

ORDINANCE NO. 896 N.S.

AN URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES
ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON ANY AND ALL MEDICAL MARIJUANA
DISPENSARIES FROM MARCH 15, 2005, THROUGH AND INCLUDING APRIL 28, 2005,
UNLESS EXTENDED BY FURTHER ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL,
TO TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY

WHEREAS, the voters of the State of California approved Proposition 215, codified as Health and Safety Code section 11362.5 et seq. and entitled "The Compassionate Use Act of 1996" (the "Compassionate Use Act"); and

WHEREAS, the State enacted SB 420 to clarify the scope of the Compassionate Use Act and to allow cities to adopt and enforce rules and regulations consistent with SB 420; and

WHEREAS, in adopting this moratorium, it is the council's intention that nothing in this Ordinance be construed to allow persons to engage in conduct that endangers others or causes a public nuisance, permits or allows persons to use marijuana for non-medical purposes or allows any activity related to the cultivation, distribution or consumption of marijuana that is otherwise illegal; and

WHEREAS, the existing City zoning regulations do not provide for the location and regulation of medical marijuana dispensaries and such uses might be permissible in any zone that allows retail uses, drug stores, or medical uses; and

WHEREAS, during the pendency of this moratorium, City Council has directed City staff to prepare, and the Planning Commission to consider and make a recommendation on, a proposal to regulate through limiting the allowable zones and requiring conditional use permits and/or prohibiting medical marijuana dispensaries; and

WHEREAS, neighboring cities in San Luis Obispo County have received inquiries regarding the regulations and requirements for the establishment of medical marijuana dispensaries and the City anticipates that it will soon receive similar inquiries as well; and

WHEREAS, if medical marijuana dispensaries were allowed to be established without appropriate regulation, such uses might be established in areas that would conflict with the requirements of the General Plan, be inconsistent with surrounding uses, or be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare; and if such uses were allowed to proceed as allowed under the current zoning, such uses could conflict with, and defeat the purpose of, the proposal to study and adopt new regulations regarding medical marijuana dispensaries; and

WHEREAS, while medicinal marijuana use is permitted under California law, marijuana is a prohibited controlled substance under federal law, and pending before the U.S. Supreme Court is the case of *Ashcroft v. Raich*, and a decision on that matter may resolve this conflict of laws; and

WHEREAS, this urgency ordinance is adopted pursuant to the requirements of Government Code section 65858;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Finding, Declaration of Urgency.

The City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles hereby finds and declares that there is a need to enact an urgency interim ordinance establishing a moratorium on all new medical marijuana dispensaries, subject to the findings and conditions obtained in this Ordinance. Other cities in San Luis Obispo County have received inquiries regarding the establishment of medical marijuana dispensaries and it is anticipated that Paso Robles will soon receive similar inquiries as well. If medical marijuana dispensaries are allowed to proceed without appropriate review of location and operational criteria and standards, the dispensaries could have potential adverse secondary effects on neighborhoods and the City that present a clear and immediate danger to the public health, safety, and welfare. The City finds that if establishment or development of medical marijuana dispensaries were allowed to proceed while the City is studying zoning proposals and regulations for this use, it would defeat the purpose of studying and considering zoning proposals to regulate and/or prohibit this use. Failure to enact this moratorium during the stated period may result in significant irreversible change to neighborhood and community character. Based on the foregoing, the City Council does hereby declare this urgency ordinance is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare while considering revisions to the zoning regulations related to medical marijuana dispensaries.

SECTION 2. Moratorium.

(a) The City Council hereby declares a moratorium on any and all medical marijuana dispensaries and any and all modifications to existing uses to add a medical marijuana dispensary.

SECTION 3. Definitions.

As used herein the term "Medical Marijuana Dispensary" or "Dispensary" means any facility or location where medical marijuana is made available to and/or distributed by or to two or more persons in the following categories: a primary caregiver, a qualified patient, or a person with an identification card, in strict accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 11362.5 et seq. A "medical marijuana dispensary" shall not include the following uses, as long as the location of such uses are otherwise regulated by this Code or applicable law: a clinic licensed pursuant to Chapter 1 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, a health care facility licensed pursuant to Chapter 2 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, a residential care facility for persons with chronic life-threatening illness licensed pursuant to Chapter 3.01 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, a residential care facility for the elderly licensed pursuant to Chapter 3.2 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, a residential hospice, or a home health agency licensed pursuant to Chapter 8 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, as long as any such use complies strictly with applicable law including, but not limited to, Health and Safety Code Section 11362.5 et seq. and the City of El Paso de Robles Municipal Code, including but not limited to the City's Zoning Code.

SECTION 4. Effective Date.

This Interim Ordinance shall become effective and shall remain in force and effect from and including March 15, 2005, through and including April 28, 2005, unless extended prior to expiration date.

Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles on the 15th day of March 2005 by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Heggarty, Nemeth, Picanco, Strong, and Mecham
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk