

March 7, 2019

VIA EMAIL & FIRST CLASS MAIL (BDONAVANIK@ELMONTECA.GOV)

Director Betty Donovanik
Economic Development Department
City of El Monte
11333 Valley Boulevard
El Monte, California 91731

Re: Development Agreement (DA) No. 05-18, Medicinal Cannabis
Conditional Use Permit (MCCUP) Nos. 10-18, 11-18 and 12-18;
Development Agreement (DA) No. 01-19, Medicinal Cannabis
Conditional Use Permit (MCCUP) Nos. 01-19, 02-19 and 03-19

Dear Ms. Donovanik:

We submit this letter on behalf of the City of Temple City ("City") in connection with the cannabis cultivation and processing facility proposed at 4377 Baldwin Avenue in the City of El Monte and a similar facility proposed at 4411 Rowland Avenue in the City of El Monte (collectively "Projects"). The City was not informed of the Projects prior to their appearance on the agenda for the El Monte Planning Commission meeting of February 26, 2019, and so has not had an opportunity to comment on the Projects.

These comments are intended to be included in the administrative record for both Projects as they advance to consideration before the El Monte City Council.


The City is disappointed that the City of El Monte has asserted that the Projects are exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). The CEQA Class 32 exemption claimed for the Projects does not apply where any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality would arise from a project (14 CCR 15332). In addition, categorical exemptions cannot be utilized where the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant (14 CCR 15300.2(b)) or where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances (14 CCR 15300.2(c)).

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As explained in more detail by the comment letters submitted on behalf of the City in connection with cannabis cultivation and processing facilities proposed to be located at 4400 Temple City Boulevard and at 9860, 9866, 9870, and 9874 Gidley Street, the City of El Monte is processing a number of cannabis cultivation and processing facilities in the commercial-industrial area immediately adjacent to Temple City without any consideration of the cumulative impacts of those projects. In addition, the City's previous comments regarding impacts on public services, traffic, hazardous material, waste, and the odors that emanate from cannabis cultivation and processing facilities apply to the Projects.

Whether taken as individual projects or as part of the cumulative influx of cannabis projects in the region of El Monte adjacent to the City, the reasonable possibility that the Projects will have significant effects on the environment requires that a substantive and serious CEQA review of the Projects be undertaken. We urge the City of El Monte to halt approval of the Projects until such time as that review is completed.

Sincerely,


Gregory M. Murphy
Acting City Attorney

GMM

cc: Bryan Cook, Temple City City Manager