

For Immediate Release

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City of Ventura grants three more commercial cannabis business permits

Ventura, Calif. – Following a thorough Phase IV reassessment, Interim City Manager Don Penman has granted approval to three additional recipients for commercial cannabis conditional permits. The three recipients are MOM Ventura, located at 3868 East Main Street; Shryne Ventura, located at 1860 S. Victoria Avenue; and Safeport, located at 5801 Valentine Road.

Back in October 2022, the initial Phase IV process led to the conditional award of permits for three retail businesses: Responsible and Compliant Retail Ventura, situated at 1890 East Main Street; TAT Ventura, found at 2835 E Main Street; and ZASA, located at 4591 Market Street.

During the fall of 2022, the remaining five finalists submitted appeals. Subsequently, a settlement agreement was reached between the City and the appellants in July 2023. This paved the way for a partial Phase IV re-evaluation where the five appellants competed for three permits. As a result, the City Council passed a resolution increasing the permissible number of retail permits from five to six.

Businesses granted conditional permits will be subject to site inspections, conduct employee background checks, and obtain a business tax certificate and certificate of occupancy from the City before commencing operations. Upon establishment, the City will conduct ongoing inspections, audits, and monitoring to ensure compliance with local and state regulations. A collaborative effort among City staff, the Ventura Police Department, and state regulators will be employed to ensure community safety.

Additionally, stricter obligations apply to cannabis businesses, including adhering to an age restriction of 21 years or older (18 and above for medical patients), maintaining a minimum distance of 600 feet from elementary, middle, or high schools, and annual permit renewals. Non-compliance with the permit terms or the City's ordinance may lead to permit revocation.

In November 2020, voters approved a ballot measure for cannabis taxation. On February 24, 2021, the City Council authorized the City Manager to provisionally grant up to five retail storefront or non-storefront cannabis permits and 10 industrial permits.

In April 2022, City staff and an external consulting group selected eight finalists using comprehensive criteria, such as business ownership, community compatibility, local benefits, investment plans, and proposed sites. A subsequent public meeting was held in July 2022 to gather community input on applicants and proposed locations.

The City will continue discussions with the California Coastal Commission regarding a potential Local Coastal Plan Amendment. This initiative is geared towards facilitating retail operations within the Coastal Zone. As part of this effort, the City Council will evaluate the feasibility of expanding authorized permits to include the possibility of retail locations within the Coastal Zone.

Cannabis businesses are required to contribute to Ventura's non-profit sector and generate between \$600,000 to \$700,000 in revenue to fund City services in the first full year of operation.

For more information on the City's cannabis regulations or the application process, visit www.CityofVentura.ca.gov/Cannabis.

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