

August 24, 2018

Mayor Lisa Helps & Council
City of Victoria
One Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

**RE: STOREFRONT CANNABIS RETAILER REZONING APPLICATION
FOR 1402 DOUGLAS STREET**

Dear Mayor Helps & Council:

INTRODUCTION

Please accept this letter, along with the accompanying forms and fees, as our client's (business name, "Farm") rezoning application for the property at 1402 Douglas Street. This site, recently rezoned CA-82 (Old Town Cannabis District), and issued with a Cannabis Business Licence, is currently operating as a storefront cannabis retailer. Based on operational needs, we wish to apply for a rezoning to expand existing operations into the newly available adjacent retail space in the same building, thus requiring an amendment to the maximum floorspace permitted for storefront cannabis retail.

THE SITE

The ongoing retail function is consistent the City's land use policies, since the property (located at the corner of Douglas and Johnson Streets) is part of the *Official Community Plan* designated area of *Core Historic*. The applicant has a long term lease with the owner of the property, who supports this application. Built in 1900, the building (known as *The Porter Block*) has housed many diverse businesses over the last century, but still retains its architectural integrity and remains a Downtown Victoria landmark. This building is also "Designated" on the City's Heritage Registry.

Legally described as *the easterly 60 feet of Lot 671, Victoria City*, the site is 18.43 m by 18.35 m, for a total area of about 338 m². The site contains a two-storey commercial building (approximately 930 m²). The owner resides in the upper storey of the same building envelope.

The building's main entrance fronts onto Douglas Street, and abuts other commercial uses on the north and west sides.

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THE PREMISES

The premises consist of a storefront with a monitored entrance that faces Douglas Street. The existing ground level interior floor plan provides an exterior entrance leading into a 142 m² cannabis "retail" area, in which product is displayed in secure glass cases that can only be accessed by staff. The basement level consists of preparation, packaging, and storage space. The total floor area for the business is 198 m².

During the renovations after the initial rezoning, Farm made extensive and high quality capital improvements to the premises and property, including restoration of an original heritage entrance on Douglas Street. These renovations have enhanced the urban streetscape at this prominent Downtown intersection.

RATIONALE FOR ADDITIONAL FLOORSPACE

Since operations began at Farm (Douglas Street) in April 2018, there has been a steady increase in clientele to the point where there are customer line-ups within the premises. This location has become a "destination" site for retail cannabis in Downtown Victoria for tourists and locals alike. With the upcoming legalization of recreational cannabis, Farm anticipates the demand for cannabis will only continue to grow.

This early success has meant an increase in storage space is already necessary, and having more actual retail space would increase safety and security by giving staff better sightlines of the entrance, the display cabinets, and the client mix in general.

The owner of the building (Paul DaCosta, Flower Power Enterprises) is in the process of retiring and closing his adjacent storefront AVEDA business within 1402 Douglas Street. Expansion into this street level space would add 95 m² to the main floor cannabis retail area. Given that the AVEDA location also contains 88 m² of available basement space, it makes practical sense to include that floorspace as part of the designation, and add it to the existing Farm administration/packaging area. The new total floor area would be 450 m², although only 237 m² would actually be storefront "retail" space. No exterior changes to the building are proposed.

SITE PROFILE

Because renovations to the building to expand the retail and storage spaces will not disturb the soil or involve soil excavation, and none of the uses indicated in Schedule 2 (as indicated in the Ministry of Environment Administrative Guidance on Contaminated Sites) has occurred on the site, a site profile has not been submitted with this application.



ONGOING OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following operational requirements are in place, and will continue into the proposed expanded space:

- Admittance is restricted to adults 19+ years of age;
- Exterior signage meets the City's bylaw requirements;
- No consumption of product is permitted on the premises;
- The business operates within designated hours of operation, and does not operate between 8 pm and 7 am;
- Health and safety warnings are posted within the premises;
- Adequate ventilation is provided;
- All security provisions have been met, including a security plan, surveillance cameras, security personnel, training, and a minimum of two employees on-site during business hours, one of whom is a manager; and
- Security and fire alarms are installed, and professionally monitored.

CLOSING

In addition to the Douglas Street location, for the past three years, the applicant has been operating the original "Farm" cannabis dispensary (3055A Scott Street) in a safe and professional manner. Operated to rigorous standards, and respectful of its neighbours, "Farm" intends to continue this level of professionalism within the proposed expanded premises at 1402 Douglas Street.

Thank you for your favourable consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deane Strongitharm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Deane Strongitharm, MCIP, RPP

cc: Paul DaCosta
Allen Spillette
Michael Supowitz

Attachs.