

I am filling out the form provided to me by the MCA so that I can share with you my experiences working with the County through this process.

- Do you feel that MCP & Elevate Impact have clearly informed you of policies, procedures and standards of success versus failure for your application? Absolutely not!! I have experienced nearly a year of turning in applications and rounds of documentation, each time being told that I am approved only to be later requested to submit more information or make more changes. Supposedly my grant (with a signed contract that was executed in early December) is being held up due to unpaid cannabis taxes, however, all of my 2021 quarterly taxes were used to pay for my building permits so that I could remain in sequence with the construction timeline that I submitted for the Equity Grant. At that time, I was told I was approved. Seven month's later, I am still awaiting funding of the grant, but since I owe cultivation taxes the county will not fund the grant. I am now running into the crucial time that I will not be prepared for this next growing season with out building the greenhouses that the grant money was intended for.

I recently asked the cannabis department and the Equity Grant Contractor if I could be guaranteed that the grant would fund once I paid the cultivaiton tax, because I had more pertinent bills to pay if I wasn't going to receive the grant funds by paying the cultivation tax. It has been over a week since i posed this question and I still have not received a response.

It seems to me that we cultivators are held to a very strict standard of meeting timelines and presenting complete and proper information, yet the County and the Cannabis Program are not equally responsible. When the Cannabis Program and the County don't meet their end of the deal, our lives are impacted in a very big way both financially and emotionally.

- If you are unclear on those policies, procedures and standards of success from MCP & Elevate Impact, how effective are they at providing clarity when you present them with questions? Extremely ineffective. I have zero faith that the grant will be funded if I provide the next round of requested action. I am almost 100% confident that something else will come up that will further delay the funding of the grant. I was one of the 1st two individuals to sign the Grant

Contract. I signed on December 8, 2021.. I was told that the check would be cut the following Thursday. I am still awaiting funding after going back and forth several times about paying unpaid cultivation taxes. A cannabis department representative even made line item adjustments on my budget spreadsheet and sent it to me to approve so that I could get it funded. Then that approval was rescinded. I have been yanked around so much that I have no faith that I will actually be funded, even if I do pay my unpaid cultivation taxes.

- Do you find it difficult to get timely responses from MCP & Elevate Impact? In general no. This past year, the average response time was 7-10 days. After I reached out to the Director Paula, she was very responsive. It has been 6 days since I sent my last email asking for a guarantee that my grant would be funded if I provided the requested action and I have not yet received a response.
- Do the webinars offered by MCP & Elevate Impact provide you with useful, clear information? Yes. I am appreciative of the webinars. They are put together well and informative.
- If you have been required to make revisions to your specific grant application or budget, were you given all the corrections at one time or did they happen in small successive installments? Yes. The corrections were given in small increments and often were repetitive. For example: To prepare the initial application a complete project budget, timeline, scope of work, and detailed answers to questions for the application were required. Once reviewed, I was asked to resubmit my budget but on the Equity Grant's template (basically asking me to re do the work I did, but in a different format), submit copies of my licenses and business account statement (which should've been requested initially), a 13 page executive summary (which was redundant of the 10 questions I answered about why I needed the funds , how they would help my with my business, and how I would use the funds), and a Budget Narrative (which I had submitted with my initial budget), and then I was asked to submit

proof of insurance. Later, i was asked to submit a budget for the COMPLETE project, not just for the portion of the project that the \$50k grant would cover.

- If in successive installments, do you believe that the information could have been presented to you more efficiently? Yes
- Do you feel like the goal posts have changed during your grant application process? 1000% YESSS! As Kristin said to me during a phone conervation, "We are building the plane while we are flying it." This is inexcusable as these shortcomings have real life implications for us, our businesses, and our families.

### 3. General Program questions

- Do you feel that you have a clear understanding of MCP policies, procedures and standards of success versus failure for your permit or application? No. I have seen building planners give incorrect information only to have the head of the department say something different. Had I not waived Mike Oliphant down and asked for the correct information, I would've been charged several thousands of dollars in permit fees for something I didn't actually need a permit for.
- If you are unclear on those policies, procedures or standards for success in the program, how effective is MCP at providing clarity when you present them with questions? In my experience MCP has been effective in providing clarity and trying to work with me to fix any issues that have arisen. I know that they are understaffed and that there has been so many changes to what is required as well as to personnel that there hasn't been continuity in messaging and requirements through the past 4 cannabis directors since the inception of the program.
- Do you find it difficult to get timely responses from MCP? Its a mixed bag. Sometimes they go through phases when they are responsive, and sometimes they are not so responsive.

- Do the webinars offered by MCP provide you with useful, and meaningful way to obtain clear information? **Yes.** The recordings or a link to the recordings should be the MCP page of the county website.
- Do you feel like you can participate effectively in MCP webinars? **Somewhat.** I believe that they try to answer the questions the best that they can, but they end abruptly at 5 pm because staff needs to go home. There are hundreds of cultivators that are struggling to make it through this process and have hung in through many many difficult times, changes, and uncertainty. We deserve to have the time given to us to answer our questions. I suggest starting the meetings earlier so that there is ample time to answer questions, or pay the staff to stay later.
- Do you know what the policies and procedures of MCP are? **Yes on some stuff, but not on others like CEQA, SSHR Review, Appendix G, Contiguous Expansion Affidavit.** There is so much information coming at us from the County, CDFR, DCC, CDFW, Building and Planning, State Water Control Board, etc that it is very very difficult to stay on top of everything while still trying to run our businesses.
  - - Do you know how to locate them? **On the County Cannabis Program web page?**
    - Are all forms you need on the website? **I believe so.**
    - Are they in the location they should be for the task you must perform? **Pretty Much.**

Additionally, I have watched for many years the input and opinions given by the cultivators and supporting service providers be discounted and ignored by the BOS, the County Staff, Building and Planning, and the Cannabis Department. It seems that our input is being received as us being self serving, dishonest, and greedy. The reality is that we are simply trying to survive and we are trying to help you create a cannabis program that will be sustainable, one that actually works with the cannabis economy as it has existed. Input from people like Hannah Nelson, Ron Edwards, Casey O'Neill, Mo Ramirez, and the MCA are informing you of what will work and

what won't. Please start perceiving their input as real, live, boots on the ground, 1st hand accounts as to what will work for the cannabis community to survive and thrive and what won't.

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