

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM
#09-2026

DATE: March 16, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

THROUGH: Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*
Jason Loveland, Deputy City Manager *12*

FROM: Becky Smith, Interim Director of Planning & Development

SUBJECT: Natural Medicine Business – Unified Development Ordinance Amendment

PURPOSE

To receive Council feedback on draft amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) related to Natural Medicine Business land use regulations.

BACKGROUND

On Oct. 13, 2025, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1873, amending the UDO to regulate natural medicine businesses. The regulations were modeled after the City's existing "time, place, and manner" provisions for marijuana-licensed businesses, and established standards relating to zoning, hours of operation, location criteria, odor control, lighting, storage, and other operational requirements.

Following adoption of the ordinance, a local natural medicine facilitator in training addressed City Council during public comment on Jan. 26, 2026. The individual requested that Council consider revising certain provisions of the ordinance. According to the comments provided, the current regulations would prevent the individual from operating a natural medicine business once licensing is obtained from the state.

The individual explained that the state licensing process for natural medicine facilitators is both lengthy and costly and that the certification process had begun before the City adopted its ordinance. In addition, the individual owns the commercial unit where the business intends to operate, making relocation financially difficult.

The unit is located in a commercial zoning district where the use would otherwise be permitted under the ordinance. However, two specific provisions create barriers to operating at this location:

- The requirement that no natural medicine business be located within 200 feet of any single or multi-family residential structure, unit, parcel, or lot; and
- The prohibition on locating within 500 feet of any public park.

Because the unit is located adjacent to residential uses and near a public park, these distance requirements would prevent the business from operating at that site.

City Council directed staff to evaluate possible amendments to the ordinance that could allow this business to operate and to present potential revisions for Council discussion. To address the concerns raised, staff prepared draft amendments that include the following potential changes:

- Removing the distance requirement related to residential structures and residential property
- Removing “public park” from the constraints list

In follow-up communications with staff, the therapist also requested expanded hours of operation. The current ordinance limits operations to Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The request was to allow operations seven days per week from 7:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. to provide greater scheduling flexibility for therapeutic services. Staff has incorporated this request into the proposed amendments for discussion.

Because natural medicine businesses represent a new regulated use in Colorado, staff also reviewed how other Front Range communities are approaching regulation. This research is intended to provide context and examples of how similar jurisdictions are addressing zoning, operational standards, and location requirements for these businesses. A summary of this research is included as Attachment 1 to this memo.

Based on Council direction from this discussion, staff would initiate the UDO amendment process, which would include a public hearing before the Planning Commission with a recommendation to City Council, followed by a public hearing before City Council through a first and second reading ordinance approval process.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that City Council provide feedback and indicate whether there is consensus to proceed with the proposed UDO amendment process related to natural medicine business regulations.

STAFF REFERENCE

If Council members have any questions, please contact Becky Smith, Interim Director of Planning & Development, at bsmith@northglenn.org or 303.450.8741.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Front Range Communities Natural Medicine Regulations
2. Draft Ordinance Amendments

Front Range Communities Natural Medicine Regulations

City	Distance from Schools/Childcare	Residential Buffer	Hours of Operation	Permitted Zoning Districts	Operational Requirements	Non-conforming Use Exemption	Notes
Northglenn	500 ft from licensed childcare, preschool, K-12, residential childcare	200 ft from any single or multi-family residential structure/parcel	9am–5pm Mon–Fri	Industrial (IN), Commercial Auto-Oriented (CA), Commercial General (CG) — by right	Odor mitigation (air filtration system required); secure disposal (no exterior refuse); downward-facing security lighting; all activities indoors; windows/entrances screened from public view; no hazardous materials in processing	Not specified (in practice would allow to continue if constraint comes in after the business is licensed)	Additional buffers: 500 ft from public parks/pools/rec facilities; 1,000 ft from halfway houses/correctional facilities; ½ mile between any two natural medicine businesses
Thornton	1,000 ft from day care, preschool, K-12 (direct pedestrian access)	None specified	Not specified	Commerical Uses-NC (Neighborhood Commerical), GC (General Commercial), RC (Regional Commercial), BP (Building Park)	Odor mitigation, secure disposal, enhanced exterior lighting, safe discharge plan	Yes — pre-existing businesses exempt from setbacks if school or daycare come in after business is issued license	Defines as a facility licensed by the state licensing authority that permits a facilitator, as defined by state law, to provide and supervise natural medicine services for a participant.
Boulder	500 ft from middle, junior, or high school (state law measurement)	None specified	Not restricted (operating hours specifically excluded)	Same as medical offices; Use Review required in some residential districts	Not specified	Not specified	500 ft buffer stands out as notably more permissive than everyone else's 1,000 ft

Front Range Communities Natural Medicine Regulations

City	Distance from Schools/Childcare	Residential Buffer	Hours of Operation	Permitted Zoning Districts	Operational Requirements	Non-conforming Use Exemption	Notes
Golden	1,000 ft from childcare, preschool, K-12 (direct pedestrian access)	None specified	Not specified	C1, C2, CMU, M1, M2, PUD (office-use districts only)	Not specified	Not specified	Permanent location required
Erie	1,000 ft from schools and childcare (direct pedestrian access)	250 ft from residential properties	Healing centers: 8am–8pm Mon–Sat; All other natural medicine businesses: 8am–5pm Mon–Fri	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	
Lafayette	State setback rules (1,000 ft)	None specified	7am–10pm (no day restriction); exception for adverse health events	Commercial, business, industrial (healing centers); industrial only (other licensed facilities)	Not specified	Not specified	Most permissive hours among listed cities

Front Range Communities Natural Medicine Regulations

City	Distance from Schools/Childcare	Residential Buffer	Hours of Operation	Permitted Zoning Districts	Operational Requirements	Non-conforming Use Exemption	Notes
Parker	1,000 ft from schools, childcare, residential areas	Included in 1,000 ft buffer	8am–5pm Mon–Fri	Business/Commercial Districts (healing centers); Light Industrial (cultivation, manufacturing, testing)	Screening, lighting, odor, storage, disposal, security, hazardous materials	Not specified	Treats healing centers similarly to medical offices
Castle Rock	1,000 ft from schools, childcare, residential zones	Included in 1,000 ft buffer	8am–5pm Mon–Fri	I-1 Light Industrial and I-2 General Industrial only	Odor mitigation (undetectable beyond property lines), security, proper disposal	No exemptions for pre-existing businesses	Most restrictive zoning; all facilities must comply
Centennial	1,000 ft from schools, daycare, residential childcare	None specified (residential childcare covered)	Basic operating rules (specifics not detailed)	Non-residential districts only for standalone businesses; overlay district approach	Safety and community impact focus	Not specified	"Standalone" businesses regulated differently from those integrated into medical/counseling facilities

SPONSORED BY _____

COUNCIL MEMBER'S BILL

ORDINANCE NO. _____

No. _____

Series of 2026

Series of 2026

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 11-3-2 AND 11-3-3 CONCERNING
NATURAL MEDICINE BUSINESSES

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTHGLENN,
COLORADO, THAT:

Section 1. Table 3-2-A Table of Allowed Uses in Section 11-3-2(d) of the Northglenn Municipal Code is hereby amended by the addition of the following allowable use, added to the table, as follows:

Table 3-2-A: Table of Allowed Uses																
√ = allowed by right S = special use permit A = accessory Blank cell = use prohibited + = Use-specific standards apply																
	Residential						Mixed-Use			Other Nonresidential						
	RS-1	RS-2	RS-3	RM-1	RM-2	MH	MN	MC	MR	CG	CA	IN	PF	AG	OS	Use-Specific Standards
Commercial uses																
Natural Medicine Businesses																
Natural Medicine Businesses										√ +	√ +	√ +				11-3-3(h)

Section 2. Section 11-3-3 of the Northglenn Municipal Code is hereby amended by the addition of a new Subsection (h), to read as follows:

Section 11-3-3 Use-Specific Standards.

* * *

(h) Natural Medicine.

(1) **Authority and Purpose.** The Colorado Natural Medicine Code, C.R.S. § 44-50-101, *et seq.* (the "CNMC") specifically authorizes the City to regulate the time, place and manner of the operation of licenses issued pursuant to the CNMC. The purpose of this Article is to regulate the time, place and manner where natural medicine and natural medicine healing centers are provided.

(2) **Definitions.**

Natural medicine means psilocybin or psilocyn and other substances described in the CNMC as natural medicine.

Natural medicine business means any of the following entities licensed under the CNMC: a natural medicine healing center, a natural medicine cultivation facility, a natural medicine products manufacturer, or a natural medicine testing facility, or another licensed entity created by the State licensing authority.

Natural medicine healing center means a facility where an entity is licensed by the State licensing authority that permits a facilitator, as defined by the CNMC, to provide and supervise natural medicine services for a participant, as defined by the CNMC, which includes a participant consuming and experiencing the effects of regulated natural medicine or a regulated natural medicine product under the supervision of a facilitator.

Natural medicine product means a product infused with natural medicine that is intended for consumption, as provided by the CNMC.

Natural medicine services means a preparation session, administrative session, and integration session, as provided by the CNMC.

Participant means an individual who is twenty-one (21) years of age or older who receives natural medicine services prescribed by and under the supervision of a facilitator, as provided by the CNMC.

Regulated natural medicine means natural medicine that is cultivated, manufactured, tested, stored, distributed, transported, or dispensed, as provided by the CNMC.

Regulated natural medicine product means a natural medicine product that is cultivated, manufactured, tested, stored, distributed, transported, or dispensed, as provided by the CNMC.

State licensing authority means the authority created under the CNMC for the purpose of regulating and controlling the licensing of the cultivation, manufacturing, testing, storing, distribution, transfer, and dispensation of regulated natural medicine and regulated natural medicine product, as provided by the CNMC.

(3) Operation of Natural Medicine Businesses.

(A) *Hours*: Natural medicine businesses shall only operate between the hours of ~~9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.~~ **7:00 A.M. TO 11:59 PM, Monday through Friday.**

(B) *Public view*: All doorways, windows and other openings of a natural medicine business shall be located, covered, or screened in such a manner to prevent a view into the interior from any exterior public or semipublic area. All activities shall occur indoors.

(C) *Location.*

(i) Natural medicine businesses shall be a use permitted by right in only the Industrial (IN), Commercial Auto-Oriented (CA) or Commercial General (CG) zoning districts.

(ii) No natural medicine business shall be located at the following locations:

1. ~~within 200 feet of any single or multi-family residential structure or unit, or parcel or lot;~~
2. within 500 feet of a licensed childcare center; preschool; elementary, middle, junior or high school; or a residential child care facility;
3. within 500 feet of any ~~public park~~, public pool, or public recreational facility;
4. within 1000 feet of any halfway house or correctional facility;
5. within one-half (1/2) mile of any other natural medicine business;
6. within any building or structure that contains a residential unit; or
7. upon any City of Northglenn owned property.
8. The distances described in this subsection (C)(ii) shall be computed by use of a radius from the property lines of the locations set forth in subsection (C)(ii) to the unit within a building or structure housing the natural medicine business.

(D) *Lighting:* Primary entrances, parking lots and exterior walkways of a natural medicine business shall be clearly illuminated with downward facing security lights to provide after-dark visibility for facilitators, participants, and employees.

(E) *Storage:* All storage of natural medicine shall be located within a permanent building, and not a trailer, tent, or motor vehicle.

(F) *Odor:* Natural medicine businesses shall use an air filtration and ventilation system designed to ensure that the odors from natural medicine, natural medicine products, natural medicine healing, and natural medicine healing products are confined to the premises and are not detectable beyond the property boundaries on which the business is located.

(G) *Disposal*: Natural medicine businesses shall provide secure disposal of natural medicine and natural medicine product remnants or by-products. Natural medicine and natural medicine product remnants or by-products shall not be placed in an exterior refuse container.

(H) *Processing*:

- a. The processing of natural medicine that includes the use of hazardous materials, including without limitation flammable and combustible liquids, carbon dioxide, and liquified petroleum gases, such as butane, is prohibited.
- b. Nonhazardous materials used to process natural medicine shall be stored in a manner so as to mitigate and ensure odors are not detectable beyond the property boundaries on which the processing facility is located, or the exterior walls of the processing facility associated with the processing of natural medicine or natural medicine healing products.
- c. The processing of natural medicine shall meet the requirements of all adopted City building Codes and other applicable law.

INTRODUCED, READ AND ORDERED POSTED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

MEREDITH LEIGHTY
Mayor

ATTEST:

JOHANNA SMALL, MMC
City Clerk

PASSED ON SECOND AND FINAL READING this ____ day of _____, 2026.

MEREDITH LEIGHTY
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHANNA SMALL, MMC
City Clerk

COREY Y. HOFFMANN
City Attorney