



ABLE BC
FOR A RESPONSIBLE CANNABIS INDUSTRY

August 7, 2024

City of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC
V5G 1M2

[VIA EMAIL](#)

RE: Planning and Development Committee; Liquor and Cannabis Policy Review – Updated
Recommended Actions (Committee Report No: 46000-06)

Mayor Mike Hurley and Council,

I am the Executive Director of British Columbia's Alliance of Beverage Licensees (ABLE BC), a not-for-profit industry association that advocates for BC's private liquor and cannabis industries. On behalf of our licensed cannabis retail members, we commend and wholeheartedly support the City of Burnaby's consideration to permit legal and privately owned cannabis retail stores within your community.

As policy experts in the safe and responsible sale of regulated substances, ABLE BC advocates for smart cannabis policies that support diverse communities, contributes to local economies, and helps small businesses succeed. We work collaboratively with our government partners to ensure the success of legally licensed cannabis retailers, and to tackle the illicit supply of unregulated and untested cannabis.

As the City of Burnaby prepares to permit privately owned licensed cannabis retailers in your community and its' appropriate municipal framework, we respectfully submit the following perspective for your consideration.

1. Privately owned businesses should be included as part of Burnaby's cannabis retail

We strongly encourage the City of Burnaby to ensure that privately-owned cannabis stores are present in Burnaby's retail landscape and emphasize that government operated stores already have three existing stores in prime retail locations within Burnaby.

Privately owned cannabis stores in BC are typically small businesses who are active members in their community, provide jobs for constituents, contribute to the growth of the local economy, and are excellent operators who are well equipped to engage their customer's diverse needs.

2. Ensuring a minimum 1 kilometre distance criteria between cannabis stores

ABLE BC advocates for, and strongly supports, the City of Burnaby's proposal to implement a minimum one kilometre door-to-door distance separation between cannabis stores in Burnaby.

Based on our advocacy work in BC's liquor retail policies, the provincial government has regulated a minimum distance of one kilometre between liquor retailers. This single policy has successfully ensured a balanced distribution of access points for consumers, prevented market oversaturation, and stimulated both investment and employment from retail small businesses.

While we commend the City of Burnaby for emulating the same approach on the municipal level for its' cannabis retail framework, we emphasize that the minimum distance criteria also be applied to any future applications of government-operated stores in Burnaby.

3. Staff Assessment of Applications: clarification on previous experience criteria

In the Committee Report, City of Burnaby staff recommended previous experience as part of the criteria for the applicant assessment process. We strongly agree that an applicant's previous experience retailing a controlled substance—such as cannabis or liquor—be considered during the application process. To that end, the City may wish to take into account the following:

- Number of years of responsible retail experience of similarly regulated substances (i.e. liquor or cannabis);
- Related retail experience (cannabis or liquor) in other municipalities;
- Proven experience of operating in compliance with the terms and conditions of a license.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jeff@ablebc.ca or 604-499-2566.

Sincerely,



Jeff Guignard
Executive Director
ABLE BC