



STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

August 09, 2017

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: Joe Mateer, Senior Planner

DATE: July 05, 2017

TITLE: **Approve a Medical Cannabis Cultivation and Manufacturing Use Permit and Design Review Permit for Talking Tree Farms at 4841 West End Road; File No. 167-026-UP2-DR.**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve the proposed Use Permit and Design Review Permit for the development and operation of a medical cannabis business within an existing industrial structure by adopting: 1) the proposed Planning Commission Action including the Findings of Approval, Conditions of Approval (Attachment A); and 2) a California Environmental Quality Act Categorical Exemption Section 15303, Class 3 – Conversion of Small Structures.

INTRODUCTION:

Applicant seeks a Use Permit and Design Review to operate a commercial cannabis activity in the City of Arcata Medical Marijuana (Cannabis) Innovation Zone – Area 2. The commercial cannabis business is proposed within two, existing, detached buildings 2,500 square feet each. A second floor addition is proposed within each existing building. The proposed commercial (medical) cannabis use includes cultivating in “Building B” with less than 25% of the total building floor area (Attachment B). A non-volatile or volatile extraction process in “Building A” will refine the cultivated cannabis into a cannabis oil. Minor alterations to the site may be required for mechanical equipment and other site improvements.

DISCUSSION:

The City of Arcata City Council recently adopted Land Use Code amendments to increase the number of Use Permits for Area 2 of the Medical Marijuana Innovation Zone from 4 to 20. The Planning Commission has approved four medical cannabis Use Permits for Area 2 of the Innovation Zone.

The proposed medical cannabis use on Assessor’s Parcel Number 507-121-044 is proposed in the new buildings created for General Machine’s new location. The two detached buildings will be modified to create a second level within the existing building footprint thereby not increasing the building height or mass. Cannabis cultivation is proposed in “Building B” while the extraction / manufacturing process will be located in “Building A”. Cultivation areas meet the City’s standards

for allowable cultivation areas – no more than 4,000 sq ft and less than 25% of the total building floor area (Attachment B).

The proposed use would operate cultivation processes 24 hours a day with other business and manufacturing operations typically occurring from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. A non-volatile or volatile extraction process in Building “A” will refine the cannabis into an oil. The project is expected to have at least eight employees at the facility any one time. There will be no on-site retail sales of medical cannabis products or customer visits, thus traffic generation will be limited to employees and an up to three delivery/pickup trips per day.

New building alterations will be limited to the following:

1. New interior and exterior mechanical equipment for ventilation and odor control;
2. New screened entrance gate;
3. Overhead weather protection awnings for person doors;
4. Second floor addition, interior walls for cultivation, processing, extraction, packaging storage, and office; and security cameras; and
5. Upgrade native landscape area, surface vehicle/bicycle parking area, provide Low Impact Development and landscaping near parking area.

The proposed medical cannabis business meets the Arcata Land Use Code Industrial Limited and Medical Marijuana Innovation Zone Combining Zone development standards. All referral department and agencies recommend project approval with their comments incorporated into the recommended Conditions of Approval.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project qualifies for a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Categorical Exemption based on Sections 15303, Conversion of Small Structures, Class 3. This CEQA finding is based on the medical cannabis use proposed at 4841 West End Road (Assessor’s Parcel Number 507-121-044) as being in compliance with the City of Arcata General Plan and Land Use Code Standards, including the City’s Medical Marijuana (cannabis) Regulatory System.

See California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Findings in Attachment A – Findings of Approval.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A - Draft Action, Findings, Conditions of Approval (PDF)
- B - Operations, Site, Floor Plan, Elevations (PDF)
- C - IL Compliance Table (PDF)