

CITY of CARPINTERIA, CALIFORNIA



November 13, 2023

Honorable Das Williams, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
c/o Clerk of the Board
105 E. Anapamu Street, Room 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Cannabis Odor Control Best Available Control Technology (BACT) Determination

Honorable Chair Williams:

As you are aware, the City has in the past provided comment to both the Santa Barbara County Planning Commission ("Planning Commission") and Board of Supervisors ("Board") on the ongoing impacts and land use compatibility conflicts occurring as a result of the proliferation of commercial cannabis activities in the Carpinteria Valley. Chief among these concerns has been the persistent presence of malodors impacting the residential, educational and recreational areas of the City located in close proximity to the numerous commercial cannabis cultivation facilities bordering Carpinteria.

Dating back to at least 2017, the City has advocated for the most stringent odor control regulations possible, including requiring the use of the best available odor control technology at the time. Beginning in 2020, with the initial rollout of nascent carbon filtration technology optimized for use in vented greenhouses in select Carpinteria Valley cultivation facilities, the City has monitored general trends to gauge the efficacy of this new technology. In the years since, as carbon filtration technology has been adopted by more of the growers, it has become clear that carbon filtration stands above other odor control technologies as being most effective in consistently reducing the escape of cannabis odors into surrounding areas. **Accordingly, the City of Carpinteria ("City") strongly urges the County of Santa Barbara ("County") to designate the use of activated carbon filtration as currently being the sole best available control technology (BACT) to mitigate nuisance cannabis odors within the Carpinteria Valley.**

The County's current Article II Coastal Zoning Ordinance ("CZO") development standards for cannabis odor control (Section 35-144U(C)(6)(e)) list a variety of odor control treatments as BACT, including the use of "vapor phase" technologies. Based on experience with the use of vapor phase systems in the Carpinteria Valley over the past nearly seven years, it has become clear that such systems are inadequate by themselves to prevent nuisance odors from escaping and affecting neighboring residents and uses. The CZO development standard states, in part:

*A Professional Engineer or a Certified Industrial Hygienist must review and certify that the equipment and methods to be used for reducing odors are consistent with accepted and available industry-specific **best control technologies and methods designed to mitigate odor** (emphasis added).*

We note that in several recent applications for cultivation operations in the Carpinteria Valley that have been considered by the Planning Commission and Board, the use of carbon filtration has been required or upheld, and we support and encourage County decision-makers and staff to continue to do so. Given the increasing adoption of carbon filtration amongst recently considered cannabis cultivation applications, and resultant improvements in air quality (related to odors), it is our opinion that carbon filtration alone should be considered as the sole BACT when considering applications for new cannabis operations or when reviewing existing cannabis operations for compliance with CZO regulations.

As the City has referenced in our previous comment letters, and as required by the current CZO odor control development standard, **we encourage the County to require the use of carbon filtration as the sole best available control technology for newly proposed cannabis operations, and similarly encourage the County to require previously-permitted cannabis cultivation operations to upgrade existing odor control systems that are not compliant with this standard.**

We appreciate the Board's consideration of this request and we encourage the Board to clarify to decision-makers, staff and current operators that carbon filtration is the only viable technology to reasonably mitigate the impact of nuisance odors.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Al Clark', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Al Clark, Mayor
City of Carpinteria

Cc. Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Lisa Plowman, Planning Director
Travis Seawards, Development Review Division Deputy Director
City Council Members
Nick Bobroff, Community Development Director