

STAFF REPORT

Date: December 11, 2024

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, Interim City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of Privileged Business License - Adult-Use Cannabis Cultivation Facility (Change of Location) - Cannavative Farms LLC, Scott Wyre MD, 7754 Security Circle.

From: Lance Ferrato, Director

Department: Business Licensing

Summary:

This is an application (R146699Q-AMD-2024a) by Cannavative Farms LLC for a change of location from 14331 Lear Boulevard to 7754 Security Circle (Exhibit A). The business is located in Ward 4 and the zoning designation is Mixed-Use Suburban (MS). Planning comments note that a cannabis cultivation facility, adult-use, is an existing allowed use per RME19-00012 (Exhibit B) and business operations are allowed from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Staff recommends that Council approve the privileged business license application.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Economic and Community Development

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Background:

Council approval of privileged license applications is required for the licenses to be issued. Reno Municipal Code (RMC) 5.05.008(k) states that license applications for gaming, liquor, medical cannabis establishments, adult-use cannabis establishments, pawnbroker, secondhand merchandise, and escort services must be approved by the Council, as well as other relevant reviewing bodies. Applications must also meet the initial requirements set forth in RMC Titles 4 and 5.

Discussion:

Applications have been processed by the Business Licensing Department and approved by the

Planning Division. The requested location was recently vacated by a licensed cannabis cultivation facility that was approved in conjunction with a Zoning Verification Letter (RME19-00012) on November 28, 2018.

Pursuant to NRS 678B.500(2), “A cannabis establishment may move to a new location under the jurisdiction of the same local government as its original location and regardless of the distance from its original location if the operation of the cannabis establishment at the new location has been approved by the local government. A local government may approve a new location pursuant to this subsection only in a public hearing for which written notice is given at least 7 working days before the hearing.” In accordance with the preceding, notification was posted at the location on November 26, 2024, and notice was published in the Reno Gazette Journal from December 2, 2024, through December 11, 2024.

Financial Implications:

No financial implications at this time.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada Law. RMC 5.05.008(k) provides that Council approval is required for gaming, liquor, medical cannabis establishments, adult-use cannabis establishments, pawnbroker, secondhand merchandise, and escort service licenses. Council may deny a license for good cause, which is defined in RMC 5.05.008(j), to include but not be limited to:

- (1) The application is incomplete or contains false, misleading, or fraudulent statements.
- (2) The applicant fails to satisfy any qualification or requirement imposed by this. title, local, state or federal law, regulation or administrative policy pertaining to such activities.
- (3) The applicant has been subject, in any jurisdiction, to administrative action of any kind imposing fines or other discipline relating to the operation of a business licensed in the jurisdiction, or denied a license or work card, due to suitability issues.
- (4) The applicant has engaged in deceptive practices upon the public.
- (5) The applicant has, within the five years immediately preceding the date of the application, been convicted of any of the following criminal offenses, regardless of the jurisdiction of the conviction:

- a. A felony or any crime which, under the laws of this state, would amount to a felony;
 - b. Any crime of which theft, fraud or intent to defraud is an element;
 - c. Unlawfully possessing or distributing a controlled substance;
 - d. Solicitation, prostitution, or pandering;
 - e. Any sex offense requiring the applicant to register under N.R.S. 179D.441 to 179D.470, if the applicant has been classified by the State as a Tier 1 or below;
or
- (6) A person who, within the ten years immediately preceding the date of the application, has been convicted of any sex offense requiring the applicant to register under N.R.S. 179D.441 to 179D.470, if the applicant has been classified by the state as a Tier 2 or Tier 3 offender.
- (7) Any cause reasonably related to furtherance of the public welfare.

In addition, under RMC Sec. 5.22.013, Council may, in its discretion, approve, deny, condition, limit, or take such other action with respect to the applications for medical cannabis establishment and adult-use cannabis establishment licenses as it considers appropriate to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the city and to regulate the use of buildings, structures, land use, business and other purposes.

Cases generally construe "good cause" as having two components: 1) the reason for denial must be reasonably related to the public welfare, and 2) the decision must be supported by substantial evidence and not be arbitrary or capricious. Substantial evidence requires more than the mere statements of interested parties and their counsel and the opinions of council members. *Council, Reno v. Travelers Hotel*, 100 Nev. 436 (1984). Accordingly, a sufficient factual record should be developed before a privileged license is denied for "good cause". A delay (continuance) to gather more information or evidence is permissible provided the delay is not unreasonable in duration or purpose.

Council has asked to conduct its review promptly, even if not all other reviews have been completed. This practice is customer friendly; but it could result in possibly relevant information not being presented to Council in its consideration of "good cause".

Other grounds for denial appear in the RMC Chapters governing specific privileged licenses. Most notably, RMC 5.07.040(a) provides:

“No new on-premises wine and beer licenses, on-premises alcoholic beverage licenses, or cabaret licenses shall be issued authorizing the sale of any alcoholic beverage for consumption on the premises for any location or premises which the Council deems unfavorable or undesirable due to its proximity to any schoolhouse or schoolroom used by any public or common school, or church, or its location in an area that is predominantly residential or, because of the specifics of the proposed use, either detrimental to the surrounding properties or burdensome for police monitoring purpose....”

Any denial of a license must be consistent with equal protection limitations. Applicants in similar situations must be treated substantially the same. However, factual differences which rationally support different treatment to further a governmental interest should be upheld.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve the privileged business license application.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the privileged business license application.

Attachments:

Exhibit A - Vicinity Map - Cannavative Farms LLC

Exhibit B - Zoning Verification Letter - RME19-00012