

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-__

AN INITIATED ORDINANCE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN OF PAONIA, COLORADO, ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON AUTONOMOUS ROBOTS, PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY AND PRIVACY, AND PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT AND REVIEW.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Town of Paonia is a statutory municipality organized under C.R.S. § 31-1-203; and

WHEREAS, C.R.S. §§ 31-15-101 and 31-15-401 grant statutory municipalities corporate and police-power authority to protect public health, safety, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, autonomous robots recently appeared on Paonia streets without public notice, explanation, or opportunity for citizen input; and

WHEREAS, the People of Paonia find that unregulated autonomous robots raise serious concerns about public safety, privacy, and the character of our community; and

WHEREAS, the People desire to establish a temporary moratorium on autonomous robots to allow time for proper public discussion and regulatory framework development;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN OF PAONIA, COLORADO:

SECTION 1. TITLE

This initiated ordinance shall be known and cited as the "Robot Moratorium."

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this ordinance:

- **"Autonomous Robot"** means any self-propelled device operating without continuous human control in public spaces
- **"Public Space"** means streets, sidewalks, parks, and other areas accessible to the public

SECTION 3. MORATORIUM

The following provisions shall apply during the moratorium period:

- No person or entity shall operate autonomous robots in public spaces within Town limits
- **NO FEES, LICENSES, OR PERMITS** are established or required by this ordinance
- **Exemptions:** Emergency response robots operated by public safety agencies

SECTION 4. ENFORCEMENT

- Violations may be reported by any person
- Violations constitute a civil infraction

SECTION 5. SUNSET AND REVIEW

- This moratorium expires December 31, 2027
- The Town is encouraged to develop regulations through public process

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance takes effect 30 days after certification of election results.

ADOPTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN OF PAONIA, COLORADO

Date: _____

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the qualified electors of the Town of Paonia, Colorado at the election held on _____, 2025.

Town Clerk

SIGNATURE COLLECTION SECTION

WARNING: IT IS AGAINST THE LAW: For anyone to sign any initiative petition with any name other than his or her own or to knowingly sign his or her name more than once for the same measure or to knowingly sign a petition when not a registered elector who is eligible to vote on the measure.

DO NOT SIGN THIS PETITION UNLESS YOU ARE A REGISTERED ELECTOR OF THE TOWN OF PAONIA

#	Signature	Printed Name	Residence Address	Date
1	_____	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____	_____

AFFIDAVIT OF CIRCULATOR

I, _____, swear or affirm that:

1. I have read and understand the laws governing the circulation of petitions
 2. I circulated this petition and witnessed each signature
 3. Each signature is of a registered elector of the Town of Paonia
 4. To the best of my knowledge, each signature is genuine
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Signature of Circulator

State of Colorado)

) ss.

County of Delta)

Subscribed and sworn before me this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Notary Public

COVER LETTER FOR SUBMISSION

09/03/2025

Town Clerk

Town of Paonia

214 Grand Avenue

Paonia, CO 81428

Re: Submission of Citizen Initiative Petition - Autonomous Robot Moratorium

Dear Town Clerk,

I hereby submit this citizen initiative petition which establishes legislative policy creating a temporary moratorium on autonomous robots operating in public spaces.

This Initiative is Clearly Legislative Because It:

1. **Establishes public safety policy** regarding emerging technology
2. **Creates prospective regulations** applying to all future robot deployments
3. **Sets limits on technology use** in public spaces - a fundamental policy choice
4. **Addresses community character** and quality of life concerns
5. **Provides sunset provision** allowing time for proper regulatory development

The Initiative Does NOT:

- Direct specific administrative actions
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- Target any individual operator or device
- Interfere with day-to-day operations
- Create licensing or fee requirements

Context - Mysterious Robot Deployment:

In June 2025, autonomous robots appeared on Paonia streets without:

- Public notice or explanation
- Opportunity for citizen input
- Clear ownership or purpose
- Safety protocols or oversight

This unilateral deployment of surveillance-capable technology demonstrates the urgent need for democratic input on how technology affects our community.

Legal Framework:

Per C.R.S. §§ 31-15-101 and 31-15-401, statutory municipalities have police power authority to protect public health, safety, and welfare. Establishing a moratorium on potentially hazardous or intrusive technology is a classic exercise of this legislative power.

Per *Vagneur v. City of Aspen*, 295 P.3d 493 (Colo. 2013), the initiative power must be "liberally construed." Creating temporary moratoria while policy is developed is quintessentially legislative.

Pattern Recognition:

This mysterious robot deployment coincides suspiciously with:

- Your rejection of the STR initiative
- Approval of \$50,000 surveillance camera system
- Pattern of expanding surveillance while blocking democratic participation

The People have the right to pause and evaluate new technologies through democratic process.

Simple and Reasonable:

This initiative simply says: "Let's pause autonomous robots until we can have a public discussion about their appropriate use." It:

- Creates no bureaucracy
- Requires no fees or permits
- Exempts emergency response
- Expires automatically in 2027
- Encourages proper public process

Key Legislative Elements:

- Establishes temporary policy moratorium
- Creates general prohibition with specific exemptions
- Applies prospectively to all operators

- Sets automatic expiration date
- Addresses public safety and privacy

These are textbook legislative functions establishing community standards.

Please confirm receipt and acceptance of this petition for circulation within five (5) business days. Any concerns should be provided in writing.

The fundamental question - should autonomous robots operate in our public spaces without public input or oversight - is exactly the type of policy question voters must decide.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete McCarthy
119 1/2 Dorris Ave, Paonia CO, 81428

cc: Town Attorney
Mayor
Board of Trustees