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July 20, 2020

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
Via BOS@mendocinocounty.org

RE: Agenda Item 5 – Cannabis Ordinance

Honorable Board of Supervisors and Staff,

Mendocino County has been and should be a leader in the regulation of cannabis.

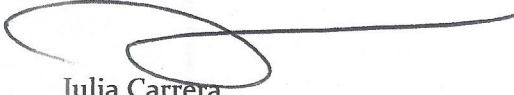
As a subject matter expert working successfully with Use permits in four northern counties, it is JC&A's professional opinion that the Use Permit process is a working system in 4 of the 5 counties we operate in for cannabis cultivation permitting. The Use permit process provides individual CEQA evaluation addressing the wide range of environmental concerns your constituents have. Staff and the County organization as a whole are knowledgeable and have experience with this process. Use permits allow for CDFW and other state agencies to evaluate and respond within a 30-day period. JC&A has provided support to the issuance of 100 Use Permits in four counties. (Note: 1 acre for every 20 acres of a large parcel remains to be seen if CDFW approval is available in Lake County, CDFW Region 2).

Timing and organization of the Use Permit process has been identified as an obstacle for Mendocino County. A Mendocino County cannabis pilot program with contracted and qualified CEQA reviewers and pilot program management, including a contracted Planning Commission agent to review only cannabis Use Permit applications to work in conjunction with staff and the Planning Commission is one of those solutions. Implementation could begin in 2020. JC&A is available to go over the particulars of such a pilot program and are available to support the county as needed.

The Pilot Program solution is a strong match for the equity grant funds utilization on all existing applicants who must move through this CEQA process to obtain a state license. And Mendocino County farmers have publicly supported this approach on the Facebook group MendoCannaAction.

You have an opportunity here to do the right thing. Creativity, backed with seasoned and licensed professionals providing expertise in support of Staff, are the components required to move the Mendocino County Cannabis Program forward. And JC&A is here to assist in whatever capacity needed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, fluid loop followed by a horizontal stroke that extends to the right.

Julia Carrera
Compliance Specialist
Julia Carrera & Associates, Inc.