

Martinez, Ruben

From: Sareen Kasparian <om>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 11:00 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Sweet Flower Support

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April 15, 2021

Dear City of Pasadena

I am a long time resident of Pasadena and support the Zoning Code Amendment to the city's existing Cannabis Businesses regulations.

I urge the council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment, permitting up to three dispensaries per council district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet, allowing remaining approved operators to open in their preferred locations.

The original measure CC adopted by the City with majority support by Pasadena residents **allowed up to six dispensaries** in Pasadena, and the City selected six applicants. However, the implementation by the City **permitted only up to four dispensaries** to open, and presently only two are open for business. Of the remaining two, one applicant has been disqualified, and the other, in Old Pasadena, has shown no signs of progress towards opening.

The City is losing jobs, tax revenues, and community benefits.

Changing the ordinance to permit three dispensaries per district and lessen the distance requirement between dispensaries will NOT place an undue burden on Pasadena's residents or community. These changes affect ONLY commercial zones in Pasadena, and do not have any impact on required distances from residential areas, churches, schools, etc.

For the above reasons, **please vote in favor** to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment, allowing Sweet Flower to open for business at the Colorado and Lake location.

Yours,

04/19/2021
Item 7

Anna Gueuzubeuyukian

Pasadena CA 91107

Martinez, Ruben

From: nairi karkoudrian <
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 12:02 PM
To: Martinez, Ruben
Subject: letter of support for zoning

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I am a long time resident of Pasadena and support the Zoning Code Amendment to the city's existing Cannabis Businesses regulations.

I urge the council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment, permitting up to three dispensaries per council district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet, allowing remaining approved operators to open in their preferred locations.

The original measure CC adopted by the City with majority support by Pasadena residents **allowed up to six dispensaries** in Pasadena, and the City selected six applicants. However, the implementation by the City **permitted only up to four dispensaries** to open, and presently only two are open for business. Of the remaining two, one applicant has been disqualified, and the other, in Old Pasadena, has shown no signs of progress towards opening.

The City is losing jobs, tax revenues, and community benefits.

Changing the ordinance to permit three dispensaries per district and lessen the distance requirement between dispensaries will NOT place an undue burden on Pasadena's residents or community. These changes affect ONLY commercial zones in Pasadena, and do not have any impact on required distances from residential areas, churches, schools, etc.

For the above reasons, **please vote in favor** to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment, permitting up to three dispensaries per council district, allowing remaining operators to open, and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet, so that each of the approved applicants can promptly open their store in their proposed location.

Sincerely,

Nayri Tabakian

Pasadena, CA 91107



RECEIVED

2021 APR 16 PM 3:47

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members:

RE: Zoning Code Amendment to Cannabis Business Regulations on April 12 City Council Agenda

COLIN DIAZ
PRESIDENT & CEO

My name is Colin Diaz and I serve as the President & CEO of the Culver City Chamber. Much of my work has been centered on the promotion and protection of economic development in Culver City and throughout the region. I current serve on a multitude of committees, taskforces and boards focused on our recovery from the pandemic, as well as addressing and supporting policies that fosters business growth and sustainability. The latter is why I am writing today.

I applaud you all on the work that has been done in Pasadena, as I have been able to watch the growth and transformation over the past 17 years from when I previously worked in the city at Caltech. The renaissance is like that which we are experiencing in Culver City. We also are in the process of opening the retail Cannabis Industry in our community and have gone through a similar vetting process of applicants, location, and feasibility.

For that reason, I urge the Council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet. This will provide increased tax revenue and a new funding source for the City, which should be welcomed as we all come out of the pandemic.

We support these proposed changes that will not only allow Sweet Flower to open its dispensary in its preferred location near Lake and Colorado in the Playhouse District, but will also promote a functioning cannabis program in Pasadena that will bring the jobs, tax revenues and community benefits to the City that were long promised but, to date, under-delivered.

At best, under the current location restrictions, only up to four dispensaries could be allowed. "Up to four" is not "Up to six." The voters wisely gave the city council the power to amend the ordinance; it is time now to do so.

Sweet Flower, as a top six applicant, stands ready to establish its store in the Playhouse District near the corner of Lake and Colorado. Sweet Flower is an independently owned, local business, that employs locally and gives back to the communities it serves. It is a best-in-class operator that cares about the communities it serves, and specifically the Black- and Brown-communities that have been most negatively impacted by the war on drugs.

In addition to the serving on the Board of the Culver City Chamber of Commerce, Sweet Flower's management team members serve on the Boards of Cannabis for Black Lives and the Black Cooperative Investment Fund, among other non-profits focusing on issues of minority impact and empowerment.

In Culver City, one of the most important elements that was required of our applicants was community engagement & support. It was important to us to not just have a transactional relationship with the operators. Of the over 20 applicants, Sweet Flower has gone above and beyond the rest to connect with the community, give back, address equity and be an amazing partner for the Chamber and City alike. They have underwritten events, sponsored marketing for non-profits, created and implemented equity initiatives and continually engage with the community to see how they can do more.

I strongly urge the council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet. The job creation, tax revenue and ability to impact real change and equity justify this change on its own. Plus, the addition of Sweet Flower is a sound investment, as they will shape the expectation for other operators in your City and yield great benefits.

Appreciatively,

Colin Diaz, President & CEO | Culver City Chamber

Martinez, Ruben

From: Richard McDonald <
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 4:10 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Jomsky, Mark; Charles Berwanger; Mermell, Steve; Bagneris, Michele; Fuentes, Theresa; Reyes, David; Paige, Jennifer; Nunez, Guille
Subject: RE: April 19, 2021 City Council Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the City's Cannabis Business Regulations

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Please provide the following two additional comments to the Mayor and City Council for Monday's hearing:

1. All of the letters of support on the City's website are form-based letters from the landlord for SweetFlower and/or their friends, and/or companies or unions that do business with it elsewhere. None of them address the Judgment in favor of the City and against SweetFlower, nor the alternative locations available to SweetFlower in Districts 1, 2, and 5, or how potential amendments to the Code could be made to allow it to locate in those Districts. None of address any of the concerns raised by the Planning Commission and City Council in November 2019.
2. The reference on page 6 of your staff report to the exemption from CEQA under Business & Profession Code section 26055(h) is mistaken. That exemption was adopted in 2019 to encourage cities to implement Proposition 64, and thus applied to the City's adoption of its initial ordinance, not subsequently to these proposed amendments. The State Supreme Court rejected a similar move by the City of San Diego in the *Union of Medical Marijuana Patients* case we cite in our letter. See 7 Cal. 5th 1171, Fn. 7.

Richard A. McDonald, Esq.
Law Office of Richard A. McDonald
Of Counsel, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP

Pasadena, CA 91101
Office Telephone:
Cell Telephone:

Email: _____
Website: _____

From: Richard McDonald <rmcdonald@carlsonnicholas.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 12:10 PM
To: correspondence@cityofpasadena.net
Cc: mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net; Charles Berwanger <cberwanger@grsm.com>; smermell@cityofpasadena.net; mbagneris@cityofpasadena.net; Fuentes, Theresa <tfuentes@cityofpasadena.net>; DavidReyes@cityofpasadena.net;

jpaige@cityofpasadena.net; gnunez@cityofpasadena.net

Subject: April 19, 2021 City Council Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the City's Cannabis Business Regulations

Please provide the attached letter to the Mayor and City Council for the above-referenced hearing on Monday, April 19. Please also let us know how public comment will be handled during the hearing. Thank you.

<<...>>

Richard A. McDonald, Esq.

Law Office of Richard A. McDonald

Of Counsel, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP

Pasadena, CA 91101

Office Telephone:

Cell Telephone:

Email: Richard.McDonald@CarlsonNicholas.com

Website: www.carlsonnicholas.com

Martinez, Ruben

From: Richard McDonald
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 4:31 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Jomsky, Mark; Charles Berwanger; Mermell, Steve; Bagneris, Michele; Fuentes, Theresa; Reyes, David; Paige, Jennifer; Nunez, Guille
Subject: RE: April 19, 2021 City Council Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the City's Cannabis Business Regulations

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Please provide the following point to the Mayor and City Council for Monday's hearing on Item 7:

1. All of the "community benefits" discussed in the staff report will be realized regardless of where the six stores go because it is a separate requirement under the Code, so why put half of all of them in only District 3?

Richard A. McDonald, Esq.
Law Office of Richard A. McDonald
Of Counsel, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP

Pasadena, CA 91101
Office Telephone: (626) 799-1100
Cell Telephone: (626) 799-1100

Email: rmcdonald@carlsonnicholas.com
Website: www.carlsonnicholas.com

From: Richard McDonald
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 4:10 PM
To: correspondence@cityofpasadena.net
Cc: mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net; Charles Berwanger <cberwanger@grsm.com>; smermell@cityofpasadena.net; mbagneris@cityofpasadena.net; Fuentes, Theresa <tfuentes@cityofpasadena.net>; DavidReyes@cityofpasadena.net; jpaige@cityofpasadena.net; gnunez@cityofpasadena.net
Subject: RE: April 19, 2021 City Council Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the City's Cannabis Business Regulations

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1. All of the letters of support on the City's website are form-based letters from the landlord for SweetFlower and/or their friends, and/or companies or unions that do business with it elsewhere. None of them address the Judgment in favor of the City and against SweetFlower, nor the alternative locations available to SweetFlower in Districts 1, 2, and 5, or how potential amendments to the Code could be

made to allow it to locate in those Districts. None of address any of the concerns raised by the Planning Commission and City Council in November 2019.

2. The reference on page 6 of your staff report to the exemption from CEQA under Business & Profession Code section 26055(h) is mistaken. That exemption was adopted in 2019 to encourage cities to implement Proposition 64, and thus applied to the City's adoption of its initial ordinance, not subsequently to these proposed amendments. The State Supreme Court rejected a similar move by the City of San Diego in the *Union of Medical Marijuana Patients* case we cite in our letter. See 7 Cal. 5th 1171, Fn. 7.

Richard A. McDonald, Esq.
Law Office of Richard A. McDonald
Of Counsel, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP

Pasadena, CA 91101

Office Telephone:

Cell Telephone:

Email:

Website: _____

From: Richard McDonald <____@pas.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 12:10 PM

To: correspondence@cityofpasadena.net

Cc: mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net; Charles Berwanger _____; smermell@cityofpasadena.net; mbagneris@cityofpasadena.net; Fuentes, Theresa <tfuentes@cityofpasadena.net>; DavidReyes@cityofpasadena.net; jpaige@cityofpasadena.net; gnunez@cityofpasadena.net

Subject: April 19, 2021 City Council Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the City's Cannabis Business Regulations

Please provide the attached letter to the Mayor and City Council for the above-referenced hearing on Monday, April 19. Please also let us know how public comment will be handled during the hearing. Thank you.

<<...>>

Richard A. McDonald, Esq.

Law Office of Richard A. McDonald

Of Counsel, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP

Pasadena, CA 91101

Office Telephone:

Cell Telephone:

Email: _____

Website: _____



Pasadena, CA 91107

April 16, 2021

VIA E-MAIL

Mayor Victor M. Gordo and City Councilmembers
Pasadena City Hall
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

RECEIVED
2021 APR 19 AM 8:28
CITY OF PASADENA

Re: Proposed Zoning Code Amendments to City Cannabis Regulations

Dear Mayor and Honorable Members of the City Council:

Varda, Inc. ("Varda"), one of the six applicants that succeeded in securing a cannabis retail license within the City of Pasadena (the "City") in 2020, respectfully submits this letter in opposition of the proposed amendment to the City's existing Cannabis Business Regulations to loosen zoning restrictions (the "Proposed Amendments").

The Notice of Public Hearing indicates that the Proposed Amendments would:

1. "modify the location requirements to allow up to three dispensaries per council district, and
2. Decrease the distance between cannabis retailers from 1,000 feet to 450 feet."

While we appreciate the impetus behind the Proposed Amendments, we are also concerned about the fairness of the proposed modifications.

Varda and other existing cannabis retailers within the City fully complied with the more stringent zoning requirements in order to obtain their licenses. This happened only recently. Relaxing the zoning restrictions at this juncture would be unfair and unjust to Varda. Any new retailers will receive an unfair advantage simply because they waited.

In addition, the Proposed Amendments will have the undesirable effect of concentrating cannabis retailers in certain council districts. Under the Proposed Amendments, three dispensaries could be located within the radius of a single city block. Such saturation of the market is at odds with Measures CC and DD approved by the City's voters.

We respectfully request the esteemed members of this City Council reject the Proposed Amendments. Varda is ready and willing to work with the City to study these issues and find other solutions that serve the community and fit within the vision of the cannabis measures approved by Pasadena residents.

Sincerely yours,

Tony Fong
Varda Inc.

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: Mireille Hamparian <mhamparian@pasadena.net>
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 9:36 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Support for Sweet flower with the amendment of zoning code to cannabis regs

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Dear City Council Members,

Re: Support for Sweet Flower with the amendment of Zoning Code to Cannabis Regs

My name is Mireille Hamparian, a resident of Pasadena and I advocate for the successful passing of the Zoning Code Amendment to Cannabis Businesses Regulations on Monday, April 19 2021 in support of Sweet Flower.

Staff's recommendation is a fair solution for the applicants and best scenario to generate more tax revenue for the City of Pasadena.

Please support the staff recommendation and vote in favor of amending the current ordinance. I'm excited to see Sweet Flower as a retailer in Pasadena.

Thank You,

Mireille Hamparian

Pasadena, CA 91106

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: Aleen Aposhian <...>
Sent: Sunday, April 18, 2021 1:51 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Support for Sweet Flower with the amendment of Zoning Code to Cannabis Regs

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Dear City Council Members,

My name is Aleen Guldjian and I am a long time resident of Pasadena.

As a resident of our beautiful city of Pasadena, I believe it is our responsibility to support local businesses, which is why I advocate for the passing of the Zoning Code Amendment to Cannabis Regulations on Monday, April 19, 2021 in support of Sweet Flower.

In my opinion, the staff's recommendation is a fair solution for the applicants and the city as a whole, as this would allow the city to generate more tax revenue.

Please support the staff recommendation and vote in favor of amending the current ordinance.

I hope to see Sweet Flower as a retailer in Pasadena.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Aleen Guldjian

...e
Pasadena, Ca 91107

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: 林小英 <
Sent: Sunday, April 18, 2021 9:04 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: City Council Meeting April 19, 2021 Agenda 7 Cannabis Zoning

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Dear Members of the City Council:

My Name is Yu Lin, and I am a long time resident in Pasadena and currently living in Old Town Pasadena. I recently found out the city is attempting to change the zoning of cannabis retail store in our city. The people of Pasadena voted an ordinance to make sure we do not have a high concentrations of cannabis retail stores in one neighborhood. I am against the idea of multiple stores in the same district and do not agree the current cannabis zoning law make any changes. The city staff report compares Pasadena with much bigger cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco, but most cities in California do not even have any cannabis retail presence. Most of the letters in support of changing the current rules zoning rules look identical, and I do not believe these letters are sincere.

Please consider what the people voted for and vote against changing the proposed zoning code amendment.

Thank you for your time,

Yu Lin

04/19/2021
Item 7

2021 APR 19 AM 8:30

April 16, 2021

BC IF

Black Cooperative Investment Fund

"No Talk. ALL ACTION!"

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members:

The Black Cooperative Investment Fund (BCIF) is a 501(c)3, community-based organization rooted in self-help economics that provides microloans to the Black community through pooled dollars and raises awareness about the importance of economic empowerment, equity, and wealth building for the Black community.

BCIF urges the Council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1,000 to 450 feet.

We support these proposed changes that will not only allow Sweet Flower to open its dispensary in its preferred location near Lake and Colorado in the Playhouse District, but will also promote a functioning cannabis program in Pasadena that will bring the jobs, tax revenues and community benefits to the City that were long promised but, to date, under-delivered.

At best, under the current location restrictions, only up to four dispensaries could be allowed. "Up to four" is not "Up to six." The voters wisely gave the city council to power to amend the ordinance; it is time now to do so.

Sweet Flower, as a top six applicant, stands ready to establish its store in the Playhouse District near the corner of Lake and Colorado. Sweet Flower is an independently owned, local business, that employs locally and gives back to the communities it serves. It is a best-in-class operator that cares about the communities it serves, and specifically the Black and Brown communities that have been most negatively impacted by the war on drugs.

Sweet Flower's management team members serve on the Boards of Cannabis for Black Lives and the Black Cooperative Investment Fund, among other nonprofits focusing on issues of minority impact and economic empowerment.

I introduced Tim Dodd to BCIF in 2018. We are of like minds and he immediately wanted to get involved with BCIF. Prior to BCIF, Tim was already supporting my work to make change to the systemic racist systems in Culver City. Any time I spoke, participated in a panel, he was there with his family in tow. I've had the pleasure of meeting all staff members in his employ at his Sweet Flower stores. The employees and key management of Sweet Flower are representative of economic inclusion and diversity.

When the tragic murder of George Floyd happened, Tim was one of the first to call me – not to express his sorrow for what's happening to the Black community, but to stand with me, my community, and take action! I'm proud to say he's become a dear friend, and fellow BCIF board member. He's contributed his time, talent, and treasure – and still recognizes that more needs to be done and he's committed to seeing that BCIF maximizes its mission.

Prior to joining our board, Tim used his retail stores, social media, and colleagues from a variety of business sectors to advocate and support the ongoing work of BCIF.

BCIF urges the council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1,000 to 450 feet.

In solidarity,



Melanie Mack

Vice Chair, Black Cooperative Investment Fund

Black Cooperative Investment Fund
www.bcifund.org
EIN: 81-4320957

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: Savannah George <
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 10:16 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public hearing- cannabis ordinance

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Dear City Leadership,

After reading the staff report, corresponding documents and many article in Pasadena Now, I am confident that the staff report is the most realistic, FAIR and all around beneficial proposal for the City of Pasadena and its residents.

We need to move forward with issuing the permits for the remaining winning applicants for the following reasons:

Start generating tax revenue and community benefits.

Promote HEALTHY competition. It's disappointing to see that the existing dispensaries are speaking against this change. Why? So they charge more and provide minimal service? They want a monopoly to control the entire city?

More jobs for Pasadena residents

We know where every retailer wants to go. With 450 ft separation, there will be no over concentration. This is a moot point.

Do what is right and support this ordinance and thank you for your service to our community.

Sylva Manoukian

Pasadena CA 91104

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: Arnel Lumagui <
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 10:50 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Fwd: Zoning Code Amendment

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Dear City of Pasadena,

Please allow this letter to convey my support to APPROVE the Staff Recommendation to the zoning code amendment to Cannabis businesses.

This is a reasonable solution that serves the betterment of Pasadena.

Very transparent that the over concentration in one distract and unfair advantage to change ordinance comments are submitted by corporate attorneys on behalf of the mega large cannabis companies. From all six winners, the Sweet Flower application posted on the city website is my top pick. Value driven, strong culture, reputable company.

Pasadena supports and promotes small businesses. Let's show our support by passing this ordinance change tonight.

In Appreciation,

Yester Karakhanian

Pasadena CA 91104

04/19/2021
Item 7



RECEIVED
2021 APR 19 AM 11:17
CITY OF PASADENA
COUNCIL

April 12, 2021

Dear Honorable Members of the Council,

On behalf of Ball Family Farms Corporation, the first Black-owned, vertically integrated cultivation company in Los Angeles, I would like to offer our support for Sweet Flower operating in the City of Pasadena. The fight for equity in the cannabis industry has and continues to be a troubling. While Black and Brown people have built and shaped the cannabis culture, been disproportionately impacted by cannabis convictions and over policing and still hold the record for imprisonment—we have far too few corporate partners working to change that reality. Sweet Flower, however, has been a retailer partner that has amplified our voice, supported our brand, and contributed to our campaigns around social justice and equity.

As a Black woman in cannabis, I can say with great certainty that the sexism and racism in cannabis is alive and well. It is exceedingly difficult to succeed in this new regulated market without large corporations making social equity a priority. We need good corporate partners, like Sweet Flower, to help build a diverse and equitable supply chain. Sweet Flower creates space for women-owned and POC-owned brands in their shops, which, unfortunately, is not a requirement. They not only talk about equity but practice it. At a Sweet Flower shop, you will find a professional, compassionate, diverse staff reflective the community they serve. This is not by accident. Its by design. Sweet Flower as a brand and business celebrates, encourages and creates diversity and inclusion in every aspect of their business model.

While I understand the impacts of a zoning amendment, being a seasoned land use professional, I think land use policies need to be flexible to support the social equity Black and Brown communities deserve in cannabis. That work begins with allowing operators that truly support social equity to operate. Again, I believe that Sweet Flower will continue to be an exemplary community and industry partner and we encourage you to allow for their business to support the community of Pasadena.

Respectfully,

Ebony J. McGee Andersen

04/19/2021
Item 7



RECEIVED

2021 APR 19 AM 11:26

CITY OF PASADENA
CITY CLERK

April 19, 2021

Mayor Victor M. Gordo
Vice-Mayor Andy Wilson
Hon. City Councilmembers Hampton, Kennedy, Madison, Masuda, Rivas and Williams
City Council of and for the City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members:

Re: Proposed Zoning Change Amendment to Cannabis Regulations

Sweet Flower urges the city council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet.

We support these proposed changes that will not only allow Sweet Flower to open our dispensary in the east end of CD3 over a mile from Old Pasadena, but more broadly will **promote a cannabis program in Pasadena that will bring the good jobs and local community benefits to the City that were long promised**. None of these changes would impact any sensitive uses – churches, schools, parks, residential neighborhoods, etc. – or overly concentrate cannabis stores, or have any environmental impact. **This is a thoughtful, narrow solution, one that we urge the council to approve.**

It is evident that the current location restrictions will not enable the city to enact the spirit or goals of Pasadena voters when they approved Measure CC allowing up to six dispensaries in the City. At best, under the current location restrictions, only up to four dispensaries could be allowed, in CD 3, 4, 6 and 7; **due to the prevalence of residential zoning and other sensitive uses in CDs 1, 2 and 5, it is clear that there are NO compliant locations in any of those districts.**

In fact, only two of the original six applicants are operational, and a third applicant, in Old Pasadena in CD3, has made no signs of preparing to open and has sold most of its California assets since applying in Pasadena. Presciently, the voters gave the city council the ability to amend the ordinance. It is time now to do so.

Sweet Flower, as a top six applicant, stands ready to open its store near the corner of Lake and Colorado in CD3 as expediently as possible. Sweet Flower is a local business -- it is based in Culver City, its owners are local, and it employs locally and gives back to the communities it serves.

- Sweet Flower is **70% diverse** at the store level and **80% diverse** at the store management level
- Sweet Flower has incubated and nurtured over a **dozen Black and Brown-owned** cannabis brands, and carries these brands at all its stores, **six times the industry average**.
- Sweet Flower's management team members serve on the Boards of **Cannabis for Black Lives** and the **Black Cooperative Investment Fund**, among other non-profits.
- Sweet Flower has made **over \$180,000** in charitable contributions to local community causes throughout Southern California, **more than any other approved applicant**.

04/19/2021
Item 7



- Sweet Flower owns and operates more stores in Southern California than any of the other approved applicants: in Studio City, Melrose, the DTLA Arts District and Westwood, with Culver City expected this summer (where Sweet Flower was selected as the highest ranked applicant).
- Sweet Flower employs over **100 local team members** throughout Los Angeles County, **more than any other approved applicant.**
- Sweet Flower has **Labor Peace Agreements in place with the UFCW at all of its locations.**
- Sweet Flower's entry level pay is over \$16.00 per hour, and offers medical, dental, vision, 401(k) and paid time off, among other benefits.
- Sweet Flower has paid over **\$7.3M in local city and California state taxes**, significantly more than other approved applicants.
- Sweet Flower is well-capitalized to proceed, having just raised \$15 million of equity capital.

Sweet Flower is ready to serve and contribute to the Pasadena community just as we have done in the other communities we serve, with good jobs and local community benefits. To that end, Sweet Flower proactively reached out to the **Pasadena Community Coalition** to build a **social equity partnership with the Pasadena community, prior to opening, the only applicant to do so.** Under our **Memorandum of Understanding**, attached, Sweet Flower is already building a partnership with the **Pasadena African-American and Latinx communities**, by committing to:

- a. use best efforts to hire **AT LEAST 50%** of its employees from the African American (AA) and Latinx communities in Pasadena, or secondarily from the larger San Gabriel Valley communities;
- b. use best efforts to hire at least 50% of supply line vendors (i.e. security, janitorial, delivery etc.) in Pasadena from the AA/Latinx community;
- c. provide programs for residents in the AA and Latinx communities in Pasadena to obtain the skills, training and experience needed to work in the local legal cannabis industry;
- d. create mentoring programs for emerging cannabis business owners and entrepreneurs from the AA and Latinx communities in Pasadena;
- e. create business partnerships in Pasadena between Sweet Flower and local and state-wide AA and Latinx -owned Cannabis producers, manufacturers, and distributors; and
- f. develop a clearly defined plan to give back to the AA/minority community in Pasadena most affected by the drug wars through partnerships, job training and community funding.

Opposition to the city's proposal falls mainly into two camps, which we would like to briefly address.

The first are concerns that if approved it would result in a concentration of dispensaries, especially sensitive in Old Pasadena in CD3/6. But **the City now has the benefit of knowing where these applicants would be located.** And with that we know that there would **at most be two dispensaries in Old Pasadena (Harvest and Atrium).** Importantly, while Sweet Flower's store would be in CD3, it is at the far east end of the district near Lake and Colorado, over a mile from Old Pasadena. And despite assertions made by another applicant, it is impossible for there to be three, or even two, dispensaries within one block; the 450' separation would preclude this.

A parallel concern expressed is that this change will lead to overcrowding on the street, street congestion, higher crime, etc. But we now have the benefit of seeing two stores open and operating, with no issues whatsoever. This mirrors Sweet Flower's significant experience in operating multiple stores in Los Angeles.



The second camp of opposition comes from lawyers for other applicants who have approved locations. Their opposition is not surprising. They do not want competition. That may be in their own pecuniary interests, but it is not in the interests of the City and its residents. **All applicants applied for their locations at or around the same time.** For another applicant to now assert that this amendment benefits only those who “waited to apply” is incorrect and misleading; in fact, Sweet Flower applied first, and has remained in good standing and paying rent at its location since June 2019.

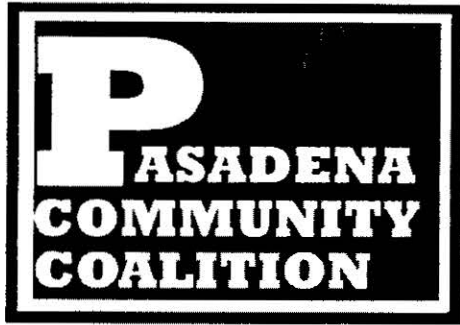
All applicants, including Sweet Flower, understood when they applied that there would be up to six retailers in the city. For those other applicants to cry foul now, when the City moves to accomplish exactly what it said it would, is transparently anti-competitive and self-interested. These assertions should be viewed simply for what they are – diversionary tactics attempting to undermine the City’s process.

Sweet Flower looks forward to bringing the inclusion, diversity, great jobs, tax revenues and community benefits to the City of Pasadena that its residents so richly deserve.

We urge the city council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment.

Sincerely,

Timothy Dodd
CEO, Co-founder, Sweet Flower Pasadena, LLC



SWEET FLOWER

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between
Sweet Flower Pasadena, LLC
and
Pasadena Community Coalition

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) sets forth the terms and understanding between Sweet Flower Pasadena, LLC (“Sweet Flower”) and the Pasadena Community Coalition (“PCC”) collectively referred to as the “parties”, to develop and operate the following programs as set forth below.


1. **Programs and Partnerships.** Sweet Flower and PCC shall partner to develop the following programs:
 - a. Create and operate a hiring program for individuals in which Sweet Flower will commit to work with PCC and its designees (currently Ujima Advisor LLC) to use best efforts to hire at least 50% of its employees from the Africa American (AA) and Latinx communities in Pasadena; If not available then from the larger San Gabriel Valley communities (i.e. Altadena, Monrovia, Covina, etc.)
 - b. Provide programs for residents in the AA and Latinx communities in Pasadena to obtain the skills, training and experience needed to work in the local legal cannabis industry;
 - c. Create mentoring programs for emerging cannabis business owners and entrepreneurs from the AA and Latinx communities in Pasadena;
 - d. Create business partnerships in Pasadena between Sweet Flower, the PCC, and local and state-wide AA and Latinx -owned Cannabis producers, manufacturers, and distributors;
 - e. Sweet Flower shall use its best efforts to hire 50% of its supply line vendors (i.e. security, janitorial, delivery etc.) in Pasadena from the AA/Latinx community.
 - f. Sweet Flower will work in Pasadena with the PCC to develop a clearly defined plan to give back to the AA/minority community in Pasadena most affected by the drug wars through partnerships, job training and community development funding which will include a minimum threshold for the amount of funds to be donated annually using actual dollar amounts or % of profits.
 - g. Sweet Flower shall also make contributions to the PCC and its programs as PCC and Sweet Flower may mutually agree upon going forward.

The parties shall meet at least monthly to measure progress against the goals and objectives set out herein.

2. **Enforceability.** If any term, covenant, condition, or provision of this MOU is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the remainder of the provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect and shall in no way be affected, impaired, or invalidated thereby.
3. **California Law and Venue.** It is agreed this MOU shall be governed by the laws of the State of California. This MOU is made, executed, and performed in the County of Los Angeles.
4. **Non-assignability.** This MOU shall not be assignable by either party without the prior written consent of the other party.
5. **Successors.** This MOU and each of its terms and provisions shall be binding upon the parties and their successors
6. **Effective Date and Duration.** The MOU and the obligations hereunder shall be effective upon signatures and dates of all parties. The MOU and the obligations under this MOU may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from Sweet Flower and PCC. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials from the parties to this MOU.
7. **Timing.** The parties understand that this MOU reflects a commitment by the parties and the parties further commit to signing a long form MOU specifying the parties' roles and obligations once Sweet Flower is awarded a cannabis retail license from the City of Pasadena.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this MOU to be executed by their duly authorized representatives as of the date above written. The representatives agree for itself, its employees, officers, partners, and successors, to be fully bound by all terms and conditions of this MOU.

Sweet Flower Pasadena, LLC


By
Timothy Dodd, CEO

Date: March 31, 2021

Pasadena Community Coalition


By
Martin Gordon, Chief Executive Officer

Date: 3-31-21

Martinez, Ruben

From: xiao chen
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 2:34 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: City Council Meeting 4/19/21 Cannabis Zoning.

CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you *know* the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button. [Learn more...](#)

To whom it may concern,

I live in Pasadena and have children that goes to school in Pasadena. I do hope the council will vote no on expanding the cannabis stores in the city. Having what we have is good enough and I do not want my children expose to more of these types of these stores in the city.

Allen Chen

04/19/2021
Item 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: David Payne <
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 2:51 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: NO MORE CANNABIS SHOPS IN PASADENA

CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button. Learn more...<https://mydoit.cityofpasadena.net/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0010263>.

To whom it may concern .

I am a Employee in the Cannabis industry in Pasadena . I am writing this email to let the city of Pasadena know that I am against more shops opening up in Pasadena . The Cannabis Market needs to grow slowly with the community, not against the community. Please do not let anymore shops opening up in Pasadena until the Citizens of Pasadena are ready for it. Give the people the right to vote .

Regards,
David.

Sent from my iPhone

04/19/2021
Item 7

RECEIVED

Re: Zoning Code Amendment to Cannabis Business Regulations on April 12 City Council
Agenda 2021 APR 19 PM 3:28

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council Members:

Dose of Saucy LLC urges the Council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet (while leaving distance buffers to all sensitive uses, such as schools, parks, etc., the same). Doing so promotes the functioning cannabis program that Pasadena residents desire and approved, along with the jobs, tax revenues and community benefits that were promised but, to date, under-delivered.

The current location restrictions allow at most four dispensaries. "Up to four" is not "Up to six." The voters wisely gave the city council the power to amend the ordinance to achieve the desired goal; it is time now to do so.

Saucy Condiments LLC is a California company whose current trajectory is partly attributed to the access to resources that my mentor, Kiana Anvaripour, provided on behalf of Sweet Flower. I was matched with Ms. Anvaripour through the Our Academy nonprofit program for BIPOC cannabis businesses, and we have worked closely together for several months to bring my QWOC-owned brand to life. Ms. Anvaripour has gone above and beyond to make herself available for marketing brainstorming sessions and using the influential Sweet Flower platform to help my business have a successful launch in a competitive market. Her valued guidance extended beyond the end date of the mentorship program because of her passion for empowering female entrepreneurs she believes in. The genuine connection and interest that she showed me made her a fast ally and trustworthy advisor. When I was fortunate enough to meet other members of the Sweet Flower team, I quickly learned that this organization comprised itself of strong, diverse women who have been instrumental in making Sweet Flower the industry leader that it is today. As a brand that I have admired for a couple of years now, it is a bit mind blowing to think I will be on their shelves in two short weeks alongside 12+ social equity brands (and that list continues to grow). I am a consistent customer of Sweet Flower because their in-store experience, selection of brands with ethos that I want to support, community engagement, and budtender education is unmatched.

We understand that Sweet Flower, a top six applicant, stands ready to establish its store in the Playhouse District near the corner of Lake and Colorado. From our work together, we know that Sweet flower, an independently owned local business, is a best-in-class operator that employs locally and gives back to the communities it serves, and specifically the Black and Brown communities that have been most negatively impacted by the war on drugs. For example,

Sweet Flower's management serve on the Boards of Cannabis for Black Lives and the Black Cooperative Investment Fund, among other non-profits focusing on issues of minority impact and empowerment.

04/19/2021

Item 7

Saucy urges the council to approve the proposed Zoning Code Amendment permitting up to three dispensaries per district and reducing the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries from 1000 to 450 feet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tess M. Taylor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tess M. Taylor
Founder of Saucy Condiments LLC
yourfriends@doseofsaucy.com