



Mayor Helps and Council
City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

22 March 2022

Re: Application for a Cannabis Retail Store at 1400 Quadra Street

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

When the Rezoning Application for this property was brought forward in 2020, the DRA LUC supported the Staff recommendation to decline it based on the fact that “ The proposal is inconsistent with the *Storefront Cannabis Retailer Rezoning Policy* as there are four properties within 400m of the subject property that have storefront cannabis retailer as a permitted use: 826 Johnson Street is 72m away, 853 Cormorant Street is 136m away, 778 Fort Street is 325m away, and 1402 Douglas Street is 388m.”

Ignoring city policy, Staff’s advice and the DRA LUC’s feedback, Council approved the rezoning application. Since Council chose not to uphold its own Policy, disregard the input of Staff and the community, it seems inevitable that Council will approve this subsequent application.

Proximity rules were wisely established by Council to limit the number of Cannabis retailers to the point that the public is adequately served but not create an overconcentration of operators in any one community. Unless conditions have changed over the past two years and there are no properties within 400m that are zoned to permit a storefront cannabis retailer, there are a multitude of ground floor retail properties for lease within the Downtown (now more so than ever) and therefore no apparent impediment for the applicant to seek a location that complies with the established proximity rules.

Once again, we strongly encourage Council to uphold its decision to adopt the 400m proximity rule for Cannabis retailers even if the use is permitted at this location. (Note: Our 2020 DRA LUC letter for the Rezoning Application is appended to this letter.)

Sincerely,

Ian Sutherland
Chair Land Use Committee, Downtown Residents Association

cc COV Planning



Mayor Helps and Council
City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC, V8W 1P6

28 June 2020

Re: Rezoning Application No 00738 for 1400 Quadra Street and 851 Johnson Street

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

The DRA LUC would like to offer support for the Staff recommendation to decline the application. As observed by Staff, the property “is inconsistent with the *Storefront Cannabis Retailer Rezoning Policy*, as there are properties within 400m that are zoned to permit storefront cannabis retailer as a use”.

Proximity rules were established by Council to limit the number of Cannabis retailers to the point that the public is adequately served and operators do not need to sell to minors to make ends meet. There is a strong case that indicates a direct correlation between the viability of these businesses and compliance regarding sale to minors.

It is understood that the application is a relocation of an existing licence within the local area. However, there is no shortage of ground floor retail properties for lease within the Downtown and therefore no apparent impediment for the applicant to seek a location that complies with the current proximity rules. It is important that precedence is not set in relaxing these proximity rules without a compelling rationale. We strongly encourage Council to uphold its wise decision to adopt the 400m proximity rule for Cannabis retailers.

Sincerely,

Ian Sutherland
Chair Land Use Committee, Downtown Residents Association

cc COV Planning