

Tuscola County Planning Commission News Letter

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Medical Marijuana Facility siting and the potential for loss of Federal project funding by Zygmunt Dworzecki, Chairperson

It has been a while since the Tuscola County Planning Commission sent out a newsletter. Currently, some municipalities are studying the legal aspects of the most current Michigan Marijuana laws and how those laws might affect their community should a decision be made to locate a medical marijuana facility or facilities in their community.

This issue was discussed at the Friday, July 14, 2017 East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) Full Council board meeting held in Iosco County with discussion continuing into the Regional Economic Development Team (RED Team) meeting that followed.

An inquiry had been made by a Council member to a federal granting agency regarding the federal position on infrastructure project funding when there is a medical marijuana facility either sited or being considered for location in an area.

The federal response to this question was that they cannot provide funding for anything that would have a direct benefit for marijuana projects. This would apply to such projects as possible industrial park expansion in order to provide additional space for a medical marijuana dispensary or manufacturer. This position holds true for USDA and other federal programs. In addition, the Small Business Development Center cannot provide services to any marijuana related business and Michigan Works! cannot provide services to any marijuana business. This is because, at this time, Marijuana remains illegal at the federal level.

This information is provided to help your community make a wise decision as you move forward on your plans if they might include the possibility of a marijuana project/facility in your community. Two questions to remember are:

- 1: Would there be a need for added infrastructure in an Industrial Park or elsewhere in anticipation of potential siting of a marijuana related facility?
- 2: Would such added infrastructure improvements include water and sewer system upgrades that might be utilized by such a facility.

The future of your community depends on the amount of research you do now as it may well impact the decisions you make later. The State of Michigan has legalized Medical Marijuana and has also put restrictions into the law, however even though it will be regulated, this is likely to be a growth industry within the State. Therefore, it is wise to remain current at the local level on laws and zoning related to any issue involving marijuana. If growth of your community is foremost in your future, then plan wisely and do not stop your progress toward future growth!

Our meeting: The first Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. in the conference room of the Purdy Building