

November 30, 2021

Mayor Helps & Council  
City of Victoria  
City Hall, 1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

**Re: Application to Rezone 235 & 247 Russell Street**

We are pleased to submit this letter requesting the above-described properties be rezoned from M1 Limited Light Industrial to M2 Light Industrial.

**Description of Proposal**

This proposal is to move the two properties described above into the appropriate zone. It has come to our attention that the current use of 247 Russell Street, and the possible future use of 235 Russell Street, would be better suited to the M2 Light Industrial zone, as compared to the current M1 Limited Light Industrial zone. Specifically, 247 Russell is currently licensed by Health Canada to run a cannabis nursery and to cultivate cannabis and has been doing so since receiving those licenses in 2020. The property at 235 Russell recently received a Development Permit to construct a 4-story building. This building will support the activity at 247 Russell. That is, uses at 235 Russell will also be cannabis-related.

**Background**

We purchased the two properties in 2018 and soon after began the Health Canada licensing process required for the current activities at 247 Russell. Throughout the renovation and licensing processes, we understood that the current M1 zoning associated with the property was the appropriate zoning for this use. As part of the Health Canada licensing process the Victoria Fire Department, Victoria Police Department and the City of Victoria municipal government were notified of the intended use. The business has operated as described above since receiving the Health Canada licenses in 2020. As it has recently come to our attention that the City of Victoria currently considers the appropriate zone for these industrial-type cannabis uses to be M2, our intention is to rezone both properties from M1 to M2.

**Government Policies and Project Benefits**

Whether M1 or M2, City of Victoria policy supports light industrial economic development. While the uses may not be specifically defined in either zone (i.e., M1 or M2) or the OCP, job creation, environmentally-friendly industrial development and the increase in tax base are among benefits consistent with municipal policy and the OCP. Current and future business activity will help to reinforce the vibrancy of the area.

**Neighbourhood**

Immediately south of the E&N railway, 247 Russell Street fronts both Russell and Mary Streets. Adjacent to the south of 247 Russell Street, 235 Russell Street is located mid-block on the east side of Russell Street. 235 Russell Street is also adjacent to industrial properties. Thus, to the north is the railway and adjacent to the south and east are industrial properties zoned as either M1 or M2. The adjacent properties are currently used for industrial purposes. The proposed rezoning is in keeping with the immediate context.

### **City Staff and Community Consultation**

We have consulted with City staff on several occasions. Staff have been collegial and supportive of the project. We have also communicated with CALUC, which has decided to waive the need for a CALUC meeting.

In summary, whether M1 or M2, we believe the ongoing and future business activities at both 235 and 247 Russell Street provide jobs, taxes and reinvigorate the area. Moving the properties from M1 to M2 will not result in physical changes to either property and should have no detrimental effect on the community or surrounding neighbours. In fact, it will likely be unnoticed. The businesses make a significant contribution to the city's evolving urban fabric.

Yours truly,

**235 Russell Sakura Venture Ltd.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dan Robbins', written over a circular scribble.

Dan Robbins