



City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

CITY COUNCIL PLANNING COMMISSION Regular Special

MEETING DATE: January 13, 2026

TITLE: Resolution 2025-49 of the City Council of the City Of Needles, Approving a Conditional Use Permit for a Licensed Retail Cannabis Dispensary and Related Tenant Improvements at 1611 Needles Highway, APN 0185-062-26-0000, within the General Commercial (C-2) Zoning District

APPLICANT: Norman Yousif, on behalf of Off The Charts (OTC)

LOCATION: 1611 Needles Highway; APN 0185-062-26-0000

BACKGROUND: The applicant, Off The Charts (OTC), is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to establish a licensed retail cannabis dispensary within an existing commercial building located at 1611 Needles Highway. The site is approximately 0.28 acres, zoned General Commercial (C-2), and has been vacant for several years. The proposed project includes tenant improvements, building upgrades, and site enhancements, representing a significant reinvestment that will activate an underutilized parcel and enhance the surrounding commercial corridor. The applicant proposes standard cannabis retail operations with customer check-in procedures, controlled access, secure product handling, inventory tracking, and adherence to all state and local regulations.

The subject property is located on Needles Highway within the General Commercial (C-2) zoning district and carries a General Plan land use designation of General Commercial. The existing building has remained vacant for an extended period, contributing to underutilization along this commercial corridor. Surrounding uses include commercial and residential development to the south and vacant commercial parcels to the north, east and west. Cannabis retail is a conditionally permitted use in the C-2 district under the Needles Municipal Code, requiring approval of a Conditional Use Permit to ensure operational compatibility and compliance with safety and design standards.

The applicant proposes to renovate the existing building to accommodate cannabis retail operations. Interior tenant improvements will include controlled customer access, secure check-in areas, retail display space, and compliance-based storage and security systems. Exterior improvements will include façade upgrades, new lighting, ADA access improvements, repainting, landscaping, and repairs or upgrades to the parking lot, pavement, and striping. Security enhancements will include surveillance cameras, controlled entry points, and perimeter safety improvements. The operation will prohibit on-site consumption, maintain strict odor control, and ensure that no cannabis product is visible from the exterior. Customers will enter through a secured lobby, undergo ID verification, and proceed into the retail area only after authorization. The project is expected to improve the site's appearance, enhance public safety, and contribute positively to the commercial environment along Needles Highway.

The applicant proposes secure access controls, on-site security staffing, 24/7 surveillance monitoring, and comprehensive compliance procedures. The operation will prohibit loitering and on-site consumption and will implement odor-control measures to ensure no off-site impacts.

Redevelopment of the long-vacant site will provide economic investment, job creation, improved visual character, and potential increases in tax revenue. The project will strengthen commercial activity and contribute to corridor beautification.

On December 3, 2025, the Needles Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing to receive oral and written testimony regarding Conditional Use Permit Resolution No. 12-03-2025-PC. Following the hearing, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FINDINGS: In accordance with Section 94.06(c), the Planning Commission must make the following findings to recommend approval of a conditional use permit:

1. The requested permit is conditionally within its jurisdiction according to the table of permissible uses.

2. The application is complete
3. The use will not endanger public health or safety.
4. The development will be in conformity with the Needles General Plan.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION: A public hearing notice was published in the Needles Desert Star on Wednesday, December 31, 2025, and posted in two conspicuous locations. Notices were sent to property owners within 300' of the proposed project site.

ENVIRONMENTAL: CEQA Compliance – Categorical Exemption (Section 15301, Class 1): The proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under Section 15301 (Class 1) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. This exemption applies to projects involving minor alterations to existing structures with negligible or no expansion of the existing use. The project involves commercial use within an existing structure and minor site improvements. The building footprint will remain unchanged, and no significant expansion of the existing structure or use is proposed.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution 2025-49 Approving a Conditional Use Permit for a Licensed Retail Cannabis Dispensary and Related Tenant Improvements at 1611 Needles Highway, APN 0185-062-26-0000, within the General Commercial (C-2) Zoning District

SUBMITTED BY: Irene Romero, City Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Project Plans
3. City Council Resolution, Findings, and Conditions of Approval
4. CUP Application

City Manager Approval: Patrick J. Martinez

Date: 1/8/2026

Other Department Approval (when required): _____

Date: _____