

Robert Adelman
Benmore Valley Road
Lakeport, CA 95453
9 May, 2018

County of Lake
Board of Supervisors
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

Supervisors:

I am writing to clarify issues around early activation of Use Permits under Ordinance 3073 and the effect of further delays on projected Measure C tax revenue for 2018 and beyond.

On multiple occasions, both on the public record and in private meetings, members of the Board and planning staff have indicated that those applicants that are qualified for early activation under Ordinance 3073 would be issued temporary permits in time to operate in 2018. These representations have proven to be false. The relevant issue is the definition of a “complete” application. Evidence would indicate that there is intentional obstruction on the part of county officials.

The Benmore Valley applicants have submitted complete applications. After multiple months of preparation and weeks of pre-application conferences and discussion with staff, a world class team of planning, engineering, and legal professionals, with over 170 years of combined experience, submitted complete applications under the guidelines of Ordinance 3073 and the explicit intention set forth by the Board. The only comments back from staff are related to trivial matters, like camera resolution, minor map modifications, and a superfluous request for an air quality study to determine the environmental impact of CO2 off gassing from the plants (we are surrounded by over 100,000 acres of plants). All of these issues can be dealt with in the review process once early activation permits are issued.

When submitting for a building permit for unpowered cold frame greenhouses with no foundation, built on grade, for minimal frost protection, staff indicated a value of \$8,736,000 (see attached invoice). Clearly there are obstructionist forces at work to make such a ridiculous and easily refutable claim. The best way to generate revenue is to support these projects rather than make transparent attempts to gouge applicants with up-front fees.

Based on statements by staff there is ample evidence these delays are intentional and not related to the quality of the application material. In a meeting with Community Development Director Massarelli and Supervisor Scott, with Attorney Brad Johnson conferenced in on speaker phone, Mr. Massarelli told us that his criteria for developing the Property Management Plans for Ordinance 3073 was to make the process honerous to reduce the number of applicants, while creating arbitrary criteria enabling the CDD to deem any application incomplete. It appears that he was successful in meeting both of these stated goals.

Due to delays in planting, at least **\$119,790 in Measure C tax revenue has been lost for 2018** from the Benmore Valley projects. The claims that Measure C will not generate significant revenue appear to be supported by policies that make that a self-fulfilling prophecy. The public who voted Measure C into law deserve to have representation that support generating maximum revenue while stimulating local economic activity. The Benmore Ranch projects have already generated over \$150,000 in professional fees for local businesses, and that is just the beginning. The economic benefit to local businesses is substantial and verifiable.

An attached addendum to the Lake County Economic Impact Report dated February, 2018 reflects data and trends from the first 4 months of the regulated cannabis market. Current data and transparent methods point to erroneous conclusions in the HdL presentation to the Board. When projects on one group of contiguous parcels surrounding the Benmore Valley have potential to generate over \$1,000,000 annually in Measure C taxes and HdL projects \$164,000 Measure C revenue from all of Lake County, something is wrong. It appears the data is being skewed to support an opaque political agenda.

New tax measures such as Measure G only make sense as part of a comprehensive strategy to support economic growth and increased economic stimulation. Measure C and Measure G are complementary initiatives to support economic development. The one-time recent bump in economic activity due to the sales generated by rebuilding after the fires is not sufficient basis for projecting future revenue from Measure G sales tax. We need a more sustainable plan to increase discretionary spending.

I would appreciate serious consideration by the Board to pass the resolution put forth in the attached letter from Brad Johnson.

Sincerely,

Robert Adelman

CC:

Jeff.Smith@lakecountyca.gov

Moke.Simon@lakecountyca.gov

Jim.Steele@lakecountyca.gov

Tina.Scott@lakecountyca.gov

Anita.Grant@LakeCountyCA.gov

Mireya.Turner@lakecountyca.gov

Carol.Huchingson@lakecountyca.gov

ceo@lakecochamber.com