- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

I don't know. I don't know where anybody's getting it. I only know vape stores.

- 5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

Now the only thing I've heard is you have you should have something from your doctor.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

No, and I've personally dealt with that. Someone rear-ended me while high and the officer found weed in the car. The guy only got a ticket for failure to stop but not for possession. I had to go to PT because I had some whiplash and a shoulder injury, but my insurance had to pay for everything because the driver didn't have insurance.

- 6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

People around here know it's common. It's pretty much across the whole Shore.

- 7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

I've heard both sides. It's just so easy to get your hands on it. If it's used for medical purposes, then fine. But if people are just going to their doctor and coming out with an off-the-wall medical need then that's not good. Kids in school are getting hold of it way too easy.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

I think law enforcement find it frustrating – what can they do? So many people are using and getting it, they would be spending more time trying to crack down on marijuana than other priorities. They have to choose their battles.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

I haven't heard anybody say that. I don't think it's dangerous. But it could be if it affects your driving and your mind.

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?
Those involved in city council, county commissioners, mayors, etc.

I'm kind of torn with that. They were so on the ball putting it out there and it's frustrating because you have child predators and sex traffickers and homeless veterans, but leaders thought marijuana was more important to talk about. They are spending time and money on the marijuana issue when there are other more pressing social problems. I have veterans in my family who aren't getting services they need, but leaders want to talk about marijuana.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?

On the news I've seen them taking time on this issue. An acquaintance hands out blessing bags to the homeless but there are officials who do nothing for vets, but leaders go out of their way to legalize marijuana. I don't know why they waste time on this because people are doing it regardless. When it was illegal people were still using marijuana and no one cared. Now that leaders have spent time and resources on the marijuana issue, still no one cares. People don't care if it's legal or not so why are we spending time and money talking about it?

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I haven't heard any type of advertising just through word of mouth. A friend on Facebook posted about it, but that was not smart.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
Yeah, we have different counseling groups and a pain management place.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

Yes, if a person really needs it and can be responsible with then it's fine. But I worry about abuse. And if it was strictly for medical use would be better.

Interview #9

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

We smell it on customers when they come in. We sell packables but only nicotine products.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

More and more common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
People don't have anything else to do. And some people use it as stress relief.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
No, I don't think any groups use it more than others.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Yes, people do grow it for personal use.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

There's not much advertising.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Yeah!

- a. Why do you think this?

Exmore is common for marijuana.

- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?
Sunrise, TruBlu and a tobacco store near Eastville.

- 5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I'm not aware of any laws.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?
I don't think they are enforced.

- 6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

100% aware of sales and use.

- 7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

The majority of people are ok with it, but some don't like it.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Law enforcement don't like it – if you use it and get caught, you'll get in trouble.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

People don't think it's harmful.

- 8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Leaders don't mind. But some older people don't really understand marijuana. Before it was legal, people just covered it up, but now that it's legal, they are open about it.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I'm not aware of any resources.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
I'm not aware of anything.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

Me personally, I don't care about it.

Interview #10

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I sell Delta 8 to cancer patients, and some don't even have a medical card.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Very common.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
 - For mood altering, low self-esteem, anxiety, and pain.
 - My son uses it for epilepsy. He has serious seizures and CBD gummies help him. His seizures are so bad that he has been out for two hours before. But I also don't want to get him in trouble so we have to be aware.
 - b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?

No, all groups use it, all ages.
 - c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?
 - I know some who grow it. There is a farm here that grows it.
 - I know a few people who grow it for personal use.
3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?
 - I don't think there are enough ads – we need MORE ads.
 - a. Who is the target audience for the advertising? n/a
 - b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads? n/a
 4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?
 - They would probably just buy it on the street.
 - But that is so dangerous – you don't know if it's been laced with anything.
 - a. Why do you think this?

- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

There are just 4 stores on the Shore that do. Cape Vape, Habits Tobacco, Shore Vape and Love and Canna.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

The limit is 1 ounce.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

Some people over-enforce and some don't enforce enough.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

Very aware.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

Overall, a lot of people are ok with it.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

- We get cops in here and they don't want to mess with the legal issue anymore.
- People who have never used marijuana have negative views. My cousin had a few plants in the house one time and the cops raided them, took the kids into CPS, and held a gun to my cousin's head. It was a terrible experience with the law, so my uncle has a very, very negative view of marijuana.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

- Some people consider marijuana to be a gateway drug.
- But I haven't heard that in a long time.

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana? Leaders don't mind. But some older people don't really understand marijuana. Before it was legal, people just covered it up, but now that it's legal, they are open about it.

- I think most are ok with it.
- I don't know – I can't say how they might feel about it.

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No.
9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.
- Medical cards and shops like ours can provide information about responsible use. There are definitely pot heads out there who are burnt out. But they won't go through any kind of severe withdrawal.
 - I was always able to quit without any problems each time I got pregnant.
- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
The CSB or a medical dispensary.
10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?
- Be positive about it – I've seen lots of kids benefit from using it.
 - Be open about it.

Interview #11

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

Please try to answer all parts of each question and provide as much information, description, and detail as possible. All answers will be compiled together and remain anonymous.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

My shop can't sell marijuana, and I only sell Delta 8. Customers always ask if I can sell them marijuana, but I can't.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

Here there are a lot of people using it.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
People use it for problems, to get relaxed, for pain relief and just to get high.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
Fewer older people, mostly those in their 20s – 40s. Everyone knows someone who uses it.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Some people grow it in their house to gift and to use to save money

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

I see posts on Facebook. Some people set up fake accounts so they can't be found.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising?
They are pictures of Delta 8 or 9 cartridges
- b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads?

4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Yes, it would be easy.

- a. Why do you think this?

In the ghetto neighborhoods people know each other and where to get it.

- b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

Smoke shops.

5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

I can't sell Delta 9; you can have 2-3 plants, and no more than 2 ounces in your possession.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

Yes, the laws are enforced. Cops aren't stupid. Where I come from in Yemen, the law is no joke – if you get caught it is bad.

6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

Very aware, but everyone keeps it secret. If I know a person well, I will share information, but not with a stranger.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

It depends on the parents. Some parents don't like it, but others allow it for all of their kids.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

First time users can have difficulty, especially teens. Everyone has different reactions to marijuana to it depends on the person. Street drugs can be dangerous, and also lead to crime.

8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?
- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No.

9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

I'm not aware.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
Not aware.

10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

I say yes because other states already have legalized it.

Interview #12

The following questions are focused on marijuana on the Eastern Shore – which can touch on multiple different aspects including the use, growth, and sale of marijuana, for both medical and recreational use.

Please try to answer all parts of each question and provide as much information, description, and detail as possible. All answers will be compiled together and remain anonymous.

1. Please share if or how you are connected to any marijuana-related issues in our community? This could be medical or recreational marijuana. (i.e., What is your interest in medical or recreational marijuana? What role do you (or your organization) play with marijuana use or sale in your community)?

I sell legal THC and CBD products. I sell a lot of Delta 8 because you can relax but not get too high using it. Some people don't like the high. CBD is calming and good for sleep and doesn't get you high.

2. From your perspective and experience, how common is it for people in your community to use marijuana?

I have very young people and some in their 80s, and they like Delta 8 for pain.

- a. Why do you think people in your community use marijuana?
For relaxation, sleep, and pain.
- b. Are there specific groups that use marijuana more than others?
It's an age thing. Middle aged people like to smoke marijuana. Younger people like to vape it.
- c. Are there people in your community that grow marijuana plants? If so, do they do so for personal use or for sale/distribution?

Everyone I know grows some. There is a company in Exmore called Something Green, LLC that grows it in large scale. They "gift" it by selling another item for a higher price and "giving" the marijuana. They also come here to teach people how to grow and cultivate marijuana plants so people can grow their own. They are hosting the "Smoke the Blues Away" event on April 23.

3. How prevalent is advertising or marketing focused on marijuana in the community? This can include television ads, billboards, posters, internet advertising or the radio?

I don't see advertising. Even though it's sort of legal, I am very careful what I post on Instagram. These products, just like vitamins, are not FDA regulated. Once we get into legal sale of

marijuana it will be a cash only business. That makes me nervous about having so much cash on hand. And there will always be a black market.

- a. Who is the target audience for the advertising? n/a
 - b. What do the ads portray or what impression do you get from the ads? n/a
4. If someone wanted to use marijuana, how easy would it be for them to access it? Would most folks know where to go? Or who to ask?

Yeah, a lot of people know. I don't ever recommend buying anything on the street though. Doctors are sending people to my shop to try vaping as a way to stop smoking, and for CBD for pain relief. Some people get Kratom to ease off of opioids, but Kratom is also addictive.

- a. Why do you think this?

It's available on the street.
 - b. What kind of stores are in the community that sell marijuana-related paraphernalia or supplies?

There is Love and Canna in Cape Charles.
5. What policies or laws, either at the local community level, or the state level, are you aware of regarding the sale or use of marijuana?

Many people don't know the law. It's a confusing law right now. And marijuana is still going to create a black market, which will be dangerous. So, we need to figure it out and move on.

- a. Do you believe these policies or laws are being enforced?

I do believe the laws are being enforced.
6. How aware do you think your fellow community members are of the sale or use of marijuana in the community?

Very aware. People are chomping at the bit.

7. How do you think the community, in general, feels about the sale or use of marijuana? What type of attitudes or beliefs do you think the community has?

People want it for medical reasons and don't want the high.

- a. Are attitudes different for different members of the community? Like youth, older adults, law enforcement, etc.

Older people are very excited. It's been swept under the rug for so long. I don't think law enforcement is against it either. They think people are more responsible using marijuana than alcohol.

- b. How do you think the community views any risk or potential harm associated with marijuana use? Do folks think using marijuana is harmful?

People don't think it's harmful. They are very stoked.

- 8. What is your perception of community leaders' attitudes toward the sale or use of marijuana?

- a. Have you heard them talk about this issue or reference it?
No.

- 9. What efforts are you aware of to either promote responsible marijuana use, or to support/help those with marijuana use disorders? This could be an ad you heard or saw.

(Store posted a notice about responsible use of THC products, stating to use only at home and not to drive while using it). If you educate people, they understand what can happen with marijuana. My customers know their bodies and their limits. I always advise people to take half a dose of THC gummies because THC affects everyone differently. You can get too high depending on how you metabolize the THC.

- a. What resources are available in your community for people using marijuana?
I don't think there are really any resources. I know people who smoke all day but remain functional. I have never witnessed any kind of disorder.

- 10. How would you like to see your community respond to the sale or use of marijuana?

Be positive about it in an educational manner. Some days I talk all day to customers about these products. Some people are still nervous about coming in here, about where and how the products were made and how to use them. And you get what you pay for – some stores sell the same products cheaper, but they can't tell you anything about the product. I can provide the information and people appreciate that.