



September 25, 2020

Dear Matthew Angrove,
Area Planner, City of Victoria

I am writing today on behalf of the management and ownership of The Magnolia Hotel & Spa in regards to the rezoning application at 901-919 Gordon Street and 620-630 Courtney Street. The rezoning as posted is looking to permit the use of the storefront as a Cannabis Retailer.

The Magnolia Hotel & Spa has been operating at 623 Courtney Street since 1998 welcoming travelers in our luxury boutique hotel for over two decades. We are currently rated as the #1 Top Hotel in Canada by Trip Advisor, and currently employ approximately 75 people within the hotel and restaurant, The Courtney Room.

On behalf of management and ownership, we would like to express that we do not support this application to share the block with a Cannabis Retailer. We do not believe that having a Cannabis Retailer among upscale tourist and entertainment areas is beneficial for the neighborhood, and being a block from our iconic harbour we do not feel it is the image we are looking to convey to tourists of our beautiful city. Additionally, there are 4 retailers within several blocks of the hotel and as such we believe the market already has supply readily available.

Operationally we are concerned with the comings and goings of patrons of a Cannabis Retailer. Many businesses on our block have patios, and we have windows that open in to our establishments. We believe that there is a high risk that patrons would be smoking Cannabis nearby the store which would negatively impact the comfort of those patronizing hospitality businesses such as ours. We also know that there are no resources to actively police this. Hospitality businesses have been dramatically impacted by COVID-19 and we are utilizing any outdoor spaces available to both operate safely and make the best of a very poor business situation. We strongly believe that having a Cannabis retailer will be detrimental to these efforts.

Lastly, while possibly speculative but nonetheless concerning to our staff, since the rezoning application sign has gone up there have been concerns expressed from staff about what impact this retailer would have on the safety and security of the neighborhood. The safety and security of downtown has deteriorated during the past 6 months, during COVID-19. How much of this is perception, and how much reality could be debated, however it is a real concern for employees who come to work downtown.

Thank you for considering the views of neighboring businesses in reviewing this application. It is our hope as a business that this re-zoning is denied.

Please feel free to reach out to me at 250-412-8480 if you have questions about our letter and our concerns on this issue.

Bill Lewis,
General Manager
The Magnolia Hotel & Spa

**623 Courtney Street
Victoria, BC, V8W 1B8**



**623 Courtney Street
Victoria, BC, V8W 1B8**