



Reducing the Availability of Tobacco in Stanislaus County

Final Evaluation Report 2023 - 2025



CALIFORNIA HEALTH COLLABORATIVE
changing lives by improving health and wellness



Compromiso Adelante California Health Collaborative

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The background features a blue-toned illustration of a community center. On the left, a sign reads 'CERES'. At the top right, a sign reads 'COMMUNITY CENTER'. In the foreground, several people are depicted: a man holding a clipboard, a woman holding a sign that says 'TOBACCO-FREE', and another woman. A sign on the left side of the illustration reads 'SALAS RIVER'.

In 2023, Ceres had no tobacco retail license (TRL) and Riverbank’s existing TRL lacked key enforcement tools like fees and penalties — leaving both communities vulnerable to unchecked tobacco sales. Building on prior momentum and strong local partnerships, California Health Collaborative (CHC) worked closely with Latino-serving organizations and local leaders to advance comprehensive TRL ordinances, addressing community-identified priorities and paving the way for meaningful, lasting change.

Abstract

The tobacco industry heavily targets California's Latino community through marketing, sponsorships, and political contributions. In response, California Health Collaborative established the Compromiso Adelante (meaning "Engagement Ahead") Project. Compromiso Adelante focused on the cities of Riverbank and Ceres in Stanislaus County, a rural area in California’s Central Valley with a higher smoking rate than the state average. The Latino population is the largest ethnic group and has the highest smoking rate of any ethnic group in the county. Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) is an effective policy solution to reduce overall access and particularly youth access to tobacco products. As the city of Riverbank had a TRL but lacked best practices, while Ceres had no TRL, both cities presented strong opportunities for intervention.

Compromiso Adelante’s primary objective was for two jurisdictions in Stanislaus County (Riverbank and Ceres) to adopt and implement either a policy that eliminates the sale of all tobacco products, or a comprehensive tobacco retail licensing policy.

Compromiso Adelante’s key strategies to achieve this goal were:

- documenting the tobacco retail landscape in each jurisdiction through community interviews, polls, policy research, and a youth purchase study
- educating the community on tobacco-related issues and policy solutions
- engaging residents, including youth, in advocating for tobacco prevention policies
- providing technical assistance to elected officials and/or city staff related to adopting or implementing TRL

Although the original objective was not fully achieved after two years, Compromiso Adelante made meaningful strides in several key areas in both Ceres and Riverbank. Significant progress was accomplished in community outreach, public education, technical assistance, and increasing elected officials’ awareness of tobacco-related policy options. These efforts moved progress forward in Ceres and laid a strong foundation for future advocacy and policy development in Riverbank.

Aim & Outcome

Compromiso Adelante's primary objective was as follows:

At least two (2) incorporated jurisdictions in Stanislaus County (e.g. Riverbank and Ceres) will adopt and implement either a policy that eliminates the sale of all tobacco products, or a comprehensive tobacco retail licensing policy that requires tobacco retailers to obtain a license to sell tobacco products, includes elimination of flavored and menthol tobacco sales, a minimum retail sale price for tobacco products set in conjunction with minimum package/volume size, restrictions on the redemption of coupons or other discounts on tobacco products, and designates a portion of the annual licensing fee ensure adequate enforcement of the policy. The policy will exclude any provision that criminalizes a person for the purchase, use, or possession of tobacco products.

By the end of the 2023-2025 scope of work period, the objective was not met. Despite challenges, Compromiso Adelante achieved meaningful progress in both Ceres and Riverbank across several key areas. The initiative strengthened community outreach, expanded public education, provided technical assistance, and enhanced elected officials' understanding of tobacco-related policy options. These efforts advanced momentum in Ceres and established a solid groundwork for continued advocacy and policy efforts in Riverbank.

Background

Compromiso Adelante's work addressed a critical need for tobacco prevention in the rural region of Stanislaus County. Tobacco-related diseases take a larger toll in Stanislaus County than elsewhere in the state. For example, the rate of deaths from lung cancer is higher in Stanislaus County than statewide, and the same is true of coronary heart disease deaths (California Department of Public Health, 2022).

The county's large Latino population, which makes up nearly half of its residents, experiences disproportionately high smoking rates. Almost 14% of the Latino adults use tobacco products, which is the highest tobacco use rate among any ethnic group (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2022). Statewide, the density of tobacco retailers is higher in Latino neighborhoods than in the general population (103.3 vs. 78 retailers per 100,000 residents) (California Health Collaborative, 2022). These factors highlight the importance of focusing on tobacco retail licensing (TRL) to reduce youth access and tobacco-related health disparities.

TRL has been shown to reduce youth exposure to tobacco, particularly when implemented with best practices like sufficient fees, restrictions on product location, and limitations on advertising and discounting. When Compromiso Adelante launched, Ceres had no TRL, and Riverbank's TRL, though in place since 2015, lacked enforcement mechanisms such as fees and penalties. Ceres had 38 tobacco retailers for its population of approximately 49,000, and Riverbank had 14 retailers serving a population of around 25,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). In 2022, the

American Lung Association's State of Tobacco Control report card graded Ceres with an "F" for its lack of tobacco prevention policies. Riverbank, despite having a TRL, received a "D" overall due to the TRL lacking comprehensive components.

The need to focus on TRL was echoed by the county's 2021 Communities of Excellence process, where TRL ranked within the top five indicators based on community feedback. This showed that the community was ready to support tobacco retail regulations that would significantly benefit Latino families, who are strongly affected by the county's tobacco-related disparities.

California Health Collaborative (CHC) has had a long history of successfully working on tobacco prevention initiatives. In Riverbank, CHC had been collaborating with city staff since 2019 to incorporate tobacco prevention goals into the city's general plan. In the process, CHC had established connections with numerous Latino-serving organizations. This momentum from previous efforts positioned *Compromiso Adelante* to be a powerful force in advancing TRL policies in Ceres and Riverbank. These communities, with their significant Latino populations, high smoking rates, and readiness for policy change, presented ideal opportunities to pursue TRL ordinances that would help protect youth and reduce tobacco-related health burdens.

Evaluation Methods & Design

The evaluation plan used process measures to support the objective, as Table 1 illustrates.

The *Compromiso Adelante* team carried out three community-based evaluation activities in the first twelve months of the project: a series of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), a Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS), and a Public Opinion Poll (POP). They also reviewed local policy decisions, resulting in a documented Policy Record. The results of each evaluation activity played a role in planning intervention activities and educating the community.

One of the team's first priorities was to conduct a **Policy Record Review** (Appendix 1). They reviewed Ceres and Riverbank city council archives and councilmember profiles. The initial review showed both city councils had mixed levels of support for tobacco-prevention policies.

Next, the team conducted **Key Informant Interviews** (Appendices 2 and 3) with community members to better understand their priorities and views. The interviews focused on interviewees' perception of tobacco use in the community and their levels of support for tobacco prevention policies.

In January 2024, the team conducted a **Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey** (Appendix 4) to document the extent of illegal sales of tobacco and vaping products to young adults. Results (Appendix 5) showed that one in four retailers in Ceres and one in five retailers in Riverbank illegally sold tobacco products to underage investigators.

The team conducted a **Public Opinion Poll** (Appendix 6) to learn about community knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions on the availability of tobacco, youth access to tobacco, and support or opposition for TRL. Results (Appendix 7) showed that **78% of the community members surveyed supported TRL.**

Throughout the evaluation activities, the Compromiso Adelante team took several steps to ensure data quality:

- For the **Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey**, Compromiso Adelante staff provided virtual data collection training for the young adult investigators and shared feedback from their own trial runs of purchase attempts.
- The evaluation consultant, LPC Consulting Associates, Inc. (LPC) trained Compromiso Adelante staff in how to conduct **Key Informant Interviews**. Compromiso staff piloted the KII protocol with colleagues to ensure the questions were understood as intended before interviewing community members.
- Compromiso Adelante staff personally collected most of the **Public Opinion Poll** data. Staff also trained volunteers from partner organization, *We R La Raza*, to collect survey data.

Compromiso Adelante staff used content analysis to analyze Key Informant Interview results to summarize and report interview findings. LPC used descriptive statistics to summarize data from the Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey and Public Opinion Poll.

Limitations

The evaluation design had a few potential limitations. First, studies have shown that in a YATPS, the customer’s gender, age, and the time of day of the attempted purchase all influence the illegal tobacco sales rate (Lee et al., 2016). Because Compromiso Adelante’s YATPS was conducted with all male investigators and in a limited time frame, YATPS findings do not fully reflect illegal sales under all circumstances. Additionally, the POP and KIIs used a convenience sample, which may have represented the views of those who chose to participate rather than the overall population of each community.

Table 1. Summary of key evaluation activities

Evaluation Activity	Type	Purpose	Sample	Response Count	Instrument Source	Analysis	Timing
Policy Record	Process	Understand local policymaker support/opposition & tobacco-related policy changes	N/A	N/A	Tobacco Control Evaluation Center	N/A	Years 1-2
Key Informant Interviews	Process	Understand community leaders’ insights and priorities	Purposive sample of community leaders	8 interviews (4 per jurisdiction)	Evaluation Consultant	Qualitative analysis	Year 1
Public Opinion Poll	Process	Understand local perceptions of	Convenience sample of local residents	229 survey responses	Evaluation Consultant	Descriptive statistics	Year 1

Evaluation Activity	Type	Purpose	Sample	Response Count	Instrument Source	Analysis	Timing
		tobacco and support or opposition for TRL		(100+ per jurisdiction)			
Tobacco Purchase Survey	Process	Document the extent of illegal sales of tobacco/vaping products to young adults	Census of tobacco retailers	52 retailers	Evaluation Consultant	Descriptive statistics	Year 1

Implementation & Results

Compromiso Adelante employed the *building a movement* theory of change to guide the implementation of their primary objective. The major intervention activities included educational presentations for the community, development of strategic partnerships, gathering and sharing relevant data, meetings with and presentations to elected officials, and providing technical assistance to elected officials and city staff related to adopting or implementing TRL. Each phase of implementation is described in this section and displayed in the chronological timeline below (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Year 1 May – June 2023	Initial Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researched the policy landscape and decisionmakers
Year 2 July 2023 – June 2024	Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted interviews to learn local perspectives on tobacco • Educated the community on tobacco prevention through outreach events • Conducted Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey to measure underage sales rates • Conducted Public Opinion Poll to measure community support
Year 3 July 2024 – June 2025	Policy Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported Ceres Police Department with local data and TRL information • Developed Policy Implementation Plans • Provided technical assistance to Ceres

Although the primary objective was not reached, Compromiso Adelante made notable advancements in both Ceres and Riverbank. The project bolstered local outreach, deepened community education, delivered technical support, and elevated policymakers’ awareness of tobacco-related policy strategies. These accomplishments helped sustain progress in Ceres and laid important groundwork for future advocacy and policy initiatives in Riverbank.

While Ceres and Riverbank are close in proximity, they are unique communities. The Compromiso Adelante team adapted their intervention to fit each city, leading to two distinct stories, described below.

Ceres

When Compromiso Adelante launched, Ceres had little history of acting on tobacco prevention at the city level. The city did not have a local TRL program for regulating its 38 tobacco retailers. The Compromiso team's early policy research (Appendix 1) found that two of the current city council members voted in 2020 in favor of smoke-free parks when children are present. However, in a contradictory decision, the city council also voted to give permission to sell tobacco at River Bluff Park in Ceres, which is used for youth baseball and softball.

As educators, we witness the impact of vaping on our youth, and I would support any policy to help limit its accessibility to youth who seem to have easy access to it.

– Ceres resident

Despite this mixed record on tobacco prevention, the city council was seen as potentially supportive of TRL. Compromiso staff knew that winning the City Council's support for a TRL policy would be crucial. They identified three council members with backgrounds in youth and health initiatives as the most likely supporters of a TRL policy. The two other members (one with a background in law enforcement and the other in business) were expected to be more difficult to

sway. However, Compromiso staff learned that some local marijuana dispensaries were pressuring the city council to investigate illegal marijuana sales from local smoke shops. This provided an argument for TRL from the pro-business perspective. Compromiso staff also had shifts in support from councilmembers. One decision-maker was hesitant to support Compromiso; however, they were quickly replaced by another councilmember who was more willing to meet with staff to discuss a tobacco retail license.

To gain more insight into local views on TRL, Compromiso Adelante staff conducted interviews with community members (Appendix 3). Interviewees from the education sector voiced support for policies that would keep tobacco and vape products away from young people. In contrast, interviewees with ties to the business sector and blue-collar industries were worried about the potential negative effects on retailers.

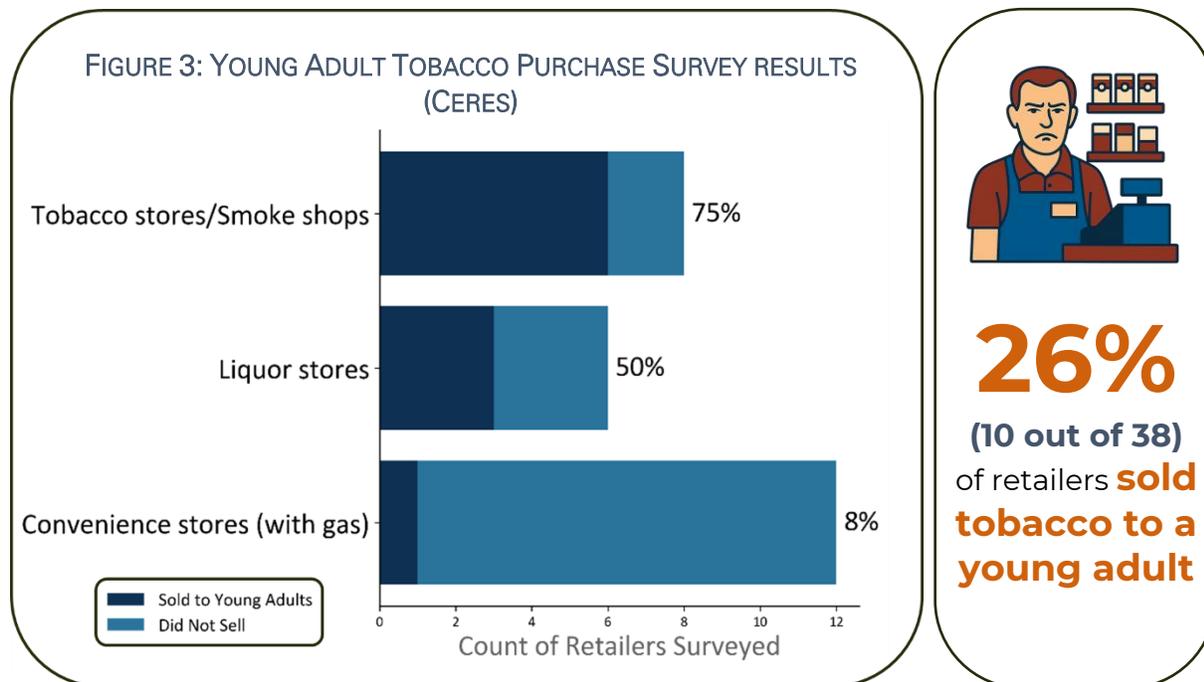
Compromiso also began attending meetings and community events, sharing information about their mission. For example, Compromiso staff brought together community stakeholders for a strategic planning session in August 2023, presented at an October 2023 Town Hall held by the local school district, and participated in the TOPS (Tobacco Prevention) Coalition of Stanislaus County and Stanislaus Sustainable Communities Coalition (SSCC). The project gained support from local residents, especially parents who were concerned about youth access.

Measuring Public Opinion and Illegal Sales

The Compromiso team launched two data collection activities that would inform their future strategy: the Public Opinion Poll (POP) and Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS). These revealed two important findings: (1) underage sales were a problem in Ceres, and (2) most residents supported restrictions on the sale of tobacco products.

The Compromiso Adelante team conducted the YATPS in January 2024 (Appendices 4 and 5). The team obtained a list of all 38 tobacco retail locations in Ceres, including big box stores and

smaller smoke shops. The team recruited and trained three under-21 investigators. The investigators systematically visited each retailer, attempting to purchase either cigarettes or e-cigarettes. About one in four retailers made an illegal sale. Notably, **75% of smoke shops made an illegal sale** (Figure 3).



To understand community sentiment toward tobacco use and policies, Compromiso also conducted a Public Opinion Poll (POP) throughout winter and spring. Results of surveying 123 Ceres residents (Appendix 7) showed that 49% thought the city had too many stores selling tobacco products, and 63% agreed that tobacco is an issue among youth under 18. The survey also showed strong support for restrictions on retail sales; **78% supported a local tobacco retail license** (Figure 2), and 72% supported banning tobacco sales altogether. When the results were grouped by city council district (Appendix 8), districts 1, 3, and 4 showed the highest levels of support. These districts also had the highest concentration of tobacco retailers, suggesting that residents who live near more retailers are more likely to support increased restrictions.

The results of both the POP and YATPS were included in informational packets Compromiso provided to city council members. YATPS results were shared in social media posts and were also showcased in community presentations.

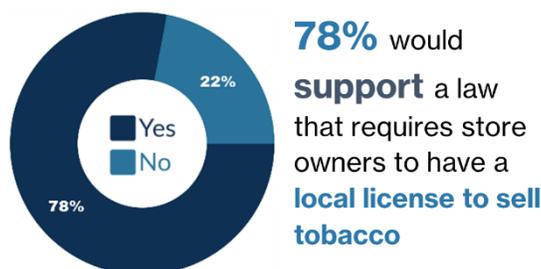


FIGURE 2: CERES PUBLIC OPINION POLL RESULTS

Educating the Community

The Compromiso team educated the community on tobacco-related issues through events, presentations, and trainings. These included several meetings held by Ceres Unified School

District where Compromiso staff spoke to parents, school staff, and families to raise awareness of the harms of tobacco and vaping, the industry’s marketing tactics, and how TRL can prevent youth access to tobacco. All presentations included the Ceres YATPS, which made a strong impact and led to surprised reactions from residents. A particularly noteworthy event was the March 2024 Town Hall Meeting at the Ceres Community Center, where Compromiso staff presented to an audience of 200 community members and collaborative partners to promote community involvement in TRL.

The team shared information including YATPS findings on social media (Figure 4). Compromiso staff also created a Ceres data sheet with statistics from the YATPS and POP to show the prevalence of youth access to tobacco as well as residents’ support for a TRL (Appendix 10). This community-facing infographic, which was tested and revised with residents’ feedback, highlights key data points in a clear, easy-to-understand format.

To ensure educational efforts were culturally competent and relevant to Ceres, staff made sure events and materials were available in Spanish to accommodate the local Latino population. Additionally, staff aligned events with cultural holidays, such as Mexican Independence Day, to make them more meaningful and resonate with the community. This approach helped engage residents and ensured the content was both accessible and culturally appropriate.



FIGURE 4: SOCIAL MEDIA POST SHARING CERES YATPS RESULTS

Focus on Law Enforcement

In 2024, Compromiso staff shifted to a focus on law enforcement. The local police department’s interest in stopping illegal retail activity, combined with their positive reputation with city leaders, made them a potential champion for TRL. Compromiso staff played a role in this by helping Ceres Police Department (CPD) understand the extent of illegal sales and learn about options for TRL policy. This was done by publicizing the results of Compromiso’s YATPS as well as fostering connections between the CPD and Modesto Police Department (MPD).

Compromiso had been in contact with CPD since the planning stages of the YATPS, when CPD expressed support and were interested in the results. In March 2024 the police chief was in attendance when the Compromiso team shared YATPS results at a local town hall meeting, where the findings produced shocked reactions from the community. After the meeting, the chief asked Compromiso staff if he could reference the findings when applying for a Department of Justice (DOJ) grant that would provide funds for sting operations. **The Ceres Police Department ultimately received the grant after using YATPS results in the application.**

Compromiso staff also learned that the MPD were conducting a series of stings in Modesto smoke shops. Compromiso staff invited the CPD to attend a TOPS Coalition meeting where MPD gave an update on their investigation. After the meeting, MPD and CPD started to talk to each other, and MPD offered support in conducting similar stings, even offering to send personnel to help. In the next few months, CPD went on ride-alongs with MPD to understand their investigation methods.

In October 2024, MPD held a press conference sharing that their months-long investigation revealed local smoke shops had illegal gambling machines, flavored tobacco products, and other illegal merchandise (Morgan, 2024). MPD shared about how they were working with the district attorney to draft a TRL policy, which would provide funding for more compliance checks. The Compromiso team and CPD attended the press conference. After hearing MPD's plan, CPD seemed to gain a new interest in TRL.

To build on the recent media attention on MPD's smoke shop sting, Compromiso brought three student volunteers from the Jakara Movement to give public comments at a Ceres City Council meeting on November 25th, 2024. The students spoke about the recent sting in Modesto, shared personal stories of how tobacco has affected students at Central Valley High School in Ceres, and advocated for TRL as a solution. Council members commended the youth for bringing up the issue. The students reiterated their points in a follow-up conversation with the city manager after the meeting.

In February 2025, CPD conducted their own sting investigation. Like MPD, they coordinated with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, which allowed them to investigate retailers as a compliance check without a search warrant. They inspected three smoke shops within Ceres and found all three were selling illegal hemp products. Officers seized 3,500 illegal products between the three shops (Benzinger, 2025). This increased the evidence of illegal sales that Compromiso staff found during the YATPS, making the need for tobacco retail regulations even harder for city leaders to ignore. As the City Council was known to be very supportive of local police, this was an encouraging sign that Compromiso could leverage the recent police work in favor of passing TRL in Ceres.

Making a Policy Plan

Between the community support, evidence of illegal sales, requests from local marijuana dispensaries to regulate tobacco retailers, and Modesto's plan to adopt a TRL, the Ceres City Council decided to discuss a TRL plan. CPD began working with city staff to draft an ordinance, and city staff accepted the Compromiso team's assistance. In early 2025 Compromiso staff began developing a Policy Implementation Plan for TRL tailored to Ceres (Appendix 11). Compromiso staff met with city staff about their priorities, concerns, and needs. The plan, a comprehensive guide to TRL policy, contained information about the benefits of TRL, important elements of a policy, implementation guides, and case studies. Additionally, it outlined the roles of various departments in enforcement, preparing leaders to ensure a coordinated effort across local agencies to support policy implementation. However, the question remained whether the city council would be willing to adopt a TRL before waiting to see how Modesto's TRL would play out.

Compromiso staff continued to communicate with CPD and meet with the Lieutenant in charge of the DOJ grant. Compromiso focused on framing TRL as an opportunity to secure more sustainable funding to continue enforcement activities CPD had established during the DOJ grant. The Lieutenant connected Compromiso with the city manager and city attorney but has not set up meetings. The Compromiso team provides ongoing technical assistance through the Lieutenant.

I'm worried about the amount of smoke shops popping up, especially. Even near the schools my grandkids see a lot of the signs.

– Riverbank resident

Riverbank

The City of Riverbank had a history of tobacco prevention work (Appendix 1). The city adopted a Tobacco Retail License ordinance in 2015, but did not set a fee, and there was no enforcement program. While the city's senior planner supported tobacco retail regulation and denied most requests for new tobacco retailers, three new tobacco retailers opened in Riverbank between 2019 and 2022.

A previous CTPP-funded project, STAAND (Small-Town Allies Against Nicotine Dependency, 2019-2024) had laid the groundwork for community support. STAAND successfully organized community support for adding tobacco-prevention language to the Environmental Justice Element of the city's General Plan. When STAAND ended, Riverbank had not set a timeline for updating their General Plan, but community support was strong.

When Compromiso Adelante launched, city council support for tobacco prevention seemed mixed. Of five city council members, two were business owners, including one who owned a chain of grocery stores that sold tobacco products. Compromiso Adelante hoped to gain the support of the other three members, including an educator and community advocate.

To gain more insight into local views on TRL, Compromiso Adelante staff conducted interviews with community members (Appendix 3). Interviewees from the education sector, city planning department, and an elected official voiced support for stronger restrictions on tobacco retailers.

Through participating in community and school events, Compromiso Adelante also encountered support from families and school communities. Compromiso staff spoke to parents, teachers, and school staff who expressed support for TRL, recognizing its benefits for the health and well-being of youth and the whole community. Compromiso also encountered support from Mayor Hernandez who was elected in November 2024 and had publicly supported the STAAND initiative.

Other community leaders were more cautious. The Riverbank sheriff took a neutral stance, explaining in an interview that he was focused on enforcing current laws rather than supporting new ones. He added that local law enforcement may not have enough staffing to enforce new ordinances. Compromiso staff anticipated needing to collaborate with other local leaders and groups to build broader support for the initiative.



FIGURE 5: YOUNG ADULT TOBACCO PURCHASE SURVEY RESULTS (RIVERBANK)

Learning About Youth Access & Public Opinion

The Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) in Riverbank revealed that, similar to Ceres, tobacco retailers in Riverbank were making illegal sales to underage customers (Appendix 5). In January 2024, the under-21 investigators systematically visited all of Riverbank’s 14 tobacco retailers, attempting to purchase either cigarettes or e-cigarettes. Overall, **21% of retailers (about one in five) made an underage sale** (Figure 5).

To understand community sentiment towards tobacco and tobacco-related policies, Compromiso conducted a POP in Riverbank in winter and spring 2024 (Appendices 7 and 9). Results of surveying 106 Riverbank residents showed strong support for restrictions on the sale of tobacco products: **78% of respondents said they would support requiring store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco** (Figure 6). The results of both the POP and YATPS were shared in social media posts and showcased in community presentations.

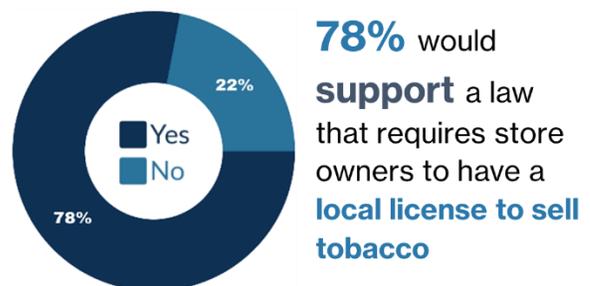


FIGURE 6: RIVERBANK PUBLIC OPINION POLL RESULTS

Educating the Community

Compromiso staff engaged in a number of community education activities with the goal of engaging the community, garnering support for tobacco-related initiatives, and identifying stories that highlight local reasons for supporting TRL.

Compromiso staff regularly participated in Riverbank Community Collaborative (RCC) meetings. These were opportunities to establish relationships with community stakeholders and share findings from the project’s community research. City decisionmakers, such as city council members, would also occasionally attend the meetings. Through the RCC, Compromiso staff

became acquainted with local educators, which led to invitations to give educational presentations and participate in events at schools.

Tabling at local events had a significant impact in Riverbank. It allowed the Compromiso team to directly engage with residents and families, giving them the opportunity to share their stories and learn about policy solutions to youth tobacco use and vaping. It also helped increase the team's visibility and build recognition within the community.

Compromiso also held training events for targeted audiences. For example, in August 2024 staff provided a training to a group of *promotoras* (community health outreach workers). The training was focused on education on tobacco issues and how to best communicate this to the Latino population. In September 2024, staff also attended a We "R" La Raza Parents Meeting and shared out current data on youth access to tobacco and collected post cards from attending parents.

To reach a broad audience, Compromiso staff created a Riverbank factsheet (Appendix 10) with statistics from the YATPS and POP to show the prevalence of youth access to tobacco, as well as residents' support for a TRL. To ensure that events and materials were culturally competent and relevant to Riverbank, Compromiso staff made sure they were available in Spanish. Like the approach in Ceres, Compromiso staff tested and revised the factsheet with residents' feedback. This ensured accessibility for the local population and made the information more relatable and inclusive.

Forming a TRL Strategy

Compromiso's goal was to strengthen the existing TRL policy in Riverbank. This would involve refining the current regulations, creating an enforcement plan, and ensuring broader community and governmental support to create a more effective and sustainable framework for tobacco prevention.

Compromiso staff came to understand that one main challenge was a lack of awareness among decisionmakers about the current TRL. Riverbank had not been enforcing TRL because no application fee had been established. The senior planner position, which previously made decisions on retailer applications, had been vacant since December 2023. City staff simply did not have enough awareness of their existing TRL to start the process of updating it.

Although community engagement was going well, with Compromiso participating in events and holding trainings for community groups, it was difficult to make lasting impressions on the city council and city planning staff in order to raise their awareness. Many messages to the city council went unanswered, and there was turnover in two council member positions. When the Compromiso team communicated with city council members, it seemed they did not see tobacco retail policy as an urgent issue. Most of the recent requests for new tobacco retailers had been denied, so there were not many new tobacco retailers in Riverbank – but this was due to the former senior planner's preference, not the TRL itself.

Mayor Hernandez, elected in 2024, appeared to be a solid supporter of the cause. Compromiso staff focused on fostering this connection and initiated several open and productive

conversations with the mayor. This connection was valuable in discussing the TRL initiative and raising the likelihood of a future collaboration with the city council.

Compromiso had learned early in the program that the sheriff was not likely to be an advocate for new laws. However, as Ceres began to move forward with TRL plans, Compromiso leveraged the collaboration with the Ceres Police Department and Modesto Police Department in order to demonstrate the benefits of TRL. Compromiso used this example to show that law enforcement can be proactive in solving tobacco retail problems, especially if they have recurring issues with things like illegal sales or illegal activity at certain businesses.

By 2025, it became evident that Riverbank would benefit from substantial technical assistance to strengthen its Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) efforts. To support this, the Compromiso team drafted a Riverbank Policy Implementation Plan (Appendix 11) to guide both the creation of and compliance with future tobacco-related policies. The Plan is intentionally dynamic, proactive, and adaptable – tailored to meet Riverbank’s unique needs at its current stage in the TRL process. It will continue to be updated to reflect evolving local policies and community conditions.

Conclusions & Recommendations

By the end of the two-year program period, Compromiso Adelante’s objective was not met. However, data collected showed that the public is open and supportive of passing such a policy, which provides a foundation for future efforts. Through strengthened outreach, expanded education efforts, and strategic technical support to broadcast evaluation and community data, Compromiso significantly increased local capacity and raised awareness among policymakers about tobacco-related policy options. These efforts not only reinforced ongoing momentum in Ceres but also established a strong foundation for future advocacy and policy development in Riverbank, positioning both communities for continued progress in the years ahead.

Effective Strategies

Compromiso Adelante identified several strategies that proved especially effective in advancing their goals. Engaging city council members through in-person interactions, such as attending council meetings and local community events, helped build trust and open lines of communication. Relationship-building efforts were most successful when they began with offering support aligned with city priorities; for example, Compromiso staff assisted the Community Policing Division by providing data for a Department of Justice grant application, which organically led to discussions about how a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) could provide sustainable funding for their ongoing work. Referencing nearby communities like Modesto that had adopted or were considering TRLs also helped normalize the policy and build momentum. Sharing Youth Access to Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) results in multiple formats, including social media, printed materials, and live presentations, was another impactful tactic. Finally, developing a Policy Implementation Plan that addressed specific questions and operational needs of city staff, particularly in Ceres, reinforced the project’s responsiveness and relevance to local priorities.

Less Effective Strategies

In working with city leaders, Compromiso Adelante found that certain outreach strategies were less effective. Unsolicited emails or “cold” calls, especially those that simply introduced the program or shared educational materials without prior connection, rarely led to meaningful engagement. Similarly, making direct requests too early in the relationship, without first offering assistance or support aligned with the city’s priorities, often failed to build trust or interest. These experiences underscored the importance of leading with collaboration and demonstrating value before seeking policy-related commitments.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

Several key lessons emerged from Compromiso’s efforts in Ceres and Riverbank that can help guide future work. First, **community engagement has been crucial in both cities**, with direct involvement from local schools, community groups, and law enforcement helping to build support for the TRL initiative. Assisting with Ceres Police Department’s DOJ grant was instrumental in showing the city that the Compromiso team was a resource to be utilized and not simply trying to meet their own needs. This showed the team was willing to provide the tailored assistance that the Ceres community needed. Compromiso also gained broad reach through presentations for parents, trainings to students, and showing through action how a TRL could benefit their community, rather than just theoretically.

Data collection, including the Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) and Public Opinion Polls (POP), provided **compelling evidence to drive discussions and shape policy strategies**. Activities such as the YATPS helped lead conversations and illustrate how tobacco affects youth, especially since this is a high-priority issue for many of the decision-makers. The YATPS also helped to get youth involved and take an interest in the overall initiative.

Ensuring cultural relevance by offering materials in Spanish and aligning activities with local cultural events helped increase community engagement. All materials were made and tested with communities to make sure they were easy to read and understand. In addition, Compromiso planned and attended events at *El Rematito* (a local flea market/swap meet) that is frequented by Latino residents of Ceres and Riverbank, as well as all of Stanislaus County. Trainings were available in Spanish and staff included native Spanish speakers. Building connections with faith-based organizations and schools are where Latino residents typically feel safer especially given the new climate and rising fears of being out in public. In addition, *Know Your Rights* training helped alleviate concerns and ensure residents are informed about keeping themselves safe in addition to tobacco prevention efforts to promote involvement.

In summary, while the primary objective of Compromiso Adelante was not fully achieved within the grant period, the groundwork laid through community engagement, data collection, and strategic partnerships has been substantial. Public support for tobacco-related policies, combined with increased awareness among decision-makers and culturally responsive outreach, positions both Ceres and Riverbank for meaningful progress in the future. These efforts have strengthened local capacity and built lasting relationships that will support continued advocacy, education, and policy development in the years ahead.

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Appendices

1. Policy Record Summary
2. KII Protocol
3. KII Report
4. YATPS Tool
5. YATPS Report
6. POP Questionnaire
7. POP report
8. POP short report, Ceres
9. POP short report, Riverbank
10. Factsheets
11. Policy Implementation Plan, Ceres

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Your efforts are deeply appreciated!

Policy Record Summary Report

Evaluation Activity: 2-E-2

Date: December 2023

Purpose

In order to understand the climate of current tobacco policy in Ceres and Riverbank the project conducted a review of policy records including the city council archives and council member profiles. This was done to identify existing tobacco control policies in the region, examine the voting records and interests of the currently seated council members, see how issues were framed and discussed, and identify potential allies and adversaries. The collected data will inform our outreach to council members about the need for a tobacco retail licensing policy that earmarks a portion of the license fee for enforcement activities and eliminates the sale and distribution of tobacco products.

Background and Methodology

Compromiso Adelante project staff utilized the Tobacco Control Evaluation Center's (TCEC's) policy record to identify ordinances or resolutions related to smoking policies for Ceres and Riverbank. Goals of the policy review were: 1) a list of applicable policies and procedures with a brief description, 2) the date the jurisdiction adopted the ordinance/resolution, and 3) the voting record by the Council members in Ceres and Riverbank.

This summary report includes a review of two policy records Compromiso Adelante project staff conducted between July 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023, one for Ceres City Council and one for Riverbank City Council.

Findings

Ceres

City Council Member Affiliations & Biographical Information

The Ceres City Council consists of five members. All of the current members were recently elected within the last four years. Three of the members were local small business owners, one is an active community member, while one was in law enforcement. Staff deemed three likely to be supportive, one likely to be unsupportive, and one unknown.

- Small Business Owner 1: In addition to having a small business focused on fitness this councilmember has experience in fire industry training and coaching high school football. Because of the focus on fitness, health, and youth support level is likely to be supportive.
- Small Business Owner 2: Owns a small party rental business and works with students and Youth Advocated for Justice. Also serves on Latino Community Roundtable. Due to this focus on youth and Latino Population support level is likely to be supportive.

- Small Business Owner 3: Owner of a storage company and chairman of St. Judes finance committee. Due to focus on economic impact and lack of history in health initiatives support level is likely to be unsupportive.
- Community Member: Insurance agent, Inventory Manager, active volunteer within the community, and Youth Baseball Coach. Because of focus on youth and interest in volunteering within community support level is likely to be supportive.
- Retired Law Enforcement: Retired Law Enforcement and Director of Stanislaus County Police Activities League as well as NCAA Referee with strong interest in sports. Support level is unknown because of focus on law enforcement and how funding will be provided for enforcement of TRL.

In conclusion, staff believes that approaching those who are likely to be supportive with data showing how tobacco is affecting their constituents will lead to a successful project.

Tobacco Related Ordinances

This policy record review identified one tobacco related ordinance voted on by the Ceres City Council. In 2020 two of the current city council members voted in favor of smoke free parks when children are present.

In another ordinance City Council voted in favor of permission to sell tobacco at River Bluff Park in Ceres which is used for youth baseball and softball games and practice. There is a contradiction here in the sale of tobacco products where children are. This would be due to the focus on business and revenue generated by these sales which is a heavy focus for the City Council. The other current members of the city council had not been in office yet. No other ordinances were passed by the current city council or within this reporting period.

Riverbank

City Council Member Affiliations & Biographical Information

The Riverbank City Council consists of five members. Biographical information was available for five of the members. One has a background in education, three in small business, and one in volunteering with youth and politics. Staff deemed two likely supportive of tobacco-related issues, one likely unsupportive, and two unknown.

- Business Owner: Owns a chain of grocery stores that sells tobacco products. Due to being a tobacco retailer support level is unlikely.
- Small Business Owner: Owns multiple businesses in the community and has a heavy focus on small business. Support level is unknown due to focus on business.
- Education Sector: Special Education Teacher in the community. Due to occupation and proximity to the issue of increasing youth use of tobacco products in school support level is likely to be supportive.
- Real Estate Agent: Works as a real estate agent and focuses on business but also has a strong focus on the Latino community. Support level is likely to be supportive due to programs focus on health impacts on the Latino population.

- Volunteer: Active in volunteering across the community as well as a member of various Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander advocacy groups. Also a member of the Central Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Due to her focus on Latino residents and youth, support level is likely to be supportive.

In conclusion, staff believes that approaching those who are likely to be supportive with data showing how tobacco is affecting their constituents will lead to a successful project.

Tobacco Related Ordinances

The policy record review identified one tobacco-control related ordinance and a discussion on Smoke free Multi Unit Housing to be included in the environmental justice element of the general plans of the City of Riverbank after a presentation given by Young Adults Fighting Tobacco (YAFT) Coalition in 2022. There is also a current Tobacco Retail License that was passed in 2015, but this current Tobacco Retail License does not include a fee and there are no enforcement/ compliance checks currently being conducted in the city. The license is being used by the current Planning Manager to deny requests for additional tobacco retailers in the city. The Planning Manager is a supporter of tobacco prevention. However, that Planning Manager is retiring at the end of 2023 and there is nothing in the current TRL to preclude the next planning manager from approving requests. The council adopted the TRL but never took the next step of calculating an appropriate fee and setting up an enforcement program.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This policy report shows promising progress for the successful adoption of a Tobacco Retail License in Ceres.

In Riverbank where there is a current Tobacco Retail License, this report shows promise to strengthen the current Tobacco Retail License in Riverbank which has not set a fee or contains any other meaningful components that we hope to include in a new strengthened version.

It is recommended that the Compromiso Adelante team prepare to provide implementation and enforcement advice to Ceres if they adopt the Tobacco Retail License as well as Riverbank so the need to strengthen their current Tobacco Retail License is understood.

Compromiso Adelante

2-E-1 Key Informant Interview Protocol

Interview Information		Key Informant Information	
Date of interview:		Name:	
Interviewer name:		Title:	
Note taker name:		Organization/affiliation:	
Format (in-person, Zoom, etc.)		Jurisdiction:	

Introduction: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today. My name is _____ and I work for Compromiso Adelante, a Tobacco Prevention program with the California Health Collaborative. We are speaking with local leaders to learn your opinions on potential policies on the sale of tobacco products. We are particularly interested in opportunities, barriers, and recommendations for adopting these policies.

Your responses to the questions will remain confidential, and your answers will be compiled with others so that no one will be able to identify individual responses. I'd like to audio-record the conversation, so we don't miss any of your comments. Is that okay?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Turn recorder on

1. First, tell me what what made you want to be a *[councilmember, mayor, etc.]*?

2. Tell me a little about yourself and your history in *[education, healthcare, public service, etc.]*.
 - a. Have you ever been involved in tobacco preventions efforts? If so, tell me about it.

3. What challenges do you face in your work as a *[councilmember, mayor, etc.]*?

4. What is your perception of tobacco use overall in [*Riverbank/Ceres*]?

5. Are there any issues you're aware of that involve tobacco or the selling of tobacco products in [*Ceres/Riverbank*]? Tell me about them.

6. In general, do you think it is easy for people to access tobacco products in your community? Why or why not?

7. In general, do you think it is easy for youth/teenagers to access tobacco products in your community? Why or why not?

Next, I'd like to ask your opinions about **potential policies related to tobacco sales.**

8. How supportive would you be of a policy that would **eliminate the sale of all tobacco products** in [*Ceres/Riverbank*]?

9. How supportive would you be of a policy that would put more **restrictions on tobacco sales** – including setting minimum sale prices and restricting the use of coupons and discounts, in [*Ceres/Riverbank*]?

10. In general, do you think people in [*Ceres/Riverbank*] would support more restrictive policies on tobacco sales? Why or why not?

11. What strategies do you think would help to raise community support for these kinds of policies?

12. Can you suggest other leaders in the [*Ceres/Riverbank*] that we should talk to?
Probe: Who might provide a different perspective?

13. Those are all my questions. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

14. Are you open to staying in contact in the future?

Closing: Thank you so much for your time today, we know it is valuable! And your insights will be very helpful for informing our work. If you think of anything you would like to add to our conversation, or if you'd like more information about our work, please let me know.



Key Informant Interview Report

Evaluation Activity: 2-E-1

Date: December 2023

Purpose

The purpose of the interviews is to identify supporting parties and barriers to a comprehensive Tobacco Retail License policy in each jurisdiction. The interview responses are currently being used to determine the readiness of each jurisdiction to implement a local Tobacco Retail license, identify potential barriers and suggestions on how to address them, and identify potential allies and champions. Current target jurisdictions are Ceres and Riverbank.

Background

Implementing a comprehensive Tobacco Retail License promotes health and wellness for all members of the communities in Ceres and Riverbank. A Tobacco Retail License has been shown to reduce tobacco use behaviors, limit youth access to tobacco products, and decrease exposure to new tobacco and nicotine products.

Policy record reviews revealed that Ceres and Riverbank city councils have both recently voted on tobacco-prevention policies within their communities. Ceres passed a smoke free park ordinance (when children are present) in 2020. Riverbank passed a Tobacco Retail License in 2015 but did not include a fee or additional components that would assist in reducing tobacco and nicotine use.

Methods

As part of the assessment of current attitudes towards tobacco-related issues in the city of Ceres, key informant interviews were conducted from July 2023 to November 2023. The primary objective was to gauge perspectives on existing challenges related to tobacco and assess potential support for proposed policies, notably the introduction of a tobacco retail license.

Interviewees:

Ceres

Project staff interviewed four people altogether. Two were individuals representing the education sector. One was a local business owner. The last individual interviewed was a blue-collar warehouse worker.

Riverbank

Project staff interviewed four people. One was an elected official. One was a staff member in the planning department. Another was a representative of law enforcement. And another participant was a representative in the education sector.

**Questionnaire:**

A set of the same 14 open-ended questions were given to collect detailed views on current tobacco-related issues. Questions were designed to understand participants' perceptions and to measure support for potential policies aimed at addressing these concerns. Additionally, follow-up questions were posed to explore factors that might influence their stance to ensure understanding of their opinions and the possibility of factors that may change those opinions. The protocol was practiced, and pilot tested with Compromiso Adelante staff.

Data Collection:

All interviews were conducted via Zoom. Two staff attended each interview so that one could take notes while the other facilitated the conversation.

Data Analysis:

The information gathered was analyzed to identify common themes, concerns, and potential areas of support as well as potential challenges.

Results

The findings from the key informant interviews revealed distinct perspectives among participants from different sectors.

Support

Ceres**Education Sector:**

The two respondents from the education sector expressed similar concerns about tobacco-related issues in Ceres. They noted a rise in usage at the school site due to vapes being more difficult to detect. They demonstrated a strong level of support for potential policies aimed at addressing these concerns.

"As educators, we witness the impact of vaping on our youth, and I would support any policy to help limit its accessibility to youth who seem to have easy access to it."

Rather than a downstream response that would treat symptoms of the issue, an upstream solution like a Tobacco Retail License would assist and be supported by these parties.

Riverbank

**City Employees, Elected Officials, and Education Sector:**

City employees, elected officials, and those from the education sector exhibited a notable level of support for potential policies addressing tobacco-related issues in Riverbank. Participants within these sectors emphasized the importance of prioritizing public health while acknowledging concerns about personal freedoms. Most notably one participant stated

"I'm worried about the amount of smoke shops popping up especially. Even near the schools my grandkids see a lot of the signs."

To assist with the density and proximity to schools these sectors would be supportive of a Tobacco Retail License that would limit the amount and distance allowed from schools.

Barriers:**Ceres****Business Owners and Blue-Collar Workers:**

Conversely, participants representing business owners and blue-collar workers acknowledged the issue of tobacco but voiced similar apprehensions about the potential impact of restrictions on local businesses. Concerns centered around the potential effects on taxes and fees, leading to a more cautious or unsupportive stance towards proposed policies. A business owner said,

"While I understand the health concerns, we also need to consider the economic impact for our local businesses."

To address the implications of negative economic impact data from other areas that adopted a Tobacco Retail License, data should be shown from success stories in other areas where lack of tobacco sales had a minimal economic effect. This will emphasize that the health concern should be addressed and would not cause a significant impact.

Riverbank**Law Enforcement:**

Law enforcement participants adopted a neutral stance, refraining from expressing strong support or opposition. Notably, they communicated a shortcoming in staffing to enforce new ordinances should they be passed but would be supportive of the law if passed as law enforcement officers.

Implications

The diverse perspectives uncovered in Ceres offer valuable insights for shaping future policies related to tobacco issues. The education sector's strong support indicates an opportunity to leverage their advocacy in public awareness campaigns. However, the caution and unsupportive stance from business owners and blue-collar workers underscore the need for a balanced approach. To address economic concerns, future policies might consider incorporating incentives for local businesses.



Recommendations:

1. Collaborate with the education sector to amplify public awareness campaigns on the health impacts of tobacco.
2. Engage in constructive dialogues with business owners and blue-collar workers to understand their concerns and explore potential incentives within policies.



Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey

Retailer Information	
1. Retailer Name:	
2. Retailer Address:	
3. Which type of retailer is this? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Convenience store (with gas) <input type="checkbox"/> Supermarket/Large grocery <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience store (without gas) <input type="checkbox"/> Small market/Deli/Produce market <input type="checkbox"/> Gas station booth <input type="checkbox"/> Discount store <input type="checkbox"/> Liquor store <input type="checkbox"/> Vape shop/lounge <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco store/Smoke shop <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant/Café/Donut shop <input type="checkbox"/> Drug store/Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Survey Information	
4. Date of survey: ____/____/____	
5. Visit start time: _____ : _____ am / pm	
6. Purchaser name:	
7. I was not able to make a purchase attempt due to... (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Store closed <input type="checkbox"/> Not allowed into retailer because of age restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Tobacco Product	
8. What tobacco product did you attempt to purchase? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cigarettes <input type="checkbox"/> Little cigars/Cigarillos <input type="checkbox"/> Big cigars <input type="checkbox"/> Smokeless tobacco (e.g., chew, snuff) <input type="checkbox"/> E-liquid/Cartridges <input type="checkbox"/> E-cigarettes/Vape <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
9. What was the <u>brand</u> of the tobacco product?	
10. What was the <u>price</u> of the tobacco product?	\$ _____ . _____
11. Where was the tobacco product located? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Behind the counter (had to ask clerk to get the item) <input type="checkbox"/> In a locked case (had to ask clerk to get the item) <input type="checkbox"/> On the counter or another area of the store (could pick up item without asking)
Purchase Attempt	
12. During the purchase attempt, were you asked... (select all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> How old you are? <input type="checkbox"/> If you are active duty military? <input type="checkbox"/> To show identification? <input type="checkbox"/> Who the tobacco product is for?
13. How many other people were within 10 feet of where you were standing?	Customers: _____ Retailer staff: _____
14. Were you able to purchase the tobacco product?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<p>15. Additional Comment or Observations:</p>	
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Tobacco Purchase Survey in Riverbank and Ceres

Compromiso Adelante
Evaluation Activity 2-E-3
March 2024



Background

Since 2016, it has been illegal in California to sell tobacco products (including cigarettes, electronic smoking devices, and tobacco product paraphernalia) to anyone under the age of 21. However, many youth and young adults still manage to access and use tobacco products. Insights from Compromiso Adelante interviews with Key Informants have found that tobacco access and use is an issue among school aged students, even for middle school students. In the communities of Riverbank and Ceres, there is significant concern about youth tobacco use, according to public opinion polls conducted by California Health Collaborative's Compromiso Adelante Project.¹ Results showed that of 69 Ceres residents, 59% thought tobacco use is an issue among youth under 18, and 41% thought there were too many stores selling tobacco products near schools. Of 90 Riverbank residents, 75% thought tobacco use is an issue among youth under 18, and 57% thought there were too many stores selling tobacco products near schools.

To document the extent of illegal sales of tobacco products to underage customers, Compromiso Adelante conducted a Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) in Riverbank and Ceres. In a YATPS, trained young adult investigators attempt to buy tobacco products from retailers in a designated area.

The investigation found that about one in five tobacco retailers in Riverbank and about one in four in Ceres made a sale to an underage investigator. The results covered in this report provide insights into how retailers allow youth access to tobacco. Findings can be used to inform policymakers, provide feedback to businesses, and develop interventions for the communities.

Methodology

Retailer Selection

Compromiso Adelante staff acquired lists of licensed tobacco retailers from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration's (CDTFA) searchable online database. The list included 12 retailers in Riverbank and 34 in Ceres. During the investigation, staff identified

¹ Preliminary results of evaluation activity 2-E-4 (Public Opinion Poll), as of March 18th, 2024.

six retailers not on the CDTFA's list, for a total of 14 tobacco retailers in Riverbank and 38 in Ceres. All retailers were visited one time as part of the investigation.

Types of retailers selling tobacco products included convenience stores (with or without gas), liquor stores, tobacco stores/smoke shops, drug stores/pharmacies, supermarkets/large grocery stores, small markets/delis/produce markets, and discount stores.

Investigation Protocol

The California Tobacco Control Program describes several versions of YATPS protocols. Compromiso Adelante staff used a modified version of the Consummated Claim-to-be-21 Protocol, in which the investigators claimed to be 23 years old if asked. Staff felt this would be the most accurate representation of what a young adult trying to experiment with tobacco would do if they wanted to obtain a tobacco product. An advantage of this protocol is that it is in line with typical real-world behavior of youth attempting to buy tobacco products.

The protocol was as follows:

1. An adult supervisor (Compromiso Adelante staff) drove the investigator to each retailer. They parked out of the line of sight of the entrance so the clerk could not see the car.
2. Investigators each had a Visa card provided by Compromiso Adelante staff.
3. Investigators left their ID in the car or gave it to the accompanying supervisor to hold.
4. The supervisor first entered the store and pretended to shop. The investigator entered the store 15 seconds later.
5. Compromiso Adelante staff told investigators in advance what type of tobacco product to ask for (either cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or e-liquid). The investigation focused on these three products based on input from what products youth in the community saw their peers using and what was available in the stores during a preliminary trial run. Investigators were trained not to "stand and scan."
6. If the clerk asked the investigator's age, the investigator answered, "23."
7. If asked for ID, the investigator said they did not have it with them.
8. If the clerk did not sell the product, the investigator left the store without trying to persuade or argue.
9. If the tobacco product was sold, Compromiso Adelante staff kept it in a bag labeled with the date and location of retailer.
10. After returning to the car, the investigator recorded all information about the purchase attempt on the data collection form.

The investigation took place in Ceres on January 17th, 18th, 27th, and 28th, 2024 between approximately 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM. The investigation took place in Riverbank on January 28th, 2024 between approximately 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

Investigator Characteristics

Compromiso Adelante staff recruited young adult investigators by sending flyers to surrounding schools and mentioning it at various community meetings and gatherings. They recruited three male investigators aged 17, 18, and 19. Two investigators were residents of the neighboring city of Los Banos; they participated in the investigation in Riverbank and Ceres. The third investigator, a Riverbank resident, participated in the investigation in Ceres.

Compromiso Adelante staff trained the investigators via Zoom meetings on January 16th and January 26th. Training lasted 45 minutes and covered information on Tobacco Retail Licenses, the investigation protocol, and how to use the data collection form (See Appendix 1 for the YATPS tool). The training also included role play, which allowed the investigators to practice purchase attempts with Compromiso Adelante staff. Staff completed a trial run at 4 stores, with 2 in each district, where they attempted to purchase a cigarette or vaping product. Staff shared their trial run experience during the training with the investigators and also provided feedback to each investigator following the purchase attempt.

Analysis of Results

The evaluation consultant, LPC Consulting, analyzed the data and reported the results.

Findings: Riverbank

Riverbank has 14 licensed tobacco retailers.

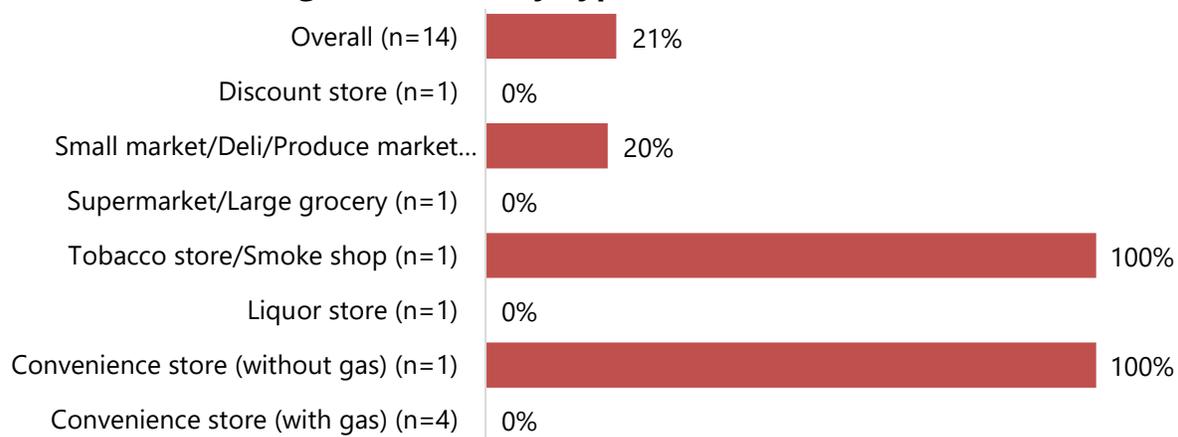
Investigators visited all 14 retailers in Riverbank. Small markets/delis/produce markets are the most common type of tobacco retailer in Riverbank, followed by convenience stores with gas.

Type of Tobacco Retailer	Number visited
Convenience store (with gas)	4
Convenience store (without gas)	1
Liquor store	1
Tobacco store/Smoke shop	1
Supermarket/Large grocery	1
Small market/Deli/Produce market	5
Discount store	1
Total	14

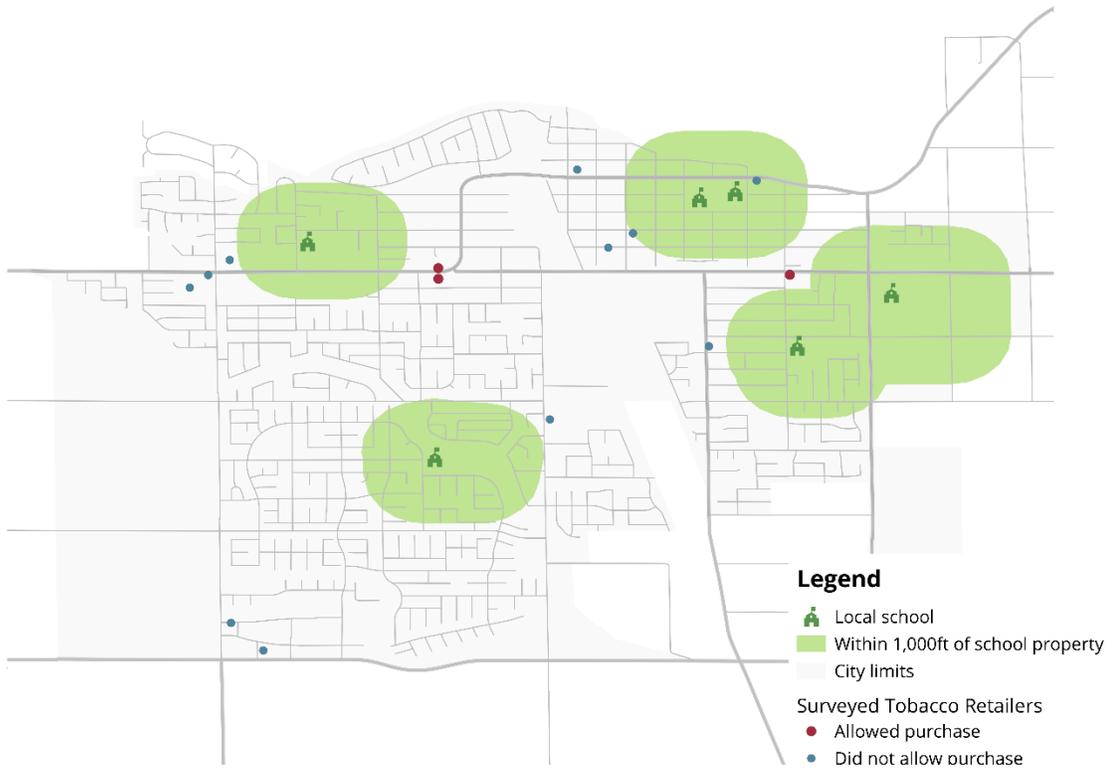
Of 14 retailers, three (21%) illegally sold tobacco or vape products to underage investigators.

Tobacco stores/smoke shops and convenience stores (without gas) were equally the most likely to make an underage sale. At small markets/delis/produce markets, one out of five made an underage sale. There were no underage sales made at other types of tobacco retailers.

Underage Sales Rate by Type of Retailer (Riverbank)



Riverbank has two tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of a school campus.
In this investigation, neither made an underage sale.



Sales were more likely when purchasing cigarettes (vs. e-cigarettes), when clerks did not ask for ID, and when no other staff or customers were nearby.

Investigators recorded information about the tobacco products they attempted to purchase. Investigators attempted to purchase either cigarettes (six attempts) or e-cigarettes/vapes (eight attempts). Sales were more likely for cigarettes.

Results by Product Type

	# of Attempts	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Cigarettes	6	2	33%
E-cigarettes/Vape	8	1	13%

Results by Product Location

	# of Attempts	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Behind the counter (had to ask clerk to get the item)	12	2	17%
In a locked case (had to ask clerk to get the item)	1	1	100%
(unknown)	1	0	0%

Investigators recorded additional information about the purchase attempts, such as if the clerk asked any questions, and who else was present. Some patterns emerged:

- Most clerks (86%) asked for ID. Investigators always replied that they did not have it.
- 57% asked the investigator for their age.
- Clerks who did *not* ask for ID made the sale 100% of the time.
- None asked who the product was for, and none asked about military status.
- Clerks were more likely to make the sale when *no* other people (customers or staff) were near the counter.
- One clerk, who did not make a sale, told the investigator that they would sell to them if they came back with someone the clerk knew or would sell if they knew the young adult. The clerk mentioned not wanting to get in trouble.

Results by Situational Factors

	# of Attempts	% of Attempts (n=14)	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Clerk asked the investigator's age				
Yes	8	57%	3	38%
No	6	43%	0	0%
Clerk asked for identification				
Yes	12	86%	1	8%
No	2	14%	2	100%
Clerk asked who the product was for				
Yes	0	0%	0	0%
No	14	100%	3	21%
Clerk asked if investigator was active duty military				
Yes	0	0%	0	0%
No	14	100%	3	21%
Other customers were within 10 ft				
Yes	10	71%	1	10%
No	4	29%	2	50%
More than 1 retail staff was within 10 ft				
Yes	3	21%	0	0%
No	11	79%	3	27%

Findings: Ceres

Ceres has 38 licensed tobacco retailers.

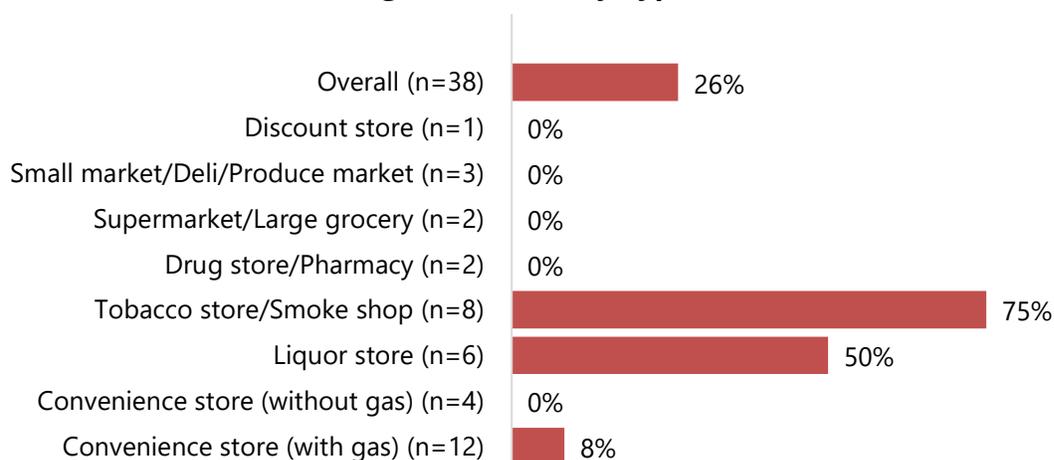
Investigators visited all 38 retailers in Ceres. Convenience stores (with gas) are the most common type of tobacco retailer in Ceres, followed by tobacco stores/smoke shops.

Type of Tobacco Retailer	Number visited
Convenience store (with gas)	12
Convenience store (without gas)	4
Liquor store	6
Tobacco store/Smoke shop	8
Drug store/Pharmacy	2
Supermarket/Large grocery	2
Small market/Deli/Produce market	3
Discount store	1
Total	38

75% of tobacco stores/smoke shops and 26% of all retailers illegally sold tobacco products to underage investigators.

Tobacco stores/smoke shops were most likely to sell to the underage investigator; six out of eight (75%) made a sale. Liquor stores were the next most likely, where three of six (50%) made a sale. At convenience stores (with gas), one in 12 made an underage sale. There were no underage sales made at other types of tobacco retailers.

Underage Sales Rate by Type of Retailer (Ceres)



Ceres has 17 tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of a school campus.

In this investigation, four (24%) made an underage sale.



Sales were more likely when purchasing cigarettes (vs. e-cigarettes or e-liquid), when clerks did not ask for ID, and when no other staff or customers were nearby.

Investigators recorded information about the tobacco products they attempted to purchase. Investigators attempted to purchase either cigarettes (19 attempts), e-liquid/cartridges (five attempts), or e-cigarettes/vapes (14 attempts). Sales were most likely for cigarettes.

Results by Product Type

	# of Attempts	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Cigarettes	19	6	32%
E-liquid/Cartridges	5	1	20%
E-cigarettes/Vape	14	3	21%

Results by Product Location

	# of Attempts	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Behind the counter (had to ask clerk to get the item)	33	8	24%
In a locked case (had to ask clerk to get the item)	1	0	0%
(unknown)	4	2	50%

Investigators recorded additional information about the purchase attempts, such as if the clerk asked any questions, and who else was present. Some patterns emerged:

- Most clerks (89%) asked for ID. Investigators always replied that they did not have it.
- 42% asked the investigator their age.
- Only one clerk asked for *neither* age nor ID, and they did make the sale.
- Clerks who did *not* ask for ID made the sale 100% of the time.
- None asked who the product was for, and none asked about military status.
- Clerks were also more likely to make the sale when *no* other people (customers or staff) were near the counter.

Results by Situational Factors

	# of Attempts	% of Attempts (n=38)	# of Sales	% of Attempts Resulting in Sale
Clerk asked the investigator's age				
Yes	16	42%	9	56%
No	22	58%	1	5%
Clerk asked for identification				
Yes	34	89%	6	18%
No	4	11%	4	100%
Clerk asked who the product was for				
Yes	0	0%	0	0%
No	38	100%	10	26%
Clerk asked if investigator was active duty military				

Yes	0	0%	0	0%
No	38	100%	10	26%
Other customers were within 10 ft				
Yes	30	79%	5	17%
No	8	21%	5	63%
More than 1 retail staff was within 10 ft				
Yes	12	32%	1	8%
No	26	68%	9	35%

Conclusions

The results indicate compliance problems among tobacco retailers in both Riverbank and Ceres.

In Riverbank, 21% of 14 tobacco retailers (about one in five) made a sale to an underage investigator not carrying ID who claimed to be 23 years old. An underage person seeking to buy tobacco products would have to go to about five stores to find one willing to sell to them.

In Ceres, 26% of 38 tobacco retailers (about one in four) made a sale to an underage investigator not carrying ID who claimed to be 23 years old. An underage person seeking to buy tobacco products would have to go to about four stores to find one willing to sell to them. Some types of retailers were more likely to sell than others: 75% of tobacco stores/smoke shops made an underage sale, and 50% of liquor stores. There are also compliance issues near school grounds: Ceres has 17 tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of a school campus, and four (24%) made an underage sale.

A few patterns were consistent in both Ceres and Riverbank. Clerks never asked about military status or who the product was for, suggesting these are not factors in underage sales. The majority of clerks did ask for ID. Clerks who did *not* ask for ID were most likely to make a sale. However, some sales (six in Ceres and one in Riverbank) were made after the clerk had asked for ID.

These results provide evidence to guide efforts in Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) in Ceres and Riverbank.



Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey

Retailer Information	
1. Retailer Name:	
2. Retailer Address:	
3. Which type of retailer is this? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Convenience store (with gas) <input type="checkbox"/> Supermarket/Large grocery <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience store (without gas) <input type="checkbox"/> Small market/Deli/Produce market <input type="checkbox"/> Gas station booth <input type="checkbox"/> Discount store <input type="checkbox"/> Liquor store <input type="checkbox"/> Vape shop/lounge <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco store/Smoke shop <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant/Café/Donut shop <input type="checkbox"/> Drug store/Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Survey Information	
4. Date of survey: ____/____/____	
5. Visit start time: _____ : _____ am / pm	
6. Purchaser name:	
7. I was not able to make a purchase attempt due to... (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Store closed <input type="checkbox"/> Not allowed into retailer because of age restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Tobacco Product	
8. What tobacco product did you attempt to purchase? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cigarettes <input type="checkbox"/> Little cigars/Cigarillos <input type="checkbox"/> Big cigars <input type="checkbox"/> Smokeless tobacco (e.g., chew, snuff) <input type="checkbox"/> E-liquid/Cartridges <input type="checkbox"/> E-cigarettes/Vape <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
9. What was the <u>brand</u> of the tobacco product?	
10. What was the <u>price</u> of the tobacco product?	\$ _____ . _____
11. Where was the tobacco product located? (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Behind the counter (had to ask clerk to get the item) <input type="checkbox"/> In a locked case (had to ask clerk to get the item) <input type="checkbox"/> On the counter or another area of the store (could pick up item without asking)
Purchase Attempt	
12. During the purchase attempt, were you asked... (select all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> How old you are? <input type="checkbox"/> If you are active duty military? <input type="checkbox"/> To show identification? <input type="checkbox"/> Who the tobacco product is for?
13. How many other people were within 10 feet of where you were standing?	Customers: _____ Retailer staff: _____
14. Were you able to purchase the tobacco product?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

15. Additional Comment or Observations:

Tobacco Products Survey



The Compromiso Adelante program is doing a survey to learn what people think about the sale of tobacco products in the community. Your name will not be recorded, and taking the survey is your choice.

The information you provide will be added to other people's answers and used to tell local leaders about what the community thinks and wants. Thank you!

1) Which city do you live in?

- Ceres
 Riverbank
 Neither Ceres nor Riverbank
 I don't know

The survey is for residents of Ceres and Riverbank only.

2) Which district in Ceres or Riverbank do you live in?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceres District 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverbank District 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceres District 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverbank District 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceres District 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverbank District 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceres District 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverbank District 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know | |

4) Which of these statements do you agree with? You can choose more than one.

I think...

- ...tobacco products are easy to get
 ...my neighborhood has too many stores selling tobacco products
 ...my city has too many stores selling tobacco products
 ...tobacco is an issue among youth under 18
 ...tobacco is an issue among young adults between 18 and 21
 ...there are too many tobacco advertisements at stores
 ...there are too many stores that sell tobacco products near schools

5) Would you be in favor of a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco? The license fees would cover the cost of checking whether stores follow tobacco laws, including making sure they don't sell to people under 21.

- Support
 Not support
 I'm not sure

6) Would you support a law that would restrict discounts and coupons for tobacco products?

- Support
 Not support
 I'm not sure

7) Would you support a law restricting tobacco advertising on storefronts?

- Support
 Not support
 I'm not sure

8) Would you support a law that eliminates the sale of all tobacco products in the community?

- Support
 Not support
 I'm not sure

The next section asks some questions about you. This helps us know if we heard from a wide range of people. Your answers are anonymous, and you can skip any you do not want to answer.

9) Which best describes your race or ethnicity? (check all that apply)

- American Indian/Alaskan Native
 Asian
 Black/African American
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 Hispanic/Latino
 White
 More than one race or ethnicity
 Other (please specify):: _____
 Prefer not to answer

10) What language(s) do you speak? (check one)

- English only
 Spanish only
 Both English and Spanish
 Other (please specify): _____
 Prefer not to answer

11) How old are you? (check one)

- 17 or younger
 18-24
 25-34
 35-49
 50-64
 65 or older
 Prefer not to answer

12) In the last 12 months, have you used any tobacco or vape products (such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, little cigars, or chew)?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

13) Do you have children under the age of 18?

- Yes (or expecting a baby)
 No
 Prefer not to answer

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Tobacco Products Survey

Compromiso Adelante

Evaluation Activity 2-E-4

April 2024



Background

California Health Collaborative's Compromiso Adelante Project conducted a public opinion poll in the cities of Ceres and Riverbank. The goal of the survey was to improve project staff understanding of community member knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions regarding the availability of tobacco, youth exposure and access to tobacco, and support or opposition for a policy restricting or prohibiting tobacco sales.

Methodology

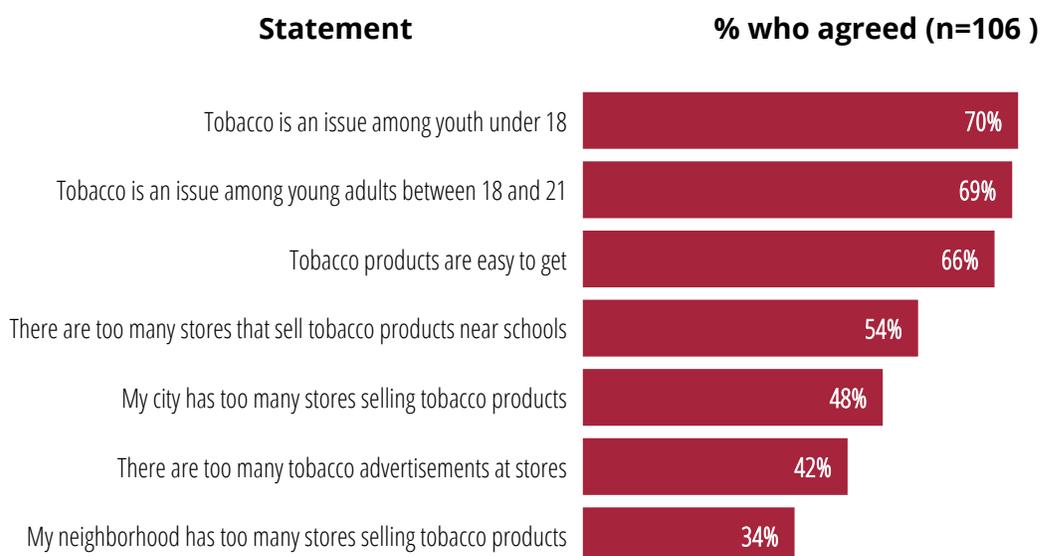
Compromiso Adelante staff worked with their evaluator, LPC Consulting Associates, to design the survey questionnaire. Between November 2023 and April 2024, Compromiso Adelante staff and volunteers from the partner organization We R La Raza collected surveys from community members in the two jurisdictions. The survey was made available in English and Spanish, and participants received a small gift card as an incentive.

Compromiso Adelante staff distributed the online survey link via an online listserv, coalitions and collaboratives, social media posts, and a local church. Compromiso Adelante staff and partners also collected surveys in person at community events, such as a townhall and local presentations. In total, **106 Riverbank residents and 123 Ceres residents participated in the survey**. This report summarizes the results.

Findings: Riverbank

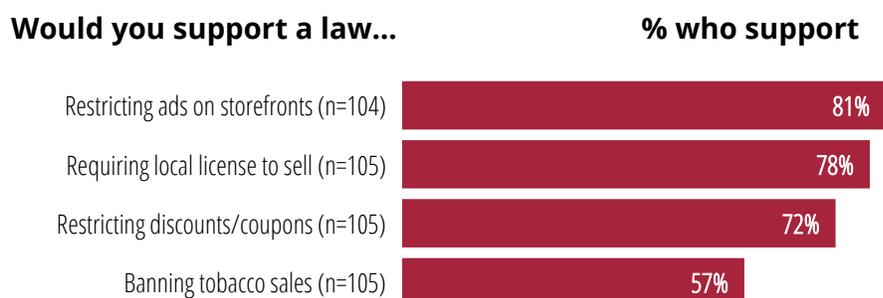
Most Riverbank respondents agreed that tobacco is an issue among youth under 18.

Residents also strongly agreed that tobacco is an issue among young adults between 18 and 21. However, only a third (34%) of respondents agreed that their neighborhood has too many stores selling tobacco products. For results by city council district, see page 7.



Most Riverbank respondents would support laws limiting the presence of tobacco in the community.

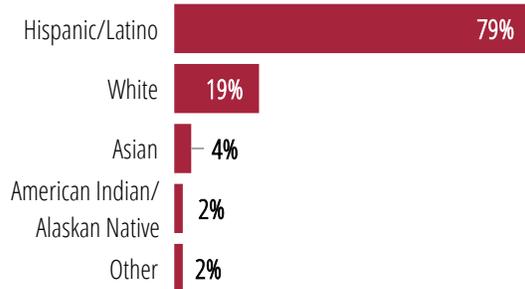
A majority of residents would support a law that restricts tobacco advertising and a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco. Over half (57%) would also support a law banning tobacco sales. For results by city council district, see page 7.



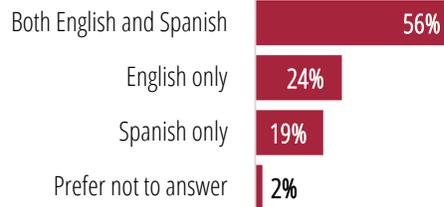
Findings: Riverbank

Who took the survey in Riverbank?

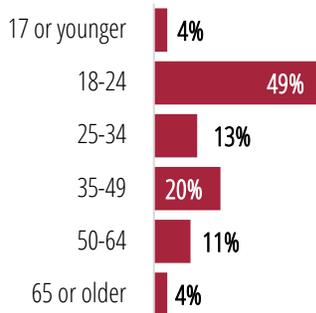
Race/ethnicity (top 5 responses)



Language spoken



Age



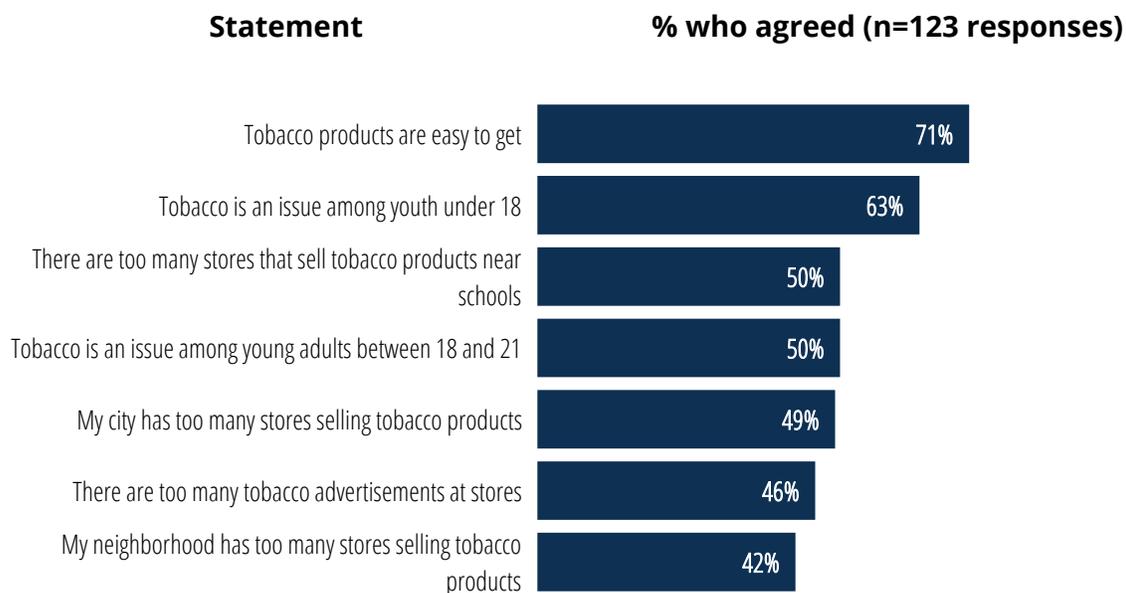
22% used tobacco or vape products in the past 12 months.

35% had a child under 18.

Findings: Ceres

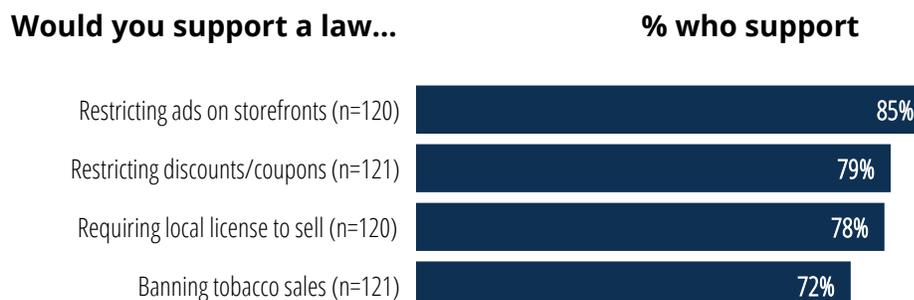
Most Ceres respondents agree that tobacco products are easy to get.

Residents also strongly agree that tobacco is an issue among youth under the age of 18. Residents were least likely to agree that their neighborhood has too many stores selling tobacco products. See “Results by District” on page 8.



Most Ceres respondents support a law that restricts tobacco advertising on storefronts.

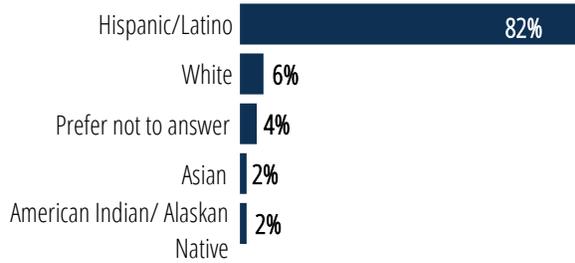
Residents also strongly support a law that would restrict discounts and coupons for tobacco products. Overall, the majority of Ceres respondents would support laws to limit the presence of tobacco in the community. See “Results by District” on page 8.



Findings: Ceres

Who took the survey in Ceres?

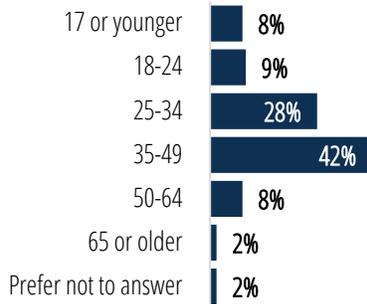
Race/ethnicity (top 5 responses)



Language spoken



Age



8% used tobacco or vape products in the past 12 months.

62% had a child under 18.

Conclusions

The results of the Tobacco Products Survey indicate strong support for restrictions on the sale of tobacco products in Riverbank and Ceres. Overall, the findings demonstrate that respondents in Riverbank and Ceres agree that tobacco is an issue in their community.

In Riverbank, 70% of respondents agreed that tobacco is an issue among youth under 18. In addition, 78% of respondents would support a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco.

In Ceres, 71% of respondents agreed that tobacco products are easy to get. Furthermore, 78% of respondents would support a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco.

A few patterns were consistent in both Ceres and Riverbank. The highest percentage of respondents in both cities would support a law that restricts tobacco advertising on storefronts. And in both cities, the lowest percentage of respondents agreed that their neighborhood had too many stores selling tobacco products. Interestingly, fewer respondents in both cities agreed that there are too many tobacco advertisements at stores, while more would support a law restricting tobacco advertising on storefronts.

The survey results provide information to guide efforts in reducing the sale of tobacco products in Ceres and Riverbank. Based on survey results, there is community support for restrictions on tobacco product sales. Because most respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino and spoke both English and Spanish, targeted efforts to engage these communities may result in community buy-in to limit tobacco sales in these cities.

Because support for a total ban on tobacco sales was less widespread when compared to the other policies listed in the survey, it may be more effective to advocate for these other favorable measures that would limit tobacco sales across both cities. Potential policies might include a tobacco retail license, policies that restrict discounts and coupons for tobacco products, or policies that restrict tobacco advertising on storefronts.

Riverbank: Results by District

Statement ¹	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4	
	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses
Tobacco products are easy to get	22 (56%)	39	22 (71%)	31	15 (88%)	17	7 (54%)	15
My neighborhood has too many stores selling tobacco products	15 (39%)	39	10 (32%)	31	10 (59%)	17	1 (8%)	15
My city has too many stores selling tobacco products	12 (31%)	39	20 (65%)	31	12 (71%)	17	5 (39%)	15
Tobacco is an issue among youth under 18	24 (62%)	39	22 (71%)	31	13 (77%)	17	11 (85%)	15
Tobacco is an issue among young adults between 18 and 21	24 (62%)	39	24 (77%)	31	14 (82%)	17	8 (62%)	15
There are too many tobacco advertisements at stores	14 (36%)	39	15 (48%)	31	11 (65%)	17	4 (31%)	15
There are too many stores that sell tobacco products near schools	26 (67%)	39	14 (45%)	31	11 (65%)	17	5 (39%)	15

Policy ²	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4	
	Support	Responses	Support	Responses	Support	Responses	Support	Responses
Would you be in favor of a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco? The license fees would cover the cost of checking whether stores follow tobacco laws, including making sure they don't sell to people under 21.	33 (85%)	39	27 (87%)	31	10 (63%)	16	10 (67%)	15
Would you support a law that would restrict discounts and coupons for tobacco products?	30 (77%)	39	21 (68%)	31	12 (75%)	16	11 (73%)	15
Would you support a law restricting tobacco advertising on storefronts?	31 (82%)	38	24 (77%)	31	15 (94%)	16	12 (80%)	15
Would you support a law that eliminates the sale of all tobacco products in the community?	18 (46%)	39	21 (68%)	31	10 (63%)	16	9 (60%)	15

¹ Number of support responses out of the total number of statements in each District

² Number of support responses out of the total number of responses in each District (excluding no responses)

Ceres: Results by District

Statement ³	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4	
	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses	Agreed	Responses
Tobacco products are easy to get	22 (63%)	35	14 (78%)	18	15 (79%)	19	5 (83%)	6
My neighborhood has too many stores selling tobacco products	15 (43%)	35	1 (6%)	18	10 (53%)	19	4 (67%)	6
My city has too many stores selling tobacco products	19 (54%)	35	4 (22%)	18	13 (68%)	19	4 (67%)	6
Tobacco is an issue among youth under 18	24 (69%)	35	7 (39%)	18	15 (79%)	19	4 (67%)	6
Tobacco is an issue among young adults between 18 and 21	17 (49%)	35	4 (22%)	18	12 (63%)	19	3 (50%)	6
There are too many tobacco advertisements at stores	15 (43%)	35	4 (22%)	18	10 (53%)	19	3 (50%)	6
There are too many stores that sell tobacco products near schools	17 (49%)	35	4 (22%)	18	11 (58%)	19	5 (83%)	6

Policy ⁴	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4	
	Support	Responses	Support	Responses	Support	Responses	Support	Responses
Would you be in favor of a law that requires store owners to have a local license to sell tobacco? The license fees would cover the cost of checking whether stores follow tobacco laws, including making sure they don't sell to people under 21.	29 (88%)	33	8 (44%)	18	16 (84%)	19	5 (83%)	6
Would you support a law that would restrict discounts and coupons for tobacco products?	26 (79%)	33	11 (61%)	18	18 (95%)	19	5 (83%)	6
Would you support a law restricting tobacco advertising on storefronts?	30 (91%)	33	12 (67%)	18	17 (90%)	19	5 (83%)	6
Would you support a law that eliminates the sale of all tobacco products in the community?	26 (79%)	33	11 (61%)	18	16 (84%)	19	4 (67%)	6

³ Number of support responses out of the total number of statements in each District

⁴ Number of support responses out of the total number of responses in each District (excluding no responses)

Tobacco in Our Community: What Do Ceres Residents Think?



In spring 2024, **123 Ceres residents participated in a survey** by California Health Collaborative’s Compromiso Adelante Project. The goal was to understand what people think about tobacco in the community, and what kinds of tobacco sales policies they would support.

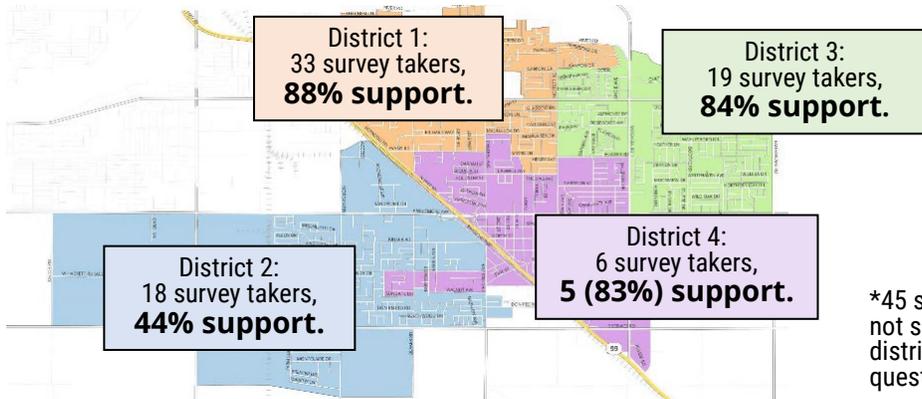
50% agreed:
There are too many stores that sell tobacco near schools.

71% agreed:
Tobacco products are easy to get.



82% of survey takers identified as **Hispanic/Latino.**

Support by City Council District: *Would you be in favor of a law that requires store owners to have a **local license to sell tobacco**?**



*45 survey takers did not specify their district. 2 skipped this question.

Tobacco in Our Community: What Do Riverbank Residents Think?



In spring 2024, **106 Riverbank residents participated in a survey** by California Health Collaborative’s Compromiso Adelante Project. The goal was to understand what people think about tobacco in the community, and what kinds of tobacco sales policies they would support.

54% agreed:
There are too many stores that sell tobacco near schools.

66% agreed:
Tobacco products are easy to get.

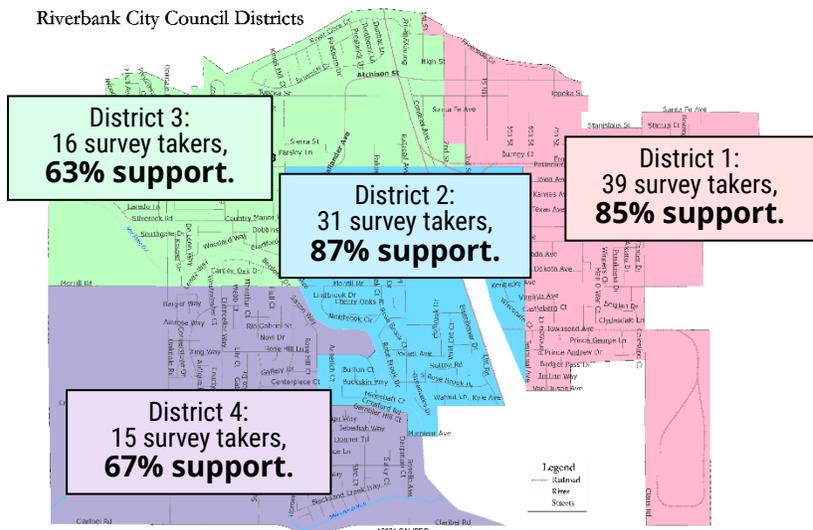


79% of survey takers identified as **Hispanic/Latino.**

Support by City Council District

*Would you be in favor of a law that requires store owners to have a **local license to sell tobacco?****

*5 survey takers skipped this question or did not specify their district



Protejamos a la juventud de Ceres

Empoderando a las comunidades con soluciones locales

¿Qué es una Licencia de Venta Minorista de Tabaco (TRL)?

Las TRL son políticas locales que obligan a los minoristas de tabaco a obtener licencias, impidiendo que los jóvenes tengan acceso al tabaco y permitiendo la aplicación de otras medidas de prevención del uso de tabaco. Estas pueden reducir el número de minoristas, particularmente en vecindarios que tienen demasiados, al mismo tiempo que financian sus propios esfuerzos para aplicar la ley.

25 %

de las tiendas en Ceres vendían productos de tabaco a jóvenes menores de 21 años de forma ilegal



Minoristas de tabaco en Ceres

Para prevenir la venta de tabaco a menores de edad, muchas ciudades y condados han aprobado ordenanzas sobre licencias de venta minorista de tabaco (TRL).



Tasas de vapeo en las escuelas de Ceres²

TASAS DE VAPEO EN CUSD

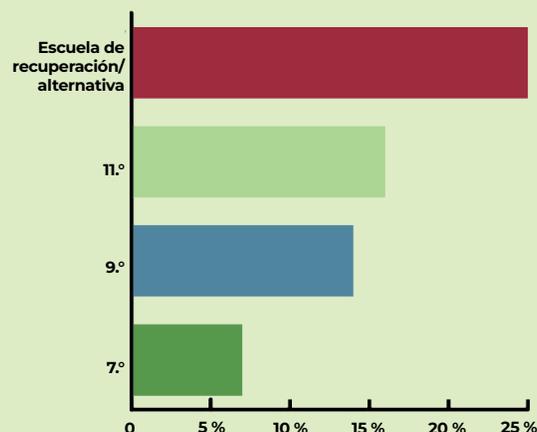
Lo probaron al menos una vez (por grado):

7.º: 7 %

9.º: 14 %

11.º: 16 %

Escuela de recuperación/ alternativa: 25 %



En el condado de Stanislaus

Casi el 14 % de los adultos hispanos/latinos consumen productos de tabaco. Es la tasa de tabaquismo más alta de todos los grupos étnicos.³

Desde 2019

17

nuevos minoristas de tabaco en Ceres.⁴



Porcentaje de tiendas que vendieron a jóvenes antes y después de la implementación de la TRL³

Ciudad / Condado	Fecha de aprobación	Cuota anual	Antes de la implementación	Después de la implementación
Condado de Yolo	2006	\$377	28 %	7.8 %
Morgan Hill	2014	\$125	15 %	0 %
Orville	2013	\$30	22.6 %	0 %

Alrededor del 78 % de los residentes de Ceres encuestados apoyan la TRL⁶

Cómo una TRL benefició a la ciudad de Ceres⁵

- » **PROTEGER A LA JUVENTUD:** Las estrictas ordenanzas TRL locales son eficaces para prevenir la venta ilegal de tabaco a los jóvenes.
- » **PROMOVER LA SALUD PARA TODOS:** Dado que suele haber más minoristas en las comunidades de bajos ingresos, limitar el acceso al tabaco aumentará las oportunidades para que todos disfruten de una vida saludable y libre de tabaco.
- » **APLICACIÓN DE LA NORMATIVA FINANCIERA:** Los funcionarios locales pueden cubrir los costos de aplicación de la normativa con los fondos recaudados por las TRL.
- » **¡ÚNASE A NOSOTROS!** Ayude a proteger a los jóvenes y a toda la comunidad de los daños del tabaco comercial apoyando las TRL a evitar la venta ilegal. Actúe por la salud de Ceres.

Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Compromiso Adelante.



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@compromisoadelante



www.compromisoadelante.org



Compromiso Adelante



Fuentes:

1. Encuesta Compromiso Adelante sobre la compra de tabaco entre los adultos jóvenes. Enero de 2024.
2. Datos de la encuesta California Health Kids Survey Ceres 2022-2023.
3. Disparidades de tabaquismo a nivel de condado entre poblaciones prioritarias. 2022.
4. Lista de minoristas de Ceres del Departamento de Administración de Impuestos y Tasas de California. Octubre 2023.
5. ChangeLab Solutions. Licencias para minoristas de tabaco: una herramienta eficaz para la salud pública. Junio 2018.
6. Encuesta de opinión pública en Ceres (n=120). Invierno 2024.

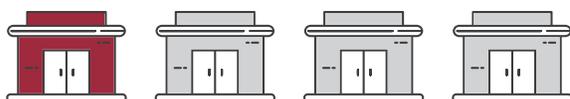
Protect Ceres Youth

Empower Communities with Local Solutions

What is a Tobacco Retail License (TRL)?

TRLs are local policies mandating tobacco retailers to obtain licenses, preventing youth access and enabling enforcement of other tobacco prevention measures. They can reduce the number of retailers, particularly in neighborhoods that have too many, while financing their own enforcement efforts.

25% of stores in Ceres illegally sold tobacco products to youth under age 21



Tobacco Retailers in Ceres

To prevent underage tobacco sales, many cities and counties have passed tobacco retail license (TRL) ordinances.

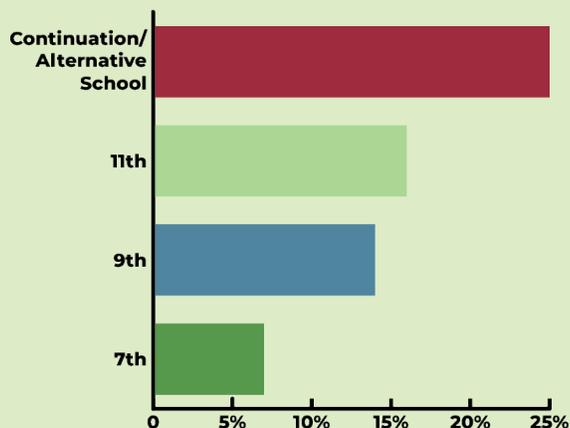


Vaping Rates in Ceres Schools²

CUSD VAPING RATES

Tried at least once by grade:

7th: 7%	Continuation/ Alternative School: 25%
9th: 14%	
11th: 16%	



In Stanislaus County

Almost 14% of the Hispanic/Latino adults use tobacco products. This is the highest tobacco use rate among any ethnic group.³

Since 2019

17 new tobacco retailers have opened in Ceres.⁴

Percent of stores that sold to youth Before and After Adoption of TRL³

City /County	Date Passed	Annual Fee	Before Adoption	After Adoption
Yolo County	2006	\$377	28%	7.8%
Morgan Hill	2014	\$125	15%	0%
Orville	2013	\$30	22.6%	0%

About 78% of Ceres residents surveyed are in support of a TRL⁶

How a TRL would benefit the city of Ceres⁵

- » **PROTECT YOUTH:** Strong local TRL ordinances are effective at preventing illegal tobacco sales to youth.
- » **PROMOTE HEALTH FOR ALL:** Since there tend to be more retailers in lower-income communities, limiting access to tobacco will increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy a healthy, tobacco-free life.
- » **FINANCE ENFORCEMENT:** Local officials can cover the costs of enforcement with the funds raised by TRLs.
- » **PLEASE JOIN US!** Help protect youth and the whole community from the harms of commercial tobacco by supporting a TRL to prevent illegal sales. Take action for the health of Ceres.

For more information, contact Compromiso Adelante

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 @compromisoadelante

 www.compromisoadelante.org

 Compromiso Adelante



Sources:

1. Compromiso Adelante Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey. January 2024.
2. Data from 2022-2023 California Health Kids Survey Ceres.
3. County Level Smoking Disparities Among Priority Populations. 2022.
4. California Department of Tax and Fee Administration Ceres Retailer List. October 2023.
5. ChangeLab Solutions. Tobacco Retailer Licensing An Effective Tool for Public Health. June 2018.
6. Ceres Public Opinion Poll (n=120). Winter 2024.

Protejamos a la juventud de Riverbank

Empoderando a las comunidades con soluciones locales

¿Qué es una Licencia de Venta Minorista de Tabaco (TRL)?

Las TRL son políticas locales que obligan a los minoristas de tabaco a obtener licencias, impidiendo que los jóvenes tengan acceso al tabaco y permitiendo la aplicación de otras medidas de prevención del uso de tabaco. Estas pueden reducir el número de minoristas, particularmente en vecindarios que tienen demasiados, al mismo tiempo que financian sus propios esfuerzos para aplicar la ley.

21 %

de las tiendas en Riverbank vendían productos de tabaco a jóvenes menores de 21 años de forma ilegal



Minoristas de tabaco en Riverbank

Para prevenir la venta de tabaco a menores de edad, muchas ciudades y condados han aprobado ordenanzas sobre licencias de venta minorista de tabaco (TRL).



Tasas de vapeo en las escuelas de Riverbank²

TASAS DE VAPEO EN RUSD

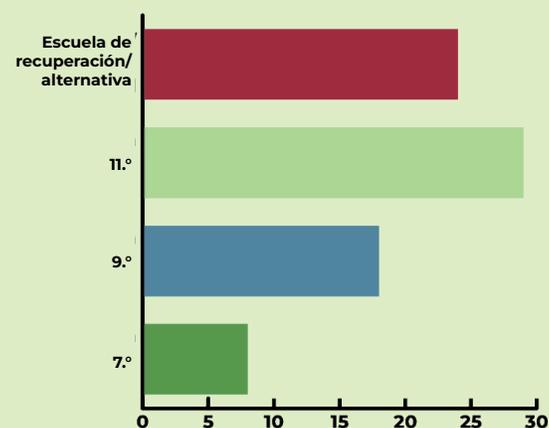
Lo probaron al menos una vez (por grado):

7.º: 7 %

9.º: 18 %

11.º: 19 %

Escuela de recuperación/ alternativa: 24%



En el condado de Stanislaus

Casi el 14 % de los adultos hispanos/latinos consumen productos de tabaco. Es la tasa de tabaquismo más alta de todos los grupos étnicos.³

Desde 2019

3

nuevos minoristas de tabaco en Riverbank.⁴



Porcentaje de tiendas que vendieron a jóvenes antes y después de la implementación de la TRL³

Ciudad / Condado	Fecha de aprobación	Cuota anual	Antes de la implementación	Después de la implementación
Condado de Yolo	2006	\$377	28 %	7.8 %
Morgan Hill	2014	\$125	15 %	0 %
Orville	2013	\$30	22.6 %	0 %

Alrededor del 78 % de los residentes de Riverbank encuestados apoyan la TRL⁶

Cómo una TRL benefició a la ciudad de Riverbank⁵

- » **PROTEGER A LA JUVENTUD:** Las estrictas ordenanzas TRL locales son eficaces para prevenir la venta ilegal de tabaco a los jóvenes.
- » **PROMOVER LA SALUD PARA TODOS:** Dado que suele haber más minoristas en las comunidades de bajos ingresos, limitar el acceso al tabaco aumentará las oportunidades para que todos disfruten de una vida saludable y libre de tabaco.
- » **APLICACIÓN DE LA NORMATIVA FINANCIERA:** Los funcionarios locales pueden cubrir los costos de aplicación de la normativa con los fondos recaudados por las TRL.
- » **¡ÚNASE A NOSOTROS!** Ayude a proteger a los jóvenes y a toda la comunidad de los daños del tabaco comercial apoyando las TRL a evitar la venta ilegal. Actúe por la salud de Riverbank.

Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Compromiso Adelante.



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www.compromisoadelante.org



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Fuentes:

1. Encuesta Compromiso Adelante sobre la compra de tabaco entre los adultos jóvenes. Enero de 2024.
2. Datos de la encuesta California Health Kids Survey Riverbank 2022-2023.
3. Disparidades de tabaquismo a nivel de condado entre poblaciones prioritarias. 2022.
4. Lista de minoristas de Ceres del Departamento de Administración de Impuestos y Tasas de California. Octubre 2023.
5. ChangeLab Solutions. Licencias para minoristas de tabaco: una herramienta eficaz para la salud pública. Junio 2018.
6. Encuesta de opinión pública de Riverbank (n=105). Invierno 2024.

Protect Riverbank Youth

Empower Communities with Local Solutions

What is a Tobacco Retail License (TRL)?

TRLs are local policies mandating tobacco retailers to obtain licenses, preventing youth access and enabling enforcement of other tobacco prevention measures. They can reduce the number of retailers, particularly in neighborhoods that have too many, while financing their own enforcement efforts.

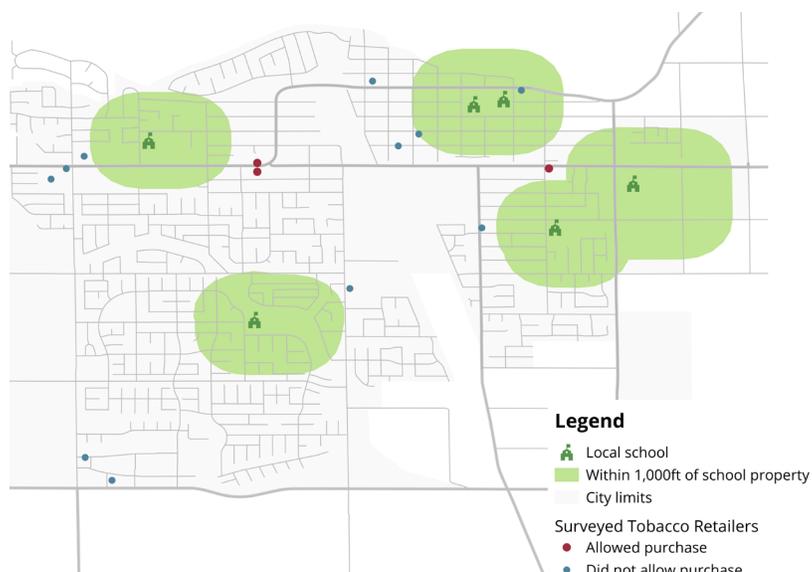
21%

of stores in Riverbank illegally sold tobacco products to youth under age 21



Tobacco Retailers in Riverbank

To prevent underage tobacco sales, many cities and counties have passed tobacco retail license (TRL) ordinances.

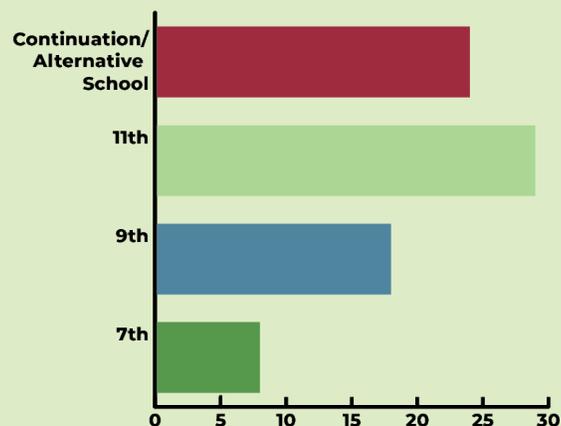


Vaping Rates in Riverbank Schools²

RUSD VAPING RATES

Tried at least once by grade:

7th: **8%** Continuation/
9th: **18%** Alternative
11th: **29%** School: **24%**



In Stanislaus County

Almost 14% of the Hispanic/Latino adults use tobacco products. This is the highest tobacco use rate among any ethnic group.³

Since 2019

3

new tobacco retailers have opened in Riverbank.⁴



Percent of stores that sold to youth Before and After Adoption of TRL³

City /County	Date Passed	Annual Fee	Before Adoption	After Adoption
Yolo County	2006	\$377	28%	7.8%
Morgan Hill	2014	\$125	15%	0%
Orville	2013	\$30	22.6%	0%

About 78% of Riverbank residents surveyed are in support of a TRL⁶

How a TRL would benefit the city of Riverbank⁵

- » **PROTECT YOUTH:** Strong local TRL ordinances are effective at preventing illegal tobacco sales to youth.
- » **PROMOTE HEALTH FOR ALL:** Since there tend to be more retailers in lower-income communities, limiting access to tobacco will increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy a healthy, tobacco-free life.
- » **FINANCE ENFORCEMENT:** Local officials can cover the costs of enforcement with the funds raised by TRLs.
- » **PLEASE JOIN US!** Help protect youth and the whole community from the harms of commercial tobacco by supporting a TRL to prevent illegal sales. Take action for the health of Riverbank.

For more information, contact Compromiso Adelante

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 www.compromisoadelante.org

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Sources:

1. Compromiso Adelante Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey. January 2024 .
2. Data from 2022-2023 California Health Kids Survey Riverbank.
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6. Riverbank Public Opinion Poll (n=105). Winter 2024.

28 April 2025

Tobacco Retail License (TRL) Policy Implementation Plan

For the City of Ceres



Executive Summary

This document outlines a recommended approach for the City of Ceres to implement a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) ordinance. TRLs are a proven policy tool that cities can use to reduce illegal tobacco sales, especially to minors, and support sustainable enforcement through an annual licensing fee paid by retailers. Based on data from Ceres and implementation lessons from other California cities, this plan identifies clear roles and procedural steps for TRL adoption and management.

Policy Context & Local Need

In November 2022, California enacted SB 793, which bans the sale of flavored tobacco products. Despite this, local enforcement in Ceres has found persistent illegal sales, including to minors. In a 2023 youth purchase survey, 25% of retailers in Ceres sold tobacco to underage customers. Smoke shops near schools remain a concern, and products like flavored vapes and menthol items are still widely accessible.

Why Implement a Tobacco Retail License in Ceres?

A TRL ordinance allows cities to:

- Enforce local and state tobacco laws more effectively.
- Penalize repeat violators through license suspension or revocation.
- Collect annual fees to fund local inspections and youth compliance checks.

SB 793 Summary (Streamlined):

SB 793 prohibits the sale of most flavored tobacco products statewide. It reinforces local authority to adopt and enforce tobacco control policies, including TRLs.

Why Implement a Tobacco Retail License in Ceres?

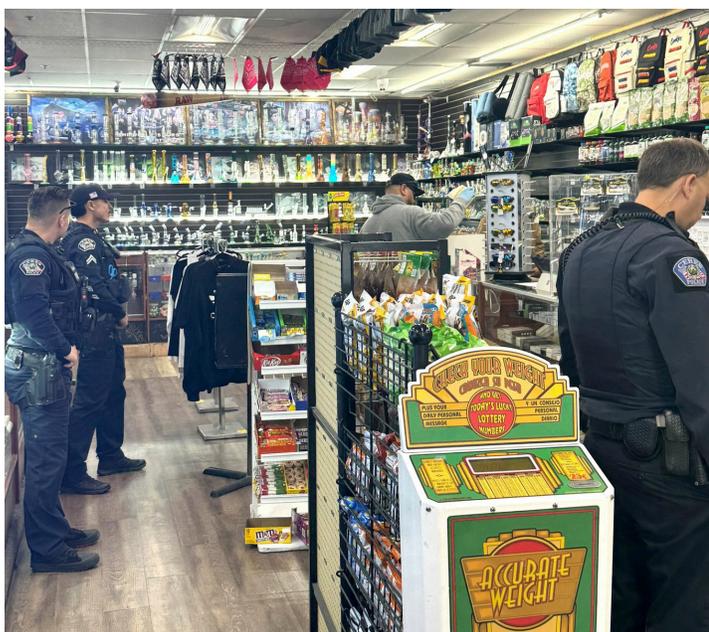
“On November 8, 2022, California voters upheld the state law, SB 793, which prohibits tobacco retailers and their employees from selling, offering for sale, or possessing with the intent to sell most flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and tobacco product flavor enhancers in retail locations (CA.gov).”

Before SB 793 was enacted, flavored tobacco products were widely available across California, with many retailers selling menthol cigarettes and other flavored options. While enforcement efforts have reduced the legal sale of menthol cigarettes, menthol, and mint flavors persist in other tobacco products, including vapes, oral nicotine, and smokeless tobacco. In communities like Ceres, concerns about access to flavored tobacco products continue to be a pressing issue especially among youth.

Availability of Flavored Tobacco Products:

Recent enforcement efforts in Ceres found that illegal sales are still happening at local smoke shops. A multi-agency sting operation led by the Ceres Police Department, along with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration and California Department of Public Health, **confirmed violations at all inspected locations.**

Officers seized **flavored tobacco products, along with illegal cannabis items and non-compliant vaping devices.** This operation also revealed that some businesses were illegally selling products to underage customers highlighting the need for ongoing enforcement.



Images Courtesy of the Ceres Police Department

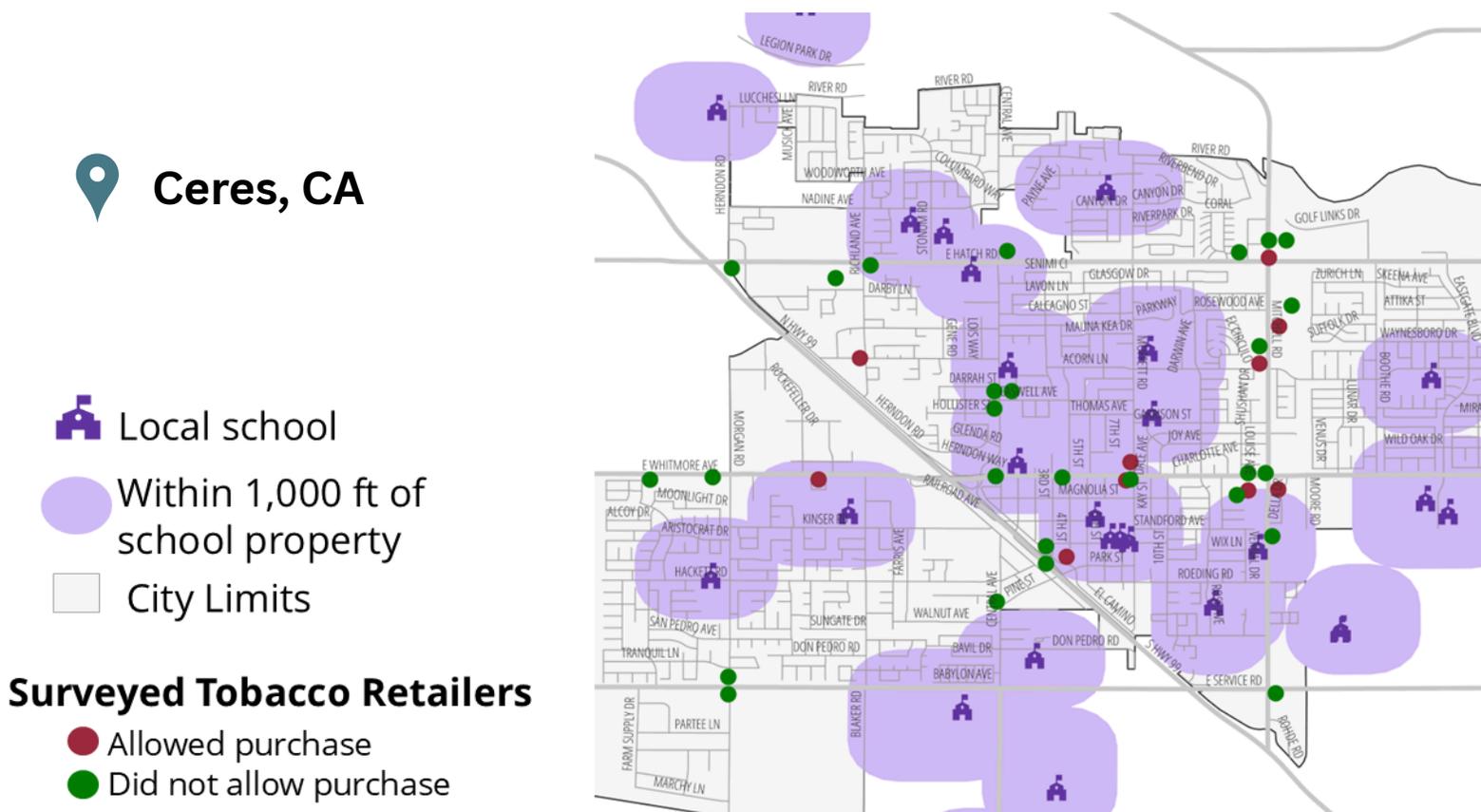
Protect Youth in Ceres Against Tobacco:

The continued sale and advertisement of flavored tobacco products is not only a direct target to youth but the Hispanic/Latino communities present in Ceres, CA, where tobacco companies have historically focused their marketing efforts. A Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey found that **one in four retailers (25%) in Ceres sold tobacco to underage customers.**



The map below illustrates a distance of approximately **1,000 feet from tobacco retailers in Ceres, CA to local schools**, highlighting access risks for youth. Youth in Stanislaus County, according to a 2023 report, continue to have access to flavored vapes, with the highest illegal sales rates found in smoke shops.

Tobacco Retailer Distance to Schools:



Next Steps: Implementation

The following matrix was created to organize different details of nearby Tobacco Retail Licenses (TRLs). The TRL fee is meant to support enforcement checks such as sting operations, both underage and traditional. Refer to the **Public Health Law Center** for help calculating fees and writing language for your local Tobacco Retail License.

Nearby Examples of Tobacco Retail Licenses

City	Effective Date	TRL Fee	Proximity Restrictions	Fee Collection	Enforcement Checks
Livermore	2019 updates in April 2024	\$1,005/yr	Within 1,000 feet of schools, childcare facilities playgrounds, public libraries, & youth/public recreational facilities.	Avenu Insights & Analytics in partnership with the City of Livermore	The Livermore Police Department & designated city officials
Elk Grove	Oct. 2004 updates in 2020-21	\$270/yr	Within 1,000 feet of schools, daycares, playgrounds, parks, amusement centers, youth sports facilities, & existing tobacco retailers.	The Development Services Department of Elk Grove	The Elk Grove Police Department & designated city officials
West Sacramento	Nov. 2009	\$427/yr	N/A	The Business License Division of West Sacramento	The West Sacramento Code Enforcement Division & the local police department
Gilroy	Nov. 2014	\$100/yr	Within 1,000 feet of a school, including private & public elementary, middle, junior high, & high schools.	The City of Gilroy's Finance Department	Authorized city officials or their designees

After meeting with members of the **Ceres Police Department and city council**, the following checklist has been customized to fit the needs of the community and the resources available.

Checklist for Successful Implementation

	Develop a system for collecting, tracking and managing tobacco retail licensing (TRL) fees and fines.	Finance Department / Police Department / Planning Department	Electronic tracking system with integration into existing financial databases recommended.
	Develop protocols for conducting compliance checks.	Police Department / Code Enforcement	Recommended use of an administration protocol from the CDTFA.
	Develop protocols for conducting undercover operations.	Police Department / Code Enforcement	Recommended use of protocol from California Department of Public Health.
	Provide materials to retailers (banned/approved products, assistance directories).	Police Department / Code Enforcement	Recommended use of Public Health & DOJ lists.
	Create retailer training and facilitate training.	Police Department / Code Enforcement	Training on healthy retail, age verification, legal compliance recommended.
	Handle, store, and dispose of seized tobacco products.	Police Department / Code Enforcement	Recommended use of protocol from CDTFA.
	Handle legal action including issuing citations, appeals, and adjudication processes.	Police Department / Legal Counsel (city attorney)	Graduated penalties, fines, potential license suspension as recommended actions.

Sources

California Department of Public Health. (n.d.). California prohibits retailers from selling flavored tobacco products. California Department of Public Health. Retrieved [2/4/25], from <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs>

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Compromiso Adelante. (2024, March). *Tobacco purchase survey in Riverbank and Ceres: Evaluation activity 2-E-3.* California Health Collaborative.

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Hones, L., & Darling, M. (2025). Tobacco Retailer Proximity to Schools, Ceres, CA [Map]. LPC Associates. Retrieved from <https://www.lpc-associates.com>

For any questions or concerns on tobacco prevention issues related to youth access, retailer density, and tobacco retailer licensing, reach out to our program coordinator.

Tobacco Control Partners. (2024, October). *List of tobacco retail license (TREL) fees in California, October 2024.* Tobacco Control Partners. Retrieved [2/4/25] from <https://pets.tcspartners.org>.

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