

To: Okanogan County Planning department and County Commissioners

From: Sue Ogborn

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Established neighborhood residents do not want pot farms moving in our neighborhoods in Okanogan County.

I believe it should have a class such as "industrial agriculture" or "Medicinal Agriculture" because of the requirements put forth by the government for fencing and monitoring by cameras, and the fact it is a drug.

Ugly fences

Cameras

Alarms

Smells

Many strangers

Noise

Increased traffic and usage of roads

Are there any other agricultural products that require the above by the government?

Established homeowners, home values decrease from pot farms. I am a witness to the hardship this has put on the Bolich family in the Pine Creek area. They felt the need to buy the home behind them in order to prevent a pot farm behind their home on their fence line approx. 200 feet from their back door. This is after they already have one across the street and one down the road. This is a family that use to take walks, jog, and ride bikes, and horses along this road. That has all stopped, due to the smell and the strangers in the area, and pit bulls. They tried to sell their primary home last year and didn't get anyone even look at it. Their selling price was a great price. They took a loss last year on the home behind them that they purchased; as the rent didn't cover the cost of the expenses to purchase the newly purchased home; I would have done the same though.

The pot farm industrial effects as stated above reduce the chance of established homes being sold. Land owners who wish to sell their land, would only be selling to more pot farmers. Future homeowners would not find it desirable to establish a new home site near the pot farms, therefore decreasing home values.

Pot farmer do not live in the area in which they farm the pot; Why?

Proposed idea

Propose a **3-5 mile radius of reimbursement to homeowners** when someone puts a pot farm within that radius, via paying property taxes for each land owner, by the grower. This would not totally comfort those who have been effected; but be one perk to having them near your home which may **ease tensions**. If the pot grower does not want to pay his neighbor's property taxes; **then they will look to put them in areas with less households**. If the **farm is already established** the county would reimburse the local homeowners by re-assessing their homes, comparing to having a home in a undesirable area, and reimburse the homeowner for their taxes. The county could then bill the Pot farmer. (Again if the pot farmer does not want to pay; the pot farmer would need to move to an area away from established households)

At the local meeting a few topics were spoken that brought me concern

Lack of officials who monitor drug and alcohol in our area?

What do we tell our children? To listen to the Marijuana money commercials that tell them not to use Marijuana.

Marijuana is a Gateway drug: Do we bring this into our neighborhoods?

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana/marijuana-gateway-drug>

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana/there-link-between-marijuana-use-psychiatric-disorders>

Excise taxes not being brought back to our area?

The Pot farmers were talking that they have helped our community by bringing jobs to our area; that may be somewhat true on a small scale, with a select few local businesses—**They bring in people from out of the area, who do not live here in our county, and money is taken out of our county.**

Several of the pot farms do not have residence on their property; to suffer the same effects as their neighbors. Most pot farm owners do not live on site; Why?

Yes the state voters voted it in. Okanogan county is going to be the so called "Napa Valley of pot farms" **is this what we want for our children?** For our community. We don't need their help in bringing business to our area. We don't want that kind of business. They can leave, and it would not hurt this community. We were fine before them, we will be fine without them.

What about the health of workers? Has Washington State L&I approved workers to work around it as safe? I know kids come to school, and clinics who smell like pot because their parents smoke it; and work around it. If it is sticking to their clothes it must be sticking in their lungs. Or are they on a cash basis and not paying L&I and Washington securities?

The bottom line is that this was not, planned or thought through. It was the state and county planning's obligation to the residents of this county to protect our communities. Nothing was relayed to the existing home owners, about pot farms coming into our area. I am angry about this. I don't even live next to one; but can understand how one would feel living next to a community of pot farms like we have on Pine Creek in Tonasket. We moved here in 2000, for the beauty of this area, and the wonderful community. Your planning department and the county are letting the established residents of Tonasket down; by your lack of zoning; and allowing these outsiders to come in and trample over the long time county residents with their ugly farms, invasive cameras, smells, and bringing in drugs into our community.

Sue Ogborn, Tonasket

Business Owner

Empire Pot farm Pine Creek; photo taken from the road/front lawn of established resident

