



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Medical Cannabis Dispensary Licenses Not Approved

County Administrator recommends changes to selection process

San Rafael, CA – After reviewing 10 vendor and site locations, the County Administrator has not approved any of the applications and has recommended a revised approach to [licensing medical cannabis dispensaries](#) in unincorporated areas.

After reviewing license applications and considering comments from the public, a volunteer advisory committee, and County staff, the County Administrator notified all the applicants that he was not approving their applications. Hymel said he plans to recommend that the Marin County Board of Supervisors consider a revised ordinance that would disconnect the selection of the operator from that of the location. In addition, he is recommending that the Board explore a delivery-only dispensary model to address concerns raised by residents at public meetings and via submission of written comments.

“This decision illustrates the challenge in finding the right combination of operator and location to provide patients with safe access to medical cannabis locally,” Hymel said.

The Community Development Agency (CDA) received 10 applications in designated locations where a medical cannabis dispensary could be permitted, and residents voiced opinions at three public meetings hosted this winter by CDA staff and members of the advisory committee. Of the 10 applications, eight were in the Highway 101 corridor zone and two were in the Central/West Marin zone. The 101 corridor applications included three in the Black Point area east of the Novato city limits, one in Santa Venetia near the San Rafael city limits, and four in the Tam Shoreline area between Mill Valley and Sausalito. The Central/West Marin applications included one in San Geronimo Valley and one in Marshall.

Although cannabis is considered an illegal drug by the federal government, Proposition 215 ensures that seriously ill Californians have the right to obtain and use cannabis for medical purposes upon receiving a recommendation from a physician. The County’s ordinance is consistent with the state’s [Compassionate Use Act](#)

and [Medical Cannabis Program](#). A licensed dispensary would have to be at least 800 feet from schools, public parks, smoke shops, and other cannabis dispensaries to qualify for a license.

Medical cannabis dispensaries remain prohibited in unincorporated Marin, and none are open or permitted in any of the county's towns or cities. The ordinance establishes a regulatory framework to license nonprofit patient collectives to meet the medical needs of local patients, many of whom have voiced the need for local dispensaries before the Board of Supervisors.

Sign up to receive emailed County updates on CDA's [Medical Cannabis Program webpage](#). The County medical cannabis program does not address the use or sale of recreational cannabis. California voters passed Proposition 64 in November 2016 that allows for the sale, regulation, taxation, growth and transportation of cannabis for recreational use. Under an ordinance passed by the Board in February 2017, recreational cannabis businesses are not permitted anywhere in the unincorporated areas of Marin.

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