



**To:** Mayor Lisa Helps and members of Victoria City Council

**From:** Alex Robb, General Manager for Trees Dispensary

**Date:** April 11, 2018

**Subject:** Rezoning for Cannabis related business for 230 Cook Street

Dear Mayor and City Council,

It is an honour to be submitting this letter along with our completed application for rezoning for cannabis-related business for the property at 230 Cook Street.

### **Description of Proposal**

The property at 230 Cook Street is located in the Cook Street Village neighbourhood, and this specific unit is a small 891 square foot suite in between Prima Strata Pizza, and the Cook Street Village Medical Clinic. The storefront will be a very small, unobtrusive, boutique cannabis retail store. As has been noted at previous public hearings on cannabis, a location next to a medical clinic or pharmacy is ideal. This would be the first licensed dispensary in the Cook Street Village neighbourhood.

### **City Policy**

This rezoning application conforms to the City's Cannabis Storefront Rezoning Policy in every way. It is further than 200 meters from community centres and schools, and there are no other cannabis storefronts within a 400 meter radius. It is appropriately zoned for the use, and has adequate parking at the rear of the building. No public nuisance is created by its operation, and we will be installing a new rooftop ventilation system to mitigate smell nuisance.

### **Project Benefits and Amenities**

The Cook Street neighbourhood is in need of one cannabis storefront to facilitate access to cannabis in the community. The economic, environmental, and social benefits of this project are numerous. The regulation of this business sector in Victoria is likely to stimulate the local economy, making Victoria a hub of this emerging regulated and taxed business activity in the city and so help transition this industry, (that was previously taking place in an informal, unregulated and untaxed manner), toward a better regulated marketplace. Trees Dispensary has sought to promote education about cannabis as a medicine, adjunct therapy for terminal illness, and harm reduction tool by offering educational workshops in our own facility and at other venues across town. We seek to be an upstanding business in town and this application will support our reputation as the most professional actors in the cannabis retail market.

**Neighbourhood**

The proposed development will contribute significantly to neighbourhood vibrancy by sponsoring and promoting arts and culture events in the neighbourhood. The proximity of the dispensary to the Fairfield and Cook Street Village neighbourhood will make cannabis more accessible to residents of these neighbourhoods, especially those who have mobility issues or do not drive.

**Impacts**

This storefront on Cook Street will be beautifully presented in wood trim and a pleasant and welcoming aesthetic. We intend to maintain a plant-filled, wood laden, earthy aesthetic that is pleasing to walk-by traffic, and complements the visual appeal of the neighbourhood. We mitigate negative neighbourhood impact by maintaining air filtration systems and strictly prohibiting consumption of cannabis on site or in the vicinity of the storefront. We will also maintain 24 hour security camera supervision.

**Design and development permit guidelines**

The current site of 230 Cook Street is zoned for commercial, which allows for the use of the premises as retail sales.

**Safety and security**

Trees Dispensary's presence in the area has contributed to the safety and security of the neighbourhood and may contribute to a decrease in overnight petty crime in the immediate area. The increased foot traffic in the area as a result of Trees business has attracted customers to other nearby businesses, and our staff have kept the area surrounding our business well maintained, clean, and free of litter and other refuse. Our 24-hour high definition camera system can be used to provide information on crimes that may happen in the neighbourhood after hours.

**Transportation**

This rezoning applications meets the parking standards set out in schedule C. There is adequate parking at the rear of the building.

**Heritage**

This property does not have heritage status and no heritage buildings are effected by this application.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to bring about regulation to this business sector in Victoria. I look forward to further developing the Trees business in Victoria and finding other ways to contribute to this vibrant community.

All best wishes,

Alex Robb

General Manager, Trees Dispensary