



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

January 12, 2016

SUBJECT

Proposed temporary moratorium on new marijuana retail uses.

SUMMARY

The City Council is considering enacting on January 26, 2016, a temporary moratorium on new marijuana retail uses and is conducting a public hearing pursuant to the Tacoma Municipal Code Section 13.02.055 to receive public comments concerning the proposed action. If enacted, the moratorium would be effective for six months or until the City's regulations are updated, which is expected to occur in April or May of this year.

BACKGROUND

State Initiative 502 ("I-502"), approved by Washington voters in November 2012, provides a framework for licensing and regulating the production, processing, and retail sale of recreational marijuana. In 2015, the Legislature enacted the Cannabis Patient Protection Act, establishing regulations for the formerly unregulated medical marijuana system and aligning it with the existing recreational system.

In response to changes in state law, the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board has been working through its rulemaking process to establish the administrative procedures and standards for the integration of medical marijuana into the existing recreational marijuana marketplace. As part of that process, the state is looking to expand the existing cap on retail marijuana stores in Tacoma and other potential rule changes. This process also involves the establishment of a new class of use – the marijuana cooperative.

The City's existing regulations were adopted in February 2015 in response to I-502 and the associated state rules regarding the recreational marijuana marketplace. They were not designed to adequately address the changes made subsequently by the State regarding medical marijuana.

The State is again processing applications for retail marijuana uses. It is not appropriate for additional applications to be reviewed under the existing regulations, particularly while the City is in the process of reevaluating our regulations and potentially making changes. In order to preserve the City's regulatory authority and the validity of our legislative process it is necessary to put a temporary hold on the establishment of new marijuana retail uses until that process has completed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information about the existing marijuana regulations, please visit the Planning Services Division's website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning and click on "Recreational Marijuana Regulations".