

Novelo, Lilia

From: Tim Dodd <tim.dodd@cityofpasadena.net>
Sent: Friday, August 06, 2021 2:33 PM
To: Mermell, Steve; cityclerk; Flores, Valerie; Reyes, David; Jomsky, Mark; PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Re: City of Pasadena - Correspondence for August 9, 2021 - agenda item 12
Attachments: Pasadena Cannabis - Measure CC 2021 reportJuly152021 EDTECH Sweet Flower.pdf

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Good afternoon Ms. Flores, Mr Jomsky, Mr Mermell and Mr Reyes -

Please see attached below further correspondence to be submitted for item 12 on August 9, 2021. Could you please also forward this to the Mayor, Vice Mayor and Councilmembers for their review.

This incorporates by reference all of the materials previously submitted to the City Council and the Economic Development and Technology Committee by Sweet Flower and by the multitude of Pasadena residents who are in support of the ordinance change to further the will of the voters in adopting Measure CC.

In summary:

These narrow, tailored ordinance changes will enable **ALL qualified and successful applicants** to open up their locations to create a competitive, viable legal market and to bring jobs, community benefits, tax revenues, and true competition to illegal operators in and around Pasadena. **These changes will have no impact on any sensitive receptors in the City.**

Further, these changes are a necessary prerequisite to adopting a robust and thoughtful social equity program to Pasadena, of which Sweet Flower, as the only applicant to execute an MOU with the Pasadena Community Coalition, is in full support. Sweet Flower is also the only applicant working with the Los Angeles Department of Cannabis Regulation, at their request, to assist in skills training and business preparation for Social Equity applicants in Los Angeles.

Contrary to unfounded opinion, **Sweet Flower has strenuously attempted over the course of the last two years to find locations in CDs 1, 2 and 5 - over 1800 properties reviewed, approached and diligenced - to no avail.** Sweet Flower and staff have, after significant expenditure of time and resources, arrived at the same conclusion - **there are no qualified, compliant and available locations in any of districts 1, 2 and 5. ALL of this material is summarized in the attached correspondence.**

Also attached herein is:

- the MOU between the Pasadena Community Coalition and Sweet Flower;

- Letters of support from;

~ 50 Pasadena residents in support of the ordinance change,

**08/09/2021
Item 12**

~a dozen BIPOC-owned Southern California cannabis brands, and

- the UFCW, the Black Cooperative Investment Fund (on whose Board we serve), the Pasadena Community Coalition, and other community groups; and

- Recent earned media in Forbes regarding our diversity and inclusivity initiatives.

Could you please also forward this to the Mayor, Vice Mayor and Councilmembers for their review.

Thank you,

Tim Dodd
CEO/Co-founder
Sweet Flower



July 8, 2021

Economic Development and Technology Committee
Chair Hampton, Vice Mayor Wilson and Hon. City Councilmembers Madison and Rivas
City Council of and for the City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109

Building a Sustainable and Equitable Cannabis Industry for all Pasadena

Dear Chair Hampton, Vice Mayor Wilson and Hon. City Councilmembers Madison and Rivas:

Sweet Flower Pasadena, LLC ("Sweet Flower") is pleased to submit to the Economic Development and Technology Committee its recommendations for building a sustainable and equitable cannabis industry for all Pasadena.

Again, foremost, we believe the City should act expediently to modify the current ordinance to more fully implement the will of the voters expressed in Measure CC, immediately providing jobs, revenues and community benefits to Pasadena residents.

In addition, we wholeheartedly support the development of a social equity program that would provide opportunity to Pasadena residents; Sweet Flower is already actively engaged with the Pasadena Community Coalition on these issues.

We address each of these recommendations below.

Achieve the spirit and intent of Measure CC

While Pasadena voters overwhelmingly voted in favor of Measure CC, voters also sensibly gave the City Council the ability to change the ordinance as necessary to meet the will, spirit and intent of the voters in adopting Measure CC to allow for up to six retailers in Pasadena.

The current Zoning Code contains a number of well-intended restrictions on where cannabis retailers may be located. Two of these restrictions, however, do not relate to sensitive uses, but restrict retailers to one per council district, and require retailers to be located at least 1000' from any other retailer.

While these two restrictions were well-intended, their effect is primarily to restrict competition, without any particular benefits to the City.

As an original "top six" successful applicant in Pasadena, without change of control or ownership and with a lease in Council District 3 in continued good standing since our June 2019 CUP application, Sweet Flower has, however, been unable to open for business solely due to these two restrictions.

Sweet Flower recommends the Economic Development and Technology Committee achieve the will of the voters in support of Measure CC by approving the City Manager's originally proposed Zoning Code Amendment to permit up to three dispensaries per district and reduce the distance requirement between cannabis dispensaries to 450 feet.

Augment the current ordinance with a social equity program

Successful social equity programs in California build on the notion of **“teach a person to fish, you feed them for a lifetime,”** going beyond merely granting the license, to also create programs that incubate, fund and advise social equity applicants so as to enable them to build successful businesses. These programs also often lessen zoning restrictions and real estate requirements, and reduce or waive up-front application and license fees and certain taxes. Importantly, such programs generally restrict ownership, and changes of ownership, of the licensees, to ensure that they are, and remain, in fact owned and controlled by the social equity licensee.

If the City Council decides to pursue such a program, which we would wholeheartedly support, Sweet Flower would be pleased to work collaboratively with the city staff in whatever manner the City would be comfortable with. Sweet Flower has already been engaged by the LA Department of Cannabis Regulation to teach Los Angeles Social Equity applicants how to establish their social equity businesses in Los Angeles, the only operator to do so.

Sweet Flower is 80% diverse across all levels of the company. Our diverse employees occupy more senior levels of management and responsibility than our non-diverse employees, and on average, earn more per hour. We are exclusively owned and operate in Los Angeles and support local non-profits at all of our locations. In the last three years, we have contributed over \$200,000 to two dozen local non-profits focused on food insecurity, underhousing and racial injustice. We serve on the boards of directors of Cannabis for Black Lives and the Black Cooperative Investment Fund. We host expungement clinics in association with Cage Free Repair, Equity First Alliance and the Hood Incubator. We sell black- and brown-owned cannabis brands at ten times the state industry average, and have incubated a number of black- and brown- owned cannabis companies.

Sweet Flower has executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pasadena Community Coalition, the only operator to do so. Sweet Flower is already working with the PCC on job fairs for Pasadena residents (the first to be held on July 9th in Pasadena for jobs at all our current locations), expungement clinics in Pasadena starting in July, and launching a Pasadena African-American brand at all our stores.

We will hire no less than 50% of our store staff in Pasadena (assuming we are able to open) from the African- American and Latinx communities in Pasadena, and no less than 50% of our ancillary companies (e.g. IT, security, janitorial, etc.) will be hired from these communities also.

We look forward to doing more in Pasadena.

We strongly recommend that the City of Pasadena and the Economic Development and Technology Committee move urgently to amend the current ordinance, as above, while developing a thoughtful and robust social equity program in Pasadena.

Sincerely,



Timothy Dodd,
CEO and Co-Founder, Sweet Flower

July 15, 2021 Economic Development and Technology Committee – Sweet Flower Submission

Introduction –

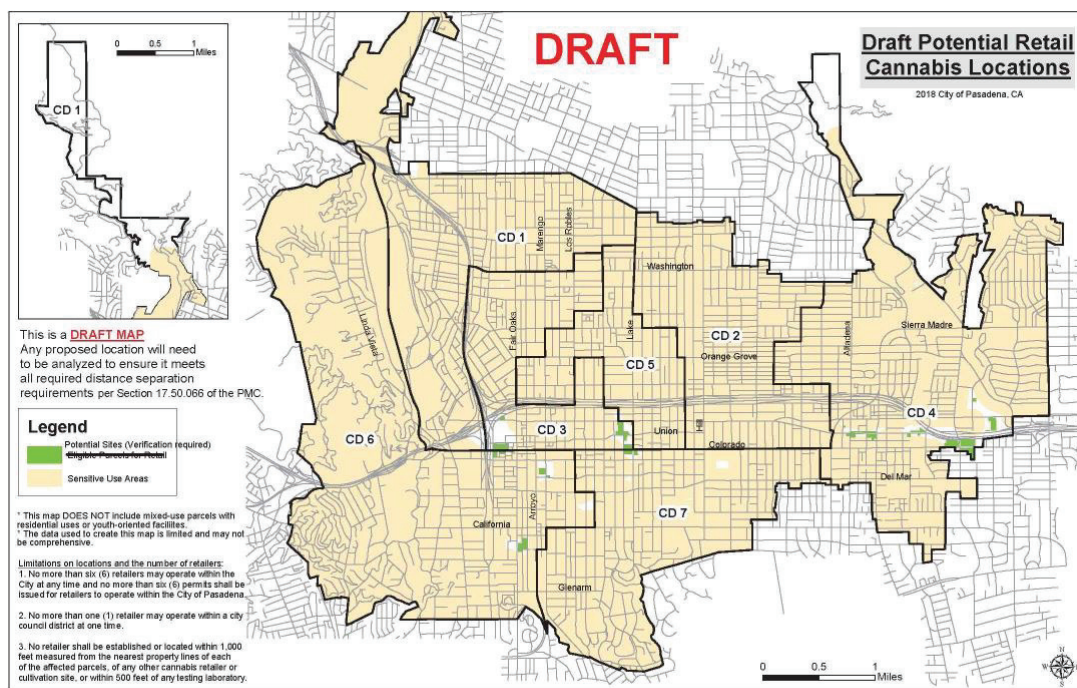
Measure CC was on the local ballot in June 5, 2018, and was passed with support by 60.82% of Pasadena voters. The ballot question to voters on the ballot measure read as follows:

*Shall an ordinance be adopted to allow a limited number of commercial cannabis businesses to operate in Pasadena, subject to business, health and land use regulations, and to repeal the City of Pasadena's current ban on commercial cannabis businesses, provided that: (1) the ordinance shall not take effect unless voters approve a Cannabis Business Tax, and (2) the City Council retains authority to amend existing ordinances and adopt future ordinances regarding commercial cannabis business activities?*¹

Measure CC repealed the city's ban on marijuana dispensaries and allowed up to six dispensaries, subject to certain regulations.

Implementation

Following the June 2018 vote in favor of Measure CC, the City produced the following map on December 6, 2018 indicating potential compliant parcels.²



Potential **compliant** parcels are indicated in **Green**. **Sensitive use** areas are indicated in **Yellow**. Almost the **entirety of Pasadena is a sensitive use** area. Sweet Flower's location is **Green**.

¹ [https://ballotpedia.org/Pasadena,_California,_Measure_CC,_Repeal_of_Marijuana_Business_Ban_\(June_2018\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Pasadena,_California,_Measure_CC,_Repeal_of_Marijuana_Business_Ban_(June_2018))

² <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/DRAFT-Cannabis-Retailer-Map-DEC-6-2018.pdf?v=1622470480874>

The above version of the city's map has not been updated to reflect the placement of the three current licenses or any buffer from dispensaries. ***Once those are factored in, the green parcels disappear entirely (see analysis below).***

This map therefore reflects ALL available parcels (in Pasadena) before ANY dispensaries are placed.

Key takeaways:

- Almost ALL of Pasadena is a “sensitive use” in YELLOW.
- **THREE council districts contain NO potential compliant parcels at all - CDs 1, 2 and 5** are totally unavailable (Sweet Flower has independently verified this with City Staff)
- **Potential compliant parcels exist in CD 3, 4, 6 and 7 only.**
- Of potential compliant parcels, many become non-compliant upon review – for example, the small area in CD3 in the center of the map South of Walnut and West of Union are apartment units (not permitted) or senior living centers (not permitted); the small area in the center of CD6 on Raymond is within 600’ of a substance abuse center to the East - High Road Project (also not permitted)
- Even once a potential compliant parcel has been verified, the parcel must be **“qualified”** – for example, the small area in CD6 east of Arroyo and North of Marengo is actually the Wescom Bank office building (unworkable); the narrow strips indicated in CD4 north of Walnut east of Altadena are grass and dirt verges on the side of the road and part of other lots (unworkable).
- Even if the potential compliant parcel is qualified, it must then be **available**.
 - First, it must be vacant or able to become vacant.
 - Second, the landlord must be willing to entertain cannabis as a use. For example, a significant portion of land in CD6 is owned by the HMRI, who have told us they are unwilling to rent to a cannabis tenant, even if a compliant, qualified property could be found.
 - Third, the landlord must be able to rent to cannabis – even if willing, if the landlord has a FDIC-insured loan on the building, that loan will rule out the use and may subject the landlord to foreclosure

**SWEET FLOWER HAS CONDUCTED AN EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF PROPERTY IN ALL DISTRICTS
OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS – OVER 1800 PARCELS REVIEWED**

THERE ARE NO OTHER COMPLIANT PARCELS AVAILABLE

Currently, licensed retailers are situated in CD3, 4 and 7.

Districts 1, 2 and 5 are unavailable, for the reasons stated above.

And while the prior Medmen location in **CD6** is not indicated as compliant on the map as it is too close to a substance abuse center (Arroyo Treatment Center), based on our knowledge and belief, it is also **not available** for rent. (The current tenant, Medmen, signed a long-term lease with a corporate guarantee and has expressed their unwillingness to sub-lease or assign the tenancy as, we understand, they believe they will prevail in their suit against the City.) **There are no other available parcels in CD6.**

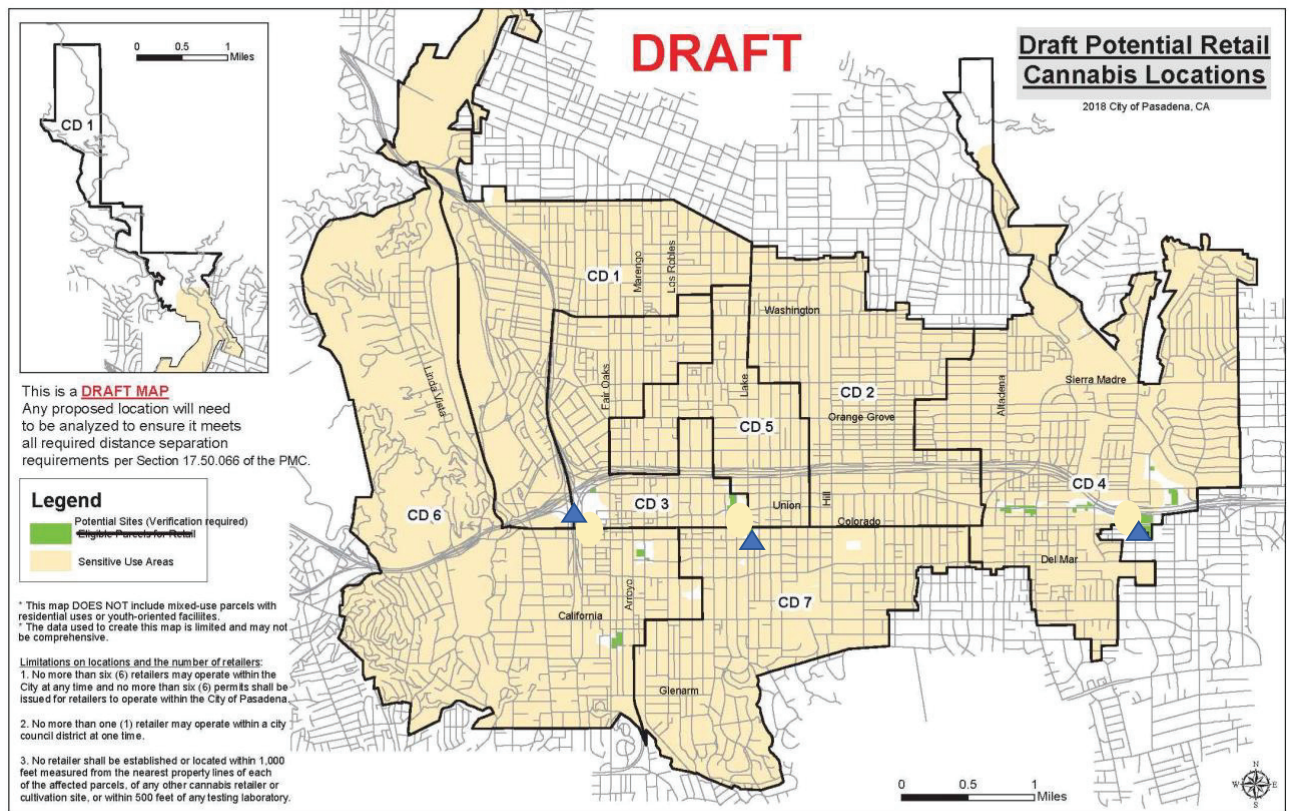
Given the above, it is not a simple matter for an applicant to find a new location.

And despite the amount of retail storefronts currently available in Pasadena, none of those newly available locations are compliantly zoned for cannabis use. See Attachment A analysis.

Indeed, in all of Pasadena, only a handful of blocks are available, and because of the distances between sensitive uses, these compliant parcels are, by definition, grouped together, as the map indicates.

Fix 1 – Remove the One per District rule; maintain the 1000' separation between dispensaries

Removing the one per district rule and applying the 1000' buffer around the 3 current licensed retailers to the map has the following effect.



Reviewing availability on a per district basis, **with the 1000' buffer in place**, there are still **NO locations available**.

Council District One	No availability: all commercial zones are within 150' of residential boundaries, churches, parks and schools - not the required 600'
Council District Two	No availability: all commercial zones are within 150' of residential boundaries, churches, parks and schools - not the required 600'
Council District Three	<p>Old Pasadena – no availability: all commercial zones near Harvest are within 1000', and then blocked by 600' buffer to Church of Scientology on Raymond. Given density of churches, day care facilities and schools in CD3, no other locations available.</p> <p>Lake and Colorado Area – no availability: all commercial zones near Essence are within 1000'; the area to the North near Walnut and Hudson are mixed use residential buildings or a single office building (no retail)</p>
Council District Four	<p>East Pasadena border area on Colorado – no availability: all commercial zones near Varda are within 1000', or not in City of Pasadena</p> <p>West CD4 area on Colorado – no availability: narrow strips indicated north of Walnut east of Altadena are grass and dirt verges on the side of the road and part of other lots (not qualified). 1-2 other potential industrial parcels currently occupied by long-term heavy industrial uses</p> <p>Foothill near Pasadena border – no availability: land currently occupied by self-storage units and Toyota dealership (unworkable and unavailable)</p>
Council District Five	No availability: all commercial zones are within 150' of residential boundaries, churches, parks and schools - not the required 600'
Council District Six	<p>Old Pasadena area/North CD6 – no availability: all commercial zones near Harvest are within 1000', and then blocked by 600' buffer to Friendship Baptist Church and Central Park. Given density of churches, day care facilities and schools, no other locations available in North CD6.</p> <p>Raymond/Pico – no availability: indicated compliant parcels are blocked by High Road Project substance abuse center. As a practical matter, on our knowledge and belief on diligent inquiry, <i>even where these parcels to be available</i>, they are not available for sale or lease as they are owned by the Huntington MRI.</p>
Council District Seven	Not available: the only available parcels in CD7 are well within 1000' of Essence's location at 908 E Colorado, which is itself non-compliant .

Fixing only the One per Council District rule will do nothing to make more locations available.

Fix 2 – Remove the One per District rule; reduce the 1000' separation

In order to provide more locations for retail applicants, the 1000' buffer between retailers must ALSO be reduced.

The City manager and staff have recommended a distance separation of 450'. **We support this recommended 450' distance, as this will allow all successful qualified retailers to be established in compliant locations.**

450' is not an arbitrary distance measure, but in fact comports to Pasadena standard block measurements, *exceeds separation measurements in comparable programs* (Costa Mesa and West Hollywood) *and far exceeds state law, which requires NO separation between retailers.*

No Visual Congestion

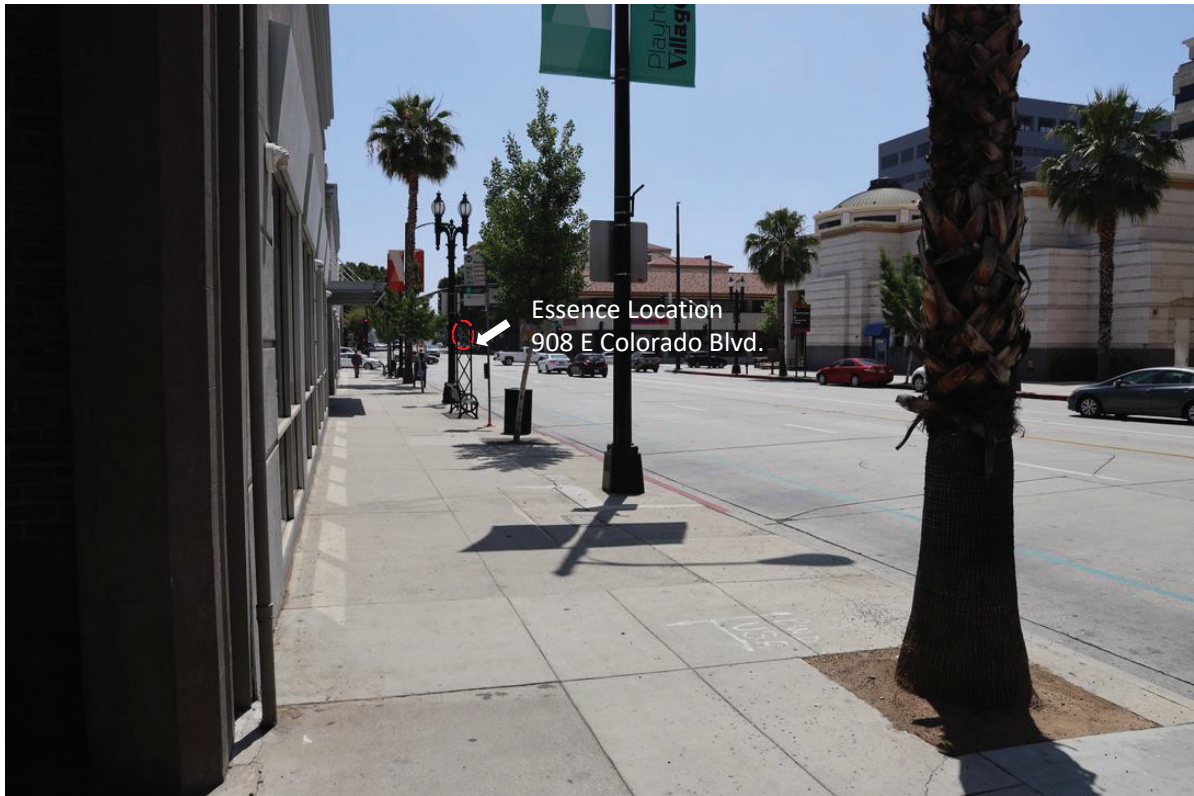
As a guide to the visual impact, below is a photo taken from Essence's front door looking east.



Sweet Flower's location is marked with a red circle, at the back of the Orange Pasadena Transit bus in the far left.

Sweet Flower's entrance is set back from the street, so the front door, signage and customer ingress and egress cannot be seen from Essence.

Below is the reverse shot from the sidewalk at the closest edge of the parcel line at Sweet Flower - 827 E Colorado – looking West towards Essence.



Neither store is visible from the other store. And neither store is identifiable as a cannabis retailer.



Sweet Flower Pasadena (no cannabis signage or product visibility) – rendering consistent with Pasadena regulations and Sweet Flower’s existing stores in Westwood, DTLA, Studio City and West Hollywood/Melrose

To the contrary however, requiring a distance separation of 500' (instead of 450') will NOT allow all successful qualified applicants to be located, and will cause harm to the City in reducing jobs, community benefits and tax revenues, with no benefit.

We have reviewed ALL currently available properties in Pasadena.


At 500' separation, not only is Sweet Flower now blocked, but there are NO further compliant locations available. Please see Attachment A.

And visually and as a matter of zoning practice - the difference of **29 FEET** - from 471' to 500' - is immaterial and arbitrary.

The arbitrariness of requiring an additional 29 Feet separation is best demonstrated visually.



ATTACHMENT A

	
	Not Available due to proximity to:
CD 3	
43 E Colorado	Church of Scientology
39 E Colorado	Church of Scientology
63-65 E Colorado	Church of Scientology
385 E Colorado Blvd	All Saints Episcopal Church
525 E Colorado Blvd	Pasadena Presbyterian Church
121 W Colorado Blvd	230 Feet from Harvest's location
127 W Colorado Blvd	180 Feet from Harvest's location
64-90 N Fair Oaks Ave	Pasadena Memorial Park
34 E Holly St	Pasadena Memorial Park
82 N Los Robles Ave.	All Saints Episcopal Church
1 W Mountain St.	Robinson Park Recreation Center
33-35 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
55-61 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
29-55 W Colorado Blvd	650 feet from Harvest, 220 feet from Atrium
61-75 W Colorado Blvd	520 feet from Harvest, 200 feet from Atrium
161 W Colorado Blvd	30 feet from Harvest
50 N Raymond Ave	Pasadena Memorial Park
125 N Raymond Ave	Pasadena Memorial Park
CD4	
2670 E Colorado Blvd	Walden School
3124 E Colorado Blvd	Residential
3240 E Colorado Blvd	Options for Youth School
253 N Vinedo Ave.	Residential
2505-2523 E Washington Blvd.	Life in Christ Bible Church
2675 E Colorado Blvd	Walden School
CD5	
985 E Colorado Blvd	Residential
1241-1337 N Lake Ave	New Apostolic Church + Residential
215 N Lake Ave	Mentor Lake Pre-School
248-250 N Lake Ave	Residential
445-475 N Lake Ave	Residential
558 N Lake Ave	Residential
639 N Lake Ave	Residential
641 N Lake Ave	Residential
700-708 N Lake Ave	Residential
701-711 N Lake Ave	Residential
883-887 N Lake Ave	Residential
1194-1196 E Walnut St	Residential
138 N Lake Ave	Residential
CD6	
1167 S Fair Oaks Ave.	Residential
38-46 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
103-117 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
42 W Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
48-50 S De Lacey Ave	Friendship Baptist Church
37-49 S Fair Oaks Ave	Church of Scientology
61 S Fair Oaks Ave	Church of Scientology
30 W Green St.	Central Park
26-38 S Raymond Ave.	Church of Scientology
54 S Raymond Ave.	Church of Scientology
36 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
96-104 E Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
30 W Colorado Blvd	Church of Scientology
112 W Colorado Blvd	296' to Harvest
101 W Green St	Friendship Baptist Church
CD 7	
1756-1766 E Colorado Blvd	Residential
650 E Green St	Christian Science Church
951-973 E Green St	Residential
1035-1045 E Green St	Residential
1055-1057 E Green St	Residential
530 S Lake Ave.	Residential
495-505 S Lake Ave.	Residential
163 S Lake Ave.	Immanuel Lutheran Brethren Church
238-240 S Lake Ave.	Residential
256-260 S Lake Ave.	Residential
350 S Lake Ave.	Residential
360-370 S Lake Ave	Residential
412-414 S Lake Ave.	Residential
1060 E Colorado Blvd	Residential
713 E Green St	Immanuel Lutheran Brethren Church
396 S Lake Ave	Residential



EXHIBITS

Exhibit A Pasadena Community Coalition Memorandum of Understanding

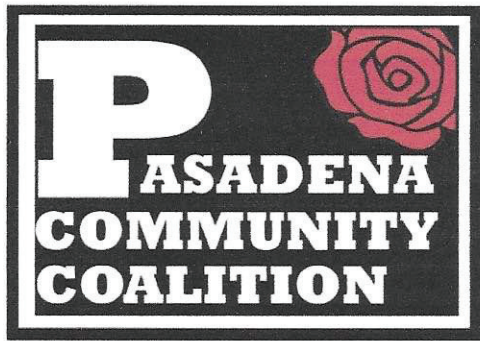
Exhibit B UFCW, Community and BIPOC-Owned Brands Support Letters

Exhibit C Forbes - "How Sweet Flower, A Celeb-Favorite Cannabis Boutique, Is Raising The Retail Bar In California"

Exhibit D Resident Support Letters



Exhibit A Pasadena Community Coalition Memorandum of Understanding



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



Exhibit B UFCW, Community and BIPOC-Owned Brands Support Letters

770

UFCW LOCAL 770
P.O. BOX 770
Hollywood, CA 90078
(213) 487-7070 or/o
(800) UFCW 770
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday

**LOS ANGELES
MAIN OFFICE**
630 Shatto Place
Los Angeles, CA
90005

BRANCH OFFICES
Arroyo Grande
Bakersfield
Camarillo
Harbor City
Huntington Park

RECEIVED

April 12, 2021

2021 APR 12 AM 10:32

Sent via E-Mail

Mayor Victor M. Gordo and CITY CLERK
Pasadena City Council CITY OF PASADENA
City Hall
100 N Garfield Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101

RE: Support for Zoning Code Amendment to Cannabis Business Regulations, 4/12/21

Dear Mayor Gordo and Members of the Pasadena City Council:

On behalf of the 32,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 770, we wish to express our union's support for the proposed modification to location requirements within the City's cannabis ordinance and for Sweetflower Pasadena LLC's application to operate a cannabis business in Pasadena.


In coalition with community partners, UFCW has supported and organized for the rights of cannabis consumers and retail workers and was a major sponsor for both medicinal and adult use in the State of California. We believe that both those who consume cannabis for health purposes and recreational activity should be protected. Furthermore, those who work in the industry deserve dignity, respect, and a living wage with benefits.

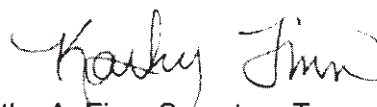
Sweetflower shares our vision. In compliance with state law, the company has entered into Labor Peace Agreements with us for all of its Southern California cannabis businesses within UFCW Local 770's jurisdiction. Sweetflower employs best practices in its existing compliant operations, and because of our partnership, we expect strong labor standards and a diverse workforce at this potential future business. It is our understanding that as one of the City's top-six business applicants, Sweetflower is prepared to open its retail store in the City's Playhouse District.

UFCW supports the proposed modifications to the ordinance as a practical means towards expanding community access to the legal, regulated cannabis market. Adjusting location requirements to allow for an increased number of dispensaries per city council district will help ensure the City's regulated cannabis market realizes its goals of bringing increased tax revenues, good jobs, and community benefits to the residents of Pasadena.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter.

Sincerely,
UFCW Local 770


John M. Grant, President


Kathy A. Finn, Secretary-Treasurer

JMG:jc

RECEIVED

April 19, 2021

2021 APR 19 PM 4:30

Dear Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers:

This correspondence is meant to give more depth to the importance of providing an avenue to local cannabis retailers, who take the notion of "Social Equity" seriously.

Long standing members of the council and city staff will remember the Pasadena Community Coalition's (PCC) open letter to the Mayor, Council and staff in June of 2019, regarding cannabis licensing which opened: Who is looking out for us (the community most affected by the drug wars)!

In response to the question the PCC became by default the quasi-compliance officer for the city (and the community). It became clear that the retailers were not concerned with giving back to the communities of color most affected by the drug wars by providing jobs, partnerships or funding for these communities but, only to give lip service to this priority until a CUP was obtained.

A testament to this is a comment by a representative for one of the retailers where he causally states that we can worry about social equity later. One retailer which is hard to actually identify as it started as Integral/Essence and was recently identified to us as owned by Green Thumb Industries (GTI), refused to honor their social equity commitments stating a change in ownership/leadership makes any agreements null & void. Harvest who we understand may also have changed ownership/leadership showed no interest in working out a social equity plan to benefit the community. Without consequences for lack of real social equity compliance it will never happen.

On the other hand, Sweetflower reached out to the Coalition and through a series of meetings put together a MOU (memorandum of understanding), detailing their commitment in writing to social equity!

In reading the the attached documents and independent research it is clear that Sweetflower has followed through on its commitment to social equity.

04/19/2021
Item 7

Back to the original question: who is looking out for us? The PCC for one and it appears that at least one cannabis retailer who has also answered the call. If amending the ordinance will finally bring a retailer with a social equity conscience and commitment, how can we say no? Amend the ordinance.

Martin A. Gordon
Chair/CEO
Pasadena Community Coalition

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



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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

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 currently 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



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2021 APR 19 AM 11:17
CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

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. It's 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

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