

# POT GROW: City already has three operational pot dispensaries

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In an interview before the council meeting, Bischke said she's grown concerned over the last few months about reports about an oversupply of marijuana in the state.

The Associated Press reported in February that marijuana wholesalers were producing up to three times more cannabis than Oregon could legally absorb, according to an estimate from a former Oregon State University professor.

The Burnswell application was going through the approval process as Bischke learned about statewide oversupply concerns, leading

her to appeal the planning commission's decision to the council.

"It impacts the city as a whole," she said.

Besides potentially oversupplying the market, Bischke said the property had other issues like part of it being in the flood zone.

Bischke said each marijuana grow needed to be evaluated on its own merits, and she didn't consider Krenzler's withdrawal to be a victory.

"There's still more work to do," she said.

The city already has three operational marijuana dispensaries, and a fourth, Thur's Smoke Shop, received approval from the planning

commission in May.

Although Thur's owner Bryson Thurman is building the dispensary at 1616 S.E. Court Ave., he originally intended to build it on Tutuilla Road. Nearby residents and the Pendleton School District came out in force against the proposed dispensary, and Thurman eventually withdrew his original application and relocated.

Although Burnswell withdrew its application, another land use appeal for a potential marijuana business was also on the agenda.

A company from Ontario called EO Investments LLC asked to rezone 5,000 square feet at 421 S.E. Fourth Street from central mixed

use to light industrial with the intention of leasing it to a marijuana production company.

The commission denied the company's application, but EO Investments appealed.

"My decision to vote no on the motion was made primarily to respect the boundary between the (central mixed use) and (light industrial) zones previously established in the downtown corridor," commissioner Brian Currin wrote in a statement to the council. "An approval of this request would have created a one lot 'peninsula' of industrial property into the CMU property boundaries."

At the meeting, Tyrell Erlebach of EO Investments said the council's decision should be based on more than the aesthetics of a zoning map and drew attention to all the industrial qualities of the surrounding area like a scarcity of sidewalks, railroad spurs and the nearby Pendleton Flour Mill.

"It makes the zoning map look nice if this building is in the CMU," he said. "But I would like to argue that outside a color on a map for planning and zoning, it really makes this building dysfunctional."

Mike Ledbetter said he owns some properties in close proximity to the EO Investments building and

was concerned that the odor from a marijuana grow would force him to move his business, Ledbetter Refrigeration, out of town.

Bischke, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, also spoke out against EO Investments' proposal, adding that Pendleton had more than enough supply of industrial land for a cannabis facility to locate elsewhere.

The council ultimately upheld the planning commission's decision, and denied the EO Investments' application.

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# HERMISTON: 400 people are expected to take part

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have to be separated from rims before drop-off. Other items collected include appliances, electronics, glass, metal, untreated wood with no nails in it, latex and oil-based paints, newspaper, cardboard and batteries. For items like motor oil and sensitive documents that need shredding, which the city won't be taking that day, they will provide information about where those items can be disposed of.

Once people have taken care of the junk on their own properties, they're invited to help clean up public property around town on

Saturday, April 21.

Fetter said the "I Love My City" activity should be the campaign's biggest event yet. Current estimates from participating churches show about 400 people are expected to participate in the clean-up day.

While I Love My City was started by Hermiston Assembly of God as a series of service projects, other churches have since signed on. The April 21 clean-up event is open not only to members of those congregations but anyone who wants to help.

Participants are invited to show



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
**Pieces of plastic hang from a thorn bush near the railroad tracks off of Northwest First Place on Tuesday in Hermiston.**

up at 9 a.m. at McKenzie Park.

"Anyone can show up, and if they're looking for a job to do they

can check in at the big tent," Fetter said.

The group will be divided into six teams that will each be given a zone to clean up. Zones will be located along North First Place and the railroad tracks, on the west side of Highway 395 between Elm Avenue and Jennie Avenue, and four downtown zones stretching from Highland Avenue to Gladys Avenue.

Each zone will be given specific tasks, including picking up litter, weeding, scrubbing graffiti and removing leaves and other debris piled along the sides of buildings.

"This is the time of year the wind is blowing and things are growing," Fetter said.

He said graffiti has been a particular problem in Hermiston recently and police are working to identify suspects. He said he hopes people who care about their community looking nice will help police catch the vandals and that people will let the city know about graffiti in public parks so they can remove it quickly.

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