

Comments on Marijuana dispensary discussion

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also see attachment of EMBARC marketing materials, do we want this?

Council Members:

If your task at the February 17th council meeting is to decide whether or not to explore the development of a Development Agreement for an Embarc cannabis dispensary, I recommend that the council vote “no” on this, putting an immediate end to this effort. In other words, nip the issue in the bud.

Amador County and its incorporated cities all currently prohibit such dispensaries, including Sutter Creek, based on my reading of Sutter Creek’s ordinance addressing cannabis. The City Manager’s report fails to point out that the current ordinance prohibiting cannabis dispensaries would need to be amended in order for Embarc to operate here. The County and the incorporated cities in the county have spoken very clearly on this matter. Sutter Creek should not act unilaterally on this, but rather show respect here for the will of the County and its cities.

The City Manager’s report states, “Staff has received inquiries about a dispensary.” From whom besides Embarc? Which group of Sutter Creek residents have been clamoring for what many of us see as a bad idea? We know people who moved to Sutter Creek to get away from a cannabis culture that they saw being promoted to the detriment of their children and their community.

The report states, a “Development Agreement is a contract that allows the City to secure significant community benefits (revenue and public safety enhancements,” such as additional surveillance cameras); however, the report fails to consider the negatives behind cannabis use and dispensaries. For example:

- There is more and more evidence that cannabis, particularly that containing THC, is not a healthy product (see web links that follow).

- What are the views of the Amador County Highway Patrol, the Sheriff, or our Police Dept? The Highway Patrol DUI data related to marijuana DUI's show increased arrests since state legalization in 2017 (from 86 in 2016, 126 in 2017, 114 in 2018, 120 in 2019, 107 in 2020).
- Embarc's store would require a security guard, while not even Walmart in Jackson employs a security guard. Our wineries and liquor stores do not employ security guards. What does this suggest about the nature of Embarc's business?
- What might be the impacts on our children given easier access to cannabis products? The Independent High School is located very close to Ridge Rd. Would the proposed location for Embarc be close to the school?

The City Manager's report states, "Cannabis dispensaries in *similar* markets create jobs for 25-35 employees and generate up to \$10M in revenue per year." Consider:

- It can easily be argued that not one of the 13 markets in which Embarc operates are similar to Sutter Creek. They are located in large metropolitan areas with larger populations.
- Those markets all lack the small town historic character that make Sutter Creek such a charming tourist destination.
- What evidence has been provided to The City of Sutter Creek that Embarc could generate these levels of revenue and numbers of employees in Sutter Creek, where the whole county has only a little over 40,000 people?

The report ends with, "I think this a significant economic development opportunity and can be done in a way that protects Sutter Creek's quality of life;." However, take a look at Embarc's advertising and promotional material. It clearly focuses on getting high:

- The company's home page has a search button at the top of the page prompting, "Discover your high..."
- "Getaway Bag Drops", T-shirts (often worn by employees), sweatshirts, and caps promote getting high with Embarc's logo along with such phrases as Devil's Lettuce, High from California, Stoned to the Bone, Weed from Hell, Gasser's High Voltage Drags, Taste Bliss, Red Eye, It's 4:20 Somewhere, My Kind of Flower Shop, Unlock Your High, Cheap Vcay— Visit embark.com to Book Your Trip, Bong Voyage, Lake & Bake, Embarc Ski Club— California Powder, and A Neighborhood Cannabis Shop. Would shoppers in Sutter Creek carry these Getaway drop bags around town, inadvertently advertising for Embarc and getting high?
- Their stores have signs such as High from Alameda, High from California, High from Fresno, Enjoy Your Trip, etc. In Sutter Creek a sign would likely read, "High from Sutter Creek."

Compare this to our wine industry, for which our county and Sutter Creek are known. Imagine the wineries using their products to promote getting wasted, hammered, smashed, plastered, etc. That is not the image they or our residents wish to project for good reason. How do the wineries feel about a dispensary in Sutter Creek? They employ more than 35 people, by the way.

Final comments on this: if raising revenue is the primary impetus for amending the cannabis ordinance in order to permit a dispensary, can't we find healthier ways to raise revenue? **Do we need to turn to drugs? Please let's just nip this in the bud now.**

Regards,

Brian and Barbara Comnes, 284 California Dr., Sutter Creek

===== **NEGATIVE HEALTH EFFECTS OF CANNABIS** =====

SAMHSA

Know the Effects, Risks and Side Effects of Marijuana

<https://www.samhsa.gov/substance-use/learn/marijuana/risks>

CDC

Cannabis Health Effects

<https://www.cdc.gov/cannabis/health-effects/index.html>

NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE

How Cannabis Use Impacts Long-Term Health

<https://www.nm.org/healthbeat/healthy-tips/how-cannabis-use-impacts-long-term-health>

Frontiers in Psychiatry

The Behavioral Sequelae of Cannabis Use in Healthy People

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychiatry/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2021.630247/full>

CU Anschutz Medical Campus

Largest Study Ever Done on Cannabis and Brain Function Finds Impact on Working Memory

<https://news.cuanschutz.edu/news-stories/largest-study-ever-done-on-cannabis-and-brain-function-finds-impact-on-working-memory>

Mayo Clinic

Most of the side effects of cannabis are due to the THC content. But different types of cannabis have different amounts of THC. This can make it very hard to know the right amount to take. The side effects seem to be worse the higher the dose of THC a person uses.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-marijuana/art-20364974>

===== >> **Brian Comnes Sutter Creek, CA** <<=====



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