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Marijuana dispensary

1 message

Barbara Comnes [REDACTED]

Wed, Aug 12, 2026 at 5:10 PM

To: jsierk@cityofsuttercreek.org, sfeist@cityofsuttercreek.org, jswift@cityofsutter.org, Claire Gunselman <cgunselman@cityofsuttercreek.org>, Dan Riordan <driordan@cityofsuttercreek.org>
Cc: Tom DuBois <tdubois@cityofsuttercreek.org>

Please include this email in the administrative record for this issue.

To: Members of the City Council
From: Barbara Comnes, 284 California Drive, Sutter Creek

Why do some people think that Sutter Creek will benefit from Embarc's recreational marijuana dispensary?

1. More money for the City budget.

How much more money? This is uncertain. There is no guaranteed amount. California is awash in drugs and dispensary revenues are down. How would the money be used? We don't know. If there were increased policing costs generated by the dispensary, would there be sufficient revenues from the drug sales to even cover those costs?

2. Convenience for local marijuana users.

The number of these users is unknown. The City has officially heard from very few of them regarding support for a dispensary compared to the number of residents who have officially opposed it. Convenience appeared to be their major concern, since they are still able to legally grow marijuana and purchase marijuana products.

3. Fairness for local marijuana users.

Some supporters said that given the town's wine tasting rooms, it is only fair that a recreational dispensary be permitted. **They are not equivalent**, however. I can't think of a winery that would place its tasting room at the location selected by Embarc—if Sutter Creek has a grungy zone, that is it. Nevertheless, Embarc finds this location satisfactory. Also, imagine along with *Wildflower and Wine* and *Wine Walk*, Sutter Creek had *Marijuana Stoned to the Bone Strolls*. Imagine Sutter Creek with "marijuana lounges" on Main St. Did you know that some marijuana lounges in California employ medical staff to assist patrons with acute THC reactions and are considered important to manage liability? And where else besides in these lounges can you legally smoke in public buildings in California—marijuana, yes, but smoke is smoke?

A recreational dispensary does not reflect or enhance Sutter Creek's character, so important to its reputation. Embarc has no interest in preserving that character, which derives from its gold rush history and location in a wine growing region of many years.

What price will the City pay for permitting this dispensary?

1. Damage to Sutter Creek's relationship with Amador County residents.

Like so many other California counties, Amador County did not vote for marijuana recreational legalization. Since then marijuana products of greater concern due to very high THC concentrations have become available in dispensaries like Embarc's.

2. Damage to Sutter Creek's relationship to the County government.

The Board of Supervisors made crystal clear their opposition to the dispensary in a resolution, in subsequent letters to the Council, and in verbal testimony to the Planning Commission.

3. Damage to Sutter Creek's relationship with local law enforcement.

The Sheriff opposes the dispensary. Sutter Creek's Police Chief, in a Staff Report, concluded that a dispensary would leave the Police Department unable to provide public safety to the City without the addition of three full-time police officers, their necessary personal equipment, and 3 patrol cars.

4. Damage to Sutter Creek's relationship with the Amador Unified School District.

The School Board has communicated their opposition in a strongly worded resolution.

5. Damage to Sutter Creek's relationship with the Danco property and Independence High School.

The Danco property will house and manage people with substance abuse problems and severe mental illness. The high school is a continuation high school serving students who may be at risk of not graduating. Locating a dispensary within easy walking distance of these properties is very ill-advised.

6. Damage to the City of Sutter Creek's reputation for fairness and transparency.

No dispensary operators other than Embarc have been given the opportunity to compete for a dispensary permit. No other business in Sutter Creek has the symbiotic relationship Embarc would have with the City, in which they partner to support sales in this case the sale and increased use of drugs in the community.

7. Most importantly, damage to the City's relationship with our youth and to their health. In enhancing their budget through these drug sales, the City would send the wrong message to our youth. How many cases of additional cannabis-induced psychosis among our youth are worth any extra money that the City might gain through drug sales? Their brains are still developing until age 25!

I urge you to **vote NO** on the dispensary. Permitting the dispensary is not worth the price Sutter Creek will likely pay.