

RESOLUTION NO. PC2021-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF DRAFT ORDINANCE NO. 1171 PERTAINING TO REGULATIONS FOR INTERIM OUTDOOR CANNABIS CULTIVATION. CITY-INITIATED.

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority granted to the City of Coachella (“City”) by Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution, the City has the police power to regulate the use of land and property within the City in a manner designed to promote public convenience and general prosperity, as well as public health, welfare, and safety; and,

WHEREAS, adoption and enforcement of comprehensive zoning regulations and business license regulations lies within the City’s police power; and,

WHEREAS, on November 8, 2016, California voters passed Proposition 64, the Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act (“AUMA”), legalizing the use and possession of cannabis and cannabis products by adults aged 21 years and older; and,

WHEREAS, on June 27, 2017, Governor Brown signed into law Senate Bill 94, which created a single regulatory scheme for both medicinal and non-medicinal cannabis known as the Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (“MAUCRSA”); and,

WHEREAS, MAUCRSA allows local jurisdictions to allow or prohibit the various commercial cannabis activities which are allowed by the State, including outdoor cannabis cultivation; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance would amend Title 5 (Business Licenses and Regulations), Chapter 5.68 to (i) allow outdoor commercial cultivation; (ii) provide additional application and operational requirements for outdoor commercial cultivation; and (iii) comply with current City policies and State law; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance would also amend Title 17 (Zoning), Chapters 17.10, 17.12, 17.14, and 17.85 to (i) allow outdoor commercial cultivation in certain City zones and subject to certain property development standards, and (ii) comply with current City policies and State law; and,

WHEREAS, the subject Municipal Code Amendment is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15061(b)(3). The activity is not subject to CEQA because it will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment; the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378 of the California Public Resources Code, and the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant impact on the environment. Where it can

be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA; and,

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2020 the City Council of the City of Coachella (“City Council”) conducted a study session which included a discussion item on the possibility of allowing outdoor cannabis cultivation uses in the City’s remote agricultural areas bounded by Avenue 48 on the north, Tyler Street on the west, the All-American Canal on the east, and Avenue 52 on the south; and,

WHEREAS, at the February 26, 2020 the City Council provided staff direction to work on a draft ordinance that would allow for “interim agricultural uses” for outdoor cannabis cultivation on properties that are: 1) remotely located and removed from sensitive odor receptors; 2) have land use entitlements for future development but wish to include an interim agricultural use to cultivate cannabis for three to five years prior to construction of the first phase of urban development; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Coachella (“Planning Commission”) conducted a properly noticed public hearing on June 16, 2020 at which members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment upon this Ordinance, the recommendations of staff, and other public testimony; and,

WHEREAS, after said public hearing, the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve this Ordinance.

NOW THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals. The Planning Commission of the City of Coachella, California, hereby finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein as substantive findings of this Resolution.

SECTION 2. Recommendation to City Council. Based on the entire record before the Planning Commission, all written and oral evidence presented to the Planning Commission, and the findings made in the staff report and this Resolution, the Planning Commission of the City of Coachella hereby recommends that the City Council adopt Ordinance No. 1171 entitled: “An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Coachella, California, Amending Various Provisions of the Coachella Municipal Code Regarding Interim Outdoor Commercial Cannabis Cultivation” which is attached hereto as Attachment “A” and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 3. Findings. The Planning Commission finds that the amendments to the Coachella Municipal Code proposed by the above referenced ordinance are consistent with the goals and policies of all elements of the General Plan and exercise the City’s land use powers to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public which would be put at risk if commercial cannabis activity is allowed to move forward in the City without local regulation and enforcement abilities.

The Planning Commission also finds that the proposed amendments to the Coachella Municipal Code would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City in that they will regulate interim outdoor commercial cannabis cultivation as a land use, by allowing the use with a conditional use permit in selected zoning districts and under certain restrictions.

The Planning Commission also finds that the proposed amendments to the Coachella Municipal Code are internally consistent with other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code, in that interim outdoor commercial cannabis cultivation uses would be subject to specified zoning districts and to findings necessary to grant a conditional use permit.

SECTION 4. CEQA. The Planning Commission finds that this Resolution is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

SECTION 5. Certification. The Secretary shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the members of the City of Coachella Planning Commission on this 16th day of June, 2021.

Stephanie Virgen,
Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Yesenia Becerril, Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Carlos Campos, City Attorney

I, Yesenia Becerril, Planning Secretary, City of Coachella, California, certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on the 16th day of June, 2021, and was adopted by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Yesenia Becerril
Planning Commission Secretary

ATTACHMENT "A"

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA,
CALIFORNIA, AMENDING VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE COACHELLA
MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING INTERIM OUTDOOR COMMERCIAL
CANNABIS CULTIVATION.