



Memorandum

TO: The Honorable Whatcom County Council's Committee of the Whole
The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

FROM: Cliff Strong, Senior Planner

THROUGH: Mark Personius, Director, Planning and Development Services

DATE: February 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Request from the Planning Commission to adopt an emergency moratorium on the acceptance of applications for outdoor Cannabis growing and processing operations

During the Public Comments section of both their February 11th and 25th meetings, the Planning Commission heard from numerous residents complaining about the impacts of Cannabis operations near their homes, in particular odors and lighting. At their 25 February 2021 meeting, the Planning Commission passed a motion that reads:

Due to concerns raised by the public regarding off-site impacts (e.g., odors, lighting, and potentially excessive water use) from outdoor marijuana growing and processing operations, the Planning Commission recommends the County Council consider implementing an emergency moratorium on acceptance of applications for outdoor marijuana growing and processing operations and work with PDS to revise those regulations to address the public concerns.

Though staff did inform the Commission that the Council had added to the 2021 adopted Docket of proposed development regulation amendments an item to review these regulations, they felt that we should also cease accepting any new applications for such uses while the Commission and staff worked on reviewing and potentially updating the code.

If this is something the Council wishes to pursue, PDS staff will work with the Council's attorney to prepare the required documents and forward forthwith.