

ORDINANCE 3249

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 17, CHAPTER 4, CHAPTER 8,
AND CHAPTER 20, OF THE OFFICIAL CODE OF THE CITY OF GREAT
FALLS (OCCGF) PERTAINING TO USE OF LAND WITHIN THE CITY
OF GREAT FALLS FOR COMMERCIAL MARIJUANA BUSINESS
ACTIVITIES**

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WHEREAS, the City of Great Falls is authorized by its Charter and Montana law to establish laws to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Great Falls; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission has, in the exercise of those powers, previously established Title 17 of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls (OCCGF), which establishes a comprehensive structure for development and land use within the City of Great Falls; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission took action in June of 2010 to adopt Ordinance 3054, as a component of the Title 17, Chapter 4 and Chapter 20, provisions regarding land use, to prohibit any medical marijuana activities in the City of Great Falls;

WHEREAS, in November of 2020, a majority of the voters of the State of Montana, including a majority of the voters of Cascade County and the City of Great Falls, voted to approve Initiative Measure 190 (“I-190”), which legalized both the adult use of marijuana under certain limitations and various categories of commercial marijuana business activities; and

WHEREAS, I-190, as passed by the voters, contained express limitations on the ability of a charter municipality like the City of Great Falls to completely prohibit certain adult-use marijuana providers and dispensaries from being located in the City; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Montana Legislature took action to enact House Bill 701, which amended I-190 and created a different comprehensive structure to allow for and regulate commercial marijuana business activities in Montana; and

WHEREAS, one of the specific changes the Montana Legislature made to I-190 through HB 701 was to remove I-190’s express limitation on the ability of a charter municipality like the City of Great Falls to completely prohibit certain commercial marijuana business activities; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission has taken action to refer a proposed ordinance specifically prohibiting all types of commercial marijuana business activities from operating within the City of Great Falls to a vote of the electors of the City to be conducted on November 8, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a lawsuit has now been filed against the City of Great Falls challenging its authority to prohibit commercial marijuana business activities and seeking an order from the District Court requiring the City to allow for such activities within its boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission now wishes to enact an alternative regulatory framework in its Land Development Code that will allow for commercial marijuana business activities within the City of Great Falls, with such framework to become effective and operative only in the event of either (1) a vote of the electors of the City in November of 2022 to not specifically prohibit such activities or (2) the issuance of a Court order directing that the City allow such activities to be conducted within its boundaries.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA:

Section 1. The provisions of OCCGF Title 17, Chapter 4, Chapter 8, and Chapter 20, are hereby amended as depicted by Exhibit "A" attached hereto and by reference incorporated herein with deleted language identified by ~~strikeout~~ and inserted language **bolded**; and

Section 2. **CONTINGENT EFFECTIVE DATE:** This ordinance shall in no event be effective any sooner than thirty (30) days after second reading and final adoption as provided by law, but it shall not become effective **except** upon (A) certification by the Cascade County Election Administrator of an election result showing that a majority of the electors of the City of Great Falls voting in the election to be conducted on November 8, 2022 have voted against the enactment of Ordinance 3246 as presented to them via Resolution 10471 OR (B) the issuance of a Court order directing that the City of Great Falls allow commercial marijuana business activities within its boundaries. In the event that neither such contingency ever occurs, this ordinance shall be null, void and of no legal force or effect.

ACCEPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana on first reading August 16, 2022.

ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana on second reading and public hearing on September 6, 2022.

Bob Kelly, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

APPROVED FOR LEGAL CONTENT:

Jeff Hindoien, City Attorney