



Cannabis Position Statement – August 24, 2020

It is the position of the Chico Chamber of Commerce to oppose the proposed Cannabis Ordinance as presented. The Chamber finds the process of developing the ordinance flawed.

The topic of a cannabis ordinance was first introduced by Vice Mayor Brown in December 2019. We found this subject ill-timed as the community continued to reel from the impacts of the Camp Fire. Subsequently, a Cannabis Advisory Committee was created by the City Council and led by Vice-Mayor Brown. A number of meetings were held to discuss the topic. The formation of the committee appears to have been disingenuous as Vice Mayor Brown then drafted the ordinance without asking committee members for recommendations.

As it pertains to the proposed ordinance, we have several concerns:

No mention of or provision for additional taxation of cannabis sales

We believe there will be additional responsibilities placed on public safety resources resulting in additional costs to the City as the result of cannabis sales, although no effort is made to recover those expenses. The early proponents of this ordinance referenced additional tax revenues to offset public safety expenses, however this ordinance is silent on that issue.

Troublesome and potentially unenforceable restrictions proposed for cannabis businesses, including

- Requiring these businesses to pay their employees 125% of CA minimum wage
- Requiring businesses with more than 20 non-supervisory employees to enter into a labor agreement (unionization)
- The business must be locally managed, and the owners must reside in Chico or Butte County

We believe these mandates are an overreach by government and unenforceable

Requiring private businesses to provide benefits to the community

- Requiring volunteer service hours of business owner/employees
- Requiring monetary donations to local non-profit organizations

We believe these mandates are an overreach by government and unenforceable

Allowable business locations incompatible with adjacent uses

- The ordinance allows testing labs, manufacturing, distribution and retail delivery services within 100 feet from K-12 schools, day care centers or youth center facilities

We believe allowing cannabis related businesses in close proximity to youth-oriented facilities is inappropriate

Finally, we would like to reiterate from our letter to Council dated August 18, 2020 regarding the proposed Cannabis Ordinance, *“The Chico Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests the discussion on the proposed Cannabis Ordinance on today’s City Council Agenda be delayed until the public can all meet in the same room. This ordinance is not ‘essential City business,’ and we strongly believe the discussion should be postponed until the Emergency Order has been lifted.”*

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