

## **List of Stakeholder Submissions**

Association of Canadian Cannabis Retailers

Action on Smoking and Health

Aurora Cannabis

BC Association of Chiefs of Police

BC Centre for Disease Control

BC Craft Farmers Co-op

Burb

Canadian Cancer Society

Canadian Live Music Association

Canandia

Canopy Growth

City of Chilliwack

City of Richmond

Clean Air Coalition of BC

Craft Cannabis Association of BC

Fraser Health Authority

Heart and Stroke Foundation

HEXO

HYTN Cannabis

Infinity Cannabis Chill Out Joint

Interior Health Authority

Juanlove

Kairo

Kindred

Kootenay Cannabis Economic Development Council

Mothers Against Drunk Driving

Northern Health Authority

Phenologic

Physicians for Smoke-Free Canada

Selkirk Innovates

The Entourage Co. & Diplomat Consulting

Traffic Injury Research Foundation

Truegreen

Truss

Union of BC Municipalities

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

Weedmaps

**Association of Canadian Cannabis Retailers  
BC Cannabis Consumption Recommendations  
May 9, 2022  
Submitted via email**

**Introduction:**

The *Association of Canadian Cannabis Retailers (ACCRES)* is a non-profit advocacy group for provincially licensed, private Canadian cannabis retailers. *ACCRES* represents 54 retail brands in British Columbia. We are a member driven, non-profit organization with a mandate to advocate for private cannabis retail license holders.

As the legal cannabis market matures, opportunities have emerged to regulate cannabis consumption areas, for both nuisance reduction and in order to support the development of the economic potential of the cannabis retail and canna-tourism sectors.

**Consultation with the Industry**

*ACCRES'* mandate is derived from direct feedback from our membership and other private retailers, as well as extensive consultation with organizations including Tourism Kelowna, the City of Vancouver, WorkSafe BC, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, and other relevant stakeholders.

In the last quarter of 2021 and first quarter of 2022, *ACCRES* conducted two online surveys of retail license holders in BC, and hosted an in-person policy workshop at the BC Cannabis Summit in Kelowna, BC between April 20-22, 2022, which was attended by representatives from numerous government agencies relevant to the topic.

**Regulatory Gap and Impact**

Based on the consultation feedback received, *ACCRES* believe that the lack of regulatory framework for safe, regulated cannabis consumption spaces is resulting in three negative outcomes for the citizens of British Columbia:

- Increase incidence of intermodal travel between the location that cannabis is purchased and the location it is consumed resulting in an increased chance of intoxicated driving. The same policy rationale is applied to alcohol in justifying the existence of bars and pubs, and should apply equally to cannabis from a public good perspective.
- Those living in public, high density and rented housing are marginalized by these policies as the consumption of cannabis in apartment style housing is almost exclusively banned. Combined with the regulations prohibiting smoking means that people in this situation are driven to potential nuisance public consumption when they choose to consume this legal substance.
- Municipalities are not capturing the potential business development via tourism that cannabis consumption lounges can provide. There are examples in the existing legacy market that are internationally famous as tourism destinations currently operating in the province and not providing a regulated alternative does little to support the growth of the legal cannabis market. Other cannabis legal markets including Washington, Oregon, and Colorado have seen significant economic benefits from canna-tourism, something regions like Kelowna are eager to embrace as well.

- 60% of cannabis consumers ingest cannabis via smoking or vaping, and the lack of accommodation for these ingestion methods will present a significant challenge for the viability of consumption centric business models.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Allow for the co-location of sales and consumption areas, with priority given to existing licensed retailers for application and licensing. This will allow vendors who have already established positive relations with both their local government and their regional cannabis inspectors to spearhead the initiative.

2. The sales of cannabis and alcohol should remain separate. The consumption of cannabis and alcohol should be regulated separately.

- Separation continues to avoid the potential public health and safety risks that can be related to the mixed consumption of alcohol and cannabis.
- In cases such as music events and festivals, license holder should be required to provide separate, age gated areas to act as beer garden or cannabis consumption space to encourage mindful consumption and discourage over consumption of either product.

3. Protocols for age-verified, complimentary sampling of cannabis products under .3 grams in weight of dried flower and under 2mg for edible and drinkable products should be adopted. This is important for a number of reasons, including the limited marketing opportunities currently available to producers under the *Cannabis Act*, the inability for producers to give retailers and their staff representative samples of their products, and the high cost associated with full servings of many of these products acting as a barrier to access to the legal market.

4. Consumption permits for outdoor events should be prioritized for the following types of events (not excluding other similar event categories not listed):

- Festivals
- Outdoor music events
- Private events (weddings, corporate events etc.)

As it stands today, cannabis is publicly and frequently consumed at these events. The lack of a licensing class or a way to regulate these activities does nothing to advance public safety, while preventing responsible parties from buying insurance, creating safety plans, and other basic activities that would significantly increase the public good.

Given cannabis' legality, there is no reason for this continued lack of formal status in event regulations.

5. Sales of cannabis products in the context of consumption spaces should remain the exclusive purview of retail license holders and, when issued, farmgate license holders. This is in recognition of significant fatigue with cannabis licensing at the local level and among the public, who have been barraged with rezoning notifications, variances, etc.



Existing licensees of both production and retail licenses have already secured the goodwill of local government and their neighbouring businesses, have a relationship with the cannabis consuming public, have staff licensed and trained in the safe sale of cannabis products, and would therefore represent the best possible foundation for consumption spaces and licensed events.

6. A licensing class for sales and consumption for outdoor “All Ages” environments which would normally provide an age gated beer garden/wine tasting area should be implemented.

7. Consumption areas, regardless of location, should prioritize local zoning and smoking by-laws, giving each municipality the flexibility to facilitate this business model as the community sees fit.

8. Allow for the use of cannabis infused topical products in spa and other health/wellness environments. Non- cannabis primary retail should not be allowed to retail THC infused products. Non cannabis primary businesses should be required to purchase THC infused topicals via regular cannabis retail channels.

9. Allow for the cross-promotion of cannabis and non-cannabis businesses in the specific context of the use of cannabis products (ie. Micro license holder can cross promote with a cannabis tour company. Spa can refer clients to retailer for purchase of infused products, etc.)

10. Allow for dedicated cannabis food primary licensing for infused products. These licenses should be stand alone and should prohibit the sale of non-infused food or alcohol.

11. Allow consumption licensees to temporarily provide/rent cannabis consumption tools, ie bongos, vaporization devices, etc



## Response to the British Columbia Government Consultation on Cannabis Consumption Spaces

May 2022

### Introduction

Founded in 1979, Action on Smoking & Health (ASH) is one of Canada's leading tobacco control organizations. We welcome the opportunity, as part of the B.C. government consultation on recreational cannabis consumption, to provide recommendations to protect public health and to protect youth from cannabis use.

ASH urges the Government of British Columbia to seriously consider the following recommendations as these best practice, evidence-based strategies are aimed at protecting and improving public health. Our recommendations are intended to reduce public health harm and the burden of chronic disease by protecting public health, preventing and reducing high-risk use and reducing the possibility of unintended consequences of cannabis use.

### The Issue

The B.C. government is currently considering how to regulate the use of recreational cannabis in workplaces and public places. This process must take into consideration the strong association between cannabis and tobacco use and the potential for cannabis use to impact tobacco initiation and consumption (i.e., modelling smoking behavior to youth). Consideration should be given to the possible renormalization of smoking in public and to the exposure of non-users to secondhand smoke.

### A public health approach<sup>i,ii</sup>

A public health approach emphasizes evidence-based initiatives and considers social justice, equity, respect for human rights, efficiency, and sustainability. This approach also ensures that a continuum of interventions, policies, and programs are implemented that are vigilant to the potential benefits and harms of substances, as well as the unintended effects of implemented policies. The goal of a public health approach is to promote the health and wellness of all members of a population and reduce inequities, while ensuring that the harms associated with policies are not disproportionate to the harms of the substances themselves. A public health approach includes the following strategies:

- health promotion to reduce the likelihood of use and problematic use;
- health protection to reduce the harms associated with use;
- prevention and harm reduction to reduce the likelihood of problematic use and overdose;
- population health assessment to understand the extent of the situation, and the potential impact of the interventions, policies, and programs on the population (evaluation);
- disease, injury, and disability surveillance to understand the effect on society and to evaluate the effects of these activities; and
- evidence-based services to help people who are at risk of developing, or have developed problems with substances.

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#### Action on Smoking & Health

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## Cannabis and tobacco use

Cannabis and tobacco are two of the most commonly used psychoactive substance in the world. Approximately 15 percent of Canadian adults currently use tobacco products according to the latest Canadian Community Health Survey.<sup>iii</sup> When last surveyed, 25 percent of Canadians used cannabis at some point during the previous year.<sup>iv</sup> Higher cannabis use is generally observed among youth and young adults than among the general population. Approximately 20 percent of youth aged 15-19 and 30 percent of young adults aged 20-24 used cannabis in the past year, compared to 10 percent of Canadians aged 25 and older.<sup>v</sup> Cannabis is not a benign substance and its high-risk use can lead to problems with cognitive psychomotor functioning, brain development, motor-vehicle collisions, respiratory problems, dependence and mental health conditions. These harms are generally concentrated among a limited group of high-risk users (regulation and programming must be developed to support this population).<sup>vi,vii</sup> According to the World Health Organization, Canadian youth have the second highest cannabis use rates worldwide.<sup>viii</sup>

Studies suggest that up to 90 percent of cannabis users are also tobacco users and that cannabis use during adolescence and early adulthood is associated with increased risk of initiation of tobacco use and nicotine dependence.<sup>ix</sup> About one-third of tobacco users are joint users of tobacco and cannabis<sup>x</sup>. Mixed use of cannabis and tobacco presents a serious concern for tobacco control efforts. According to recent Ontario data, about 30 percent of people who smoke cannabis mix tobacco in their cannabis “joints”<sup>xi</sup>. Tobacco blunt wraps are often used for this purpose and these are widely available. A strong and consistent association exists between tobacco use and cannabis use.<sup>xii</sup> Concurrent and mixed use of tobacco and cannabis is associated with an increased risk of adverse health effects compared with using cannabis alone.<sup>xiii</sup> Concurrent use and mixed use of tobacco and cannabis is also associated with higher levels of problematic cannabis use.<sup>xiv</sup> The two substances in combination may have multiplicative effects that could generate worse health outcomes.<sup>xv</sup> As a result, the concurrent and mixed use of cannabis and tobacco is considered a high-risk route of consumption.<sup>xvi</sup> Tobacco and cannabis use may act as behavioral cues for increased use of either substance.<sup>xvii,xviii</sup> Evidence shows that tobacco users who smoke cannabis are more likely to relapse when attempting to quit using tobacco.<sup>xix</sup> Thus, any increase in overall cannabis use resulting from legalization may increase tobacco use, particularly among youth.<sup>xx</sup>

Caution and concern must be raised due to the disproportionate population health level harm and burden caused by tobacco use in comparison to cannabis use. Tobacco-attributable mortality and morbidity in Canada significantly exceeds that of cannabis-attributable mortality and morbidity - tobacco use results in *over 50 times* more attributable-mortality in Canada than cannabis use.<sup>xxi</sup>

## Preventing renormalization of smoking behaviours

Second hand cannabis smoke contains many of the same carcinogenic substances and harmful toxic chemicals as second hand tobacco smoke.<sup>xxii</sup> Smoke-free public spaces regulations provide the public, especially vulnerable populations, with protection from health impacts of second hand smoke. Restrictions on the public consumption of tobacco play an important role in reducing overall smoking rates, improving indoor air quality, preventing renormalization of smoking and supports cessation attempts.<sup>xxiii,xxiv,xxv</sup> Similar smoking bans should be implemented for cannabis use to reduce health impacts of second hand cannabis smoke, and avoid renormalization of smoking behaviour. Public use of



cannabis will increase unhealthy modelling of smoking behaviour, which may inherently stimulate demand and associated harm.

As well, the use of waterpipe (hookah) in public establishments has grown in popularity, particularly among youth.<sup>xxvi</sup> The increasing number of waterpipe establishments and the introduction of flavoured waterpipe tobacco products further raises the appeal of these products among youth. Even though the health risk associated with waterpipe smoking is similar to tobacco use, youth perceive waterpipe smoking to be less harmful and lack knowledge about the harms of waterpipe smoking. It is important to note that it is difficult to determine what type of product is being sold and consumed in waterpipe establishments. It is vital for the province to fully implement a consistent ban on all forms of smoking and vaping (tobacco, cannabis, and shisha) in public establishments and workplaces to ensure uniform protection, to simplify enforcement, and to support ongoing efforts to denormalize smoking behaviour and prevent youth use.

### **Municipal restrictions**

Numerous B.C. municipalities have adopted wide restrictions on the smoking and vaping of tobacco and cannabis<sup>xxvii</sup>. These municipalities have taken these steps to improve public health and to protect children and youth from exposure to public smoking and vaping. These bylaws should not be undermined by the provincial legislation mandating cannabis consumption spaces. Municipalities should retain the right to maintain public restrictions on cannabis and tobacco smoking and vaping despite any contradicting provincial legislation.

### **Conclusion**

Public cannabis consumption may have unintended consequences on tobacco use and control efforts in the province. There is strong evidence of the association between joint tobacco and cannabis use, and the health impact of mixed use. Public cannabis use has the potential to increase tobacco use and tobacco initiation including through the renormalization of public smoking. Cannabis smoking and vaping can also put nonsmokers at risk especially in confined spaces and particularly among those with health conditions that are affected by secondhand smoke such as allergies, asthma and heart disease.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the above rationale, ASH urges the Government of British Columbia to:

1. Consider extending public restrictions on cannabis and tobacco smoking and vaping to include all public recreation spaces to maximize protection for children, youth and nonsmokers. Numerous B.C. municipalities have already adopted wide restrictions on public smoking and vaping.
2. Reconsider the need for special cannabis consumption spaces unless access by minors is strictly prohibited and enforced, and the consumption space is not visible or accessible to children and youth.
3. Ensure that workers are not exposed to cannabis smoking or vaping in confined outdoor spaces given the risk of exposure to secondhand smoke, especially by those with existing health



conditions that are affected by secondhand smoke—including those with asthma, allergies and heart disease.

4. Municipalities should retain the ability to adopt stronger local restrictions on tobacco and cannabis consumption, including the ability to prohibit cannabis consumption spaces.

**ASH urges the Government of British Columbia to implement the above recommendations to prevent and reduce harms associated with tobacco and cannabis use, particularly among youth, and to improve the quality of life for all British Columbians.**

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**Title:** Cannabis Consumption Spaces Consultation

**Prepared for:** BC Cannabis Secretariat

**Prepared by:** Aaron Denhartog, Director, Government Relations, Aurora Cannabis Inc.

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**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022.

**Question 1: Do you agree with the principles outlined in the [discussion paper](#)? Why or why not?**

We agree that a core element of any reforms to BC's cannabis system needs to be maintaining the high standards for social responsibility that exist today and encourage responsible consumption. Ensuring consumers are informed about the products they are consuming is essential in promoting responsible consumption and reducing adverse health and safety effects. Allowing for onsite sales and consumption will permit further educational opportunities while allowing for the monitoring of new customers. It will also create ancillary business opportunities for transportation and tourism.

However, Aurora believes that the onsite sale and consumption of cannabis products should be permitted in the same establishments or locations as the sale of alcohol and food. Doing so would provide for greater consumer choice, increased sales and provide unique partnership opportunities that are not available to the illicit market. British Columbia needs to create diverse and competitive businesses that meet consumer and market demands, while supporting the transition from the unregulated to legal market. Excluding cannabis product sales where food and alcohol are already sold severely limits the opportunities to develop sustainable business models.

While the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation report mentions there are health risks associated with co-use of alcohol and cannabis and the exponential effects on impairment, we believe these risks can be mitigated with proper consumer education and an updated smart serve module for employee training. Employees should be able to inform consumers about responsible use and product types to ensure informed choices about consumption are made.

**Question 2: What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?**

Aurora would like to see the Government of BC permit onsite cannabis sales and consumption spaces at outdoor events such as concerts and festivals through Special Events Permits (SEPs), similar to what is already in place for the sale and consumption of alcohol. We believe age-gated cannabis spaces could be set-up in those outdoor spaces that respect the principles outlined in the discussion paper. Doing so would provide for greater consumer choice, increased sales and provide unique partnership opportunities that are not available to the unregulated market. Given that consumers are already known to be consuming cannabis products at these types of events, we believe it provides an additional opportunity for consumer education.

We would also like to see consumption spaces set up as part of the province's farmgate model. Similar to wine or beer tastings at local wineries and breweries, we believe the option to sample products after

tours and educational sessions will help to further consumer knowledge on the products they are purchasing.

**Question 3: What would make this space economically feasible as a business?**

In order for SEPs to be economically feasible, they must be accompanied by the ability to sell cannabis products onsite meant for consumption. Limiting SEPs to strictly consumption would only create additional regulatory barriers for activities the public is already participating in.

Furthermore, we request that federal License Holders (LHs) and their affiliates be permitted to participate in these onsite sales opportunities, particularly through SEPs. By prohibiting LHs from engaging in traditional advertising and promotional activities, Health Canada has established a remarkably restrictive regulatory environment for LHs who are looking to connect with customers and build brand loyalty. LHs are unable to establish distinct brand recognition through packaging and labelling like other consumer product companies otherwise are. On their own, we do not believe that allowing onsite sales and consumption through SEPs or farmgate retail stores are an economically feasible business but can assist LHs in consumer education and building brand loyalty.

**Question 4: How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?**

As noted above, we believe these risks can be mitigated with proper consumer education and an updated smart serve module for employee training. Employees should be able to inform consumers about responsible use and product types to ensure informed choices about consumption are made.

**Question 5: Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?**

Aurora takes no position as to what consumption spaces should further be prohibited. Rather, we firmly believe the government should reconsider changes as part of this consultation to allow for safe consumption spaces, with proper ventilation for medical patients and consumers alike. Current regulations around use in public put disadvantaged populations, low-income consumers and tourists at risk. If consumers, patients and tourists do not have a legal place to consume, they will be forced to consume in public places. This would ultimately disservice current smoke-free regulations already established to deter the normalization of public smoking and provide-smoke free environments in public.





June 02, 2022

BC Cannabis Secretariat  
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Dear BC Cannabis Secretariat:

RE: Cannabis Consumption Spaces

Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to reply to the Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement – Discussion Paper dated April 2022. Upon review of the paper, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has obviously consulted with various stakeholders to prepare this document and they have incorporated their information accordingly.

Our primary concerns are for road safety which has been touched upon in the “Drug-Affected Driving” (page 5) section. The paper states appropriately that there could be an increased risk of accidents. This has been shown to be very true in numerous studies conducted since the legalization of cannabis not only in Canada but in various states in the United States. It is not truly an accident as someone purposely operates a motor vehicle after consuming cannabis. The associated costs of the loss of life and injury as well as property damages will increase with increased cannabis consumption. In order for people to attend a cannabis event, they will undoubtedly drive.

Cannabis does not overtly affect people as it does alcohol. The cannabis events will not allow smoking or vaping of cannabis products, so therefore it will be primarily edibles. Edibles affect the human body in different ways and people unknowingly will consume more in order to get an appreciable feeling of elation that they would get with smoking or vaping. This increased level of consumption of cannabis edibles puts the public at a much more increased risk when the consumer gets behind the wheel of a motor vehicle to leave the event.

The paper discusses that there will be increased enforcement by police in order to ensure that drug-affected and drug-impaired drivers are not on the highways of British Columbia. This is not feasible as resources across British Columbia are stretched thin as it is now and there are not enough Drug Recognition Experts located throughout the province to combat the increasing problems once these events are sanctioned.



Your suggestion that there be a Serving it Right process for cannabis is not feasible as the physiology of the drug within the body will not be considered or identifiable by an untrained person. It takes intensive training and experience in dealing with drug-impaired drivers for police to identify drug-impaired drivers. An online Serving It Right process is not even possible for the safety of the attendees and the public. As stated, earlier cannabis cannot be measured and served like alcohol. The designated driver program is a great idea, people can only attend these events if they arrive and depart via prescribed transport, and they are not allowed to drive for hours after the event.

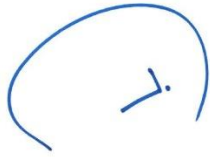
There would need to be on-site licensed medical staff for all of these events as novice users of cannabis edibles are increasingly “greening out” and they are being rushed to medical facilities to prevent them from dying.

Under the section “Co-Locating Cannabis and Alcohol Consumption”, there is a request by the industry to serve both intoxicants at the same time. This can never be allowed, the effects of impairment in numerous scientific studies have shown that the combination of both drugs will exponentially impair a person’s ability to operate a motor vehicle. Alcohol is a drug along with the psychoactive component of cannabis – THC.

Under the section “Drug-Affected Driving” (page 9), you speak of the potential penalties that could be imposed if the driver is apprehended and prosecuted. This is all and well, except the legislation does not have any teeth as there is no way of prosecuting a driver under the Graduated Licensing Program. There are tools available such as the Sotoxa or the Draeger Drugtest 5000, but there are no sanctions in place roadside for police to utilize this equipment. The Administrative Driving Prohibition Program is great in theory but as we see the application is very slow and has no immediate repercussions on the driver. A driver currently has to wait on average a year before his driving privileges are prohibited and any sanctions come to bear for driving while impaired by a drug. The legislation needs to be amended such that private laboratories can be used to corroborate impairment after a Drug Impairment Evaluation has been conducted by a Drug Recognition Expert. The urine or blood seized by the Drug Recognition Expert needs to be analyzed within a very short period in order for there to be any appreciable effect on driving behavior. The urine needs to be sent to a laboratory with a turnaround time of 7- 10 days, as opposed to the RCMP Forensic laboratory which on average takes slightly less than a year from the time of driving to be analyzed. If the Administrative Driving Prohibition Program is to be effective in keeping drug-impaired drivers off the roads of British Columbia, then regulations need to be amended forthwith before cannabis events can even be contemplated. Along with the Administrative Driving Prohibition Program, the Immediate Roadside Prohibition program needs to be updated immediately to include 3-7-30 day sanctions for the consumption of cannabis products and driving after a positive result is obtained with the use of a Sotoxa or a Draeger Drugtest 5000.

In conclusion, we understand that there is public pressure to regulate cannabis just like alcohol in public venues but the physiological effects of cannabis on the human body are not like the effects of alcohol. There need to be very strict regulations in place for such venues to operate in order for the attendees and the public to be safe. There also needs to be greater powers for the police to combat drug-impaired drivers who have consumed cannabis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a small, stylized mark that resembles a checkmark or a stylized 'N'.

Neil Dubord, OOM, AdeC  
Chief Constable, Delta Police Department  
Chair, BCACP Traffic Safety Committee



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May 9th, 2022

**Re: BCCDC Population and Public Health Submission to Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General  
consultation on regulation of cannabis consumption spaces in BC**

Please accept this submission from BCCDC Population and Public Health to the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General request for feedback on regulation of cannabis consumption spaces in BC.

**Question 1**

*Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?*

The principles outlined in the discussion paper generally address many of the considerations necessary to mitigate risks to health associated with regulation of cannabis consumption spaces.

British Columbia has one of the highest rates of reported cannabis use in Canada compared to other jurisdictions, particularly among youth and young adults(1). According to results of the COVID-19 SPEAK Survey, residents of BC reported increased cannabis use during the pandemic, with 18.8% of young adults 18-29 reporting increased use as of spring 2022(2).

Allowance of retail cannabis consumption spaces in BC will increase accessibility and availability of cannabis, as well as open new avenues for marketing and potential drive the normalization of cannabis use. This will likely increase consumption as well as the corresponding risks to health. Cannabis is associated with numerous harms, including impacts to brain development for people under 25, increased risk of psychosis and other mental health disorders, increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease through exposure to cannabis smoke, and impairment of cognitive and motor function that can increase risky behaviours and the risk of motor vehicle collisions(3). Risk of harm is elevated among those who use cannabis more frequently, as well as those who start using as an adolescent or young adult.

For these reasons, a regulatory framework for allowance of cannabis consumption spaces in BC must include robust protections to mitigate the harms of increased access and availability, particularly for youth and others at highest risk of harm. In addition to the discussion paper associated with this consultation, other organizations have developed comprehensive summaries of potential considerations and mitigation measures based on experiences with other substances, such as alcohol and tobacco, as well as experiences from other jurisdictions that have regulated cannabis consumption spaces(4). While regulation of alcohol consumption spaces (bars, pubs etc.) may pose a comparable framework for cannabis, it is important to reflect that the current model is likely insufficient to mitigate many harms associated with alcohol consumption. Development of a new regulatory framework for cannabis consumption spaces must therefore seek to achieve a better balance of economic and health considerations.

**Question 2**

*What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed? What would make this space economically feasible as a business? How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?*



A research and teaching centre affiliated with UBC

Decisions related to which types of cannabis spaces should be allowed should primarily depend on the associated health impacts and the ability to mitigate potential harms, rather than economic incentives.

The emphasis on the “start low, go slow” approach to consumption in the discussion paper can help encourage users of cannabis consumption spaces to moderate their intake and avoid over-intoxication; however, this can be challenging given the variable levels of psychoactive constituents, such as THC, in cannabis products. Better standardisation of the levels of THC in cannabis products and appropriate labelling may improve the ability of consumers to moderate intake. Products with higher THC levels should be disincentivized, as higher potency cannabis products have been associated with increased harms(3).

The risk of impaired driving and other risky behaviours may also be exacerbated by the delayed onset of effects. While the discussion paper identifies a number of measures that may help mitigate the impact of impairment, such as increase access to public transportation, public awareness campaigns, training for servers, and designated driver programs, cannabis consumption spaces must also account for these delayed effects by ensuring that they either facilitate users to stay onsite until they are able to experience the degree of impairment associated with the product or otherwise include safeguards against users misjudging the degree of impairment they may experience.

The risk of increased consumption among the population associated with permitting cannabis consumption spaces may be exacerbated depending on their location and density of retail outlets. Research suggests that limitations on the proximity of alcohol and tobacco retail outlets near schools, parks, and other such areas may reduce consumption and the risks of related harms(5). For example, the visible presence of alcohol outlets can influence youth alcohol use, even if youth are restricted from frequenting these outlets(6). Relatedly, increased density of retail outlets may increase the risks of cannabis consumption. For example, increased density of alcohol outlets has been associated with increased risks of over-consumption, as well as alcohol-attributable effects such as impaired driving(7).

### Question 3

*Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?*

Regulation of cannabis consumption spaces should also align with the restrictions for retail cannabis sales and marketing in BC and Canada, including the following:

- Combining cannabis use with other psychoactive substances can increase the risk of adverse health outcomes(3). As mentioned in the discussion paper, co-location of alcohol and cannabis sales/consumption should be prohibited, as well as sales/consumption of other psychoactive substances, as this may increase the likelihood of concurrent use.
- Marketing of cannabis products and services offered at cannabis consumption spaces should be restricted in line with existing limitations for retail cannabis. Products and marketing materials that may be targeted to children and youth should be prohibited.

Other setting specific limitations should also be considered:

- While the discussion paper confirms that indoor smoking/vaping will not be permitted, additional considerations should be made for smoking/vaping restrictions in outdoor public spaces. Exposure

to second-hand cannabis smoke may also be harmful in outdoor settings to those within proximity to the user(8). In order to mitigate potential risks of exposure to second-hand cannabis smoke and vapour, restrictions on cannabis smoking and vaping within outdoor spaces should align with broader tobacco smoking and vaping bylaws and restrictions. Local governments should be supported to ensure that their local bylaws and restrictions are adequate to address the risks of second-hand smoke exposure.

- Cannabis consumption spaces should be restricted from farmers markets and other informal events where enforcement may be insufficient. Additionally, any cannabis consumption spaces occurring within a broader event with under-age participants should be well separated from other activities/services and access limited to those of legal age. Marketing materials and promotion should also be restricted from general admission areas to avoid promotion to children and youth.

Sincerely,



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**BC Craft Farmers Co-Op  
BC Government Consultation Response  
Cannabis Consumption Spaces**

May 2022

**Introduction**

BC has invited sector stakeholders to provide feedback regarding cannabis consumption policies. In response, the BC Craft Farmers Co-Op (BCCFC) has consulted members through three processes:

1. BC Cannabis Summit in Kelowna, BC between April 20-22, 2022
2. BC craft farmers roundtable in East Kelowna April 23, 2022
3. Virtual BC roundtable May 5, 2022

**Cannabis Consumption – BC Questions**

BC's stakeholder engagement is focused on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces (tasting rooms, lounges, special events, retail). Feedback is requested on the following questions:

Question	Response
<b>Should BC allow cannabis consumption spaces as described? If yes, how should it be done?</b>	<p>Yes. It is disappointing BC is still asking this question after two years. Is there still doubt? BC should state clearly and quickly they are proceeding in this direction so we can move forward with implementation. With regard to <b>how</b>, participants suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't reinvent the wheel. Simply adopt what is working now for wineries, craft breweries and distilleries.</li><li>• Adoption of the BC Smart Serve program was suggested.</li><li>• Learn from other jurisdictions, particularly related to special events, farm gate, weddings and restaurant dining for adults.</li><li>• Collaborate with BCCFC and BC Cannabis Retail Association to help implement these policies and mitigate federal barriers.</li><li>• Clarify how consumption policies apply to medical use.</li></ul>
<b>Can consumption spaces support economic development, recovery and tourism and shift consumption from illicit to regulated products?</b>	<p>Yes. It is disappointing BC is still asking this question. Had BC listened to previous submissions, there should be no doubt about the potential benefits of implementing these policies. BC needs to act quickly to identify the provincial actions needed to realize how co-ordinated consumption, farm gate and direct sales policies can achieve the sector's full economic potential. BC Cannabis Summit attendees approved several policy solutions for BC and Canada to consider. <i>See link below.</i> Insurance realities need to be considered for locations/tour operators.</p>



<p><b>How can cannabis consumption policies prohibit indoor smoking/vaping?</b></p>	<p>Without exception, all indoor smoking activities should be treated the exact same as other products (cigars, tobacco, e-cigarettes). At the same time, a framework that allows for the adult consumption of edible cannabis products, baked goods and cannabis-infused restaurant menu items should be enabled.</p>
<p><b>How can cannabis consumption policies address drug-affected driving?</b></p>	<p>All participants support public education related to any kind of intoxicated driving. The roll-out of farm gate and consumption policies, in collaboration with BC cannabis associations, provides a significant public education platform.</p> <p>More broadly, BC Cannabis Summit participants recommended BC and Canada establish a National Cannabis Health Research Institute in our province to answer lingering questions about the benefits and risks associated with cannabis use, including impairment and unique effects created by various delivery mechanisms. <i>See link below.</i></p>
<p><b>How can cannabis consumption policies discourage co-use of alcohol and cannabis?</b></p>	<p>All agree a significant public education opportunity exists with the farm gate and consumption policies to discourage the co-use of alcohol and cannabis.</p> <p>At the same time, some believe too many limitations regarding the legal activities of adults may not be effective or reflect reality. Cannabis infused restaurant menus, weddings, conferences and special event permits where alcohol sales are also on-site were examples of things that should not be unreasonably prohibited. Other participants noted BC has co-located cannabis and alcohol within their own regulatory approach and they approve retail locations in close proximity to liquor establishments.</p> <p>All agree a more adult conversation is needed that focuses on education, best practices in other jurisdictions and recognition that some of these activities are already occurring between adults.</p>
<p><b>How can cannabis consumption policies require a positive recommendation from the applicable Indigenous or local government?</b></p>	<p>Participants generally agreed with this, noting these approvals are required for production, retail and processing licence holders now. However, participants suggested clarity is required from the BC government to confirm consumption on ALR lands will be permitted and that cannabis is defined as an agriculture product/activity. <i>See link below.</i></p> <p>Participants also agreed Canada and BC should provide financial incentives to help Indigenous, local governments and tourism associations facilitate and promote these job creation opportunities. <i>See link below.</i></p>





### **General Discussion: Farm Gate**

Virtually all participants discussed provincial consumption policies within the context of BC's proposed farm gate cannabis sales policy and the general state of BC's cannabis sector. In this light, we have included a summary of feedback received on BC's farm gate policy roll-out, expected this summer/fall.

- Don't reinvent the wheel. Business integration required to implement cannabis sales at farms or a common-market location already exist in other sectors. We can adopt what is working now for wineries, craft breweries and distilleries.
- Farm gate represents a significant opportunity for small farmers to diversity revenue streams so they are not relying only on wholesale pricing. Land values may also increase.
- Dedicated licencing stream for farm gate stores should not be overly expensive to access, especially since some stores and markets may be seasonal.
- Roll-out of farm gate, direct sales and consumption policies represent a significant public education opportunity that can enlighten consumers and destigmatize the plant.
- BC is moving too slow and missing opportunities. They need to involve the sector more directly in the implementation of farm gate and consumption to ensure they are successful and lessons are applied from other jurisdictions (SK, AB and ONT).
- Farm gate and consumption policies rolled out together represents a significant tourism opportunity for all regions of the province.
- Hemp should be included in the policies given significant consumer interest in CBD products.
- Insurance challenges need to be considered for locations and tour operators.
- Opportunity for existing retailers to collaborate with farmers to help open stores and navigate application process.
- Federal production and processing licensing restrictions are likely to dampen the farm gate experience by keeping consumers/tourists from getting too close to the plant.
- Proactive strategies should be developed that engage the federal regulator and apply best practices from other jurisdictions that can facilitate a meaningful interaction between the consumer and plant.



## **Conclusion**

As noted, more than 450 participants of our recent BC Cannabis Summit in Kelowna had the opportunity to develop policy solutions and opportunities facing our sector and all governments. Many speak directly to consumption consultation and the roll out of related BC policies.

As has been the case with previous consultation, they believe the development and implementation of BC's cannabis policy needs to be better coordinated.

Specifically delegates expressed their support through an inclusive and fully-funded Canada/BC Craft Cannabis Economic Development Partnership that expands the sector's capacity to create jobs, promote 'Buy Local' campaigns, destination cannabis tourism and meaningful public education.

Here is a link to the seven (7) policies prioritized by Summit delegates: [BC Cannabis Summit Delegates Prioritize Policy Solutions for Federal and Provincial Governments: Farm Gate and Consumption Consultation Launched - BC Craft Farmers Co-op \(bccraftfarmerscoop.com\)](#)

## **Contact:**

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BC Cannabis Consumption Submission  
To: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
From: Burb Cannabis Corp

### **Introduction:**

The Cannabis Act came into effect in 2018, and while non-medical recreational use of cannabis has been legalized, safe and accessible cannabis consumption spaces have not. The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General of the British Columbian government assembled a discussion paper regarding feedback on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces. This written submission from Burb Cannabis poses arguments in favour of legal consumption spaces and addresses the issues facing public health and safety, economic development and tourism, and accessibility to safe cannabis products.

Burb is a privately held, multi-licensed cannabis retail and lifestyle brand that opened its first doors in 2018. With four stores (and counting) in British Columbia, we are committed to cannabis culture and ensuring that 19+ Canadians have access to safe and legal cannabis consumption methods. We acknowledge that the intention of the engagement paper proposed by the BC government aims to seek feedback on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces from British Columbians, industry and public health and safety stakeholders, and local and Indigenous governments. Our goal is to contribute thoughtful points in favour of safe, accessible cannabis spaces that we believe have an overall positive effect on the community and economic fabric of British Columbia.

### **1. An Addendum on Cannabis and Alcohol**

First and foremost, we encourage the reviewer of this text to approach our discussion paper by separating the association between cannabis and alcohol. In the discussion paper prompted by the BC government, several comparisons between alcohol and cannabis were made. Albeit may seem logical to compare these controlled substances, we believe that cannabis should stand alone. Various studies published over the last several decades have concluded the negative implications of alcohol use including increased violence, injuries and

health related costs.<sup>1 2 3</sup> In fact, alcohol related medical costs outweigh cannabis by about eight times in the province of British Columbia.<sup>4</sup> We believe that by creating a connection between the two substances only hurts any future consideration of changed cannabis regulations and laws.

## **2. Consumption Spaces: Support for Safe Cannabis Use**

Burb promotes the implementation of safe cannabis consumption spaces so long as these spaces are attached to licensed cannabis retail locations and adhere to any regulations set by the BC government. As an organization committed to the public health and safety of our community we acknowledge the following outlined in the province's discussion paper:

According to the 2021 Canadian Cannabis Survey, smoking is the most common method of cannabis consumption (72.9%) in British Columbia. There are significant public health concerns about cannabis smoking, including that it might contribute to re-normalizing smoking behaviour and increase secondhand smoke exposure. Some of the risks associated with smoking are more pronounced indoors. The Province is not considering permitting indoor smoking and vaping.<sup>5</sup>

As a genuine concern for the safety of our community, Burb aligns with the issues proposed above regarding the potential for secondhand smoke exposure as a result of consumption of cannabis. There is also evidence from a recent study conducted by the University of California (UC), San Francisco, that suggests consumption lounges increase the risk of secondhand smoke beyond consumption lounges. Their study found that concentrations of harmful fine particulate matter in one dispensary was 28 times higher during working hours when consumption spaces were open than when the business was closed.<sup>6</sup> While this can be a cause for concern, it is also important to note that the state of California does not have any regulations in place that make it mandatory for cannabis consumption spaces to put proper mechanical equipment in place to reduce and mitigate secondhand smoke exposure.

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<sup>1</sup> Lachenmeier, D. "Comparative risk assessment of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other illicit drugs using the margin of exposure approach." Scientific reports, 5, 8126. (retrieved May 4, 2022)

<sup>2</sup> Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research. "Alcohol consumption greatly increases serious injury risk for heavy and moderate drinkers." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/10/111014162820.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/10/111014162820.htm) (accessed May 4, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> "Marijuana and other illicit drug use and the risk of injury: A case-control study." Missouri medicine, 103(2), 152–156. (retrieved May 4, 2022).

<sup>4</sup> Gerald Thomas, "Cannabis, Tobacco and Alcohol Use in Canada," Cannabis, Tobacco and Alcohol Use in Canada | Here to Help, accessed May 4, 2022, <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/cannabis-tobacco-and-alcohol-use-canada>.

<sup>5</sup> "Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement." n.d. Accessed May 6, 2022. [https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711\\_Cannabis\\_Consumption\\_Discussion\\_Paper\\_PSSG\\_v5.pdf](https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711_Cannabis_Consumption_Discussion_Paper_PSSG_v5.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Nicole, W., 2021. Cannabis Consumption in Dispensaries: Public Health Implications of an Emerging Practice. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 129(8).

In fact, this same study from the University of California states that the potential for secondhand smoke exposure can be reduced through proper HVAC and ventilation systems. In a more extensive study conducted by the United States Office on Smoking Health in 2006, they found that “mechanically delivered air disperses secondhand smoke and actually dilutes it by supplying less contaminated air. Air exchange and surface removal processes act together to lower secondhand smoke concentrations. Surface removal is enhanced if air is forced through an air-cleaning device and delivered back to the room with a reduced secondhand smoke concentration”.<sup>7</sup> It would seem that there is potential for indoor cannabis inhalation method to exist while also mitigating the potential for secondhand smoke both within and outside the consumption space.

### **3. Amsterdam: “Coffee Shops” As A Case Study**

Eradication of indoor inhalation threatens cannabis culture and the ritualistic qualities that make cannabis consumption so unique. As we have previously quoted, 72.9% of cannabis users in Canada consume the plant via inhalation. To eliminate this form of consumption disallows legal cannabis spaces and the government to capitalize on an activity that positively influences the tourism economy within the province. Using the historical implementation and effectiveness of Amsterdam’s ‘coffee shops’ (i.e. cannabis consumption lounges) as a case study, we make the argument that Canada should adopt the same pragmatic approach to cannabis consumption as the Netherlands.

In the 1970’s, the government of Amsterdam developed several studies on drugs - including the use of cannabis - in two reports called the Baan and Cohen report.<sup>8</sup> After a sought after discussion, in 1978 legislation was finally amended and the notion that cannabis be separated from other drugs was put in motion.<sup>9</sup> This allowed for the commerce of cannabis to exist in certain places like consumption lounges - thus the infamous “coffee shop” culture of Amsterdam was born. What was so unique about this approach to cannabis was that it was pragmatic, it wasn’t driven politically or ideologically driven.<sup>10</sup> Regulations were put in place to

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<sup>7</sup> "The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General." Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US); 2006. (retrieved May 4, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Bieleman, B., Nijkamp, R., & Bak, T. (2012). Coffeeshops in Nederland 2011. Available at: [http://www.intraval.nl/pdf/b108\\_MCN11.pdf](http://www.intraval.nl/pdf/b108_MCN11.pdf) (Accessed July 14, 2014)

<sup>9</sup> Pinheiro Dias Pereira, Thiago Ferreira and de Paula, Leonardo Batista. "Drug Tourism: General Overview, Case Studies and New Perspectives in the Contemporary World" *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation* 7, no.3 (2017): 188-202. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ejthr-2016-0021>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

encourage safe cannabis use: consumption lounges could not produce any cannabis propaganda, limited transactions, customers could not generate disturbances to the surrounding public areas, limited smoking hours, alcoholic beverage trading was not permitted, nor hard drugs, and the sale of cannabis could only be held for adults over 18.<sup>11</sup> If British Columbia can adopt a similar framework and apply it to the current market, there's no reason why safe consumption spaces embedded into the legal cannabis regulations cannot coexist.

#### **4. Economic and Tourist Development**

As a positive reflection of the legislative shift in Amsterdam, tourism - and by association, the economy - saw an increase in gross revenue. Of the 4.5 million tourists that spent a night in Amsterdam, 26% of visitors stopped by a coffee shop where cannabis consumption occurred.<sup>12</sup> At least 10% of tourists openly mentioned that their main reason for going to Amsterdam was to visit a cannabis coffee shop.<sup>13</sup> In 2008, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) found that there were 700 coffee shops total across the Netherlands, with roughly 3,400 employees, earning 211-283 million Euros annually with each establishment earning gross revenue between 208-308 thousand Euros annually.<sup>14</sup> In a similar move, the Californian government introduced a bill in 2019 that would make cannabis consumption spaces legal. At these locations, cannabis consumption cafe/lounge must be attached to a licensed retailer, age-gated, and abide by all state rules and regulations.<sup>15</sup> As positive additions to the local economy, cannabis lounges are drivers in the economic growth both locally and nationwide.

In British Columbia alone, the Cannabis industry produces roughly \$2.5 billion dollars a year.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the tourism market contributes just over \$7 billion dollars annually to the provincial government.<sup>17</sup> Compared to Amsterdam's figures, Vancouver sees just over 7

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Pinheiro Dias Pereira, Thiago Ferreira and de Paula, Leonardo Batista. "Drug Tourism: General Overview, Case Studies and New Perspectives in the Contemporary World" *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation* 7, no.3 (2017): 188-202. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ejthr-2016-0021>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "Bill Text - AB-1465 Cannabis: Consumption Cafe/Lounge License." n.d. [leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1465). Accessed May 5, 2022. [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201920200AB1465](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1465).

<sup>16</sup> Technology, Ministry of Jobs Trade and. n.d. "Learn about B.C.'S Cannabis Sector - Province of British Columbia." [Www2.Gov.bc.ca](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-business-community/sector/cannabis). Accessed May 5, 2022. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-business-community/sector/cannabis>.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. n.d. "Tourism Research - Province of British Columbia." [Www2.Gov.bc.ca](https://www2.gov.bc.ca). Accessed May 5, 2022.

million visitors per year (about 2.5 million more than Amsterdam). Amsterdam's cannabis economy contributes roughly \$300 thousand Euro per coffee shop location which is about \$400 thousand CAD. If each legal cannabis retailers in BC have the opportunity to operate cannabis consumption lounges, we could potentially expect to see an estimated gross revenue of \$150 million dollars annually from consumption lounges alone (\$400 thousand gross revenue per store x 375 legal cannabis retailers in BC). Similar to cannabis-related travels by tourists visiting Amsterdam, there's reason to believe that British Columbia would experience an effect akin to Holland.

#### **4. Safe Consumption: Legal vs. Illicit Market**

Legal cannabis consumption spaces allow for the potential to educate the community via accessibility to safe cannabis products. In a 2018 Canadian National Cannabis Survey, the results found that the highest demographic of cannabis consumers were males between the ages of 15-34.<sup>18</sup> Although this age range is wide, it still contributes to 60% of cannabis consumers nationally. Since legal cannabis can only be purchased at the age of 19 and above, this means that males from the age 15 to 18 are still consuming cannabis illegally. We propose that the creating safe, regulated consumption lounges, that are age-gated, we reduce the flux of cannabis products in the public sphere. If there is no safe consumption site, we risk allowing unregulated products in the hands of the public at local outdoor spaces including parks, schools and other areas that pose risks to children.

By making cannabis lounges and spaces operable only if it is attached to legal retailers also creates corrective experiences, allows for proper education and reduces the risk of illicit market products to get in the hands of the public. In more recent years, cannabis consumption via vaping or dabbing (concentrated THC) has rapidly increased. In a recent study conducted by the National Library of Medicine, the results found that among cannabis users aged 18-90 in the United States, 61% said they had tried vaping, 37% admitted to vaping in the last 30 days, and 12% endorsed vaping as their preferred method.<sup>19</sup> As stated in the province's Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement paper:

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<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/tourism-immigration/tourism-resources/tourism-research#:~:text=Value%20of%20Tourism&text=Tourism%20employs%20about%2046%2C400%20people>.

<sup>18</sup> Callaghan, Russell C., Marcos Sanches, Claire Benny, Tim Stockwell, Adam Sherk, and Stephen J. Kish. "Who Consumes Most of the Cannabis in Canada? Profiles of Cannabis Consumption by Quantity." *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 205 (2019): 107587. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2019.107587>.

<sup>19</sup> Borodovsky JT, Budney AJ, Crosier BS, Borodovsky JT, Lee DC, Sargent JD. "Online survey characterizing vaporizer use among cannabis users". *Drug Alcohol Depend* (2016):159:227-233. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2015.12.020.

Statistics Canada reported that an estimated 55% of the household spending on non-medical cannabis in British Columbia was in the illicit market. Illicit cannabis operators are not subject to the same high standards as legal businesses, illicit products often contain pesticides and other contaminants, and illicit sales do not contribute to tax revenues.<sup>20</sup>

Applying this data to our argument, this means that roughly 55% of vape and concentrate users are acquiring their cannabis via the black market. What's more concerning is that there is a massive influx of illicit market concentrates that do not take the required steps to eradicate any harmful chemicals, pesticides and materials compared to legal market concentrates.<sup>21</sup> As a result, black market shatter is not only lower in quality but is suspected to be the main cause of the medical epidemic of hospitalizations in recent years due to vaping.<sup>22</sup> If we allow for safe consumption with legal market concentrates in a cannabis consumption lounge, we promote safe access to products that have properly gone through the required safety checks and offset the risk of dangerous materials being consumed.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the examples given in this written submission, Burb is fully in support and believes in the positive impact safe, cannabis consumption spaces will have on the province of British Columbia. We believe that by making consumption lounges permissible only to legal cannabis retailers and implementing the correct ventilation and mechanical systems to reduce secondhand inhalation at retailer locations, the tourist and local economy will grow, as will the safe consumption of cannabis products. It is integral to the culture and community members within the cannabis industry that we have the ability and priority to operate consumption lounges as a means to reduce the stigma associated with this plant and to overturn the historical restrictions against cannabis.

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<sup>20</sup> "Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement." n.d. Accessed May 6, 2022. [https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711\\_Cannabis\\_Consumption\\_Discussion\\_Paper\\_PSSG\\_v5.pdf](https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711_Cannabis_Consumption_Discussion_Paper_PSSG_v5.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Yahagi, K. "Regulation on coexisting legal and illegal markets with quality differentiation". *Eur J Law Econ* 53, 235–259 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10657-022-09724-x>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.





## About the Canadian Cancer Society

The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) works tirelessly to save and improve lives. We fund the brightest minds in cancer research. We provide a compassionate information and support system for all those affected by cancer, from coast to coast and for all types of cancer. As the voice for Canadians who care about cancer, we work with governments to establish health policies to prevent cancer and better support those living with the disease. No other organization does all that we do to improve lives today and to change the future of cancer forever. With 2 in 5 Canadians expected to develop cancer in their lifetime, it is vital we work together to strengthen our efforts to reduce the cancer burden in Canada and British Columbia (BC).

CCS is also a member of the Clean Air Coalition BC and BC Alliance for Healthy Living Society (BCAHL), organizations which through leadership and collaborative action, aim to build greater understanding of the health hazards of smoking and support tobacco-control related activities in BC.

## Recommendations

CCS appreciates the opportunity to submit feedback as part of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's non-medical cannabis consumption space consultation process. As the province looks to how it can approach the work around cannabis consumption spaces and their regulation, CCS recommends that the government:

- 1. Draw upon the extensive and successful work done on tobacco regulations in developing regulations around cannabis consumption spaces and**
- 2. Prohibit the smoking and vaping of cannabis in the same places where tobacco smoke is prohibited, whether through provincial legislation or municipal bylaws.**

## Background

Currently, there is a lack of clear evidence on the effects of cannabis use on the body, and there is limited understanding of the cancer risks associated with long-term recreational cannabis use and exposure to second-hand cannabis smoke. Due to this dearth of evidence, CCS is concerned that long-term cannabis smoking may lead to an increased risk of cancer, particularly cancers of the lung, neck, oral and testes. Overall, CCS encourages federal and provincial governments to support continued research into the health effects of long-term cannabis use.

Given the above, a more cautious approach is warranted when it comes to the regulation and consideration of new cannabis consumption spaces. As has been demonstrated in the realm of tobacco control, public behaviours and policies can become entrenched over time, even in light of evidence of adverse health risks, and once those policies are in place, rolling back them back can take years, or as is the case of tobacco, decades. As a general approach, CCS recommends that:



- **In developing regulations around cannabis consumption spaces, the Government of British Columbia should draw upon the extensive and successful work done on tobacco regulations.**

Of particular concern, is the potential impact increasing the number of regulated cannabis consumption spaces may have on tobacco consumption and smoking/vaping behaviours in the province. From the consultation discussion paper, we know that almost one-third of British Columbians nineteen and older have reported using cannabis over the past year, and that the most common method of cannabis consumption in BC is smoking (72.9%).<sup>1</sup> A number of studies have also demonstrated links between cannabis and tobacco use, with one study showing that 67% of tobacco users have also used cannabis<sup>2</sup>, while another study of Ontario students found that 92% of tobacco users in 2011 also used cannabis (up from 16% in 1991)<sup>3</sup>. Given this connection between cannabis smoking/vaping and tobacco, CCS is concerned that creating new cannabis consumption spaces may renormalize smoking/vaping, increase second-hand-smoke exposure, and ultimately prove difficult to regulate and enforce. Consequently, CCS recommends that:

- **The smoking and vaping of cannabis is prevented in the same places where tobacco smoke is prohibited, whether the ban on smoking is by provincial legislation or municipal bylaw**

## Renormalizing smoking/vaping

Since the legalization of recreational cannabis in Canada, it remains unclear what impact increased rates of cannabis smoking/vaping has had on rates of tobacco use across the country. Further complicating any analysis of this is the effect the COVID-19 pandemic has had on smoking behaviours. For example, while there has been a downward trend in smoking rates during the pandemic, this may be attributed to personal efforts to decrease one's own risk of COVID-19<sup>4</sup>. Likewise, 22% of Canadians reported less cannabis consumption due to reduced hours of Cannabis stores, inability to socialize, and anxiety, while 22% of Canadians reported an increase in consumption due to boredom, stress, and anxiety<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, based on the fact that "increased alcohol and tobacco availability, exposure, and social acceptance can lead to higher rates of substance use"<sup>6</sup> there is a concern that increased use of smoking/vaping cannabis may renormalize smoking/vaping behaviour in general and result in a reversal

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. 2022. *Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement: Discussion Paper*. Pg 5. Available at [https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711\\_Cannabis\\_Consumption\\_Discussion\\_Paper\\_PSSG\\_v5.pdf](https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/741/2022/04/8711_Cannabis_Consumption_Discussion_Paper_PSSG_v5.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Leos-Toro C, Reid JL, Madill CL, Rynard VL, Manske SR, Hammond D. 2017. *Cannabis in Canada - Tobacco Use in Canada: Patterns and Trends, 2017 Edition, Special Supplement*. Waterloo, ON: Propel Centre for Population Health Impact, University of Waterloo. Available at <http://davidhammond.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017-Cannabis-and-Tobacco-Use-Report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> CBC News. June 2021. *How the pandemic impacted vaping and smoking rates – and why it showed vaping is 'here to stay'*. Available at <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/whitecoat/how-the-pandemic-impacted-vaping-and-smoking-rates-and-why-it-showed-vaping-is-here-to-stay-1.6068729>

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Health. 2020. Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020: Summary Results. Available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/research-data/canadian-cannabis-survey-2020-summary.html>

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Public Safety. *Discussion Paper*. Pg 5



of tobacco control efforts. This is supported by the *Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020*, which has shown that “social acceptability of occasional or regular use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis was higher among people who indicated using cannabis in the past 12 months compared to those who did not report cannabis use.”<sup>7</sup>

There is a large body of evidence that shows that “smoking norms influence smoking behaviour”<sup>8</sup>. This is particularly true when it comes to youth where smoking/vaping can be normalized in social circles, and where peer approval of smoking/vaping is one contributing factor for non-users to begin, with one study showing that half of youth had friends who smoke or vape.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the goal of restrictions on vaping advertising and promotion currently in place in BC is to limit social exposure of smoking/vaping use among youth, with the general consensus being that reduced exposure to smoking behaviours can curb use among youth.

Renormalizing smoking/vaping can also act as a barrier for existing users to quit. Around 470,000 British Columbians still smoke tobacco. Among Canadians who do smoke, 57% seriously consider quitting and are looking for tools to help them<sup>10</sup>. Smelling smoke or seeing people smoking outdoors makes it hard for people who are trying to quit smoking and may trigger relapse. Studies show that when smoking bans have been implemented, many people who smoke have chosen to quit or cut back.<sup>11</sup> Increasing social spaces where smoking/vaping cannabis is permitted may increase social pressures for individuals who want to quit to continue smoking.

One note is that there are many municipal bylaws in the lower mainland as well as the Capital Regional District that prohibit smoking on restaurant/bar patios. But there is no provincial legislation yet that does this, though many other provinces/territories do. Provincial legislation should specify that smoking/vaping of cannabis is banned in any location where smoking of tobacco is banned, whether by provincial legislation or municipal bylaw.

## Difficulty in regulation & enforcement

Another concern is in regards to the regulation and enforcement of new consumption spaces, particularly because it can be difficult to differentiate between cannabis smoke and tobacco smoke. The high number of cannabis smokers who also smoke tobacco is indicative of the fact that these substances are likely to be used in the same spaces. Added to this is the fact that many cannabis smokers may mix

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<sup>7</sup> Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020.

<sup>8</sup> David Hammond et. al. 2019. *Social norms towards smoking and vaping and associations with product use among youth in England, Canada, and the US*. Drug and Alcohol Dependence (205), pg 7

<sup>9</sup> Hammond et. al. *Social norms towards smoking and vaping*. Pg 7.

<sup>10</sup> University of Waterloo. *Tobacco use in Canada: Quitting smoking*. Available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/tobacco-use-canada/quitting-smoking>

<sup>11</sup> University of Waterloo. April 2021. *Canada-wide ban on menthol cigarettes leads to significant increases in quitting among smokers*. Available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/news/media/canada-wide-ban-menthol-cigarettes-leads-significant>

tobacco and cannabis when smoking, with data from a Ontario study showing that 32% of past cannabis users mixed tobacco and cannabis.<sup>12</sup>

Given the difficulty in differentiating between cannabis smoke and tobacco smoke, businesses would be ill-equipped to enforce existing restrictions on tobacco within their designated consumption space. This is especially true for outdoor spaces where smoking/vaping of cannabis would be permitted. One proposal from the engagement discussion paper suggests an outdoor cannabis garden at a music festival as a potential consumption site, however if a public-park that is smoke-free had a cannabis garden it remains unclear how organizers could distinguish between tobacco and cannabis smokers, or nicotine or cannabis vapors or even enforce tobacco restrictions.

## Increased second-hand smoke exposure

Cannabis smoke contains many of the same carcinogens as tobacco smoke. These carcinogens include phenolics, heavy metals, aromatic amines, carbonyls, and other miscellaneous organics<sup>13</sup>. While the long-term health effects of cannabis use on the lungs remains unclear, cannabis smoking can be associated with respiratory illness. Reported symptoms of cannabis users include “coughing, wheezing, sore throat, chest tightness, and hoarse voice,” and “the potential for harm to the lungs, airways and immune systems of people who smoke or vape cannabis should be of concern to anyone who inhales cannabis.”<sup>14</sup> This also remains true for those who inhale second-hand cannabis smoke. Public spaces have been identified as the most common place of second-hand smoke exposure (36%), both for users and non-users, while only 19% of Canadians reported second-hand smoke exposure in their homes<sup>15</sup>. Increasing the number of public consumption spaces available for smoking increases the exposure of the public within those spaces of second-hand cannabis smoke, which could potentially worsen health outcomes. Prohibiting the smoking/vaping of cannabis to the same spaces smoking/vaping of tobacco/nicotine use is prohibited can help ensure that second-hand smoke exposure rates do not increase.

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<sup>12</sup> Navitha Jayakumar et.al. Jan 2021. Co-use and Mixing Tobacco With Cannabis Among Ontario Adults. *Nicotine Tob Res* 23(1): 171-178.

<sup>13</sup> Renard, Justine. 2020. *Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Respiratory and Cardiovascular Effects of Cannabis Smoking*. Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. Available at <https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2020-07/CCSA-Respiratory-Cardiovascular-Effects-of-Cannabis-Smoking-Report-2020-en.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2020-07/CCSA-Respiratory-Cardiovascular-Effects-of-Cannabis-Smoking-Report-2020-en.pdf>, pg 11

<sup>15</sup> Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020.



Canadian  
Cancer  
Society

## Conclusion

Given the lack of clear evidence on the effects of cannabis use on the body, and limited understanding of the cancer risks associated with long-term recreational cannabis use, as well as the potential implications increased cannabis use can have on tobacco control efforts, a cautious approach is warranted in the regulation of cannabis consumption spaces. Until the health implications of long-term cannabis use is better understood, the BC government should:

- 1. Draw upon the extensive and successful work done on tobacco regulations in developing regulations around cannabis consumption spaces**
- 2. Prohibit the smoking and vaping of cannabis in the same places where tobacco smoke is prohibited, whether the ban on smoking is by provincial legislation or municipal bylaw**

Charles Aruliah  
Manager, Advocacy  
Canadian Cancer Society  
[charles.aruliah@cancer.ca](mailto:charles.aruliah@cancer.ca)



**The voice of live  
music in Canada**  
La voix du spectacle  
musical au Canada

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Honourable Mike Farnworth  
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
PO Box 9282 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9J7

Dear Minister Farnworth,

My name is Erin Benjamin. I am the President & CEO of the Canadian Live Music Association (CLMA). The CLMA is the voice of Canada's vibrant live music industry, working to advance and promote its many economic, social and cultural benefits. The CLMA was founded in 2014 as a champion for the collective mission of the live music industry including concert promoters, festivals, presenters, venues, talent agencies and industry suppliers. Our advocacy efforts focus on policy advancement, public awareness, research, and activities that unite, highlight and galvanize the work of the live music sector. We represent hundreds of members from across the country, many based in British Columbia.

We would like to thank the government for fostering the conversation around the growth and development of the recreational cannabis spaces, as well as the opportunity to add our perspective to the ongoing regulatory and legislative process regarding cannabis products and sales.

The live music sector supports government facilitating additional points of sale of recreational cannabis for consumption in establishments like lounges, cafes and certain areas of music venues in British Columbia. This would allow enhanced regulation, promote safe consumption and provide education and awareness opportunities for British Columbians wishing to consume recreational cannabis. It would decrease illicit market activity and increase the opportunity for new business growth, job creation and economic impact across the province.

We also believe that cannabis should be allowed to be sold at festivals and events. We believe that with appropriate rules and regulations, such as specific hours of sale, requiring licensed 'budtenders', etc., these types of events would be a perfect and safe place to implement specific consumption spaces. We also believe that all types of cannabis should be able to be consumed at festivals and events.

We do not feel there are any 'additional risks' created by cannabis consumption spaces, however the opportunities (economic, education, job creation and others) are exponential.

Cannabis use happens at live music events. Regulations, frameworks, programs and other opportunities that allow the live music industry to openly and proactively partner with government in the sale and safe, regulated consumption of recreational cannabis is a natural next-step in the evolution of legalized cannabis. People need to know how to properly and safely consume legal cannabis, and live music events are both **obvious and practical places** for exchange of information, dialogue and awareness-raising, as well as sales.

Municipalities are another key stakeholder in the evolutionary process, and the CLMA strongly supports their involvement in the dialogue as it continues. CLMA members have established relationships with their local municipalities and together with the Province would make a strong, strategic alliance moving forward.

Recognizing the Government has not made any commitments with regard to a timeline for a response to consultation findings, we note that the 2022 summer festival season is almost upon us. Should the Government wish to establish a safe and regulated consumption space framework quickly, we would be pleased to support any initiative or action to leverage all opportunities across this important sector. In 2017, BC's live music companies supported 12,010 FTEs, \$619.3 million in BC-based labour income, and **\$815.8 million in GDP** to the provincial economy. Tourists visiting BC for a music-related events contributed a further 2,900 FTEs, \$99.1 million in BC-based labour income, and \$168.7 million in GDP.<sup>i</sup> Today, live music is regaining its pre-pandemic momentum - creating jobs, anticipating literally millions of people attending a wide variety of events year-round, and especially during the summer months. In such uncertain times, **live music is an essential economic, social and cultural driver of British Columbia's high quality of life.**

Once again, we wish to thank the Government for its leadership and the opportunity to contribute to this important dialogue. We are committed to working with all stakeholders to help imagine and enforce a policy and regulatory framework that proactively safeguards youth, while ensuring that age-of-consent consumers can source and use product legally and safely.

Sincerely,



**Ms. Erin Benjamin**

President & CEO

[ebenjamin@canadianlivemusic.ca](mailto:ebenjamin@canadianlivemusic.ca)

613.769.5559

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<sup>i</sup> [Here, The Beat: The Economic Impact of Live Music in BC](#) – Aug. 2018 CLMA (formerly known as Music Canada Live)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing this to express my position on the new Cannabis distribution outlets being considered.

I am a Cultivation/Processor License Holder and have been since the inception of the program in 2014.

I believe that farm gate sales are essential for the industry as it is very similar to the wine industry. We are often contacted by consumers of our products who express their desire to have a tasting room and farm gate sales.

Cannabis production has been studied by the agriculture experts at the ALC and it was determined that it is an approved agricultural crop that must be permitted to produce on ALR land.

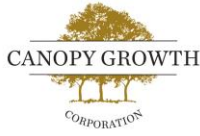
According to the ALC rules every single agricultural crop that is permitted to be produced in the province can also be sold from the farm. There is no justification to treat Cannabis any different.

It's time to end the hysteria and treat this plant like other non toxic natural health products. It's not a narcotic and never was despite being categorized as on for many decades by our trusted doctors.

Sincerely,

Alon Amit  
CEO  
CANANDIA





Via email: [Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

May 9, 2022

## Introduction

At the outset, on behalf of the over 3,000 employees of Canopy Growth, we would like to commend the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General for undertaking the engagement on Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Spaces.

As a producer of cannabis beverages and edibles, with a licensed production facility in British Columbia, we are heartened by the government's willingness to consider the creation of consumption spaces and appreciate the forthright and balanced consultation process that you have undertaken.

British Columbia has a storied past with cannabis, and it is fitting that the province consider how to expand the choices given to adult consumers who choose to participate in the legal market. It is widely acknowledged, that while many British Columbians celebrated the legalization of non-medical cannabis in 2018, many opted to continue to make illicit purchases and the unregulated market continues to thrive.

We agree with the principles expressed in the Discussion Paper and support the creation of a consumption framework that gives adults in British Columbia the ability to make responsible choices about where they can legally consume cannabis. However, the framework should embrace a broad application, embracing both licensee and special occasion permittees and should be applicable to any setting that conforms to regulated age-gating and safe consumption practices.

## Economic Impact

The creation of safe and regulated cannabis consumption spaces has the potential to make positive economic contributions to government, the cannabis sector, and small and medium sized businesses.

Deloitte Canada has estimated that the Canadian cannabis edibles market alone is estimated to be worth at least \$1.6 billion a year, with cannabis-infused beverages worth an additional \$529 million<sup>1</sup>. This is a significant market which can provide BC's hospitality and tourism entrepreneurs with considerable opportunities to include cannabis food and beverages in their offerings and for new businesses to be created.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.deloitte.com/ca/en/pages/consumer-industrial-products/articles/nurturing-new-growth.html>

Additionally, consumption spaces can create tourism and hospitality jobs and a positive impact on small businesses and sectors particularly hard hit by the pandemic- like the live music industry- which stand to benefit tremendously from the opportunity to diversify their offerings.

The creation of a framework for consumption spaces has the potential to educate consumers and generate brand awareness for legal products and contributes to a sustainable legal cannabis market for producers of all sizes. It should be recognized that legal cannabis sales generate revenue for the province – revenue that provides essential services to residents.

Lastly, cannabis has grown to be an important agricultural crop and significant economic driver, particularly in some regions. BC's farm receipts from past years validate this as the annual growth in cannabis cash receipts in British Columbia far outpaced growth in other agricultural sectors<sup>2</sup>. Any measures which further advance the cannabis sector – like consumption spaces – contribute to the province's agricultural strengths.

### **Health and Public Safety**

Simply stated, consumption spaces support health and public safety objectives by creating safe, regulated, and legal places for the consumption of cannabis.

Licensed consumption spaces are aligned with the purpose of the Cannabis Act, which is to protect public health and safety and, to provide access to a quality-controlled supply of cannabis and to reduce illicit activities. They are also aligned with the Provincial goals guiding the cannabis regulatory framework.

Licensed Producers are committed to the already strict federal rules regarding the marketing and advertising of cannabis sales, particularly as it relates to protecting youth, which is deeply embedded within the Cannabis Act and provincial regulations. Protecting youth is unquestionably at the core of our operations, consumption spaces would not differ, and strict age verification practices would be non-negotiable.

It is widely acknowledged that illicit sources continue to be prevalent in BC. Regulated consumption spaces serve two purposes in promoting legal sales. First, federal regulations require that it be sold in original sealed packaging – eliminating any questions regarding the provenance of the product and whether the source is licit. Secondly, studies of illicit cannabis products in BC and Ontario confirms that these products not only grossly overstate the THC content of the product, but also contain dangerous levels of illicit pesticides – which puts consumers of illicit products at risk<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200526/dq200526b-eng.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PSSG0050-001115#:~:text=As%20part%20of%20a%20pilot,testing%20lab%20in%20February%202021.>

<https://opp.ca/news/#/viewmediakit/619e6ac92ebc7>

Bringing consumption into regulated spaces promotes legal sales and reduces the risk associated with illicit sources.

There are several best practices gained from responsible alcohol serving that can be deployed in a consumption setting to prevent drug-affected driving. Specifically, provinces have introduced tough sanctions to keep drug impaired drivers off the road. Responsible use and public awareness campaigns have proven to be effective in deterring impaired driving, for example, “federal survey data tends to indicate that public education and awareness campaigns conducted nationally by Public Safety Canada and in provinces and territories appear to have effectively changed Canadians’ perceptions around driving after cannabis use, with an increasing number of respondents agreeing that cannabis use impairs driving abilities.”<sup>4</sup>

Not unlike the sale of beverage alcohol, responsible serving models can be developed to recognize signs of intoxication and ensure that consumers are not over-served. By licensing spaces, consumption is brought into a supervised and regulated environment (vs. public spaces, sidewalks, or home consumption). The concept would bring some parity with beverage alcohol – both are legal substances for adult use, but one has an extensive model built around consuming it and often in non-age gated spaces.

The viewpoint that special event / occasion permitting may provide the lowest risk framework overlooks the experience, accountability, and regulatory rigour that a licensee can provide. Licensees are uniquely qualified to operate regulated, age verified premises and are experienced in safe consumption practices.

### **Cannabis Consumption Spaces Support the Legal Market**

The legal market continues to compete on an uneven basis with the illicit market and consumption spaces will help support the legal framework in a safe and regulated environment.

As referenced in the discussion paper, in BC, 55% of the \$936M in household spending on non-medical cannabis was in illicit market. It is well known; illicit sales are unregulated and have no safety standards to adhere to and they do not contribute to tax revenues.

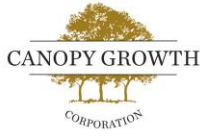
Lastly, consumption spaces offer a new experience for consumers who have not elected to participate in the legal market. And in the case of cannabis beverages, a consumption space offers products unique to legal market.

### **Co-locating Cannabis and Alcohol**

With the proper controls in place, adult consumers should be given the ability to choose between alcohol and cannabis in the same setting. Authorizing for co-location allows for consumer to choose between alcohol and cannabis, recognizes that not all adult consumers prefer beverage alcohol and brings parity to choices for responsible adults.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrccs/pblctns/2021-did-fad/index-en.aspx#s1>



Co-use can be managed with the proper controls to prevent it. Beverage licensees, for example, are experienced in serving responsibly and managing regulated, age-gated environments and have the necessary understanding of how to promote safe consumption practices.

When considering the development of this framework, the economic dimensions must be considered. Namely, the economic viability of this model relies on making available other items, allowing licensees to provide customers with choices.

### **About Canopy Growth Corporation**

As the first publicly traded, federally regulated, and licensed cannabis producer in North America, Canopy Growth embraces the opportunity and responsibility to lead the cannabis industry forward with integrity and intention. Canopy takes pride in our robust and stringent product safety controls, and responsible consumption education programs.

Since 2013, DOJA has proudly grown premium, hand-crafted flower in the Okanagan Valley.



CITY OF CHILLIWACK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

June 10, 2022

Via Email: [Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

BC Cannabis Secretariat  
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
PO Box 9237  
Victoria, BC V8W 9J1

Re: BC Public Engagement – Cannabis Consumption Spaces

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity for the City of Chilliwack (the “City”) to provide feedback regarding BC’s public and stakeholder engagement on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces. The City currently regulates smoking in outdoor public spaces per the Outdoor Public Spaces Smoking Regulation Bylaw 2015, No. 4138. Smoking is prohibited within parks, playgrounds and outdoor public spaces, dog off-leash parks, within 15m of the entrance to a public pool and ice arena, within the area of a trail, and within 10m of a bus stop. Smoking includes cannabis, whether natural or synthetic, in any manner or in any form. Feedback received from Bylaw Enforcement, Recreation and Culture, Operations, and Fire Departments are that cannabis consumption spaces not be permitted in public spaces given nuisance, fire risk and enforcement factors associated with smoking.

While allowing cannabis consumption may impact economic and business viability, until such time as issues concerning drug-affected driving, co-use of cannabis and alcohol, increased rates of cannabis use and nuisance issues arising from smoking and vaping can be prevented, expanding cannabis use through consumption spaces is not supported by the City at this time.

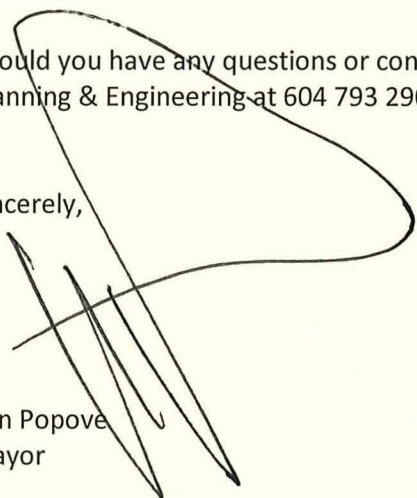
In addition, while the Province indicates they will require a positive recommendation from the Indigenous nation or local government for the area where any consumption space may be located, it is anticipated there will be an increased burden of regulating and enforcing these spaces that will fall to the local government to address. The City already experiences challenges enforcing the Outdoor Public Spaces Smoking Regulation Bylaw and is concerned about the increased calls for service and public expectations surrounding any proposed cannabis consumption spaces. The burden on municipalities is further exacerbated by a lack of revenue sharing by the province with local governments to address incremental short- and long-term costs associated with cannabis legalization in general.



Please be advised, the City of Chilliwack is not supportive of non-medical cannabis consumption spaces. Smoking and vaping of any substance in public spaces can create a nuisance, significant fire risk, and enforcement challenges. Given Provincial priorities to protect children and youth, promote public health and safety, reduce the illegal cannabis market, and keep our roads safe, allowing cannabis consumption spaces is contrary to those goals and is not recommended until such time as challenges concerning drug-affected driving, co-use of cannabis and alcohol, increased rates of cannabis use and nuisance issues arising from smoking and vaping can be adequately addressed without placing further burden on municipalities with respect to regulation and enforcement especially in the absence of revenue sharing to compensate local governments for incremental costs and responsibilities related to the legalization of cannabis.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact David Blain, Director of Planning & Engineering at 604 793 2906 or [blain@chilliwack.com](mailto:blain@chilliwack.com).

Sincerely,



Ken Popove  
Mayor



City of  
Richmond



TO: MAYOR & EACH  
COUNCILLOR  
FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

**Memorandum**  
Community Safety Division

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**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**From:** Douglas Liu  
Acting Manager, Community Safety Policy and Programs  
**Date:** April 26, 2022  
**File:** 09-5350-00/Vol 01  
**Re:** **City of Richmond Response to the Provincial Engagement on Cannabis Consumption Spaces**

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The purpose of this memo is to provide Council with the City's submission for the Provincial survey on Cannabis Consumption Spaces.

On April 6, 2022, the City was notified by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) of a Provincial engagement survey on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces. City staff conducted research on cannabis policies in Richmond and will provide the response narrative in Attachment 1 as the City's feedback on the engagement survey.

At this time, no proposed regulation and legislative reform has been provided to the City on cannabis consumption spaces. Therefore, the extent and scope of de-regulated activities are yet to be determined. Staff will report back when the Province establishes criteria for cannabis consumption spaces and its associated impacts.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Douglas Liu at [dliu@richmond.ca](mailto:dliu@richmond.ca).

Douglas Liu  
Acting Manager, Community Safety Policy and Programs  
604-276-4004

Att 1: City of Richmond Response to the Provincial Engagement on Cannabis Consumption Spaces

pc: SMT

PHOTOCOPIED

APR 27 2022

& DISTRIBUTED



May 9, 2022

Cannabis Secretariat

Email: [Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

Re: Cannabis Consumption Spaces – Consultation and Feedback

Empirical research and evidence are mixed about the benefits of recreational cannabis use on the body. There is limited understanding of the cancer risks associated with long-term cannabis use and exposure to second-hand cannabis smoke. For heart disease and stroke, there is some research that shows cannabis use could lead to increased cardiovascular emergencies, myocardial infarction, cardiomyopathy, arrhythmias, heart failure, stroke and cardiac arrest with long-term use.<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>

Since the long-term health effects of cannabis consumption need further study and given past experience with the health consequences of tobacco use, the Clean Air Coalition of BC, which includes the Heart and Stroke Foundation, BC and Yukon and the Canadian Cancer Society, BC and Yukon, encourages the provincial government proceed with caution in moving forward to extend and create cannabis consumption spaces. It is in this light that we provide feedback to the three key questions raised during the Cannabis Consumption Spaces public engagement process.

1. *Do you agree with the principles outlined in the [discussion paper](#)? Why or why not?*

Of the five principles, the one of greatest concern to the Clean Air Coalition is the first one; to prioritize public health and safety. Cannabis along with tobacco are two of the most used psychoactive substances used around the world. Research indicates up to 90% of cannabis users are also tobacco users and cannabis use during adolescence and young childhood is associated with increased risk of initiation of tobacco use and nicotine dependence.<sup>5</sup> We are pleased to see that indoor smoking and vaping of cannabis products would not be permitted and this would not change from the current regulatory regime.

However, the Clean Air Coalition is concerned that allowing cannabis consumption spaces will inadvertently renormalize the use of tobacco use. While indoor consumption places will not allow

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<sup>1</sup> Lindsay AC, Foale RA, Warren O, Henry JA. Cannabis as a precipitant of cardiovascular emergencies. *International Journal of Cardiology*. 2005;104(2):230-232. doi:10.1016/j.ijcard.2004.10.038

<sup>2</sup> Aryana A, Williams MA. Marijuana as a trigger of cardiovascular events: Speculation or scientific certainty? *International Journal of Cardiology*. 2007;118(2):141-144. doi:10.1016/j.ijcard.2006.08.001

<sup>3</sup> Parekh T, Pemmasani S, Desai R. Marijuana use among young adults (18–44 years of age) and risk of stroke: a behavioral risk factor surveillance system survey analysis. *Stroke*. November 2019. doi:10.1161/STROKEAHA.119.027828

<sup>4</sup> Jones RT. Cardiovascular system effects of marijuana. *The Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*. 2002;42(S1):58S-63S. doi:10.1002/j.1552-4604.2002.tb06004.x

<sup>5</sup> Agrawal, A, & Lynskey, M. T. Tobacco and cannabis co-occurrence: Does route of administration matter? (English). *Drug And Alcohol Dependence* 2009; 99(1-3), 240-247



## Attachment 1

### City Response to the Provincial Engagement Questionnaire on Cannabis Consumption Space

*1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?*

#### City's response:

Based on the review of the Province's Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement discussion paper (Discussion Paper), dated April 2022, the City agrees that amendments to the provincial cannabis legislation shall be respectful of local government control over land-use and business licensing. Under City's zoning bylaws, retail cannabis activities (such as sale and distribution) are not permitted. The City asks that any legislation amendments on cannabis consumption spaces to continue to respect the principle for local government decisions and control on land-use and business licensing.

An analysis of the Discussion Paper outlined various risk factors of cannabis consumption spaces that would adversely impact health and safety in the community. The City is concerned of the prevailing five risk factors, as identified in the Discussion Paper, on allowing cannabis consumption spaces:

1. **Increased rate of cannabis use.** Cannabis consumptions spaces would provide greater public access and exposure to cannabis, leading to increased cannabis-use that results in negative health and safety outcomes.
2. **Increased risk for youth and young children on cannabis edible products.** Cannabis edibles present a serious risk in terms of encouraging youth consumption of cannabis. Extent edible products range from beverage to processed treats such as cookies, chocolates, cotton candy, jelly beans or soft candy. These cannabis edibles are highly desirable and attractive to youth. There are numerous cases reported in the media of children and pets admitted to the hospital due to unexpected consumption of cannabis edibles. Cannabis consumption spaces would thereby increase the exposure and attraction of edibles to youth and young children. Medical research suggests that cannabis would impair cognitive performance of youth/adolescent and that chronic use of cannabis is at risk for long-lasting cognitive impairments.
3. **Risk of dual consumption of alcohol and cannabis at the same time.** In alignment with public health and safety stakeholders, the City is opposed for cannabis and alcohol to be sold and consumed at the same location. Dual consumption greatly increases the severity of the risk of impaired driving and negative health impacts on users.
4. **Increased drug-affected driving.** Cannabis consumption spaces would lead to increased drug-affected driving due to new opportunities for people to consume cannabis outside their homes. Based on the feedback from the local police force, Richmond RCMP, cannabis consumption spaces would increase drug-affected driving as a direct result of more people consuming cannabis and increased opportunity for consumption in public spaces. There is

currently no “Approved Screening Device” (ASD) that could detect impairment from cannabis use. Although there are other road-side methods to detect cannabis impairment, these methods do not exhibit the same efficiency and timeliness to test for cannabis impairment for enforcement campaigns, such as CounterAttack<sup>1</sup>.

5. **Increased second-hand smoke and smoking in general.** The Discussion Paper mentioned potential deregulated activities for cannabis consumptions for outdoor events and festivals, such as allowing “cannabis garden”. The City is strongly opposed of smoking and vaping of any kind, including cannabis, in any outdoor events and festivals. The City invested considerably in anti-smoking through education, outreach, engagement and enforcement with an objective to eliminate the negative health effects and public nuisance of smoking and second-hand smoke. By allowing outdoor cannabis consumption, such as cannabis garden, it would diminished years of public education on the negative health impact of smoking and second-hand smoke. More concerning is that cannabis would also cause impairment for people who inhaled second-hand cannabis smoke. As outdoor events and festivals may be visited by families with young children, youth and adolescence, impairment from second-hand cannabis smoke is a serious concern that would result in unintended consequences for people who do not or do not intend to use cannabis, but happened to be affected by second-hand cannabis smoke.

Finally, since the legalization of cannabis, the City continues to experience additional ongoing costs on enforcement of cannabis activities. As outlined in the UBCM’s resolution on Cannabis Taxation Revenue Sharing<sup>2</sup>, the City has yet to receive revenue sharing as originally proposed in the legalization framework. Therefore, it is critically important that cannabis tax revenue sharing with municipalities be established prior to further deregulation of cannabis activities, such as consumptions spaces.

*2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?*

City’s response:

The City request that any provincial cannabis legislation amendments be respectful of local government control over land-use and business licensing decisions.

*3. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?*

City’s response:

The City opposes all types of cannabis consumption spaces as identified in the Discussion Paper based on the prevailing risk factors identified in questions one, above.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/road-safety-auto-crime/counterattack>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/resolutions/resolutions-database/cannabis-taxation-revenue-sharing>

smoking and the inhalation of second-hand cannabis smoke – and focus on products that are ingested - we are concerned about the unintended consequences of children and youth seeing the consumption spaces as ‘adult only’ places and the appearance of seeing smoking in outdoor venue areas. It is difficult for anyone to see if someone is smoking or vaping cannabis or tobacco. Adults are role models for children and youth, and if these young people see adults engaged in smoking in any way, this will serve to reinforce that smoking is a permissible adult activity sanctioned by government.

After consultation, if the government is intent on creating cannabis consumption spaces, we strongly encourage that a comprehensive regulatory and licensing system is put in place that includes education, testing, enforcement and random compliance checks to ensure those that provide and manage cannabis consumption spaces have “Cannabis Consumption” educated employees and staff. Other jurisdictions, such as Alberta and Nunavut, have Retailer Tool Kits for the sale of tobacco and vaping products. The Clean Air Coalition would be pleased to work on such a program for the provincial government if it decides to move forward with the creation of these spaces.

*2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?*

On a practical level, the Clean Air Coalition would prefer to see only consumption sites that permit ingestion of cannabis products and no allowance for any smoking of the cannabis products. If outdoor spaces are permitted, we would strongly encourage they be adult only venues where children and youth will not see adults smoking.

*What would make this space economically feasible as a business?*

The Clean Air Coalition has no comment.

*How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?*

As noted above, we recommend the government establish a comprehensive regulatory and licensing system for prospective cannabis consumption operators to ensure they understand the health and social effects of cannabis use. It is here that issues of avoiding driving while impaired could be addressed as a prevention measure by the cannabis consumption operator.

*3. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?*

The Clean Air Coalition is pleased that smoking of cannabis products indoors are not being considered, however we would caution that with some venues, such as special outdoor concerts, it will be difficult to envision cannabis not being smoked beyond the cannabis garden or consumption area. Monitoring and enforcement of outdoor areas will be difficult pending the size of the venue. Moreover, it will be challenging to enforce no smoking of tobacco products as well. It may become a free-for-all situation, especially when there are potentially hundreds, or thousands of people at an outdoor event.

Finally, the consultation paper notes there is a role for First Nations and municipal governments in the process. We are concerned that, just as with varying tobacco control bylaws by municipality and regional district, there could be a patchwork of regulations that occur across the province around

cannabis consumption spaces. We would encourage there be consistency with the regulations and there be a provincial licensing system put in place.

The Clean Air Coalition recognizes the efforts of the provincial government to decrease tobacco use in the general population and many gains have been made to encourage reduced tobacco consumption. We encourage the government to take a cautious and measured approach that relies on evidence as it moves forward with cannabis consumption sites.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JB' or similar, with a large loop and a trailing line.

Jack Boomer  
Director, Clean Air Coalition of BC

cc: Charles Aruliah, Manager, Advocacy  
Canadian Cancer Society

Mary Stambulic, Manager, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations  
Heart and Stroke Foundation



## **Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement**

Prepared by Sarah Campbell for  
**Craft Cannabis Association of British Columbia**

For the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

May 9, 2022

Contact Email: [hello@craftcannabis.ca](mailto:hello@craftcannabis.ca)  
Organization website: [www.craftcannabis.ca](http://www.craftcannabis.ca)

## **Executive Summary**

The Craft Cannabis Association of British Columbia (CCABC) is a non-profit society formed in 2016 to be a voice for small-scale cannabis producers. The association represents cultivators, processors, supporting businesses and consumers from across BC that want to ensure that high quality, locally produced craft cannabis is available in the legal market. Their mandate is to support small-scale independent cannabis businesses; provide a forum for information, education, discussion and guidance for the industry; and support the development of standards, regulations and policies.

### **Part A: General Principles**

We generally agree with the principles the Province is considering in their approach to allow non-medical consumption spaces.

### **Part B: Specific Examples, Opportunities and Challenges**

We outline several examples of consumption spaces with some explanation regarding what would make them economically viable and how particular challenges might be addressed.

### **Part C: Future Vision**

## **PART A: Provincial Approach to Cannabis Consumption Spaces**

We agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper:

### **Prioritize Public Health and Safety**

We agree that consumption spaces should be compatible with provincial health and safety objectives, including promoting responsible use. We understand that if the Province allows consumption spaces that key public health and safety precautions would continue to apply, including indoor smoking and vaping not being allowed in consumption spaces. However, we hope that this is a ‘start low and go slow’ approach.

### **Encourage Consumers to Transition to Regulated Products**

54% of consumers in the Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020 who reported that they used cannabis at least once in the last year purchased from a licensed source<sup>1</sup>. This number is up from the 37% the year before, but there is a significant portion of cannabis consumers who are still purchasing from an unregulated source. If transitioning consumers to regulated products is indeed important, then the Province must meet the consumer where they’re at. If rolled out with the consumer in mind, consumption sites can certainly appeal to consumers and encourage transition addressing public health and safety and providing the needed support to current licensed operators.

### **“Start Low and Go Slow”**

It makes sense to take a phased approach to consumption spaces and we agree that special events may be a good place to start. It is important to keep in mind that cannabis consumption is happening in many instances already and as we’ve seen with legalization in general there haven’t been too many surprises. The legal industry needs support as soon as possible if it is going to have any hope of long term success.

### **Collaborate with Indigenous Peoples**

Canada signed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2016 and the Province of BC has stated that it will fully implement the Declaration. Under the declaration, Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination, autonomy or self-government, maintain and strengthen their distinct institutions, and be involved in developing and determining economic and social programs affecting them. The new cannabis economy offers economic and social benefits and Indigenous peoples deserve to partake how they see fit. It will be important to work together to ensure a healthy, successful industry.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/research-data/canadian-cannabis-survey-2020-summary.html>

**Respect Local Control over Land Use Decisions**

Local governments provide a system where councils work together to maintain order, peace and good governance of their municipal districts, and land use regulations are the means by which local governments implement the vision described in their official community plans, regional growth strategies or other planning tools.

It is important to respect local control over land use decisions, however, it is equally important to ensure local governments are provided with the education/information and support they need to make the best decisions for the future health of their communities including the economic viability of the cannabis industry.



## **PART B: Specific Examples, Opportunities and Challenges**

Non-medical consumption spaces are integral to the growth of the industry, attracting both existing and new consumers by offering them the types of cannabis experiences they are looking for. The challenges associated could be mitigated through the educational opportunities, infrastructure and procedures already in place, and through new requirements of consumption site operators such as 'serving it right' certification.

### **Farmgate Experiences**

Farmgate experiences could include outdoor consumption areas including smoking and vaping as well as consumption of beverages, edibles and concentrates depending on the license holder's available products, and also what the Province's farmgate program will allow (a mix of on farm and off farm products for example). The farm may also wish to host special events like infused dinners and/or tastings.

### **Retail Experiences**

Consuming edibles/beverage samples inside cannabis retail stores.

### **Cannabis Lounges**

Consuming edibles, beverages, extracts served indoors in cafe/restaurant/bar type spaces alongside food.

### **Special Events - Cannabis Specific**

Cannabis specific events may include cannabis farmers markets, cannabis festivals, cannabis facility tours (non-farmgate), golf tournaments, cannabis infused meals. Indoor consumption of edibles, beverages, and concentrates allowed anywhere onsite. Smoking or vaping is allowed outdoors at such events. Temporary permits may be issued with associated risk mitigation measures.

### **Non-Cannabis Specific Events**

Non-cannabis specific events may include concerts, farmer's markets, golf tournaments, Indoor consumption of edibles, beverages, and concentrates allowed anywhere onsite (at least where food and drink are allowed). Smoking or vaping is allowed outdoors at such events, in a designated area if necessary. Temporary permits may be issued with associated risk mitigation measures.

### **Lodging**

Onsite consumption should be allowed at hotels in designated areas. All types of cannabis consumption (smoking/vaping/consuming edibles/beverages/concentrates) should be allowed at cannabis specific lodging such as at Bud&Breakfasts or some Airbnbs and/or hotels that allow it.

## **PART C: Future Vision**

### **Smoking/vaping**

Outdoor consumption sites are a start, however, it must be noted that cannabis consumers around the world prefer to inhale dried flower. In Canada, dried flower represented 63% of total sales in the September 2021 Health Canada Cannabis Market Overview, compared with just 20% edible sales<sup>2</sup>, and smoking (79%) was the most common method of cannabis consumption reported by people who use cannabis in Health Canada's Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020<sup>3</sup> compared to edibles (52%). This data is reflected similarly in other jurisdictions where cannabis has been made legal such as in California and Colorado.

Studies show that cannabis is much less harmful than both alcohol and tobacco<sup>4</sup> and adults deserve the opportunity to partake in a responsible manner. Tourists/visitors to BC will expect this simple activity to be allowed. In Barcelona, for example, indoor smoking is allowed and there are municipal directives in place to ensure proper ventilation.

### **Bring Your Own Weed**

We look forward to a time when restaurants/lounges and other consumption sites will allow consumers to "bring your own weed", similar to the current BYOB alcohol policy in BC.

### **Co-location of Cannabis and Alcohol**

Co-location should be allowed in the future.

### **Minors Allowed at some Consumption Sites**

We look forward to a time when minors may be allowed at some consumption sites (farmgate for example) not to consume of course, but to be with their families as has been allowed with alcohol.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/research-data/market.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/research-data/canadian-cannabis-survey-2020-summary.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4311234/>



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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
Province of British Columbia  
[Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

May 9, 2022

Re: Non-medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on B.C.'s decision on whether to allow public cannabis consumption spaces and, if they are allowed, how they should be regulated. Our responses to your questions are below.

*1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the [discussion paper](#)? Why or why not?*

**We agree that any form of smoking/vaping not be allowed in any indoor public space, including patios and adjacent outdoor spaces** (as per the BC Cannabis Control and Licensing Act). Prohibitions on indoor smoking and vaping are well established and offer protections against second hand smoke, the protection of safe and healthy working environments, and de-normalize smoking behaviours.<sup>i ii</sup> There is concern that any cannabis exemption to existing smoking or vaping regulations may be seen as a precedent for loosening tobacco restrictions and thereby rollback hard-won tobacco protections.<sup>iii</sup>

**We disagree with the idea of creating outdoor cannabis consumption sites for inhalable cannabis.**

Outdoor smoke-free spaces contribute to community health and safety.<sup>iv</sup> Smoke does not confine itself to restricted spaces. Designated smoking areas puts others at risk for second hand smoke, potentially exposes children and youth to smoking behaviours and may re-normalize smoking behaviours.

**We agree that there is substantial evidence that increased access and exposure to cannabis will increase adverse health and safety outcomes** including increased child and youth exposure to cannabis and, in the case of public consumption, increased impaired driving.

Protecting children and youth through regulation is well established by tobacco control efforts.<sup>v</sup> Smoke-free laws in public places where youth congregate (e.g. concerts, parks, sporting events etc.) are associated with lower initiation and use of cigarettes. Limiting places where cannabis can be seen, and/or consumed reduces second-hand exposure and limits youth exposure to substances as normal everyday activities, which may support youth to not use, delay first age of use, and/or use less. Limiting advertising, promotions and proximity to places where youth congregate (schools, parks etc.) will also support reducing youth exposure.<sup>vi</sup>

**We recommend ensuring significant regulation to protect children and youth by aligning public consumption of inhaled cannabis consistent with best practice comprehensive tobacco bylaw protections**, including: restrict indoor and outdoor public consumption, limit marketing,



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and limit youth exposure through limiting density and proximity of cannabis marketing, retail, and/or consumption locations.<sup>vii viii ix</sup>

The *Discussion Paper* describes economic opportunities that may help deter the illicit market:

*“Consumption spaces could create cannabis, tourism, and hospitality jobs... Consumption spaces could provide opportunities to educate consumers about cannabis, raise brand awareness for legal cannabis products, and generate excitement about BC’s legal industry... Consumption spaces could encourage consumers to choose legal sources and help increase the legal market’s share of the cannabis economy.”* This appears to confound deterring the illicit market with the increased commercialization of the legal market.

As is described in Health Canada’s framework for the legalization of cannabis in Canada, health and social harms are equally high either with a criminal market or with an unregulated legal market. If these two points are conceptualized as the top two points of a ‘U’ the bottom curve, describing a strictly regulated market, is considered optimal with fewest health and social harms. Increased commercialization increases harm.<sup>x</sup>

**We disagree with the confounding of deterring the illicit market, a primary goal of the Cannabis Act, with increased commercialization of the legal market.** Revenue generation and increased commercialization are not the intended goals of cannabis legalization.<sup>xi</sup> A legal market with strict regulations and significant limits on commercialization is the recommended framework to protect public health and safety.<sup>xii</sup>

## *2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?*

**We recommend that the BC government delay moving forward with cannabis consumption spaces and invest in a comprehensive health impact assessment** in order that the health impacts of this regulatory change can be fully understood and inform implementation.

Should the BC government move forward, **public cannabis consumption spaces must act to minimize health harms, not contribute to the potential re-normalization of smoking behaviours, and must proactively protect children and youth from the normalization of substance use.** The following reflect the best advice currently available on limiting health and social harms of cannabis consumption spaces and are strongly recommend:<sup>xiii xiv xv</sup>

- Allow only beverages, edibles and extracts (no inhalable cannabis)
- Are age restricted (no one under 19 allowed entrance or service)
- Do not co-locate with alcohol
- Establish server-training requirements that address over serving, time delayed effects, recognition of impairment etc.
- Have impaired driving and over consumption procedures (reporting, arranging alternative transportation) and messaging
- Display health warnings (e.g. Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines; cannabis use and pregnancy)
- Limit number of servings and define maximum percentage of THC per serving
- Ensure minimum price and regulations on advertising of specials, promotion and marketing



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## *2. a) What would make this space economically feasible for a business?*

As stated above, the purpose of the Cannabis Act does not include revenue generation or business development. We understand that these are concerns of the BC Government. Some jurisdictions have chosen not-for-profit models for public consumption that eliminate the conflict of interest inherent in commercialization.<sup>xvi</sup> We recommend that the BC Government explore options for a not-for-profit model of public cannabis consumption. If moving forward with a for-profit-model, **we recommend that BC establish funding streams (for example licensing fees, taxation, or dedicated revenue percentages) directed towards prevention and treatment of harms.**

## *2. b) How do you think challenges raised in this paper could be addressed?*

**Prior to any decision that increases the commercial cannabis market, we recommend that BC undertake a comprehensive health impact assessment with attention to health equity.** Health equity concerns are larger than providing equitable access to public consumption spaces, as discussed in the consultation *Discussion Paper*. The burden of cannabis related harms is greater for some individuals, communities, and populations including racialized and some ethnic groups, low income individuals, gender non-conforming and GLBTQ individuals.<sup>xvii</sup> Increasing the density of retail opportunities disproportionately increases risk for marginalized populations.<sup>xviii</sup> Density of retail outlets, have also been associated with increased cannabis-positive beliefs and the intention of youth to initiate cannabis use.<sup>xix xx xxi</sup>

Increasing consumption spaces increases density. In an evaluation of Canada's effectiveness in achieving the recommendations outlined in Canada's framework for the legalization of cannabis,<sup>xxii</sup> it was found that Canada is falling short with respect to controlling retail outlet density.<sup>xxiii</sup> No province or territory has established a cap on retail density and density, as stated previously, is known to increase harm.

## *3) Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?*

The following public consumption spaces should **not** be considered:

- Any that allow inhalable cannabis. As outlined in question 1 – We affirm the Province's decision to not allow indoor smoking/vaping and, as outdoor smoke-free spaces are well established to contribute to community health and safety<sup>xxiv</sup> we recommend that smoking/vaping not be considered in any outdoor space.
- Any that allow co-location with alcohol or other psychoactive substances. The co-location of alcohol with cannabis can increase the harm potential of both.<sup>xxv xxvi</sup>
- Consumption spaces with the primary intention to increase the commercialization of cannabis. As detailed above, commercialization increases harms and contributes to youth initiation.<sup>xxvii xxviii</sup>
- Any area that cannot be carefully monitored for public safety, legal product, presence of minors, safety and security; food safety (e.g. farmers Markets and other informal venues)<sup>xxix</sup>



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Thank you for the opportunity to consult on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ariella Zbar MD, CCFP, MPH, MBA, FRCPC  
Medical Health Officer – Medical Director  
Fraser Health Authority

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# Heart & Stroke Submission

**Comments on the Province of BC's  
Cannabis Consumption Spaces Engagement**

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## Introduction

The Heart and Stroke Foundation (Heart & Stroke) commends the Province of BC for seeking public input on if the government should allow more places to use non-medical cannabis and, if so, how it should be regulated. Heart & Stroke is encouraged by the province's commitment that key public health and safety protections would continue to apply.

## Cannabis use on heart disease and stroke

We recognize there is currently not enough high-quality scientific evidence regarding the benefits or risks of recreational cannabis use on heart conditions or stroke. That said, new evidence is emerging. There is some emerging evidence that shows an overall notable increased risk for both heart disease and stroke, both attributable to the effects of cannabis on blood pressure, vasculitis, arterial/venous wall integrity, and atrial fibrillation.<sup>5-8</sup> Other reports link cannabis use with cardiovascular emergencies, including myocardial infarction, cardiomyopathy, arrhythmias, heart failure, stroke and cardiac arrest.<sup>9-12</sup> Some research shows risk for heart disease and stroke related to cannabis use increases with long term, frequent or excessive use.<sup>4,5,7,11</sup> Overall, while some studies indicate recreational cannabis use has potential cardiovascular adverse effects, the large variability in recreational usage (frequency, potency, method of use) requires further investigation to better understand the full spectrum of its effect on heart disease and stroke.

For this reason, and together with the limited understanding of cancer risks associated with long-term recreational cannabis use and exposure to second-hand cannabis smoke, Heart & Stroke shares Canadian Cancer Society's recommendation the government take a more cautious approach to considering and regulating new cannabis consumption spaces. As seen with tobacco consumption, public behaviours and policies can become engrained over time, even in light of adverse health risks. Rolling these policies back can take years, or as in the case of tobacco, decades. In fact, lessons learned from decades of tobacco control are important to consider when examining proposed cannabis consumption spaces.

## Renormalizing tobacco consumption concerns

Heart & Stroke urges any proposed changes ensure cannabis is not used in a way that could promote use by youth or young adults or weaken any hard-fought changes in social norms related to tobacco use.

Of particular concern, is the potential impact increasing the number of regulated cannabis consumption spaces may have on tobacco consumption and smoking / vaping behaviours in the province.

When people who had used cannabis in the past 12 months were asked in the Canadian Cannabis Survey (CCS) 2020 how often they combined their cannabis use with other substances, 17% reported they often combined it with tobacco.<sup>13</sup>

According to the Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs (CTADS) Survey conducted in 2017, 14.8% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported consuming cannabis in the past 12 months (19% among age 15 to 19 years; 33% among age 20 to 24 years; and 13% among age 25 years and older). The average age of introduction to cannabis was 18.6 years old.<sup>1</sup> Another finding from this survey was male cannabis consumption tended to be higher than female consumption.<sup>2</sup>

CTADS from 2018-19 found that 18% of students in grades 7 – 12 had used cannabis in the past year.<sup>3</sup> This figure remains unchanged from the prior survey administered in 2016-17.<sup>3</sup> There has been a slight increase in younger students reporting past year cannabis use (7% of grades 7 – 9 students in 2018-19 compared to

6% in 2016-17).<sup>3</sup> The average age of cannabis initiation has remained consistent from 2016-17 to 2018-19 at 14.3 years old.<sup>3</sup>

Regulations for tobacco and cannabis should be consistent to avoid unintentionally contributing to addiction, combined use of tobacco, nicotine and / or cannabis substances, or to a renormalization of tobacco smoking behaviours. This is supported by the CCS 2020, which showed “social acceptability of occasional or regular use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis was higher among people who indicated using cannabis in the past 12 months compared to those who did not report cannabis use.”<sup>13</sup>

## Second-hand smoke exposure

For example, any allowance of consuming cannabis in prohibited public places should ensure the public continues to be protected from exposure to second-hand smoke – whether tobacco or marijuana smoke – in outdoor public spaces.

According to CCS 2020, for users and non-users public spaces were identified as the most common place of second-hand smoke exposure (36%), while only 19% reported exposure in their homes<sup>13</sup>.

Increasing the number of public consumption spaces, therefore, increases exposure to second-hand cannabis smoke which could potentially worsen health outcomes. Prohibiting smoking / vaping of cannabis to same spaces where tobacco use is prohibited can help ensure that second-hand smoke exposure rates do not increase.

Heart & Stroke recommends cannabis use should continue to be restricted in public places where tobacco use is restricted, including outdoor special events such as music festivals or country fairs to avoid normalizing smoking or vaping in social circles. There is a large body of evidence that shows “smoking norms influence smoking behaviour”<sup>14</sup>. This is particularly true when it comes to youth and where peer approval of smoking / vaping is one contributing factor for non-users to begin, with one study showing half of youth had friends who smoke or vape.<sup>14</sup>

As it is difficult to differentiate between cannabis smoke and tobacco smoke and there is a likelihood both substances could be used in the same space, businesses or event organizers could be ill-equipped to enforce existing restrictions on tobacco within their designated consumption space. An outdoor cannabis garden at a music festival in a public park that is smoke-free is an example of this.

## Conclusion

Heart & Stroke is grateful for the opportunity to participate in this public engagement project but urges the provincial government to take a cautious approach until health implications of long-term recreational cannabis use are better understood and there is no risk to renormalizing smoking behaviours.

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May 9th, 2022

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To whom it may concern,

**RE: Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Spaces**

HEXO wishes to thank the BC Cannabis Secretariat for inviting members of the public to comment on the possibility of creating a legislative framework for cannabis consumption spaces. The company has already provided initial feedback as part of the pre-liminary engagement that took place in fall 2021. In addition to the statement that was submitted on February 18, 2022, please accept the following points of consideration for your review.

In reviewing the updated discussion paper, it was noted that one of the original principles "Increase Legal Market Competitiveness" was removed and replaced by "Encourage Consumers to Transition to Regulated Products". Although both principles are interrelated, the company feels that the latter places a greater emphasis / focus upon the consumer, despite the urgent need for government to foster a retail framework that is competitive against the illicit market.

Outlined below are a few examples where the company feels changes are needed.

- **Allow Federal Licence Holders or Marketing Licence Holders to conduct educational outreach (i.e. tasting events) and/or distribute value-added items to consumers.** Creating a pathway for federal licence holders (Health Canada licence holder), through the Marketing Licence program to distribute value-added items within consumption spaces would allow for legal operators to further compete with the illegal market by increasing brand awareness for legal products. For example, it is often perceived amongst illicit market users that legal market cannabis is inferior. Thus, by allowing for the distribution of samples through "tasting events" or "tasting booths", this type of consumer can be exposed to a wider variety of products, which in turn can support their transition to legal products. Furthermore, by allowing federal licence holders to conduct educational outreach by holding interactive events, government efforts to encourage safe and responsible use of cannabis can be supported (i.e. start low and go slow).
- **Allow Federal Licence Holders or Marketing Licence Holders to distribute samples to retailers.** Potential licence holders of a consumption space, like current retail licensees, will want the opportunity to familiarize themselves with regulated industry products before they invest money into building their inventory. Having a pathway for federal licence holders (Health Canada licence holder), through the Marketing Licence program to distribute samples would help retailers and



consumption space licence holders to make an educated decision for how they will invest their financial resources in building inventory.

- **Federal Licence Holders should have the option to sell directly to retailers.** Given consumption spaces can exist across a broad spectrum of events, experiences, or retail spaces, it is critical for operators to create a unique retail experience by ensuring a continuous supply of select brands and product offerings. Requiring consumption space operators to place orders through the BC Liquor Distribution Branch will inevitably restrict supply, which will ultimately lead to inconsistencies at the retail level, which in turn will hinder operators from generating revenues through repeat customers or by transitioning consumers from the illicit market.
- **Provide opportunities for Marketing Licence Holders to create retail experiences through ad space or placement of branded items.** Current restrictions surrounding inducements prevents marketing Licence holders such as HEXO from engaging in activities with retailers including the purchase of advertisement or shelf-space. Moving forward, the company hopes to see such restrictions loosened as Marketing Licence holders can play a pivotal role in fostering a retail environment that is capable of competing with the illicit market. For example, marketing companies could pay to have their brand displayed on glasses, coasters or other cannabis accessories (hookahs, bongs, pipes, rolling papers, etc).
- **We hope that the Cannabis Secretariat will consider other types of permits that would allow Licensed Producers to engage within consumption spaces.** Given the discussion paper noted that *“special events could be used to trial different consumption spaces and learn about their impacts”*, a special event permit (or amendment to a marketing license) that allows Licensed Producers to operate within ad hoc consumption spaces should be considered.
- **The 20% Vapour Products tax should be removed or reduced.** The current tax that is applied to vaping products sold in British Columbia makes it challenging for licensed producers to compete with black market prices. Given statistics put forth by Health Canada indicate that inhalation is the most common method of consumption amongst cannabis consumers (78%), it is crucial that licensed consumption spaces are able to transition consumers from the illicit market by offering products at fair and reasonable prices.

Lastly, the company would like to highlight a previous note that marketing licence holders were not formally consulted about consumption spaces. HEXO strongly encourages the BC Cannabis Secretariat to hold additional engagements to better understand how marketing and advertisement can support the transfer of consumers from the illicit market.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration, we look forward to participating in future consultations with the BC Cannabis Secretariat.

Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement

Written Submission

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## **Public Consumption of Cannabis – More than Smoke and Mirrors**

Since the Marihuana Medical Access Regulations Act (MMAR) was enacted in 2001 Municipal, Provincial, Territorial and Federal Governments have all taken a series of remarkable steps in shepherding this, still very nascent, industry from the shadows of illicit actors to light of mainstream society. While steps taken have indeed been “remarkable” they have too often been far from “perfect”, and this unfortunately has greatly diminished the viability and continues to challenge the sustainability of the entire industry.

The underlying force guiding this consistent “remarkable yet imperfect path” seen at all levels of government has been fear. Fear, that some change will do some form of irreversible harm. Fear of course necessarily creates an immediate and needed cautious, slow, and iterative approach to easing us collectively towards the goal of safe consumption of cannabis. In 2001 the fear was real and tangible with so many unknowns. In contrast, today, some twenty years later, we have a much better understanding and a much more educated population on the multifaceted risks surrounding the safe consumption of cannabis products and as a result our “cannabis fear” and how it influences our decisions should now be diminished, more balanced, and based largely in real world data.

Unfortunately, unfounded, misplaced, and unbalanced fear continues to exert significant influence in British Columbia’s discussion paper “***Non-Medical, Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement***” published April 2022. In that document the government examines yet another “remarkable step” specifically expansion of legal cannabis consumption to public places.

This latest change proposed by the BC Government is remarkable because if correctly implemented it has the potential to correct two of the greatest headwinds the industry faces: Monopolistic Distribution and Non-Existent Branding Opportunities. Currently the cannabis industry in BC has a single point of purchase (cannabis dedicated dispensaries) from a single monopolistic supplier (British Columbia Liquor Distribution Branch) with a single point of consumption (home), and finally and perhaps most detrimental a single way to brand the product (Product Label).

This is not a foundation on which to build future success, commercial or otherwise. So, the changes proposed in the discussion paper are not just “important” rather they are potentially the primary tool we use to solidify the foundation of the legal cannabis market and erode the illicit market towards our collective goal inevitable irrelevancy.

There are three main areas of unfounded fear in the discussion document, each of which, if given any weight, could lead to a less than perfect approach to public consumption of cannabis in BC.

The first is the notion that cannabis should be contained within discrete environments such as Cannabis Lounges. This idea is flawed and detrimental on several levels. First, it entrenches the notion of cannabis being so far outside societal norms and harmful that the non-cannabis consuming population requires legislative isolation and protection - think opium lounges in the middle east. Such isolation has a significant societal opportunity cost as the positive aspects of collective cohesiveness are not realized. It significantly limits the potential commercial success as the lounge viability would pivot solely on a single form factor (cannabis) and single population (cannabis users). Finally, it creates unnecessary regulatory burden on municipalities who cannot simply utilize existing business licence infrastructure, such as a liquor primary licence.

The second unnecessary and unfounded fear highlighted in the document is that *“cannabis products are available in several forms and concentrations, can cause a wide range of effects on the user, and, unlike alcohol, do not have standardized serving sizes.”* Nothing in this sentence is factual or balanced in any way. It is true that cannabis form factors are more varied than alcohol in that the cannabis edible category has solid (for example gummies) and non-solid (for example cannabis beverages). Further, cannabis does come in Extract and Dry Flower forms. However, the edible forms are highly regulated in mg/unit and additionally the primary source of variability which comes from the vaping and dry flower products on a mg/g perspective fall outside the scope of the discussion document as smoking whether it be cannabis or tobacco or otherwise are already significantly constrained and that is not changing. Finally, cannabis is intoxicating, like alcohol or any other drug. It has mind altering affects that if used to excess like alcohol will have detrimental effects. However, cannabis is no more “varied” than alcohol, the issue is the intoxication from a population perspective is different than alcohol and understanding that difference so that people serving cannabis and alcohol are equipped to serve it right and limit intoxication (for example some older edible formulations have a slower onset time (40 minutes), some newer formulations have a faster onset time (20 minutes)). In fact, that educational component, cannabis intoxication, is ironically already part of the “Serving it Right Course” despite bars and restaurants not currently being legally allowed to carry and serve those products. Finally, an argument could be made that alcoholic drinks have greater variability in dosing as there is nothing stopping a patron from ordering a 3 oz. drink whereas cannabis beverages all come in legislated standard serving sizes that are Ready To Drink (like all cannabis edibles).

Finally the third unnecessary and unfounded fear highlighted in the document is that *“...there is considerable concern from public health and safety stakeholders about co-location. Public health experts emphasized that co-location would lead to co-use (consuming both substances at the same time can increase the impairing effects of both substances).”* The reality is that people have been consuming cannabis and alcohol together prior to legalization and continue to do so



post legalization, and not a single safety signal has been documented other than over consumption is detrimental of either alcohol, cannabis alone or alcohol and cannabis taken together (or let's face it any intoxicating substance for that matter). The key here is limiting over-consumption (of any intoxicating agent) not structurally limiting co-consumption. The literature does not support the idea that cannabis and alcohol together is dangerous, when used in moderation.

Twenty years into this social experiment we can and should move beyond the fear and start treating cannabis like alcohol (Specifically - Cannabis Edibles) and tobacco (Specifically - Cannabis Vapes and Dry Flower). We should allow controlled consumption through all alcohol distribution channels with continuing public education and consumption controls like Serving it Right to ensure we are all safe in our consumption. If we do that the industry will be set up for success, people will be well protected and the illicit market will be significantly diminished.

This latest remarkable step in a series of remarkable steps has the potential of a more perfect path in its implementation than we taken previously if we reflect on fear through rational thought and data driven decisions. In so doing the cannabis industry will be on a more solid foundation and society, will on balance benefit from enhanced and controlled cannabis consumption.

Good Day to you:

Cannabis lounges have been around forever but hidden from plain sight. Now it is legal but most patrons feel as though they still have to hide due to the negative “reefer madness” syndrome created to increase sales in the cotton industry. I’d like to see a warm comfortable atmosphere where people can lounge, smoke, eat and listen to some awesome music and live painting.

It is displeasing to me seeing corporations taking this delightful pastime and making it into business instead for the people. A balance would be appreciated and this is a good start.

Lounges are perfect as people can use vaporizers and have a room ventilated. People are not allowed to smoke their weed anywhere so they go to their cars and smoke it. This is a problem in many respects to the law but the Government is fully responsible for this action people have to take.

Alcohol establishments survived prohibition and have been given a lot of freedom over the years. It seems like adults can take care of themselves. Maybe it’s time to let the public have more respect making their own decisions. The edibles are too mild which makes customers go to the black market. \$10 for a gummy that is 80mg of THC or \$15 for 10mg. You are giving this industry away because you can’t keep up with the black market. Let alone the black market is still at large yet you are so forceful with retailers and their regulations they have to follow and submit monthly. Remember who buys these products, old people with pain and emotional issues. Since the black market is thriving why bother with rules? This in itself shows you the public will do what they want with or without your decisions.

Truth, people need a relief from stress and pain. The doctors give medications out like it’s candy and really mess people up with their concoctions of abusive drugs. People are driving on prozac, Ativan and Oxy. They don’t have any regulations about these drugs that are far more dangerous than a pot head.

People are way ahead of you and using weed at festivals and pubs. They just go for a walk and irritate everyone around when they pass on their walk. Lounges would be preferable so they can contain these “bad” folks smoking weed!

I own a Cannabis retail licences store and listening to the challenges the majority of elders have had getting off of Pharmaceutical drugs and just use weed now to monitor their health issues. Their lives have greatly improved yet the Government still treats weed like it’s a bad drug. Seriously the only high risk is the word itself. They should have a safe place to enjoy their product. A Connoisseurs lounge would be amazing or a tour for taste testing.

Having a licence we are allowed to have 8 stores so we should have first choice with lounges since we pay so much for the licence. The fact we have to pay full price for each store and go through the same process every time is ridiculous and expensive. I'm sure large cooperations don't have any problem with these fees thus our Government is controlled by large corporations and the US. Trying to get a POS, insurance or bank account with a license was a nightmare. Some help from our Government in these areas would be nice as well. Making it easier for a licensed store to open another without the cruelty of going through 20 months of waiting whilst paying for the rent and not making any money. They don't have a code of ethics that Govern them yet you come down on all of us and expect the high road. The fact they can keep your money if they say no is also a scam. We have to pay higher fees than anyone. I call it the FU tax for Cannabis retailers because every business solution charges you "high" risk fees. There is NO EVIDENCE of high risk and this should be challenged by the banks, insurance and POS. Maybe giving Cannabis retail licences a break and helping with the money end of things as well. You say you care, lol

If we want our world to change then we should stand up to business bullies and start changing the infrastructure of business. This is a start but let's not go the way of the big money companies this time and maybe listen to the normal Joe.

I really think it's time to ease up on the general public and have more faith in their decisions as we are paying your wages therefore when do we actually get a say how we wish to be governed. You listen to a Doctor like they are a God but an old veteran in severe pain doesn't have any say. Doctors are the biggest drug dealers on earth so I'd take their opinions lightly especially seeing the abuse of prescription drugs. Coming off of antidepressants takes a year, weed 2 days. I really think you need to take this substance into perspective of a rather benign food item. Some people do have a bad reaction but a lot more react to peanuts but I don't see these on the special list.

It's nuts how many people are eating gummy's daily and smoking weed at night. At least it's better than cocaine or carcinogenic alcohol. Alcohol is proven to cause cancer and weed cures it so what is your problem with weed consumption. The public doesn't have a problem except for a few brainwashed idiots.

Yes, you should allow your humble people to have what they want. Especially after being locked up for two years. Trust the people you work for-general population!

Fact is Cannabis generates a lot of taxes for our provinces and country. We should be listened to and not overlooking. I'm a bit angry that I had to pay so much and it took so long and now everyone is selling it. Massage places already are selling CBD cream and so are pet stores. Nothing happens to them so they keep selling it. I had to pay a lot of money for me, a normal wage earning person and can't afford the prices you used to screen people out. Ironically you only helped the high rollers get in.

Life is going to get a lot worse for the general population as inflation is soaring through the roof and global warming. You are going to have greater problems with depression, suicides, pain, accidents

from exhaustion and rage attacks. Weed will be your saviour helping people dealing with stress, pain and emotional issues.

I'd like to see meditation lounges with vaping. Do a healing session after smoking weed. Massage therapist are using cannabis cream already. People are way ahead of you and will bulldoze you into doing what they do and not what you think they need.

Well, I hope this falls on compassionate beings who work for the people and not the bullies. Good luck with your decisions.

Thanks for reading my rant,

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May 9, 2022

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in response to the *Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement Discussion Paper*. Interior Health (IH) is committed to improving the health and wellness of all members of our communities by working collaboratively with government and community partners to develop healthy public policy that creates environments for good health, including reducing harms associated with substance use.

**As Medical Health Officers for the Interior Health region we believe that a harm reduction approach is necessary to balance the risks and benefits of potential cannabis consumption spaces. To this end, we would welcome the opportunity to further collaborate and provide input based on our lessons learned from other legal substances like alcohol, tobacco and vapour products.**

As Medical Health Officers, our role is to protect and improve the health of the population as a whole, including people who use cannabis. While cannabis has recently been legalized that does not mean there are not inherent risks associated with its consumption. The Canadian Centre on Substance Use in its policy brief *On-Premise Cannabis Use: Public Health and Safety Considerations* (1) states the following; "Cannabis is not a benign substance. It is an intoxicant and consuming it can result in physical and mental health harms, particularly among frequent consumers and those who begin use in early youth." Health impacts of cannabis include:

- impaired cognitive and motor ability – including ability to operate a motor vehicle
- impact on brain development in people under age 25 including attention, judgement and decision making
- increase risk of developing mental health disorders
- cardio-respiratory harms
- cannabis use disorder

Taking a public health and harm reduction approach can help to minimize risk and maximize benefits to both the people who use cannabis and the broader community. Please see our feedback on your guiding questions below:

*1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?*

**"Encourage Consumers to Transition to Regulated Products"**

The discussion paper notes that cannabis consumption spaces will help to encourage people to transition from the illicit market to the regulated market by creating new experiences to encourage the use of legal sources. It is important to note that revenue generation and increased commercialization are not the intended goals of cannabis legalization. The stated purpose of Canada's Cannabis Act (2) is to:

- (a) protect the health of young persons by restricting their access to cannabis;*
- (b) protect young persons and others from inducements to use cannabis;*
- (c) provide for the licit production of cannabis to reduce illicit activities in relation to cannabis;*
- (d) deter illicit activities in relation to cannabis through appropriate sanctions and enforcement measures;*
- (e) reduce the burden on the criminal justice system in relation to cannabis;*
- (f) provide access to a quality-controlled supply of cannabis; and*
- (g) enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with cannabis use*

The primary driver for the shift to the legal market should be to safeguard the health and safety of the population – this includes providing a regulated product for people who use cannabis. It will be important to mitigate potential unintended consequences of increased commercialization.

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate, and work together. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

Comprehensive restrictions on commercialization and promotion similar to the restrictions under the *Tobacco and Vapour Products Act* are advised as noted in the Health Canada's *Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada* (3).

Introducing venues and new experiences for cannabis consumption will increase the accessibility of regulated cannabis in our communities. Since legalization and the subsequent increase in access to a legal cannabis supply, we have seen an overall increase in cannabis use among Canadians (4). Evidence from studies of alcohol consumption have demonstrated that increased access results in higher levels of consumption – especially among those already at greatest risk. Limiting the physical, social and economic availability of alcohol is an effective means of reducing health and social harms (1, 5). Restrictions on locations of cannabis access points (including both retail and consumption sites) in a specific area, implementing required distances from schools or other locations where youth gather, and ensuring cannabis use is not visible to the public can help reduce the risk of consumption levels increasing (1).

#### **“Start Low and Go Slow”**

There is still much we do not know about the effects of cannabis consumption spaces on the health of our population. A key principle noted in the discussion paper is to “start low and go slow”. To better align with this principle the province could delay the establishment of cannabis consumption spaces until more is known about the health impacts from contexts similar to ours. Other jurisdictions in North America are starting to offer on-premise consumption and learnings from these jurisdictions could help shape BC’s implementation plan. If the decision is made to move forward with cannabis consumption spaces in BC, a time-limited pilot study is recommended before broader expansion is considered.

#### **“Collaborate with Indigenous peoples”**

We affirm that the principle of self-determination is crucial to the health and wellness of Indigenous peoples. Past experiences with other substances have underscored the importance of decolonizing and Indigenous harm reduction policies and programs (6, 7); Indigenous-centered harm reduction approaches are not possible without full collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and must include input from First Nations, urban (non-status) Aboriginal, Inuit, and Métis and Indigenous-led approaches.

#### *2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed? What would make this space economically feasible as a business? How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?*

The discussion paper notes several types of Cannabis Consumption Spaces under consideration: Retail Experiences, Special Events, Cannabis Lounges and Restaurant or Spa Services. It has been proposed that these spaces could allow the use of edible products and/or inhalation (smoking or vapour) products (outdoor setting only), and that co-location with alcohol is under consideration.

#### **From a harm reduction perspective, we would support the following features be included in cannabis consumption spaces:**

- Do not offer both cannabis and alcohol (co-locating)
- Maintains a consistent approach to inhalable cannabis and tobacco control with regard to restrictions on places of consumption as per the *Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act* (8) and regulation.
- Are age restricted (no one under 19 allowed to enter the premises or be served) and have adequate enforcement to prevent underage use.
- Provide information on available designated driver or alternative transportation options.
- Provide clear information on the potency and dosing of products.
- Density, location and marketing/promotion restrictions are in place and venues abide by these restrictions.
- Communicate harm reduction/safer substance use messaging including information on Canada’s Low Risk Cannabis Consumption Guidelines (9); information on dosing, absorption rate and duration of the effects of edible cannabis (10) as well as the availability of substance use counselling and treatment services.
- Require server training to minimize harms and help prevent overconsumption.

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In addition, some jurisdictions have chosen not-for-profit models for public consumption that eliminate the conflict of interest inherent in commercialization (11); such models could be explored.

You will find our suggestions on how to address some of the other challenges noted in the discussion paper throughout our submission.

### 3) *Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?*

**As noted above, cannabis is not a benign substance and its use can cause harm. Smoking and vaping consumption spaces and spaces that co-locate cannabis consumption with alcohol are spaces where the risks may outweigh any potential benefits.**

- **Smoking and Vaping:** Smoking remains the most popular method of cannabis consumption. Smoking or vaping of cannabis comes with risk to the person smoking cannabis as well those exposed to second hand smoke or vapour (1); given these risks, we support the decision to not consider indoor cannabis consumption spaces.

We advise maintaining a consistent approach with tobacco and vapour product control spaces for two reasons – one being to reduce the health risk from exposure to second hand smoke and vapour aerosols; and the second being the potential for these spaces to undermining the gains that have been made in tobacco and vapour product control by potentially re-normalizing the act of smoking (12).

If outdoor cannabis smoking spaces are permitted in BC, requirements should be in place for proper ventilation as per the *Tobacco and Vapor Products Control Act* (8); in addition, we recommend that these spaces are not accessible to youth, and are not located in spaces that are visible to the public. It is also important that measures be in place to reduce the risk of second hand smoke and vapour aerosol exposure to staff working in those spaces.

- **Co-locating Cannabis and Alcohol consumption: We do not recommend** co-location of cannabis and alcohol due to the increased degree of impairment when cannabis and alcohol are combined. Cannabis use affects decision-making, cognitive abilities and memory, and impairs psychomotor skills and driving ability. This impairment is substantially magnified when it is used in combination with alcohol (1). It is important to note that The Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation concluded, in their final report *A Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada* (2) that safeguards should be implemented to prevent the co-consumption of cannabis and alcohol. Allowing consumption of alcohol and cannabis in the same space can be seen as condoning or potentially endorsing co-use (13).

#### **Additional considerations:**

- **Licensed Music Festivals and Special Events:** The discussion paper notes that starting with lower complexity spaces or spaces where cannabis consumption is already likely to occur, such as licensed music festivals and other special events may be a starting point that provides an opportunity to trial different consumption spaces and learn about their impacts. It is important to note that cannabis use in festival/major event settings has been associated with significant increases in Emergency Department visits (14). Any “cannabis garden”/festival model should be paired with harm reduction measures as outlined in BC’s *Public Health Guidelines for Major Planned Events* (15) including having medical response personnel on hand to respond to emergencies.
- **Server Training:** Training programs for servers such as “Serve it Right” are suggested in the discussion paper as a way to mitigate the risk of over consumption and impaired driving; however, these programs have been shown to have varying degrees of effectiveness (1). Server training to prevent and respond to cannabis overconsumption would need to be very comprehensive given the fact that cannabis is a far more complex drug with significant variability in its effects, duration and degree of impairment, as well as its longer onset to peak concentration and effects when ingested.

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate, and work together. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

Cannabis legalization is still relatively new and we have a lot to learn. We advocate for a harm reduction approach that balances the risks and benefits of potential cannabis consumption spaces, that is shaped in close collaboration with public health professionals.

Sincerely,



Fatemeh Sabet, MD, MPH, FRCPC  
Medical Health Officer

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We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate, and work together. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.



A renowned sacrament of the Rastafari faith, Marijuana culture has been symbiotic with our meditative rituals to bring about enhanced moods of spiritual unity and higher consciousness. These rites often involve ceremonial drum circles and in so chanting mantras for healing. It cannot be denied the predominant association of cannabis with Jamaica and the Rastafari, especially considering our world famous prophet Bob Marley and message of Ras Tafari.

We spent some time at the Rastafari Indigenous Village in Jamaica cultivating these practices. At one point there was even a church here in Canada established where Rastafari may legally accept donations to partake in our sessions. This entity is called Sanctuary of the Rastafari Order with over eight thousand members in British Columbia focused in Vancouver and Vancouver Island. However, with my own city permit to operate on Wreck Beach as a vendor where a multitude ingest cannabis, we're unable to share our culture in this manner.

Juanlove Inc. hosts tourism portfolios in both Vancouver and Jamaica educating foreigners to Rastafari. However, absence of availability to open spaces to do this comprehensively, has been grossly limited locally. This restriction to our religious right is wrong as inherent to our indigene. We can accept donations but cannot offer a sale, nor even profit in economically marketing our sacramental culture.

Indigenous to Arawak and Taino descent in Jamaica, we would be active in promoting Special Events and a Rastafari Cannabis Lounge. Rastafari prioritizes the consumption of marijuana not for recreation, but for heightened conscious awareness of self, rather than a simple pastime, therapeutic in manner as opposed to illicit associations.

Cannabis consumption is quite rampant, especially Wreck beach where we have our permit for six months of the year, in such an environment which requires excess of thousands of dollars for the Hovercraft to be sent for patrons who overdose frequently. Our responsible usage could assist in decreasing these public safety risks, by introducing a consistent conscious presence, a benefit befitting a popular tourist destination.

Educating customers about cannabis would be our primary interest. Mobile operations allow us to be at the drum circle at Third Beach every Tuesday, another outdoor space wherein a lot of cannabis use is already prevalent. We agree that venues, where cannabis consumption already occurs, should become regulated. Conversely, we strongly disagree with great reasoning about any alcoholic pairings, given the adverse effects.

Thanking you kindly, Juan Love

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## Public Input on Cannabis Consumption Spaces – British Columbia

Kiario Brands Inc. (“Kiario”) would like to take this opportunity to commend the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General in British Columbia for seeking input, from various stakeholders, on cannabis consumption spaces. Kiario recognizes the groundwork and efforts being made in the province of BC to create safe and economically viable cannabis consumption spaces, while concurrently ensuring that it is leading by example for other provinces across Canada.

From the discussion paper, the principles outlined, i.e., prioritizing health and safety, encouraging consumers to consume regulated products, “start low and go slow”, collaborating with Indigenous peoples, and respecting local control over land-use decisions, are principles that Kiario generally agrees upon. With regards to health and safety, it is recognized that indoor smoking and vaping will not be permitted in consumption spaces; however, given that the most common method of consumption is smoking, it is just as important to provide a safe and accessible environment for individuals to consume cannabis in the manner they see fit. In addition, to ensure profitability from inhalable cannabis products, a provision must be created to better serve that market. As such, Kiario recommends that outdoor smoking and vaping of cannabis products, at licensed consumption spaces or at special events (i.e., music festivals), are made readily available for consumers in accordance with local bylaws and should be set as a priority.

Furthermore, as a company that owns multiple retail stores in BC, the “start low and go slow” principle is recognized as the first crucial step in developing and approving consumption spaces. We see that retail stores are the ideal venue to allow for the roll-out of safe consumption spaces, as they already have government approved and secure infrastructure, as well as certified staff members on site. In addition, cannabis retail stores can, with ease, gather data to assess its impact for future developments in the province; therefore, it is recommended that the pilot of any consumption space program should be with trusted existing holders of retail licenses. Finally, Kiario agrees that collaborating with Indigenous peoples and respecting local control over land-use decisions are essential when creating or approving consumption spaces.

As mentioned above, Kiario believes that cannabis retail stores could be the best method of rolling-out consumption spaces. As an example of how that would look like, retail stores could allocate a portion of their space to serve non-alcoholic beverages and run social activities such as board games or pool tables. This option would not incur a huge cost on privately owned businesses; as such, making it economically feasible, and it would ensure that the appropriate staff members are handling the sales of cannabis products. In addition, this option is in compliance with current federal rules, which requires cannabis products to be sold in the original packaging<sup>1</sup>, as the consumer could buy it directly from the retail store and move to the consumption space to open their package and enjoy other services that the space can offer.

With regards to the serious issue of impaired driving, it is in our opinion that staff training on over consumption of cannabis products should be implemented to ensure the safety of the general public.

These updates and training of staff members can be done through Selling It Right, which is a similar approach to that of liquor serving establishment. Kiaro does however recognize that in certain rural areas, where transportation modes (such as buses, Uber, Lyft, etc..) may not be readily available, ensuring that either designated driver programs or creating access to public transportation is important. Finally, we would like to address the first statement made in the “Drug-affected Driving” section, as it alludes that consumption spaces could lead to increased drug-affected driving by providing opportunities for people to use cannabis products outside of their homes. However, the assumption made that most people use cannabis only in their homes is not supported by evidence and consumption spaces could aid in reducing impaired driving by providing transportation services, supervision, and education on onset times or the effects of cannabis.

Kiario holds the belief that novel ideas, innovation and economic opportunities should be welcomed from all businesses and individuals with regards to consumption spaces. Therefore, in our opinion, the provincial government should be assessing consumption spaces on a case-to-case basis and not rejecting ideas before they are appropriately assessed. At the same time, providing guidelines on what is expected from consumption spaces should be readily available to ensure the original principles outlined in the discussion paper is adhered to; for example, ensuring that consumers are properly ID at the venue and not exceeding the 30-gram federal limit for each individual would be of value.

Once again, Kiario would like to thank the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General of British Columbia for providing the opportunity for many stakeholders to be heard. We appreciate your time and efforts to continue to advance the cannabis field and create a safe environment for all Canadians.



# kindred

## Submission to B.C.'s Cannabis Consumption Space Consultation- May 2022

### Kindred's Position

Kindred is a Canadian full-service brokerage firm that represents legal cannabis retailers across the country. **We are fully supportive of the government taking steps to allow the sale and consumption of cannabis in specially regulated spaces.**

We believe that the creation of licenced cannabis spaces should be guided by the ethos of providing safe products in safe spaces. Kindred has long advocated for safe cannabis products provided by regulated, licenced cannabis retailers. These licit channels ensure products are free from both potential contaminants and possible connections to organized crime.

### Types of Consumption Spaces

Kindred is supportive of all types of cannabis consumption spaces outlined in the discussion paper. Allowing cannabis lounges within stores would provide a safe place for customers to enjoy products, which would likely have positive impacts on the market share of legal retailers.

We also support allowing cannabis consumption space licences for event venues, bars, and restaurants; however, key changes are needed to make this model feasible. These changes resemble existing measures taken by the province regarding tickets, and would include:

- **Introducing wholesale pricing** for cannabis consumption space licence holders, which would make buying from licenced retailers the cheaper option.
- Ensuring that there is a **delivery return policy** so that customers who purchase cannabis for an event can return unused products.
- **Removing or amending the 30 mg limit on personal sales** so that a business or event can buy all their cannabis from one licenced retailer. If the limit is left intact, the cannabis consumption space licence holder will have to visit several shops, which is not practical for large purchases.
- Allowing **more safe, legal cannabis products from other jurisdictions** in B.C. stores.

### Challenges

Legal retailers have struggled against illicit competition; therefore, it is imperative that any changes to allow cannabis consumption spaces are accompanied by strict measures to ensure they are supplied by legal retailers. Government will also need to support legal retailers through changes to the regulatory structure, including:

- **Simplifying the licensing process for retailers and marketers.** This process can be confusing and cumbersome for smaller legal retailers, who often lose market share to illegal retailers that have no intention of following licensing rules.
- **Increasing enforcement measures intended to crack down on illegal retailers.** This could entail penalties for consumption spaces that are found to be buying from illegal retailers, up to and including terminating their operating licence.

### Conclusion

Kindred is in favour of the province allowing cannabis consumption spaces and feels that this approach, alongside the right measures, will be an excellent way to help grow the legal cannabis market in B.C. We would like to support government in making these changes and would be happy to arrange a meeting to discuss this submission further.

## Kootenay Cannabis Economic Development Council

9 May 2022

### Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement

The Kootenay Cannabis Economic Development Council is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this Engagement process.

#### Principles in the Provincial Approach

We appreciate the tone in the Discussion Paper and endorse the stated principles guiding the consultation. Amongst the stated principles, we agree with the start low and go slow approach, within reason. As this will be new territory for both the sector and regulators, this principle will allow for some ground-truthing and adjustments to help ensure that the other principles are upheld. It will be necessary to enable effective and impactful feedback from all those involved in order to ensure that this will provide the intended opportunities for BC's regulated cannabis businesses to be a significant economic driver, particularly in rural areas such as ours.

We appreciate the principle of respecting local control over land-use decisions. Nevertheless would caution against greater restrictions on cannabis cultivators in the ALR that meet the requirements laid out by the ALC for any farm located in the ALR, such as the 50% rule and consumption venues associated with vineyards. Since the province intends to allow farmgate sales of cannabis later in 2022, those on ALR land need to be able to offer sampling to their visitors. Furthermore, ALR and non-ALR locations should have similar consumption rules to create a fair playing field. Cannabis is an agricultural crop with tourism benefits and other agricultural value-added opportunities.

#### Smoking and Vaping

We understand and accept that given the dangers of secondhand smoke, the province is unlikely to allow indoor smoking or vaping in consumption lounges. We applaud the proposal to allow outdoor smoking and vaping as a way to allow consumption spaces to enable the most common way that cannabis is consumed. There are endless means to ensure that this meets the public health goals around secondhand smoke while meeting the intended goal of offering consumption opportunities in a safe, public venue.

#### Drug-Affected Driving

Our members do not wish to see cannabis associated with increased dangers within our communities. We fully understand that this could result in further stigmatization of a sector that already struggles under that burden. Nevertheless, we wish to advance the need for additional research into the impacts of cannabis on driving. There is much still not known on how to best understand the impacts, duration based on how cannabis is consumed, and what effects THC and CBD levels may have on the ability of the driver. This speaks to the go low and slow principle above

and the need to enable regulatory adjustments as new science and evidence make the impacts and management options more clear.

The proposal to increase public awareness campaigns is valuable, as is training for servers. We strongly urge a rural-lens and distinct approach when it comes to any reliance on public transport as a prerequisite to a consumption lounge license, since many of our small communities are bereft of any public transportation options.

#### Co-Locating Cannabis and Alcohol Consumption

We understand that public health and safety professionals oppose allowing cannabis and alcohol to be sold in the same location. The challenge is to provide options for individuals who eschew alcohol but who wish to socialize with their friends who avoid cannabis. Not allowing co-location services would greatly diminish the ability of restaurants or bars to provide an enhanced experience for their patrons. Allowing cannabis access to be co-located with alcohol may actually reduce the consumption of alcohol, a substance proven to have many social, safety, and health harms.

#### Diversity, Equity, and Access

We feel that the province could be more courageous and proactive when it comes to addressing equity and diversity needs through cannabis programs. There are several models of proactive programs in states in the USA that have legalized cannabis. Among the programs are incentives and extra support for those who have been disproportionately harmed by criminalization of cannabis, which is frequently those who are also disproportionately harmed by systemic racism. These programs include expungement of criminal records for simple possession as well as license fast tracking.

#### Additional issues related to consumption spaces

Retail store consumption should allow for sampling with a limit on the thc mg in each sample. We also encourage no or few restrictions on spas and other health care providers using topical products that can not be ingested, particularly for college-board certified health practitioners.



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May 6, 2022

B.C. Cannabis Secretariat  
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
PO Box 9237  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8W 9J1

Submitted via email: [Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of MADD Canada, I am writing to outline our feedback on whether and how to allow cannabis consumption spaces. We strongly agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper, namely: prioritizing public health and safety; encouraging customers to transition to regulated products; starting low and going slow; and collaborating with indigenous peoples.

While we do not have any preference as to what types of cannabis consumption spaces will be allowed, we do have a recommendation about how they should be operated. Given the serious impairing effect when alcohol and cannabis are used together, we recommend that any consumption space be made to choose between alcohol and cannabis. That is to say that the two substances should not be available for sale at any one site. Further, tasting or sampling of products should not be allowed. We would also caution against having edibles at festivals given the delayed effect of ingested cannabis and the risk of overconsumption in a more unsupervised setting.

Regarding the challenges outlined in the discussion paper, the one most concerning to MADD Canada, unsurprisingly, is drug-impaired driving. Available fatality data indicates that drugs are present at almost twice the rate of alcohol in fatally injured drivers.<sup>1</sup> Roadside surveys also report similar findings.<sup>2</sup> While this data only represents presence and not impairment, it is still concerning. Yet despite the elevated presence of drugs in road users, criminal charges for drugs represented only approximately 11% of total impaired

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<sup>1</sup> R Solomon, *Alcohol and Drugs Among Fatally Injured Drivers, By Jurisdiction and Population: Canada, 2015* (Oakville: MADD Canada, 2020) at 4.

<sup>2</sup> D Beirness, *Alcohol and Drug Use by Drivers in British Columbia: Findings from the 2018 Roadside Survey* (Ottawa: Canadian Drug & Alcohol Research Team, 2018) at v.



driving charges in 2019.<sup>3</sup> Clearly more needs to be done to prevent individuals from driving while under the impairing effects of cannabis and other drugs.

Identifying that someone is impaired by drugs or alcohol is difficult and we strongly recommend that all staff are properly trained on detecting impairment by drugs and/or alcohol. There must be a suitable ratio of staff to customers to ensure that impaired individuals do not get behind the wheel of a car, and if they do, that the police are called immediately and provided with the necessary information to stop the suspected impaired driver. Staff at cannabis consumption spaces would be the new first line of defence in the fight against drug-impaired driving and should be trained as such.

Finally, there is a critical need for improved administrative sanctions for drug impaired driving in British Columbia. Cannabis consumption spaces may lead to increased drug-impaired driving, and as such there need to be serious consequences for those drivers who are caught driving under the influence of cannabis or other drugs. British Columbia was a leader in provincial sanctions for alcohol-impaired driving, becoming the gold standard that MADD Canada used to advocate for change in other jurisdictions. Disappointingly, British Columbia has not followed with its sanctions for drug-impaired drivers, having amongst the weakest sanctions for drug-impaired drivers.

We thank you for this opportunity to outline our feedback on whether and how to allow cannabis consumption spaces. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact MADD Canada's Legal Director, Eric Dumschat, at 905-330-4632 or [EDumschat@madd.ca](mailto:EDumschat@madd.ca).

Sincerely,



Dawn Regan  
Acting Chief Executive Officer  
MADD Canada

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<sup>3</sup> E Dumschat, *Impairment-Related Criminal Code Charges & Provincial Short-Term Licence Suspensions: Canada 2010-2019* (Oakville: MADD Canada, 2021) at 26.

May 9, 2022

Director, Citizen Engagement  
Ministry of Citizens' Services on behalf of the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General  
910 Government Street  
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X3  
(Email: [Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca) )

**Attention: Director, Citizen Engagement**

Northern Health (NH) would like to thank you for the opportunity to contribute feedback to the Province of British Columbia (BC) engagement regarding Cannabis Consumption Spaces.

**Background on the NH context:**

NH's vision is to lead the way in promoting health and wellness while providing health services for Northern and primarily rural populations. The NH region is a mass geographical area of 600,000 square kilometers and provides health services to approximately 300,000 people, or approximately (7%) of the provincial population in British Columbia (BC).

Much like other northern communities across Canada, the NH region faces a disproportionate health burden compared to the rest of the province, manifesting in higher rates of chronic disease, injury and the lowest life expectancy rates in BC. Cannabis, which includes marijuana, hash and hash oil, has the highest prevalence of use after alcohol.<sup>i</sup> Within the context of cannabis smoke and vapour use, the north experiences high rates of use for both. Through the onset of legalization and introduction of edibles in 2019, cannabis usage rates have changed over the past four years.<sup>ii</sup> Data collection for the 2018 *Cannabis in British Columbia Survey* indicated, 31% of adults living in northern BC use cannabis.<sup>iii</sup> Age factored into the likelihood to combine alcohol with cannabis consumption, with 20% more persons between ages 19-29 years who reported that they combined alcohol with cannabis consumption than those aged 50+ years. <sup>iii</sup> More research is needed on the unintended consequences cannabis posed during the COVID-19 pandemic and factors that may have contributed to increased consumption and product experimentation across the north.

**Overall feedback from Northern Health:**

Cannabis has been legalized and regulated in Canada for over three years under the *Cannabis Act*. The act provides the regulatory framework for the production, possession, distribution and sale of cannabis. Its purpose is to prevent youth from accessing cannabis, protect public health and safety, and reduce criminal activity and the burden on the criminal justice system.<sup>iv</sup> Since the legalization of cannabis in the fall of 2018, cannabis consumption has increased across Canada, while the trend to inhale products is decreasing in popularity to edible cannabis. In the provincial jurisdictions of Ontario and Manitoba, further consultation is needed to gather data to indicate how retailers and business owners will adapt in the event consumption spaces permit, Manitoba is expanding to a secondary phase of consultation in 2022. In Ontario, a few cannabis retailers have sought out creative ways to distinguish themselves with ad hoc consumption spaces (i.e. a picnic table set up outside on store property), these do however pose liability concerns.<sup>v</sup> Starting the summer of 2022

the City of Calgary will allow live event fans at festivals to have access to purchase legal cannabis products (i.e. cannabis beverages, edibles and other distilled products) which will be delivered as they enjoy music in designated areas, inhalation products are excluded.<sup>vi</sup> This is the first of its kind in Canada and will offer food and other beverages, but not to be sold or combined with alcohol.<sup>vi</sup> These open-air spaces are subject to approval from the City of Calgary Interdepartmental Event Team, event opportunity forms must be submitted a minimum 60 days prior to the event.<sup>vii</sup> So while cannabis has been legal since October of 2018, individuals would have had to apply for permits and the pandemic was in the way for festivals to occur.

As a province and nation, the focus is keeping our children, youth, and young adults safe by not promoting cannabis consumption especially while protecting the developing brain. The harm reduction lens that aligns with lowering risk to the consumer is to avoid smoking burnt cannabis and choose safer inhalation (vaporizers or e-cigarettes) or edible products as a less harmful mode of consumption for adult consumers. Following the best practice guidelines released on *Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines*, adult cannabis consumers have access to less harmful products, and are consciously made aware that some products pose secondary risk compared to others, such as unwanted smoke. For adult consumers this may help aide those who may want to lower their consumption and/or make the switch to a safer alternative.

NH recommends and requests that the Province of British Columbia consider the following comprehensive strategies with regard to Cannabis Consumption Spaces:

1. Enhancing public awareness about health effects related to cannabis usage and addiction, asserting these products are not intended for children and youth
2. Refraining from concurrent substance use as a harm reduction stance
3. Restricting exposure to cannabis smoking and vaping in indoor and patio settings
4. Consistent messaging on safe rides home, to decrease the risk of impaired driving

Below, you will find additional feedback and information that supports NH's recommendations.

### **Cannabis Act and Prevention of Harm:**

The Government of Canada legalized cannabis under the *Cannabis Act* in October 2018. The end goal through legalization is for the government to have the ability to regulate the ingredients used in cannabis products, determine where cannabis can be consumed, who can purchase and use cannabis, as well as recognize how cannabis is accessed.<sup>viii</sup> Much like the history of alcohol, the ideology of prohibiting cannabis did not reduce consumption or the harms associated with cannabis use.<sup>viii</sup>

The objectives of the Act is to:

- Restrict youth access to cannabis;
- Ensure the safety and quality of cannabis products;
- Reduce cannabis- related crime and cannabis cases in the criminal justice system;
- Enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with cannabis.<sup>ix</sup>

While parts of the nation are slowly seeking consultation on cannabis spaces, it is vital for BC to be mindful of the upstream work public health and prevention strive towards. The prevention of cannabis related harms is a key piece to keep in mind. Individuals who consume cannabis regularly can develop psychological and/ or physical dependence that may cause withdrawal.<sup>x</sup> Also, there is much

room to improve with respect to controlling retail outlet density.<sup>xi</sup> By limiting retail locations and density, exposure and accessibility decreases, while also limiting the promotion of cannabis near community locations (i.e. schools, parks, community centres, and no co-location of cannabis sales with alcohol or tobacco).<sup>xi</sup> By reflecting on the hard work done through other legalized substance legislation (i.e. commercial tobacco and alcohol), cannabis needs to stand aligned and uniformed by protecting all people from smoke exposure, while also shielding children and youth from advertising and appearance to normal use which may cause undue harms.

### **Concurrent Substance Use:**

Concurrent substance use can be problematic as it can intensify the effects of both substances in use; it is safest to use only one substance, in moderation and without mixing. The concurrent use of cannabis and alcohol is of particular concern, as it is linked to a number of risks and adverse effects (i.e., greater impairment of driving ability).<sup>iii</sup> The data suggests that attitudes opposed to concurrent cannabis and alcohol use became less negative throughout the surveyed years with a notable decline in the percentage of respondents who reported disliking drinking alcohol after consuming cannabis.<sup>iii</sup> In contrast, however, both men and women respondents, on average, agreed that “It is very harmful to health to combine alcohol and cannabis,” and that they “try to avoid drinking after consuming cannabis.”<sup>iii</sup> When respondents were asked about their patterns of consumption for social events, cannabis consumers preferred alcohol to cannabis for all public events.<sup>ii</sup> Only when they were home with their partners watching television did they prefer cannabis.<sup>ii</sup> Altogether, the evidence suggests that although people’s attitudes are slightly less opposed to concurrent alcohol and cannabis usage, their behaviours do not reflect that change, and concurrent usage has not increased throughout the surveyed years.<sup>ii</sup>

Due to the potential issues that may arise from concurrent substance use, namely cannabis and alcohol, NH recommends that the following measures be considered for safe consumption spaces:

1. Only cannabis edible products allowed/ served in consumption spaces
2. Age restricted venues (must be 19 years of age for entry or service)
3. Start low go slow
4. Advertise for safe rides home and not getting into a motorized vehicle if one suspects the driver has consumed cannabis
5. Adult staff trained with mandatory responsible service training related to legal and social responsibilities, compliance checks, product knowledge and safety
6. Provide complementary water and/or other non-alcoholic beverages

### **Impaired Driving:**

Cannabis consumption may affect everyone’s health and safety differently, the degree of risk depends on many factors which include but not limited to strength, frequency, method of use, age, personal and family history of mental health conditions.<sup>xii</sup> Under the *Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines* it is recommended that individuals consider the implications of consuming cannabis and that effects of cannabis can last 6 hours or longer. It is strongly endorsed to avoid driving or operating a motorized vehicle after consuming cannabis; key messaging aligns with alcohol consumption and being under the influence. Current research released early 2022 by Dr. Jeffrey Brubacher through UBC highlights more Canadians are choosing to drive impaired from cannabis, especially drivers over the age of 50.<sup>xiii</sup> Dr. Brubacher’s research also highlights that it is important not to lose sight of alcohol impaired driving, which is extremely high risk, especially when combined with cannabis.<sup>xiii</sup>

In the *Canadian Cannabis Survey 2020: Summary*, alcohol was the substance most commonly used in combination with cannabis followed by commercial tobacco.<sup>xiv</sup> Nineteen percent (19%) of individuals reported that they had driven a vehicle within two hours of consuming cannabis in combination with alcohol, unchanged from 2019 data.<sup>xiv</sup> Individuals also shared that the most common reason for operating the vehicle after recent dual use was that the person did not feel impaired, followed by thinking they could drive carefully, did not have far to drive, and had no alternative transportation.<sup>xiv</sup> Similar to the anti-drinking and driving groups that started to appear in the early 1980's in Canada, the above mentioned research highlights the importance of key messaging and health education when it comes to driving under the influence or considering this choice.

The issue with cannabis consumption spaces that offer both substances (cannabis and alcohol) is that this almost publicly validates the mixing for dual substance consumption which may lead to severe risks to one's health. It is not considered safe to mix substances which may enhance impairment, decrease judgment and could potentially lead to a dependence or worse, overdose. For this reason, NH strongly advocates against dual substance consumption spaces of cannabis and alcohol and encourages establishments to offer non-alcoholic beverages instead.

### **Exposure in Public Places:**

Since edible cannabis became legal in Canada, we have seen that shift in consumers' preferred methods of consumption. Unlike burning cannabis products that give off a strong odour, edibles aide in hiding the pungent smell associated with the cannabis plant to make it less stigmatizing and more discreet for the consumers. Trends emerged, in which fewer consumers preferred inhalation-based methods of consumption and more consumers preferred oral ingestion.<sup>iii</sup> Despite these changes, inhalation remains the dominant method of cannabis consumption. While cannabis is not the same as commercial tobacco, second-hand cannabis smoke contains many of the same toxic, cancer-causing chemicals found in commercial tobacco smoke.<sup>xv</sup> It is important that cannabis consumers avoid higher-risk consumption methods and patterns (i.e. inhalation and concurrent consumption with alcohol).<sup>iii</sup> Restricting inhalation production from patios aligns with *Canada's Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines* in that it decreases exposure to second-hand smoke/ vapour that may pose risk, while allowing the end consumer to ingest products. These guidelines suggest limiting cannabis use to once a week or only on weekends and to avoid smoking cannabis.<sup>xvi</sup>

The politics of cannabis lounges are changing along with shifting social norms around the substance. Below the border, Colorado and Washington were the first states to legalize adult cannabis use in 2012, and other states have since followed suit.<sup>xvii</sup> The difference between the United States of America and Canada's vision, is that Canada has one of the strongest Tobacco Control Strategies in place which recognizes the risks that are posed to others through second and third-hand exposure, as well as the potential risk of switching to a new substance of choice through inhalation (i.e. commercial tobacco or nicotine). In Canada, cannabis consumers have reported a history of cigarette smoking and/or dual-use between commercial tobacco and cannabis use. As per Public Health Ontario, approximately (32%) of adult cannabis consumers in Ontario mix cannabis with commercial tobacco.<sup>xviii</sup> This raises concerns regarding the involvement of dual-use of both products and how this may be monitored if cannabis consumption patios are to proceed. It would be harder to monitor which cannabis products (i.e., joints, blunts or spliffs) are mixed with commercial tobacco, which in the end could cause further harms to fellow customers. While it is known that vaping cannabis may be less risky to the end user, it would seem challenging for retailers to monitor or inspect every vapour cannabis device to ensure nothing has been tampered with for dual-use.

NH supports the provincial government's recommendation of cannabis consumption spaces to be inclusive of edible cannabis products while restricting indoor and outdoor patio smoking and vaping. Much like smoking a cigarette or nicotine vape, cannabis smoke and vapour poses a risk to bystanders in the form of second-hand smoke and vapour. While it is known that the Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Regulation sets a six metre zone around all doorways, air intakes and open windows to any public and work places in B.C., municipality bylaws have greater restrictions on outdoor smoke/ vapour products use, and take precedence. Some communities in B.C. ban the use of commercial tobacco and vapour products on hospitality patios, have buffer zones that are larger than six metres or ban the use of these products on outdoor spaces.<sup>xix</sup> Although this is a measurable distance, the pandemic has taught us that we cannot assume the public's awareness and ability (or likelihood) of measuring it out and adhering to recommendations.

The historical prevention work completed in the commercial tobacco field over the past century has mitigated risk to many. With the end goal of less than 5% by 2035 regarding commercial tobacco consumption, now is not the time to idle or reverse this work by allowing smoking and vaping of cannabis products in public spaces. By regulating cannabis consumption spaces to edible products only, with no option to purchase alcohol products, individuals will be protected from the harms associated with dual consumption as well as second-hand exposure to cannabis smoke/vapour, while meeting the trend that highlights the preferred methods for cannabis consumption that is shifting away from inhalation and towards oral ingestion, aligning with the *Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines*.<sup>iii</sup> NH recommends supporting a regulatory framework that is comprehensive; and committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all British Columbians. NH will continue to advocate for an evidence-based public health approach through provincial and national regulatory work that aims to decrease harms for future generations.

Thank you for your leadership on this important health initiative.

Sincerely,



Lindsay Willoner, RN(c)  
Cannabis, Tobacco & Vapour Reduction Lead  
**Northern Health**



Nancy Stokke RN  
Prevention of Legalized Substance Harms Lead  
**Northern Health**



Dr. Rakel Kling, Msc, FRPC  
Medical Health Officer, NI HSDA  
**Northern Health**

## Appendix

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Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General  
Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca

RE: BC Cannabis Consumptive Space Input

To Whom It May Concern,

May 9, 2022

Thank you for the Consumptive Space Input Engagement. I congratulate the Province in taking the initiative and leadership in our country on this topic.

I provide this feedback as a consultant that works with craft cannabis companies on business development and strategy. As well, I sit on the Kootenay Cannabis Economic Development Council, and on the C45 Quality Association Regulatory Working Group. My background is in agriculture and retail business, and I live in a rural area of the Kootenays. In addition to filling out the online input form, there's a few specifics I'd like to submit:

### **1. Co-Location Selling**

The discussion paper notes that public health and safety people strongly oppose co-location selling and that other areas that allow consumption 'generally' do not allow this.

What is happening in the areas that do allow it? Is the opposition based on proven concerns? Not allowing co-location serving does not prevent the mixing of cannabis and alcohol. Anyone at a bar can step outside for a smoke or vape. This happens regularly already.

Offering cannabis beverages in an alcohol-serving environment allows patrons to make their own choice about whether to consume alcohol or cannabis. Or for example to allow a restaurant that services wine the option to choose a cannabis beverage or eat a cannabis-infused meal instead of alcohol.

Not allowing co-location service would greatly diminish the ability of restaurants or bars to provide an enhanced experience for their patrons. And it may actually reduce the consumption of alcohol... a substance proven to have many social, safety, and health harms.

Particularly in rural areas with a limited population base, it might not be economically feasible to operate a cannabis-focused or cannabis-only establishment.

I support requiring a cannabis-specific serving license that is available to businesses that already serve alcohol. I don't think it should be mandatory to have an alcohol license but there would be similar age/access restrictions.

I understand the cannabis-infused foods there might be concern about cross-contamination. Perhaps as a pilot project there could be single night/event licenses that require thc-infused products on-site only during a specific limited time period.





## **2. ALR Land Use Restrictions**

The paper notes that the ALR may limit where consumption spaces are allowed.

This needs to be spelled out more clearly. As we are starting to allow farmgate sales, those on ALR land should be able to offer sampling to their visitors. ALR and non-ALR locations should have similar consumption rules to create a fair playing field. Cannabis is an agricultural crop with tourism benefits and other value-added opportunities that need to be considered.

## **3. Retail Cannabis Consumption**

I would like to see a consideration of edible and topical sampling with a limit on the THC mg in each sample. This will help retailers and processors provide a better customer experience. Enhancing customer experience at this level may lessen the draw of illicit sellers as the consumer would have more confidence in the product they are buying at the current price points.

## **4. Spas and Health Care Providers**

There should be few restrictions on using topical products that can not be ingested. I support college-board certified health practitioners being able to use topical products with their clients. This does not include them being able to sell the products.

## **5. Rural and Agricultural Perspective**

In all changes considered, I ask that the Province keep in mind the effects of policies on the rural population. What works in urban settings often does not work in rural areas. Cannabis is an agricultural crop that deserves to be treated as such.

I hope that this engagement process creates a more in-depth discussion with key groups so that we can develop well-informed policies around cannabis use in our province. Please keep me informed of further input opportunities or discussions.

Sincerely,

Velvet Kavanagh



# Physicians *for a* Smoke-Free Canada

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May 9, 2022

Cannabis Secretariat  
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
Government of British Columbia  
Victoria, B.C.

## Re: Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement

Please accept this letter as our submission with respect to the consultation on Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space. Our submission is structured following the suggested guidelines.

**We recommend that British Columbia NOT proceed with authorizing consumption areas unless and until there is evidence to demonstrate that doing so will not contribute to an increase in the harms associated with cannabis use.** For the purposes of this consultation, we identify these harms as those outlined by the Chief Medical Officers of Health and CAMH.<sup>1 2</sup> Following their articulation of cannabis related harms, we urge B.C. to not permit cannabis consumption areas which have a reasonable possibility of increasing the frequency of use by individual cannabis users, or of increasing the number of cannabis users in British Columbia or elsewhere, or by lowering the age at which cannabis use takes place.

Our comments on the principles and assumptions presented in the discussion paper are stated below.

### 1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?

#### “Prioritize Public Health and Safety”

We are of the opinion that public health and safety should be the predominant values in the assessment of the option to permit cannabis consumption areas.

**We urge that the precautionary principle be adopted with respect to any risk assessment,** noting that this is a new area of public policy and there has not been the opportunity to gather evidence on the best practices for a legalized market. To be clear, it is not responsible for the government to insist on any level of evidence before implementing protective regulations, and in the absence of evidence should not permit activities which might cause harm.

In assessing the impact on health, the province should use the broad definition of health as defined by the World Health Organization: “A state of complete physical,

mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Using this definition, for example, the province should expand the factors it takes into consideration to include economic impact (i.e. the cost of being dependent on cannabis, as about 10% of those who ever try cannabis become).

#### **“Encourage Consumers to Transition to Regulated Products”**

**The province should not confuse legal status with health status.** While the province should aim to convert existing supply and demand to a legal market, it should not mislead the public into believing that ‘legal’ cannabis is ‘safer’ than that sold on the illicit market unless it has proof of this effect. The communication that some products are “safer” can contribute to consumers underestimating the inherent harms.

#### **“Start Low and go Slow”**

**If the province is not capable of fully evaluating the impact of consumption areas, it should not proceed in permitting them.** In applying the principle of ‘start low and go slow’, the government should recognize the costs of monitoring the impact of initial activities and the vulnerability of such a process to interference by commercial interests (whose research findings may be biased) and the provinces own capacity to make these evaluations. Evaluations of policy measures on cannabis (including any consumption space regulations) should be accompanied by stringent conflict of interest rules, by full transparency of results and data liberation. The costs of evaluation should be born by the commercial operators who benefit, and included in license fees.

#### **“Collaborate with Indigenous Peoples”**

**Cannabis regulations should respect self-government of Indigenous Canadians.** We are not aware of any reason to apply this important principle differently with respect to cannabis consumption spaces than with other policy issues.

#### **“Respect Local Control over Land-use Decisions”**

**The province should not pit risk-taking communities against cautious communities.** This principle should not be applied to undermine the decisions of neighbouring communities. A local community which wishes to operate a cannabis consumption area should not be permitted to do so without factoring in the impact on adjacent communities. There are examples in British Columbia of local land use being used to undermine general policy decisions (for example, consumers are exposed to billboards on federal lands that would not be permitted on provincial lands). Allowing communities to set up “red light”-style districts which allow cannabis consumption areas in order to compete with neighbouring communities for commercial activities would create economic pressure that would erode health protection.

2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?
3. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?

**Any cannabis consumption area should be operated on a strictly non-profit basis.**

**There should be no commercially-operated cannabis consumption sites.** Any decision to allow cannabis consumption areas should be contingent on their being operated on a non-commercial basis. There should be no economic incentive in the operation of these spaces that is linked to increased consumption, sales or attendance. For example, if it is decided that a cannabis consumption area is beneficial as part of music festival, then the designation of that space should not be provided by commercial suppliers of cannabis or other goods and services but rather should be managed as part of the festival administration. By analogy, the model that should guide any such area should be the designated smoking areas that were in place in previous generations (that is, where cigarettes are not sold), and not cigar lounges or shisha bars, which are operated by tobacco suppliers.

**Any cannabis consumption area should not contribute to positive imagery about cannabis use**

**Any decision to allow cannabis consumption spaces should not contribute to the lifestyle marketing of cannabis products or cannabis use,** and should not imbue the consumption of this drug with other lifestyle imagery (music, social acceptability, fashion, romance, sophistication, elegance, etc.). Nor should cannabis consumption be linked to the consumption of other products of harm (alcohol or tobacco).

For these reasons, cannabis consumption areas should not be co-located with alcohol or food-serving areas (whether commercial or non-profit), and they should not provide furnishings or ambiance likely to enhance the consumption experience.

**Non-harming economic strategy (that does not lead to increased cannabis use)**

**B.C. should adopt a whole-of-government policy to reduce cannabis use.** The discussion paper should reject consideration of cannabis use being used to grow B.C.'s economy. (This is described in the discussion paper that "consumption spaces could create cannabis, tourism, and hospitality jobs – especially in areas that have a history of growing cannabis or at existing tourism destinations."). While B.C.'s economy may include the manufacture and distribution of harmful products (armaments, pollution, etc.), the government policy should not be to expand their production.

Any decision to allow cannabis consumption spaces should consider the growth of the cannabis market (legal or illegal) to be an "economic benefit". Cannabis is a substance that harms a large proportion of its users. B.C.'s cannabis industry contributes to harm outside of the province.

### **Up-dated protection from second hand smoke**

**Workers and the public must be protected from second-hand cannabis smoke and vapour, even in outdoor settings.** The discussion paper suggests that consideration is being given to allowing cannabis consumption in the same environments currently permitted for smoking and vaping. The B.C. government should recognize that its restrictions on smoking in outdoor settings is the least stringent of any Canadian province. In most places in Canada, smoking is prohibited by provincial law on patios where food or drink service is provided. B.C. should strengthen protection for hospitality workers by banning smoking or vaping of tobacco, nicotine or cannabis on these venues, as other provinces have done. Any consumption area that produces smoke or vapour should not allow non-consumers or workers to enter.

### **Promotion of equity and diversity.**

**Cannabis use disproportionately harms vulnerable Canadians, and B.C.'s policies should aim to address this inequality.** Appropriately, the discussion paper identifies the "importance of ensuring equity and diversity". Inappropriately, the paper identifies this in the context of who might profit economically from expanded cannabis sales, and not who will be at most risk from such activity. The equity lens should be applied to all stakeholders in this discussion.

Ensuring that any permitted activity is managed on a non-profit basis, especially if overseen with community engagement, will contribute to community control and the promotion of equity and diversity.

**Thank you for your consideration of our views.**

Sincerely,



Cynthia Callard  
Executive Director

- 1 Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines (LRCUG)  
<https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---reports-and-books---research/canadas-lower-risk-guidelines-cannabis-pdf.pdf>
- 2 Public Health Agency of Canada. Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health remind Canadians of the harms and risks associated with cannabis use. October 2018.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2018/10/council-of-chief-medical-officers-of-health-remind-canadians-of-the-harms-and-risks-associated-with-cannabis-use.html>

## Cannabis Consumption Spaces Submission

Thank you for seeking input on cannabis consumption spaces in BC. This submission is provided by a faculty researcher from [Selkirk Innovates](#), the Kootenay's regional leader in applied research and innovation, who is working in partnership with [Kootenays Rockies Tourism](#) (KRT), one of BC's regional destination management organizations that works on behalf of tourism stakeholders in the Kootenay Rockies region. Selkirk Innovates and KRT partnered to explore cannabis tourism opportunities (along with drivers, risks, and models) in the region. This submission is based on that research as well as the researcher's extensive knowledge around the rural regional cannabis economy.

Cannabis consumption spaces are critical to the development of a robust cannabis tourism industry. This is particularly true in rural areas that are continually seeking economic development opportunities to diversify our relatively limited and often unstable staple economies.

The Kootenay region carries a rich history of cannabis production that has substantially contributed to the socioeconomic fabric of the region. This history has perhaps contributed to a more progressive view about cannabis tourism and cannabis consumption spaces.

After reading the provided [discussion paper](#), we would like to offer the following feedback to the posed questions:

1. *Do you agree with the principles outlined in the [discussion paper](#)? Why or why not?*

We generally agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper. However, we would like to identify where we deviate from what was written.

First, although this is not necessarily a principle, we are not in full agreement that cannabis lounges would be limited to cannabis and food. Although we appreciate the focus on cannabis lounges would be on cannabis, there should also be alcohol offered, just like in a restaurant or pub. This is to accommodate couples or groups who comprise a mix of consumers; some people only consume cannabis, while others only consume alcohol, and certainly some choose to consume both. Having alcohol available in cannabis lounges accommodates the variety of interests of patrons which would help to attract cannabis and non-cannabis consumers alike. As

we discuss more below, we believe the co-location of cannabis and alcohol requires a Serving it Right course for budtenders/bartenders so that those serving both cannabis and alcohol are acutely aware of the potential adverse effects of mixing the two substances. It is also important for the server to communicate this information to the clientele.

Second, under “Encourage Consumers to Transition to Regulated Products”, where it is written that “the availability of consumption spaces should not contribute to significant increases in problematic cannabis use”, we would like to point to the similarity of this concern to legalization itself which carried concern for increased problematic cannabis use. Legalization has shown to result in relatively minor increased consumption according to self-reported data, however, “legal access to medical and — most recently — non-medical cannabis may also have influenced willingness to report use” (Rotermann 2021, vol. 32, para. 48), which suggests the slight increase in use could be a data error which could not be detected. With this empirical evidence and knowledge of data bias, we believe consumption spaces are unlikely to result in increased problematic cannabis use so long as the cannabis consumer is educated. Therefore, to address the concern for problematic use, education is critical and should be part of any consumption space.

Third, regarding the section around “Start Low and go Slow”, there is expressed concern about impaired driving which is used as a rationale for starting with “lower complexity spaces”. While we agree that new regulations and policy around cannabis consumption spaces should not lead to more or greater levels of impairment, we have years of data from alcohol consumption spaces from which to learn. For example, addressing cannabis impairment should be done similarly to addressing alcohol impairment, such that the budtender/bartender should have proper training for serving cannabis (i.e., a Serving it Right for cannabis), check in on the well-being of patrons, have authority to refuse a patron service if needed, and the establishment should always provide options for safe ways home (i.e., posters with taxicab information, public transit, shuttles, free rides home, etc). Since we have decades of learning with regards to impaired driving from alcohol, we do not believe we must only start with “lower complexity spaces” like music festivals. All the proposed consumption spaces should ideally be permitted at the onset, with the right protocols in place as derived from what we have learned about alcohol consumption spaces.

However, if a staggered approach to consumption spaces is pursued, we would like to propose select pilot projects to study the effects of co-location and how these



compare to initial concerns by public health officials. These pilot projects would generate empirical evidence to adapt policy and regulation as cannabis consumption spaces develop. We appreciate how policy can be more difficult to rollback once it has been opened to the public.

Fourth, regarding the principle around “Respecting Local Control over Land-use Decisions” and the comment that “cannabis businesses that are interested in cannabis agri-tourism or hospitality opportunities located on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), including cannabis consumption spaces, may also be restricted in what non-farm activities they can pursue”, we would like to highlight how cannabis production is agriculture. Accordingly, cannabis production sites should be treated as agriculture, just like alcohol production facilities which allow for consumption and hospitality within the ALR. As stated in the report entitled *Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission*, “the number and scale of events at ALR alcohol production facilities with a lounge or special event endorsement can currently be regulated but not prohibited by local and treaty First Nation Governments” (BC Minister of Agriculture’s Advisory Committee 2018, 78). While the principle did not say non-farm cannabis activities would be prohibited, we would like to be clear that they should not be restricted any more than alcohol production facilities that are located on the ALR.

2. *What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed? What would make this space economically feasible as a business? How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?*

The economic feasibility of cannabis tourism businesses is limited by where and how cannabis is regulated, namely under the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Emergency BC which sets an enforcement first tone. From an economic development perspective, cannabis tourism cuts across multiple ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Jobs, Economic recovery and innovation, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. Incorporating cannabis agritourism into rural economic development strategies (with some guidance from these multiple ministries) would enable better access to legal cannabis (BC Chamber of Commerce 2022).

As Thach (2017), identified, the wine and cannabis industries have multiple similarities. Both industries have unique varieties with specific aromas and tasting notes, are suited to appellations, and produce multiple production lines, which



are/can all be leveraged for promoting tourism. Wine tourism includes most steps of the value chain and turns them into experiences. Due to the parallels with wine and cannabis tourism, we envision cannabis farms adopting this value chain tourism model. This would include visiting a cannabis farm and touring the facilities, participating in and learning about cultivation, experiencing how cannabis is grown and processed and enjoying tastings or samples (Keul and Eisenhauer 2019).

To be economically feasible, these farm tours and associated tastings need to have flexibility; they need the option to pair tastings with food, and/or to optionally purchase alcohol particularly for non-cannabis consuming clients who may be part of a cannabis consuming group on tour. Flexibility around what is offered (i.e., alcohol and cannabis in this case) is not unusual; most brewery tours, for example, offer non-alcoholic beverages and in some instances wine options as well. This flexibility would allow farms to diversify and better support cannabis tourism in the rural region. Afterall, limited access to cannabis farms due to the ruralness (i.e., large amounts of space between farms) are barriers for entry for cannabis tourism operators (Reilly, Switzer, and Pachmayer 2021). Allowing for a wide breadth of cannabis consumption spaces will support the economic feasibility for rural cannabis businesses.

To further address barriers for entry for cannabis tourism, the legislation around security measures of cannabis production facilities also demand attention; we have been told that a cannabis farm tour that is potentially marketed as a wellness / healing retreat requires a reduction in apparent security measures, such as barbed wired fences and padlocked entries to most areas of the facility. These types of security measures, along with other legislation, do not elucidate a calm, and peaceful farm where guests could camp, or hypothetically engage in YouPick cannabis while learning about polyculture and cannabis as a communal plant.

Another type of consumption space we favour is a cannabis spa experience which we believe would appeal to a wide range of cannabis consumers. While cannabis farms in our rural area are dispersed and difficult to arrange for tours, the option of cannabis spas along with cannabis retailers and cannabis lounges may encourage tour operators to integrate all these opportunities. This would in turn address the barrier of ruralness our tour operators are facing around cannabis tourism. A cannabis spa experience requires reasonable government regulations that aren't too onerous, affordable products, and adequately trained staff. From these opportunities, ancillary business may also develop such as certified educators and

practitioners (e.g., cannabis sommeliers, Registered Massage Therapists with cannabis specialization, etc).

To address challenges posed in the paper around impaired driving, for example, not only should there be information available for a safe way home (i.e., taxi, transit, nearby cannabis friendly lodging, and free rides), but there should also be an educational component which is required when offering tastings and other cannabis consumption experiences that is part of the staff training for those who serve cannabis. The Serving it Right for cannabis should cover the risk of the delayed onset of the effects of edibles, and information around different cannabis varieties, and chemical compounds, for example.

We agree that transit options in rural areas are more limited, and as shown by our years of impaired driving data, impaired driving is more common in rural places due to a lack of transit which makes rural venues more challenging with regards to proving a safe way home. This identifies a need to improve our rural transit options (that are either public or private like taxicabs or shuttles) in order to support rural cannabis tourism in our region.

Finally, we strongly believe cannabis should be available at bars and restaurants because it offers a safer alternative to alcohol (Reiman 2009; Lau et al. 2015) for people who do not consume alcohol. This position is based on a harm reduction perspective; since cannabis is now a legal product, it should always have the potential to be offered as an alternative to alcohol at these traditional food and beverage establishments.

### *3. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered?*

As stated above under question 1, there are no types of consumption spaces that should not be considered. The reason for this is because the wide breadth of cannabis consumption spaces is important for normalizing cannabis and cannabis consumption, which is critically important for supporting cannabis tourism. Part of normalizing cannabis is to make it available and to talk about it; to educate consumers about the best choices they can make, and to allow consumers to access it in a variety of venues and under a variety of circumstances.

In sum, we believe that all the proposed consumption spaces should be permitted at the onset. This comes with a caveat, of course; we need the right protocols in place that can be derived from the learnings of alcohol consumption spaces as well as what we already know about safe consumption of cannabis. We believe that when

cannabis was legalized, consumption spaces should have also been permitted, including those with co-locations of cannabis and alcohol particularly to support non-alcohol engaging cannabis consumers. Since cannabis consumption was not allowed with legalization, it purportedly disincentivized legal cannabis purchasing, shamed consumers who were required to consume cannabis in public spaces, put the public at risk from potential second hand smoke exposure and delayed important economic development opportunities around cannabis tourism.

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**May 9, 2022**

### ***Introduction***

BC has invited sector stakeholders to provide feedback regarding cannabis consumption policies. In response, The Entourage Co. & Diplomat Consulting Inc., two prominent cannabis business consultancies in the regulated cannabis industry in Canada have made the following notes in response and have consulted industry stakeholders at:

1. BC Craft Farmers Co-op Members
2. BC Cannabis Summit in Kelowna, BC between April 20-22, 2022
3. BC craft farmers roundtable in East Kelowna April 23, 2022
4. Virtual BC roundtable May 5, 2022

### ***Cannabis Consumption – BC Questions***

BC's stakeholder engagement is focused on non-medical cannabis consumption spaces (tasting rooms, lounges, special events, retail). Feedback is requested on the following questions:

1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the [discussion paper](#)? Why or why not?
  - a. Primarily agreed with the writings in the discussion paper. Areas of additional consideration should focus on the development of BC Leadership on the infusion of cannabis in drinks and food overseen by chefs and mixologists, the creation of a preserve for cannabis, no co-mingling of cannabis and alcohol due to no peer-reviewed research, careful consideration into where the combustion of cannabis can occur and specific efforts for the providers to not create three-tiered cannabis zoning between First Nations and their extraterritoriality, illegal sector abusing the law to get into cannabis consumption, and municipalities given too much power to prevent cannabis in their communities, driving it in to the arms of illegal or send the economic benefits in to other communities based on ignorance or lack of education
  - b. This discussion does not address how products will be acquired, sold, and reported within the establishment. As a former owner of a licensed cannabis retail store in Vancouver and having opened the first farm-gate store in

Canada as a consultant, there are concerns regarding licensing, distribution and competition in the market. We are already dealing with market saturation and competition is high. A better understanding around licensing, purchasing and sales of cannabis derived products is required. Most retailers do not have the space to outfit their retail location with a consumption area.

2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed?
  - a. Primarily the infusion of cannabis in food and drink. Creating a new class of restaurants and bars to rebuild after covid. Create a worldwide destination where 29% of US travellers have indicated their desire to have a cannabis experience. allow for the rehiring of 19-25 years old's the largest demographic of under-employable. Focus on bring in 65% of Canadians not consuming cannabis that have indicated that 66% of which want their first-time consumption to be through ingestible
3. What would make this space economically feasible as a business? treat it almost exactly as a restaurant, food/drink establishment, bars. zone it the same way and do not allow cannabis surcharges and excessive taxation to put a crimp in the development and create a new illegal sector to flourish
  - a. Don't over tax and overregulate. treat it the same as other relevant and parallel sectors
4. How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving) could be addressed?
  - a. Spend research dollars on the creation of a new standardized consumption unit (parallel to .8 in alcohol), create an education and certification program to teach inebriation in the same way as preserve, and create a vibrant legal sector that is not over regulated or overtaxed, otherwise we will again establish a vibrant illegal sector
5. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?
  - a. Any that co-mingle alcohol due to no research about the effects and the fact that most citizens don't know about cannabis effects so don't allow alcohol on top of it as well. Careful restrictions on the consumption of plant matter cannabis to be consumed through combustion. Parallel concerns to smoking of tobacco, should be show in the consumption of cannabis as well. Against

most current consumers, but you will not ingratiate new consumers or tourists in this environment.

In agreement with BC Craft Farmers Co-Op Response:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b><i>Should BC allow cannabis consumption spaces as described? If yes, how should it be done?</i></b>	<p>Yes. It is disappointing BC is still asking this question after two years. Is there still doubt? BC should state clearly and quickly they are proceeding in this direction so we can move forward with implementation. With regard to <b>how</b>, participants suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't reinvent the wheel. Simply adopt what is working now for wineries, craft breweries and distilleries.</li><li>• Adoption of the BC Smart Serve program was suggested.</li><li>• Learn from other jurisdictions, particularly related to special events, farm gate, weddings and restaurant dining for adults.</li><li>• Collaborate with BCCFC and BC Cannabis Retail Association to help implement these policies and mitigate federal barriers.</li><li>• Clarify how consumption policies apply to medical use.</li></ul>
<b><i>Can consumption spaces support economic development, recovery and tourism and shift consumption from illicit to regulated products?</i></b>	<p>Yes. It is disappointing BC is still asking this question. Had BC listened to previous submissions, there should be no doubt about the potential benefits of implementing these policies. BC needs to act quickly to identify the provincial actions needed to realize how co-ordinated consumption, farm gate and direct sales policies can achieve the sector's full economic potential. BC Cannabis Summit attendees approved several policy solutions for BC and Canada to consider. <b>See link below.</b> Insurance realities need to be considered for locations/tour operators.</p>

<b><i>How can cannabis consumption policies prohibit indoor smoking/vaping?</i></b>	Without exception, all indoor smoking activities should be treated the exact same as other products (cigars, tobacco, e-cigarettes). At the same time, a framework that allows for the adult consumption of edible cannabis products, baked goods and cannabis-infused restaurant menu items should be enabled.
<b><i>How can cannabis consumption policies address drug-affected driving?</i></b>	<p>All participants support public education related to any kind of intoxicated driving. The roll-out of farm gate and consumption policies, in collaboration with BC cannabis associations, provides a significant public education platform.</p> <p>More broadly, BC Cannabis Summit participants recommended BC and Canada establish a National Cannabis Health Research Institute in our province to answer lingering questions about the benefits and risks associated with cannabis use, including impairment and unique effects created by various delivery mechanisms. <i>See link below.</i></p>
<b><i>How can cannabis consumption policies discourage co-use of alcohol and cannabis?</i></b>	<p>All agree a significant public education opportunity exists with the farm gate and consumption policies to discourage the co-use of alcohol and cannabis.</p> <p>At the same time, some believe too many limitations regarding the legal activities of adults may not be effective or reflect reality. Cannabis infused restaurant menus, weddings, conferences and special event permits where alcohol sales are also on-site were examples of things that should not be unreasonably prohibited. Other participants noted BC has co-located cannabis and alcohol within their own regulatory approach and they approve retail locations in close proximity to liquor establishments.</p> <p>All agree a more adult conversation is needed that focuses on education, best practices in other jurisdictions and recognition that some of these activities are already occurring between adults.</p>
<b><i>How can cannabis consumption policies require a positive recommendation from the applicable Indigenous or local government?</i></b>	<p>Participants generally agreed with this, noting these approvals are required for production, retail and processing licence holders now. However, participants suggested clarity is required from the BC government to confirm consumption on ALR lands will be permitted and that cannabis is defined as an agriculture product/activity. <i>See link below.</i></p> <p>Participants also agreed Canada and BC should provide financial incentives to help Indigenous, local governments and tourism associations facilitate and promote these job creation opportunities. <i>See link below.</i></p>

**General Discussion: Farm Gate**

Virtually all participants discussed provincial consumption policies within the context of BC's proposed farm gate cannabis sales policy and the general state of BC's cannabis sector. In this light, we have included a summary of feedback received on BC's farm gate policy roll-out, expected this summer/fall.

- Don't reinvent the wheel. Business integration required to implement cannabis sales at farms or a common-market location already exist in other sectors. We can adopt what is working now for wineries, craft breweries and distilleries.
- Farm gate represents a significant opportunity for small farmers to diversify revenue streams so they are not relying only on wholesale pricing. Land values may also increase.
- Dedicated licencing stream for farm gate stores should not be overly expensive to access, especially since some stores and markets may be seasonal.
- Roll-out of farm gate, direct sales and consumption policies represent a significant public education opportunity that can enlighten consumers and destigmatize the plant.
- BC is moving too slow and missing opportunities. They need to involve the sector more directly in the implementation of farm gate and consumption to ensure they are successful and lessons are applied from other jurisdictions (SK, AB and ONT).
- Farm gate and consumption policies rolled out together represents a significant tourism opportunity for all regions of the province.
- Hemp should be included in the policies given significant consumer interest in CBD products.
- Insurance challenges need to be considered for locations and tour operators.
- Opportunity for existing retailers to collaborate with farmers to help open stores and navigate application process.
- Federal production and processing licensing restrictions are likely to dampen the farm gate experience by keeping consumers/tourists from getting too close to the plant.
- Proactive strategies should be developed that engage the federal regulator and apply best practices from other jurisdictions that can facilitate a meaningful interaction between the consumer and plant.



**Conclusion**

As noted, more than 450 participants of our recent BC Cannabis Summit in Kelowna had the opportunity to develop policy solutions and opportunities facing our sector and all governments. Many speak directly to consumption consultation and the roll out of related BC policies.

As has been the case with previous consultation, they believe the development and implementation of BC's cannabis policy needs to be better coordinated.

Specifically delegates expressed their support through an inclusive and fully-funded Canada/BC Craft Cannabis Economic Development Partnership that expands the sector's capacity to create jobs, promote 'Buy Local' campaigns, destination cannabis tourism and meaningful public education.

Here is a link to the seven (7) policies prioritized by Summit delegates: [BC Cannabis Summit Delegates Prioritize Policy Solutions for Federal and Provincial Governments: Farm Gate and Consumption Consultation Launched - BC Craft Farmers Co-op \(bccraftfarmerscoop.com\)](#)

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# NON-MEDICAL CANNABIS CONSUMPTION SPACE ENGAGEMENT

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## Introduction

Taking steps to permit cannabis consumption in designated public spaces has not yet been considered, nor undertaken in any other Canadian jurisdiction. The principles outlined in the Discussion Paper appear incomplete and more thoughtful examination is warranted. The emphasis on economic benefits for government and establishments must be better balanced against the potential and significant social costs of such an initiative. Important issues which are unaddressed include the availability and development of adequate prevention strategies, and the allocation of tax revenues from these consumption spaces to help implement education and enforcement measures to mitigate negative road safety impacts.

Research has demonstrated the impairing effects of cannabis on driving and the combined use of cannabis and alcohol have additive effects, although these effects may vary across different users. Recent self-report, trauma centre, fatality and arrest data show a very concerning, rising trend in impaired driving in Canada. In addition, currently there are inadequate enforcement resources allocated to road safety. The detection of drug-impaired driving is recognizably challenging even for police officers un-trained as Drug Recognition Experts (DREs), and programs to train servers to prevent over-service of cannabis are non-existent.

In the face of this evidence, it is premature to allow cannabis consumption spaces. Simply adopting a 'learn as you go' approach is fraught with risks because the potential negative impacts on public safety are substantial. Moving forward without clearly defined strategies to regulate establishments, strengthen alternative transportation options, bolster enforcement and prevent impaired driving is ill-advised. Consideration of tactics to make cannabis consumption spaces economically feasible as a business should be a secondary priority to public safety risks.

This submission summarizes important public safety risks that warrant careful consideration as part of decision-making. It proposes more work is needed to mitigate potential harm and ensure adequate training and prevention measures are developed and operationalized in advance of moving forward, even in a limited fashion. Key facts to inform discussion are summarized below with appropriate references if additional information is needed.

1. Research shows cannabis is associated with a modest increase in crash risk at the population level, and impairing effects are additive when combined with alcohol. The most current and comprehensive meta-analysis on cannabis-impaired driving showed "...cannabis alone was associated with impaired lateral control for lateral position variability and decreased driving speed. The combination of cannabis and alcohol was associated with greater driving performance decrements than either drug in isolation." (Simmons et al. 2021; p.1). In addition, other meta-analyses (Asbridge et al., 2012; Rogeberg et al., 2016) reported cannabis increases crash risk by 1.36-2.66 times. While the increase in crash risk varies between studies, the average increase is 30% to 40%. In addition, although a 2021 Canadian study (Brubacher et al., 2019) reported no increase in crash risk among drivers with THC levels <5ng/mL, authors further noted that tracking the prevalence of these drivers would be important to determine whether this posed an emerging issue in Canada, particularly among younger drivers.

Most concerning, drivers who combine cannabis and alcohol have a very high crash risk. In a recent Canadian responsibility analysis (Brubacher et al. 2019), drivers who tested positive for both alcohol and cannabis were approximately seven times more likely to cause a crash than drivers who did not use either substance. A comprehensive literature review examining the impairing effects of alcohol and marijuana and how combined use affects crash risk published by TIRF (Lyon & Robertson, 2020) reported similar concerns.

2. In the past three years, self-report surveys have shown the use of cannabis, alcohol, and the combination of these substances within two hours of driving has increased. Data from TIRF's national Road Safety Monitor (RSM) series for 2018-2021 show a generally increasing trend in self-reported driving within two hours of using cannabis, alcohol, and these substances combined. Driver percentages are based on an estimated population of 26,000,000 licenced drivers in Canada.
  - > When compared to pre-legalization in 2018 when 3.3% of respondents self-reported driving within two hours of using marijuana, this increased by 112% (to 7%) in 2019 and by 36.4% (to 4.5%) in 2020 (Woods-Fry et al., 2020).
  - > In 2020, 2.1% of Canadians reported driving within two hours of using alcohol and cannabis in the past 12 months, corresponding to approximately 558,243 licensed drivers. When compared to pre-legalization in 2018, self-reported driving within two hours of using cannabis and alcohol increased by 76% in 2019 and by 24% in 2020. Moreover, 2019 and 2020 represent the two largest percentages since data on this indicator were first collected (Woods-Fry et al., 2020).
  - > In 2021, almost 1 in 10 Canadians reported driving within two hours of drinking when they thought they were over the legal limit, and this is the largest reported percentage in the past decade (Vanlaar et al., 2021).
  - > Equally concerning are self-reported increases in risk-taking on the roads during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Notably, 1.7% and 3% of drivers in 2018 and 2019 respectively admitted driving within two hours of using alcohol and cannabis (Vanlaar et al., 2021). In 2021, 3.8% of respondents said they were more likely to have done this during the pandemic as compared to pre-pandemic (Woods-Fry et al., 2021).

Additionally, a major national Cannabis Survey conducted by the Government of Canada for the past few years also reported concerning behaviours. In 2021, 35% of respondents to this poll who admitted using cannabis in the past 12 months reported they had driven within two hours of smoking or vaporizing cannabis in the past 30 days, and 29% acknowledged doing so in the past 12 months (Cannabis Survey 2021).

Collectively, these data make clear that while some progress may have been achieved educating Canadians about the risks associated with cannabis and/or alcohol on driving, it is clear more concerted efforts are needed in order to reduce prevalence and reverse increasing trends.

3. **Cannabis-positive drivers are frequently detected in trauma centres in Canada.** Approximately half of 4,976 injured drivers receiving treatment in 15 trauma centres recruited between 2018 and 2020 had at least one impairing substance in their system. Cannabis was most prevalent with THC being detected in almost 20% of drivers. More than 7% of drivers had  $\geq 2$  ng/mL, and 3.5% had  $\geq 5$  ng/mL, indicating recent use and likely impairment. Drivers younger than 35 years were more likely to test positive (Brubacher et al. 2021).
4. **Roadside survey data suggest cannabis among drivers is a concern.** In the years preceding cannabis legalization in 2018, five Canadian jurisdictions undertook roadside surveys to create a baseline against which to measure changes post-legalization. A summary of study findings was prepared by the Canadian Council of Motor Vehicle Administrators (CCMTA). Approximately 80% of the 7,265 randomly selected drivers across jurisdictions agreed to participate, with almost all of them (97.7%) submitting breath samples and approximately 90% providing an oral fluid sample. Notably, 7.6% tested positive for cannabis, drug use was most prevalent among drivers 20-24 years at 14%, and 10.4% of drivers aged 16-19 were positive for cannabis. Although no surveys were conducted in 2019 and 2020, there was a significant increase in drug use, specifically cannabis, in sharp contrast to a significant decline in alcohol use compared to previous years (CCMTA, 2019).
5. **Data show cannabis and alcohol are prevalent among fatally injured drivers.** Since the legalization of cannabis in October 2018, the number of fatally injured drivers testing positive for cannabis has increased. Among fatally injured drivers in Canada in 2018 (excluding Nunavut), 29% (293) tested positive for alcohol, 23.4% (229) tested positive for cannabis, and 10% (98) tested positive for alcohol and cannabis. The percentage of fatalities increased in the last quarter of 2018 when cannabis legislation came into effect. More concerning, the percentage of fatalities involving these substances increased in 2019 with 32.2% of fatally injured drivers testing positive for alcohol (247), 26.4% (194) testing positive for cannabis, and 12.7% (93) testing positive for alcohol and cannabis combined. The 2019 numbers currently exclude BC, NWT and NT, which have not yet been reported, meaning numbers will actually be even higher. To this end, in the past 10 years, road fatalities in British Columbia have on average accounted for 9% of fatally injured drivers testing positive for alcohol and 7% of those testing positive for drugs.
6. **Cannabis and alcohol are prevalent among fatally injured pedestrians.** These two impairing substances are also prevalent in vulnerable road users killed in road crashes. In 2018, more than one-quarter (26%) of pedestrians tested positive for alcohol (55), 13.6% tested positive for cannabis (27) and 9% (18) were positive for both substances compared to 31% for alcohol (44), 18% for cannabis (24) and 9% both (12) in 2019. Most concerning, the problem of alcohol and cannabis among fatally injured vulnerable road users is largely unaddressed and progress achieving declines in this population is limited.
7. **Police-reported data reveal increases in drug-impaired driving.** According to Public Safety Canada, the first full-year when drug-impaired driving incidents were reported separately was in 2009. The 1,407 incidents represented just 2% of all impaired driving incidents. This number had almost doubled by 2015 (2,698), accounting for 4% of all

incidents, and reached 7% by 2019 with a substantial increase occurring over 2018. As of 2020, there were 7,310 police-reported drug-impaired driving incidents.

8. **The presence of cannabis consumption lounges has real potential to increase impaired driving.** In semi-urban and rural areas means of alternative transportation are limited or non-existent. Even in urban centres with greater access to public transportation, ridesourcing/ridesharing, and designated driver programs, impaired driving persists. There is no evidence to suggest cannabis-impaired drivers will make safer choices than alcohol-impaired drivers. According to the 2021 Cannabis Survey, not feeling impaired was the most often given reason (78%) for driving within two hours of using cannabis. In addition, 22% believed they could drive carefully, 20% were not driving far, and 13% reported no alternative transportation options. These results were unchanged from the previous year (Cannabis Survey, 2021).
9. **Enforcement is hard pressed to keep up with impaired-driving problem.** The rate of enforcement strength in Canada has been steadily declining since 2011 according to Statistics Canada (Conor, et al. 2020). While substantial resources have been invested in training Drug Recognition Experts in the past decade, the fact remains there are just 1,100 DREs in Canada and this number is inadequate (Public Safety Canada, 2021). As evidence of this, just 2% of persons reporting cannabis usage in the past year indicated they had been stopped by police for suspected cannabis impaired driving which was similar in 2020 (Cannabis Survey, 2021). Moreover, police services struggle to manage a multitude of road safety priorities in addition to their many other duties.
10. **Trained enforcement officers are challenged to detect cannabis impairment.** There are myriad challenges even for police officers to detect THC impairment. Current standardized field sobriety tests including horizontal gaze nystagmus (HGN), one leg stand (OLS) and walk and turn (WAT), developed to identify alcohol-impaired driving, do not adequately detect THC impairment. There are also too few trained DREs to deal with the current impaired driving problem. A study by Brubacher et al. (2018) in seven trauma centres in British Columbia from 2010 to 2015 suggested police detection of drug impairment in crash-involved patients admitted to trauma centers in BC was low. Blood samples from 1,816 injured drivers were matched to police crash reports. Alcohol was detected in 15% of drivers; THC in 7.5% of drivers. In contrast to alcohol, police seldom suspected drug use in drivers who tested positive for drugs. Police reported drug impairment or drugs as a possible contributory factor in only 5.9% of THC-positive cases and only 6.2% of cases with THC  $\geq 5$  ng/mL. Notably, this study showed more than 90% of drug-positive drivers were not identified in crash reports. These findings raise concerns about the ability of police to effectively enforce drugged driving laws without additional training or tools. To this end, this research suggests reliance on servers in cannabis consumption establishments to recognize impairment among patrons would be an impossible task.
11. **An effective server training program is necessary to prevent over-service in cannabis consumption establishments.** A primary problem associated with the proposed cannabis consumption spaces is the absence of a valid method for users or servers to gauge impairment to prevent overservice, particularly since impairing effects may be either rapid or delayed



depending on how cannabis products are consumed. Patrons may feel impairing effects or exhibit impairing effects until after they have left the establishment. This creates liability for business owners.

Unfortunately, there is no definite period of time after which it is safe to drive after using cannabis. Cannabis affects different people in different ways, and the time needed to recover from cannabis intoxication varies. Generally speaking, for a given THC dose, someone who uses cannabis more frequently and has a greater tolerance for THC can safely drive sooner than someone who uses cannabis occasionally. However, this 'tolerance effect' may be negated if the person with a higher tolerance uses a higher THC dose to achieve a similar effect to someone with a lower tolerance who uses a lower THC dose.

- > In addition, with respect to special events in particular, it will be challenging to 'police' patrons coming and going from venues, prevent products being shared with minors who may be present, and alcohol sales/consumption is also common at these venues.

## **Conclusion**

Cannabis consumption spaces in establishments licensed to sell and serve alcohol should not be considered at this time because the impairing effects of cannabis combined with alcohol on driving skills are well-documented. Indeed, any proposal to move forward with the implementation of cannabis consumption spaces in the absence of effective and well-developed prevention strategies to protect the public from recognized harms is premature. It is in sharp contrast to Federal and provincial/territorial governments embracing road safety as a priority and moving to implement the Safe System approach to eliminate road deaths and injuries.

The risks associated with cannabis-impaired driving cannot be ignored, particularly at a time when self-reported risk-taking on the road is increasing, and the percentage of road fatalities involving drivers who are positive for cannabis are rising. Aiming to encourage consumption of legal cannabis products at consumption lounges for financial benefits is likely to have potentially significant negative costs to public safety. At a minimum, much more comprehensive and visible consultation with road safety, enforcement, health and indigenous communities in BC is essential to understand issues and gain insight into opportunities and preventive measures to protect populations at risk.

Moving forward with implementing cannabis consumption spaces, even on a small scale, in the absence of actively soliciting input from stakeholders is problematic. It is arguable that cannabis consumption spaces at music festivals are not 'lower complexity'. Of greatest concern, these venues can be quite large and are frequently attended by underage youth who would be exposed to cannabis smoke and cannabis usage, and whom are at highest risk for harm.

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# Non-medical cannabis consumption space

3274 THIRD STREET  
CUMBERLAND B.C. CANADA



 **COMMUNITY**  
**URBAN BAZAAR**

## 1.) Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?

### **Prioritize public health (Agreed)**

- Outdoor cannabis use reduces release second hand smoke inhalation of aerosols including fine particulate matter (PM2.5)
- Developing recognized service standards and implementing reliable training for employees. This includes actions such as: Reasonable per-customer consumption limit, posting warnings about potential impairment, Partnership with ridesharing services, obtain agreement to refrain from driving as a condition of sale, Service criteria and train employees to refuse service when it appears, the patron has had too much to consume, responsible selling training

### **Encourage consumers to transition to regulated products (Agreed)**

- By adding some simple outdoor furnishings, tables, chairs, benches, kiosk retail outlets, performances, events, education, venues, and culture in an empty lot next to an existing licenced cannabis retailer is a part of a move to sophistication from other unregulated shops and it gives customers an opportunity to transition to regulated experiences and products
- The outdoor purpose built site is located behind Cannabis Retail Store # 450119 on a separate PID and is shielded from the small town's (population 4475) main thoroughfare to provide privacy with a capacity of about 50 people.
- Single-use cannabis products with packaging, labeling, and warning requirements for products sold on premise to keep it regulated. A knowledgeable cannabis concierge will elevate the class of cannabis entertainment by curating the experiences. The people who wish to consume cannabis can do it with a concierge service instead of hiding around a corner.

### **Start Low and go Slow (Agreed)**

- Temporary Use Permit can be issued by a local government to allow a use not permitted by zoning, specify conditions of that temporary use, and allow and regulate the construction of buildings or structure for the temporary use. A TUP may be issued for up to three years and can be renewed once. Currently the Cannabis Retail Store #450119 in Cumberland has successfully renewed their Temporary Use Permit.
- Low complexity outdoor space beside a cannabis retail store where consumption is already likely to occur during music events, comedy shows and this will help development of regulations and civil tort liability around on-site cannabis consumption.
- Phased approach with limited hours and single-use purchases, or cannabis concierge experiences. Such as spa, learning to cook, movies, games, vr, food service (no alcohol), artisan retail, education, and training.

### **Collaborate with Indigenous People (Agreed)**

- Hegus (Chief) Nicole Rempel of the Komoks First Nation have had delegates and members of the band as well as elders invited to provide feedback and blessings.

### **Respect Local Control over Land-Use Decisions (Agreed)**

- We are here to develop a purpose built temporary use permit to approach cannabis consumption in an outdoor space. Feedback from this enquiry in the local community, municipality, and first nations has helped learn a lot to reasonably provide space to consume cannabis legally since 2018 legalization of non-medical cannabis retail stores. Since 2019 your writer has provided the municipality of Cumberland, Province of British Columbia, and Komoks First Nations a great cannabis retail sales experience in Cumberland B.C.
- Infrastructure impacts - Education requirements for patrons to ensure against over-consumption, mixed consumption (alcohol) and problems caused by delayed effects.
- Partnership with ridesharing services
- Obtain agreement from consumers to refrain from driving as a condition of sale, warning signs, and responsible beverage service training must be developed and finally drug recognition training used by law-enforcement.

### **Economic Impact and Business Viability (Agree)**

- Our plan is in line with the official community plan to guide future growth and to work together through all the legislative and regulatory service policies especially policy 9.5 motion no: 18- -452 and the Corporation of the Village of Cumberland Bylaw No. 1086. We are here because of the unmatched quality of life, exquisite small-town feel, and proud artisan culture surrounded by living forests in the mecca for outdoor recreation. As per the official community plan the Village of Cumberland by Stantec Engineering dated April 5th, 2016 we will:  
“Work to enable community health and social service facilities to meet the physical, mental, spiritual, and social needs of residents and visitors”
- Restrict to outdoor services with table side seated services with cannabis concierge to curate experience from needs and tolerances of patron
- Restrict to single-use, rolled by concierge, dab with blown glass pipes, micro dose-edibles, and .25-.5mg THC content beverage
- Food services with cannabis infusion for flavour, pairing and taste. Micro amounts of THC .25-.5mg per food item
- Spas or yoga with cannabis oils or topicals
- Music, shows and venues with tickets sales

### **Smoking and Vaping (agreed)**

- Shielded from the small town's main thoroughfare with 5-foot timber fencing to provide privacy and anonymity from kids. The use of expansive air filtration and fans systems as well as other nuisance-abatement services like sound travel. No personal vaping or Cannabis from outside sources.

### **Drug Affected Driving (Agreed)**

- Infrastructure impacts - Education requirements for patrons to ensure against over-consumption, mixed consumption (alcohol) and problems caused by delayed effects.
- Partnership with ridesharing services

- Obtain agreement from consumers to refrain from driving as a condition of sale, warning signs, and responsible beverage service training must be developed and finally drug recognition training used by law-enforcement.
- Developing recognized service standards and implementing reliable training for employees

#### **Co-Locating Cannabis and Alcohol Consumption (agree)**

- No Alcohol or co-use suggested at the same location

#### **Diversity, Equity and Access (Agreed)**

- As a person of colour - I am here because of the unmatched quality of life, exquisite small-town feel, and proud artisan culture surrounded by living forests in the mecca for outdoor recreation.
- The stigma of cannabis has affected lots of lives locally, this is a space where you're welcome without fear or hate and that's meant for cannabis consumption shame, blame and pain to be healed.
- Phased temporary use permit to allow outdoor cannabis consumption areas to help alleviate lack of access to a permissible place to consume cannabis
- Prohibited in public areas, frequented by children. Set up visual barriers.

#### **2.) What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed.**

- Outdoor cannabis consumption space like in the flier on page four next to a cannabis retail store. Building permits will be submitted in May 20 2022. The heritage alteration permits have been approved as well as the public consultation
- We are here to consistently provide safe, quality- -controlled cannabis consumption spaces to meet the recreational needs of residents and visitors of Cumberland, British Columbia Canada.
- Commit to bringing the best personal cannabis consumption experience to residents, visitors, creative professionals and consumers through its innovative interior design, equal opportunity local employment, and extensive public consultation.
- Supporting the strong sense of community and growth, Michael Arneja wishes to achieve a substantial provincial referral from Senior Licensing Analyst at the Liquor and Cannabis Regulatory Branch / Ministry of Attorney General to ensure that Cannabis is consumed professionally. Our keen sense of community resonates with arts and culture, and the small village feel has attracted a lot of great candidates to come work with us. A new revenue stream will be used to provide a positive contribution to the Village Center's rejuvenation and complete the final update of VCMU- -1 zoned properties on Third St.
- It is with our innovation, accountability, transparency, and equal opportunity that we will remain a rich historical eco- -tourist destination. Our plan is in line with the official community plan to guide future growth and to work together through all the legislative and regulatory service policies especially policy 9.5 motion no: 18- -452 and the Corporation of the Village of Cumberland Bylaw No. 1086
- Partner with ridesharing, agreement to not drive by patron,
- Liability insurances and risk mitigation still pose learning opportunities

### 3.) Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?

- Indoor spaces shall not be considered because of the second-hand smoke inhalation of aerosols including fine particulate matter (PM2.5)



**Submission to the Government of British Columbia  
Re: Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Spaces Consultation**

*Submitted via email to Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca*

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## **About Truss Beverage Co.**

Truss Beverage Co. (“Truss”) is a joint venture between affiliates of Molson Coors Canada and HEXO Corp, solely dedicated to manufacturing, selling, and innovating in the cannabis beverage category. Established in 2020, Truss currently operates a 187,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Belleville, Ontario employing approximately 60 people.

Since 2020, Truss has become the cannabis beverage leader in Canada launching six brands and 34 SKUS, including 23 products currently available for sale in the Province of British Columbia.

As a leader in the space, Truss is continuing its promise to be the cannabis beverage specialist through extraordinary products and marketing that reinforces its commitment to responsible adult use.

## **Discussion Paper Feedback**

Truss applauds the Government of British Columbia for its forward-thinking policy agenda with respect to cannabis. Since Canada’s legalization of non-medical cannabis in 2018, BC has established itself as a leader in this regard amongst its jurisdictional peers and the consideration of cannabis consumption spaces speaks to the commitment to consider ways to grow BC’s legal cannabis market. Truss has a similar commitment to BC’s five cannabis goals of prioritizing public health and safety, protecting children and youth, supporting economic development, reducing crime and the illegible market, and addressing cannabis-affected driving. Overall, it is our belief that it is possible to marry these goals while advancing the legal cannabis sector with the introduction of cannabis consumption spaces.

The hospitality industry remains hard-hit by the effects of COVID-19, the ability to retail complementary adult-use products would help bolster their bottom line. According to BC’s Alliance of Beverage Licensees, “Two years of COVID-19 and the attendant on-and-off restrictions have already put about 15 per cent of operators out of business”<sup>1</sup>. We agree that not only will consumption spaces create economic growth and boost British Columbia’s economy, enabling this would create new investment opportunities and jobs in the hard-hit hospitality sector, providing a much-needed boost to small businesses in BC. It would also allow BC to compete with US states that already permit cannabis consumption spaces and attract tourists seeking the enjoyment of recreational cannabis in a safe, regulated environment while showcasing the province’s products and sales.

Truss has long advocated provincial governments to establish a regulatory framework that would facilitate the sale of cannabis beverages for consumption in establishments like bars and restaurants, so that consumers can be provided an option to consume products in establishments that are regulated, and where service of such products to minors is prohibited and under strict supervision. As noted in the discussion paper, the consideration of whether to permit outdoor smoking and vaping in consumption spaces continues to prohibit indoor smoking and vaping. Rather, the creation of a British Columbia framework would ensure that there is clarity on retailer activity. In some cases, we have seen retailers opening their own “patios” and adjacent storefronts where consumption is encouraged; effective regulation would dissuade such activity, providing

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<sup>1</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/8482985/after-tough-year-b-c-pubs-and-restaurants-aiming-for-better-in-2022/>



clear guidelines to the public on what has been deemed by the province to be a safe and approved environment for consumption.

Truss agrees with BC's introduction of a slow phased approach to consumption spaces and to start in spaces where cannabis consumption is likely already occurring such as music festivals or special events. This would help decrease the possibility of concerns surrounding increased rates of cannabis use due to public access and exposure to consumption spaces. Nevertheless, given that both alcohol and cannabis are legal products in the province, we encourage BC to consider and start working with stakeholders towards a framework for co-location – working together with law enforcement and public health to create a safe and responsible environment for future consumption in BC. Expanding cannabis sales to include consumption spaces will provide licensed cannabis producers with new streams of revenue, broaden the market for edible products while diverting sales away from the illicit market, and signal that BC is supportive of its cannabis sector while promoting responsible service and consumption.

Since its inception, Truss has been committed to working with governments at all levels as a constructive partner – which is especially important as the Canadian cannabis sector matures. Truss thanks the Government of British Columbia in advance for its consideration of the feedback we have provided regarding BC's approach to cannabis consumption spaces. Truss looks forward to working alongside the provincial government on its policy priorities aimed towards growing BC's cannabis economy while ensuring safe consumption of cannabis products.

# UBCM Submission to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Re: Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Spaces (April 2022 Discussion Paper)

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## Introduction

The Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) offers the following submission in response to the April 2022 Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General discussion paper, *Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement*. This short submission is informed by:

- UBCM endorsed resolutions;
- Input previously submitted by UBCM and the Joint Provincial-Local Government Committee on Cannabis Regulation (JCCR); and,
- Feedback delivered by UBCM and members of its Cannabis Policy Technical Working Group to the Cannabis Secretariat on October 26, 2021.

## Considerations

There are a number of broad considerations UBCM wishes to outline with respect to the potential introduction of cannabis consumption spaces:

- *Local Government Authority* – UBCM policy (endorsed resolution 2017-SR1) has previously sought, with respect to B.C.’s regulatory framework for non-medical cannabis, “respect for local choice, jurisdiction and authority, including but not limited to land use and zoning decisions.” This policy, as well as the more specific request that local governments be provided input and control over retail operations, was conveyed as part of UBCM’s November 30, 2017 submission to the Province.
- *Co-Locating Cannabis and Alcohol Consumption* – UBCM, in its November 30, 2017 submission to the Province, indicated that it did not support co-location of non-medical cannabis and alcohol or tobacco retail operations. The only noted exception was in areas that lacked the infrastructure, capacity and demand to warrant a separate location for liquor and non-medical cannabis. Perspectives regarding co-location were largely based on concerns previously identified by the medical community. It should also be noted that the Federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation recommended against the co-location of cannabis with liquor or tobacco.

- *Enforcement* – The need to effectively enforce rules respecting consumption spaces, including issues in rural areas (e.g. co-location of consumption), without burdening local bylaw and law enforcement, was raised at the October 26, 2021 briefing between UBCM and the Cannabis Secretariat. UBCM’s November 2017 submission also cautioned that the regulation of public consumption could impact policing resources.
- *Consultation* – UBCM, as part of its November 30, 2017 submission, was supportive of the provincial non-medical cannabis consultation process, notably the meaningful and frequent discussions with local governments (through the JCCR). The notion of local government involvement in the development of non-medical cannabis regulations is also supported by UBCM policy (2017-SR1, 2016-A2).
- *Cannabis Taxation Revenue* – The sharing of provincial cannabis taxation revenue is a longstanding issue for the UBCM membership. Local governments have consistently endorsed resolutions seeking an equitable share of cannabis taxation revenue for local governments to address costs and responsibilities resulting from the legalization of non-medical cannabis (2020-SR2, 2019-A2, 2018-SR1, 2017-SR1, 2016-A3). As noted in the discussion paper, there is an economic impact associated with the potential introduction of cannabis consumption spaces. This is also at a time when the legalized market and provincial revenue continue to grow. Local governments will also be relied upon to participate in any proposed consumption space framework.

## Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

UBCM supports additional research into the development of a cannabis consumption space framework that is able to address the considerations noted above. This includes:

- Maintaining local government authority (i.e. local choice) regarding whether, where and what type/form of licenced activity may take place;
- Refraining from broadly permitting the co-location of cannabis and alcohol consumption;
- Providing sufficient enforcement resources to address any associated issues (e.g. increased drug-impaired driving, co-location infractions) without burdening local bylaw and law enforcement officers;
- Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders, including local governments;
- Developing a cannabis taxation sharing framework with local governments.

It should also be noted that when asked about the development of licensed establishments where cannabis could be consumed, UBCM’s November 2017 submission noted “considerable support among local government JCCR members to develop dedicated places of use.”

UBCM appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback towards this issue. We look forward to addressing local government concerns through additional discussions with the Cannabis Secretariat, as well as through the Cannabis Policy Technical Working Group.

Whereas the Government of Canada has publicly declared its intention to legalize, regulate and restrict access to marijuana with creation of a federal/provincial/territorial task force with input from experts in public health, substance abuse and law enforcement to design a new system of marijuana sales and distribution with appropriate federal and provincial excise taxes applied;

And whereas the Government of Canada Standing Policy Committee has committed to working with the provinces and local governments of Canada on a coordinated regulatory approach to marijuana, respecting provincial health jurisdiction and particular regional concerns and practices:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the **federal and** provincial governments **directly involve local government, through UBCM and FCM**, in the process of **establishing a regulatory approach to marijuana in Canada, while ensuring that all orders of government are granted** adequate time to align and integrate regional and local regulations and practices with new federal laws.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed as Amended**

#### Provincial Response

##### ***Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General***

*The Government of Canada announced their commitment to introduce legislation to legalize, regulate and restrict access to cannabis in the spring of 2017. The Province of British Columbia is actively engaged with the federal government and considerations regarding the health and safety of British Columbians are at the forefront of those discussions.*

*At present, the Province has established a number of committees under the lead of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General to ensure British Columbia develops a regulatory framework that seeks to: prioritize the health and wellness of British Columbians; address crime and the illegal market; protect youth; and address drug-impaired driving. This includes an Inter-Ministry Working Group to support the future development of the provincial regulatory framework in preparation of the federal legislation to legalize cannabis. The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development's Local Government Division is an active participant in the Inter-Ministry Working Group.*

*The federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation has released its final report - A Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada. The Province is reviewing the recommendations made within the Report and will further engage in discussions with the federal government prior to their anticipated introduction of legislation in the spring of 2017. In particular, the Province is reviewing the recommendations that will affect provinces and territories, as well as local governments.*

*The Province respects the concerns of local governments and will build a made-in-BC approach for our province that includes rigorous considerations for the health and safety of all British Columbians.*

Whereas the federal government plans to establish a federal/provincial/territorial task force to seek input from experts in public health, substance abuse, and law enforcement to design a new system of strict marijuana sales and distribution with federal and provincial excise taxes applied;

And whereas regulation and enforcement for medicinal marijuana retail dispensaries will likely fall to the local governments once the law changes, thus creating additional burdens on local government resources:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the federal government to request that a portion of any future federal or provincial tax collected through marijuana sales and distribution be shared with local governments, and that the concept of tax sharing with local governments be forwarded to the task force looking into the new system of marijuana sales and distribution, for consideration.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### **Ministry of Finance**

*Canada is conducting wide ranging consultations as it works towards its commitment to legalize and regulate cannabis.*

*British Columbia is working with other provinces, territories and the Federal Government on the development of a regulatory framework that aligns with the interests and priorities of British Columbia based on key objectives:*

- *Prioritize the health and wellness of British Columbians*
- *Address crime and the illicit market*
- *Protect youth*
- *Address drug-impaired driving*

*Taxation of cannabis is expected to be part of the strategy for effective regulation and therefore any decisions related to taxation must be made after the regulatory framework is developed.*

*The Province provides funding to local governments through a variety of sources and programs. Any proposed transfer of tax revenue from cannabis to local governments must be evaluated in the context of the Province's need to fund the regulatory framework and essential services impacted by cannabis, including health care, education and public safety.*

Whereas the federal government intends to legalize cannabis by July 2018, and to date the provincial government has conducted minimal consultation with local government regarding the development and implementation of a BC framework for cannabis;

And whereas within a BC framework for cannabis, it is likely that a substantial portion of the regulatory burden and associated costs—for example, in the areas of compliance and enforcement—will fall on local government:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM membership endorse the following principles to guide UBCM's advocacy with the provincial government regarding local government's role in a BC framework for cannabis:

- fulsome and meaningful provincial consultation with local governments;
- provision of adequate provincial funding to cover any responsibilities and increase in administrative burden of any provincial framework that requires local government participation;
- equitable sharing of tax revenues from cannabis between all orders of government; and
- respect for local choice, jurisdiction and authority, including but not limited to land use and zoning decisions.

**Convention Decision:                      Endorsed**

### Provincial Response

#### **Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General**

*Local governments have an important role to play as the federal government moves towards the legalization of cannabis in July 2018. The Province appreciates all the feedback that local governments and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) have provided so far—their perspective is crucial to developing effective policy and legislation that will serve British Columbians.*

*The Province is committed to continuing to engage with local governments and the UBCM on cannabis legalization. The Province is working closely with local governments through the Joint Provincial-Local Government Committee on Cannabis Regulation (JCCR), established after the UBCM Convention in September 2017.*

*The Province is working on the development of the provincial regulatory framework and the goals of prioritizing the health and safety of British Columbians, reducing crime and the illegal market, protecting children and youth, and addressing cannabis impaired driving are guiding this work. The Province has used the feedback collected through the public and stakeholder engagement, and ongoing consultation with local and Indigenous governments and other key stakeholders to inform the development of the provincial regulatory framework and legislation in preparation for the legalization of cannabis in July 2018.*

*On February 5, 2018 the Province released key aspects of the provincial regulatory framework, including further details on the proposed provincial cannabis retail framework, places of use and personal cultivation. The Province recognizes that a “one size fits all” approach may not work and that flexibility and local choice is of importance to local governments. Therefore, the proposed approach will give local governments the authority to make local decisions, based on the needs in their communities.*

*In December 2017, the Federal Government announced they had reached an agreement with provinces and territories that provides for 75% of the revenues collected through the excise tax levied on cannabis to provinces and territories, with 25% being retained by the federal government. The Province is currently working collaboratively with the Federal Government to finalize the BC cannabis excise tax coordination agreement. The Province acknowledges local governments' interests in revenue sharing and is committed to working with local governments to understand the potential costs they may experience as a result of cannabis legalization.*

Whereas the Government of Canada intends to legalize non-medical cannabis on October 17, 2018, and has taken the following actions regarding cannabis excise tax revenue sharing:

- agreed to the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Agreement on Cannabis Taxation, which provides for the federal transfer of cannabis excise tax revenue to provinces and territories; and,
- increased the percentage of cannabis taxation revenue to be transferred to provinces and territories in order to help local governments manage impacts associated with the legalization of non-medical cannabis;

And whereas in the absence of fulsome data the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Executive has endorsed:

- a principled approach to guide the negotiation of a cannabis excise tax revenue sharing agreement with the Government of British Columbia:
  - 1) Cannabis legalization should not result in additional local government funding by property taxpayers.
  - 2) Local governments should be reimbursed for costs associated with the implementation of legalized cannabis.
  - 3) Local governments should be reimbursed for any additional policing costs resulting from cannabis legalization.
  - 4) Remaining excise tax revenue (after taking out expenses incurred as part of principles 1-3, and the federal share) should be shared between the Province of BC and local governments.
- a short- and long-term cannabis excise tax revenue sharing strategy, which among other things seeks to adopt the Ontario cannabis excise tax sharing model as the framework for determining an agreement in British Columbia.

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advance its short- and long-term strategy for cannabis excise tax revenue sharing to the Province of British Columbia for the purpose of negotiating a provincial-local government revenue sharing agreement.

**Convention Decision:                      Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### **Ministry of Finance**

*The Federal Government has indicated its strong preference to keep cannabis taxes low to reduce illicit market activity. As a result, cannabis taxation is not expected to generate significant provincial revenues.*

*The post-legalization period will provide all levels of government with an opportunity to better quantify the costs and revenues associated with cannabis sales and consumption, which will facilitate continuing discussions between all levels of government.*

Whereas only the federal and provincial governments are receiving tax revenue from the recently legalized sale of recreational cannabis, despite local governments encountering increased costs of the associated implementation;

And whereas UBCM endorsed a resolution (2018-SR1) calling for a principled approach to guide the negotiation of a cannabis excise tax revenue sharing agreement with the Government of British Columbia, and recommending that BC local governments receive 40% of the projected excise tax revenue in the short term, which has not received any response from the Province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to expedite a fair provincial-local government excise tax revenue sharing agreement regarding the sale of recreational cannabis.

**Convention Decision:**                      **Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### ***Ministry of Finance***

*The sale of cannabis is not expected to generate substantial revenue for the Province in the early years of legalization, as there are significant costs associated with setting up and implementing the provincial regulatory framework. So far, the Province has received roughly \$5 million dollars in federal excise duty payments on cannabis (All legal cannabis transactions up to March 31, 2019).*

*The Province will continue to work with and listen to local governments and First Nation communities to understand both the potential cost pressures and savings associated with legalization as this industry continues to develop. As part of that work, the Province has been working with UBCM as part of BC's Joint Committee on Cannabis Regulation.*



Whereas BC local governments have yet to receive a share of provincial cannabis taxation revenue, despite the federal government's decision to increase the provincial share of cannabis excise tax revenue by 25 per cent in recognition of the costs and responsibilities assumed by local governments;

And whereas the provincial government continues to decline UBCM's requests to negotiate a cannabis taxation revenue sharing agreement, notwithstanding the growing body of evidence and local government support for an agreement, including but not limited to:

- consistent requests for revenue sharing, with UBCM members endorsing resolutions on this topic each year for the past four years;
- development of short- and long-term options for revenue sharing, as endorsed by the UBCM membership and presented to the Minister of Finance on multiple occasions; and
- findings from UBCM's 2019 cannabis cost survey, indicating substantial one-time and ongoing incremental costs incurred by local governments, associated with the legalization of non-medical cannabis:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government commit to negotiating a cannabis taxation revenue sharing agreement with local governments that honours the intent of the federal excise tax revenue sharing scheme and addresses local government short- and long-term costs associated with the legalization of non-medical cannabis.

**Convention Decision:** **Endorsed**

#### Provincial Response

##### **Minister of Finance**

*The Province values its partnerships with UBCM and local governments. While cannabis revenue is growing modestly, initial targets for sales have yet to be realized while the costs of establishing the provincial regulation framework remain. The Province will continue to work with and listen to local governments about the cost pressures of legalization and will continue to be transparent with the public and our local government partners, as the industry grows and more legal stores open. Ministry staff are continuing discussions with the UBCM about revenue sharing and issues related to cannabis legalization.*

May 9, 2022

**To: BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General**  
[Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cannabis.Secretariat@gov.bc.ca)

**RE: Cannabis Consumption Spaces Stakeholders Engagement, Spring 2022**  
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/cannabisconsumptionspaces>

The province is considering whether to allow cannabis consumption spaces, and how they should be regulated. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this public policy decision.

Please, find below a written submission following the guidelines outlined on this project's website (<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/cannabisconsumptionspaces/written-submission-guidelines/>). Do not hesitate to reach us at the contact information below, should you have any questions regarding this submission. Thank you.

Sincerely,



**Mark Lysyshyn MD MPH FRCPC**  
Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer  
Vancouver Coastal Health

## 1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?

Vancouver Coastal Health's Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer supports the following principles:

- A. PRIORITIZE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.** Although most cannabis use does not result in significant harm, problematic use can result in acute and long-term adverse health and psycho-social outcomes,<sup>i</sup> including hospitalizations,<sup>ii, iii</sup> and motor-vehicle crashes.<sup>iv, v</sup> By prioritizing public health and safety considerations in regulating cannabis consumption spaces, the BC government can mitigate the potential population health impacts of such risks. Consumption of cannabis that follows the Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines is unlikely to result in significant individual or population-level harm.<sup>vi</sup> By prioritizing public health and safety considerations in the development of cannabis consumption spaces regulations, the BC government would reduce harm associated with cannabis by legalizing and regulating the cannabis market.
- B. ENCOURAGE CONSUMERS TO TRANSITION TO REGULATED PRODUCTS.** A shift from criminal to legal markets enables effective regulation of products, and allows for targeted interventions to minimize adverse cannabis-related outcomes.<sup>vii</sup> Cannabis consumption spaces are uniquely positioned to encourage use of regulated products because regulated products can be purchased and consumed within such spaces.
- C. "START LOW AND GO SLOW."** Adopting a phased approach to cannabis consumption spaces regulation is paramount. Canada is the second country to legalize cannabis.<sup>viii</sup> Given that cannabis consumption spaces have been implemented in relatively few jurisdictions, the roll out of such spaces needs to take place incrementally, with evaluation of outcomes, prior to pursuing more aggressive changes. Loosening regulations as more evidence becomes available is expected to be more feasible than adding restrictions at a later date.<sup>ix</sup>
- D. COLLABORATE WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.** Close collaboration with Indigenous Governments across British Columbia is important to promote common regulatory frameworks for the implementation of Cannabis Consumption Spaces on and off-reserve lands. This approach must recognize indigenous people's sovereignty over the regulation of cannabis on-reserve and build on the principles outlined in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act.
- E. RESPECT LOCAL CONTROL OVER LAND-USE DECISIONS.** This principle supports local governments in adapting policies to their unique situation, and using local data to inform decisions. In general, evidence supports ensuring cannabis stores are "away from" places that youth visit,<sup>x,xi</sup> and prohibiting smoking and

vaping “near” buildings and other structures.<sup>xii</sup> However, the specifics of how this can be effectively implemented in any one community needs to be determined at the community level. A built environment approach or zoning bylaw that performs effectively in an urban setting may underperform, or potentially even be counter-productive, in suburban and/or rural settings.<sup>xiii</sup>

**2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed? How do you think challenges raised in this paper (for example, impaired driving; impacts of smoking and vaping; increased rates of cannabis use) could be addressed?**

The implementation of cannabis consumption spaces should follow the four following principles:

- **Develop evidence-informed messages and communications strategies to ensure patrons of cannabis consumption spaces are effectively informed of risks, and harm reduction recommendations.** This includes risks of cannabis for impaired driving, risks of cannabis to pregnant women and risks of cannabis to health. Recent focus groups with “budtenders” at cannabis consumption spaces, in Washington, USA, suggest that there may be considerable limitations to strategies relying on cannabis salespeople to effectively communicate public health messages.<sup>xiv</sup> This calls on the BC government to conduct the necessary systematic reviews and implement public health messaging and communications strategies that are supported by the best available evidence.
- **Ensure cannabis consumption spaces are not accessed by youth,** through: i) identification checks, and related enforcement measures, to ensure adherence to age limits; ii) stipulations to decrease marketing and advertising of consumption spaces; iii) location in areas that can help protect children from normalization of cannabis use; (evidence has shown that setting locations “away from” schools, daycares, community centers, public parks and other places youth frequent is protective).<sup>xv,xvi</sup>
- **Enable local governments’ regulation of number and spacing of cannabis consumption spaces** to support the implementation of the “Start Low and Go Slow” principle. These caps would need to be developed based on input from health officials and local governments—towards the goals of prioritizing public health and safety, and enabling incremental roll-out and sufficient evaluation of projects, before expanding or lifting caps. Density limits and zoning laws can reduce neighborhood impacts.<sup>xvii</sup>

- **Ensure a consistent policy for smoking tobacco and smoking cannabis.** An important overarching consideration for all cannabis consumption spaces is that smoking or vaping cannabis in commercial spaces increases health risk for clients and vendors and poses an occupational health hazard. There is no risk-free level of second-hand smoke<sup>xviii</sup> and there are no safe exposure levels to PM2.5.<sup>xix</sup> Consuming cannabis in indoor commercial settings elevates PM2.5 levels.<sup>xx</sup> In fact, PM 2.5 levels in American cannabis dispensaries and lounges where cannabis smoking, vaping, and dabbing are permitted are comparable to indoor spaces where cigarette smoking is permitted.<sup>xxi</sup> Accordingly, it would be important that cannabis consumption spaces follow policies consistent with tobacco control best practices. It would also be important that spaces are for cannabis consumption only and not tobacco/nicotine (e.g. dual use), and that cannabis consumption spaces regulations are designed accordingly.

In addition, the regulatory framework of Cannabis Consumption Spaces should include site-specific guidelines to minimize harms from the consumption of cannabis. Some of these include:

- **Retail Experience: Restrict product consumption to designated areas.** The regulatory framework should consider design solutions to reduce the visibility of consumption spaces to underage members of the community. Special considerations need to be taken to minimize the harms from smoking or vaping cannabis products. These include continuing the prohibition of indoor smoking and aligning outdoor smoking with tobacco and vaping regulations to prevent second-hand smoke exposure to staff and community members, e.g. 6-metre minimum smoke-free buffer zone at all building doorways, openable windows and air intakes. Consumption spaces should also include information on how to minimize the harms of cannabis consumption such as using edibles instead of smoking and/or following safer use practices when smoking or vaping cannabis.
- **Special Events:** If underage members of the community are in attendance, restrict consumption to fully enclosed consumption zones. These types of spaces must be located and designed in ways that eliminate risks of normalizing and promoting cannabis consumption to youth. In addition, require safe serving certification for staff selling products at these events to help limit over-consumption and intoxication.
- **Cannabis Lounge:** Through an informal scan of the literature, our office could not find any indications that offering cannabis with food service is likely to encourage problematic consumption, so offering cannabis (following Health Canada regulations) with food service can be trialled. With respect to alcohol, our office

would recommend conducting a health impact assessment of co-location of alcohol and cannabis consumption spaces. There is some evidence that using cannabis together with alcohol may increase the impairment of driving-relevant performance skills and motor vehicle crash involvement risk (5- to 10-fold).<sup>xxii</sup> For this reason, our team recommends the province delays consideration of allowing co-location of alcohol and cannabis consumption spaces until sufficient evidence reviews pertaining to the potential health impacts are made available to regulators, and until BC has gained experience operating the first round of dedicated cannabis consumption spaces, in accordance with the “Start Low and Go Slow” principle.

➤ **Others:**

- **Spa or registered massage therapist using cannabis topicals.** Evidence pertaining to the safety and health effects of cannabis topical is limited.<sup>xxiii</sup> Careful monitoring of the health impacts of these practices are further warranted. During the initial phases of the implementation of cannabis spaces in spa or massage settings, it is recommended that use is restricted to certain classes of regulated health professionals such as registered massage therapists, naturopaths and Chinese medicine practitioners.


### 3. Are there types of cannabis consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?

VCH OCMH recommends the following consumption spaces **NOT** be considered:


- **Designated outdoor smoking areas at festivals.** Currently, BC permits public smoking of cannabis in outdoor areas that comply with local bylaws. This means that people attending festivals are likely able to go outside the festival and consume publicly in the broader community. In this context, the setting up of outdoor designated smoking areas at festivals would effectively increase the locations where people will smoke. This, in turn, could increase the visibility and normalization of smoking. If the BC government is concerned about individuals attending music festivals consuming illicit cannabis, it could consider whether setting up a discreet, dried cannabis herb mobile retail unit (outside of a festival) might be an appropriate solution to encourage a shift to legal cannabis. This type of approach would have to be accompanied by appropriate public health messaging campaigns and robust marketing restrictions, and would not be appropriate in the case of festivals with children, youth and families in attendance.
- **Cannabis consumption spaces at farmers markets, country fairs, or any events with families and children/youth.** This restriction would help protect children and youth from exposure second-hand smoke, and restrict cannabis marketing and visibility to

underage members of the community. Health research recommends the delay of cannabis consumption until late puberty/after puberty, in order to reduce risks of negative impacts on brain development and other potential negative health effects.<sup>xxiv</sup> The Cannabis Consumption Spaces regulation should include harm reduction messages and discourage marketing of these spaces to young adults.



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- <sup>i</sup> Fischer B., et al. (2022). [Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines \(LRCUG\) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update.](#) *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.
- <sup>ii</sup> Matheson J; Le Foll B. (2020). [Cannabis Legalization and Acute Harm From High Potency Cannabis Products: A Narrative Review and Recommendations for Public Health](#) *Frontiers in Psychiatry* [Front Psychiatry], ISSN: 1664-0640, 2020 Sep 23; Vol. 11, pp. 591979; PMID: 33173527.
- <sup>iii</sup> Vigil et al. (2018) and Cao et al. (2016), cited in: Goodman S; Hammond D, (2022). [THC labeling on cannabis products: an experimental study of approaches for labeling THC servings on cannabis edibles.](#) *Journal of cannabis research* [J Cannabis Res], ISSN: 2522-5782, 2022 Apr 07; Vol. 4 (1), pp. 17; Publisher: BioMed Central Ltd; PMID: 35387681.
- <sup>iv</sup> Fischer B., et al. (2022). [Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines \(LRCUG\) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update.](#) *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.
- <sup>v</sup> Sevigny E.L. (2021). [Cannabis and driving ability.](#) *Current opinion in psychology*. Curr Opin Psychol, ISSN: 2352-2518, 2021 Apr; Vol. 38, pp. 75-79; PMID: 33839427;
- <sup>vi</sup> Fischer B. et al. (2022). [Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines \(LRCUG\) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update.](#) *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.
- <sup>vii</sup> Fischer B. et al. (2020); Rehm & Fischer, (2015); Room, Fischer, Hall, Lenton, & Reuter, (2010), cited in: Fischer B., et al. (2022). [Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines \(LRCUG\) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update.](#) *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.
- <sup>viii</sup> Caulkins J.P.; Kilborn M.L. (2019). [Cannabis legalization, regulation, & control: a review of key challenges for local, state, and provincial officials](#) *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, ISSN: 1097-9891, 2019; Vol. 45 (6), pp. 689-697; PMID: 31135218.
- <sup>ix</sup> Babor TF, et al. (2010) cited in: Caulkins JP and Kilborn ML (2019). [Cannabis legalization, regulation, & control: a review of key challenges for local, state, and provincial officials](#) *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol abuse*, ISSN: 1097-9891, 2019; Vol. 45 (6), pp. 689-697; PMID: 31135218.
- <sup>x</sup> Caulkins JP; Kilborn ML. (2019). [Cannabis legalization, regulation, & control: a review of key challenges for local, state, and provincial officials](#) *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, ISSN: 1097-9891, 2019; Vol. 45 (6), pp. 689-697; PMID: 31135218.
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- <sup>xi</sup> Ackerman, A., *et al.* (2017). **Reducing the Density and Number of Tobacco Retailers: Policy Solutions and Legal Issues.** *Nicotine & Tobacco Research: Official Journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*, 19(2), 133–140. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntw124>
- <sup>xii</sup> **BC Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act (2022):**  
[www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96451\\_01#section2.3](http://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96451_01#section2.3)
- <sup>xiii</sup> BC Centre for Disease Control (2018). **Healthy Built Environment Linkages Toolkit: making the links between design, planning and health**, Version 2.0. Vancouver, B.C. Provincial Health Services Authority, 2018.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Carlini B.H. (2022). **Cannabis Retail Staff ("Budtenders") Attitudes Towards Cannabis Effects on Health and Experiences Interacting with Consumers - Washington State, USA.** *Journal of Psychoactive drugs*, ISSN: 2159-9777, 2022 Jan-Mar; Vol. 54 (1), pp. 34-42; PMID: 33781175.
- <sup>xv</sup> Ackerman, A. (2017). **Reducing the Density and Number of Tobacco Retailers: Policy Solutions and Legal Issues.** *Nicotine & Tobacco Research: Official Journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*, 19(2), 133–140. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntw124>
- <sup>xvi</sup> Caulkins J.P.; Kilborn M.L. (2019). **Cannabis legalization, regulation, & control: a review of key challenges for local, state, and provincial officials** *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol abuse*, ISSN: 1097-9891, 2019; Vol. 45 (6), pp. 689-697; PMID: 31135218.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Ackerman, A. (2017). **Reducing the Density and Number of Tobacco Retailers: Policy Solutions and Legal Issues.** *Nicotine & Tobacco Research: Official Journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*, 19(2), 133–140. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntw124>
- <sup>xviii</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). **The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General.** Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.
- <sup>xix</sup> Robert D., *et al.* (2010). **Particulate matter air pollution and cardiovascular disease: an update to the scientific statement from the American Heart Association.** *Circulation* 121.21: 2331-2378.
- <sup>xx</sup> Murphy, M.B. *et al.* (2021). **PM 2.5 concentrations in a cannabis store with on-site consumption.** *Environmental Health Perspectives* 129.6 (2021): 067701.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Wendee, N. (2021). **Cannabis Consumption in Dispensaries: Public Health Implications of an Emerging Practice.** *Environmental Health Perspectives* 129.8 (2021): 084001.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Bondallaz *et al.* (2016); Brubacher *et al.*, 2019; Chihuri, Li, & Chen, 2017; Fares *et al.*, 2021; Woo, Willits, Stohr, Hemmens, & Hoff, 2019, cited in: Fischer B., *et al.* (2022). **Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines (LRCUG) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive**
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[evidence and recommendations update](#). *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Matheson J; Le Foll B. (2020). [Cannabis Legalization and Acute Harm From High Potency Cannabis Products: A Narrative Review and Recommendations for Public Health](#) *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, ISSN: 1664-0640, 2020 Sep 23; Vol. 11, pp. 591979; PMID: 33173527.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Fischer B., *et al.* (2022). [Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines \(LRCUG\) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update](#). *The International Journal on Drug Policy*. ISSN: 1873-4758, 2022 Jan; Vol. 99, pp. 103381; PMID: 34465496.



## Weedmaps Policy Response to B.C. Government's Discussion Paper on Non-Medical Cannabis Consumption Space Engagement

May 9, 2022

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WM Technology is a leading technology and software infrastructure provider to the cannabis industry, comprising a B2C platform, Weedmaps, and B2B software, WM Business. As a company, our mission is to power a transparent and inclusive global cannabis industry.

Leveraging insights from markets that Weedmaps operates in across North America, Weedmaps Policy seeks to champion and support sound legislative, regulatory and public policies that create and foster safe, fair, reasonably regulated and profitable cannabis marketplaces. The WM Policy staff have decades of legislative, regulatory and public policy experience, and an impressive record of achievement in local, state/province and national political campaigns.

We have been specifically attentive to licensed consumption lounges, which are permitted in nine of eighteen adult-use states in the U.S., either directly through state authority or by handing over regulatory oversight to local governments. Consumption lounges are a staple of legalization efforts and a policy priority in mature states with established markets.

We have presented our [research and recommendations](#) to the Ontario government and would be happy to meet with the B.C. Cannabis Secretariat to discuss our recommendations in greater detail.

As you would be aware, a substantial portion of sales and revenue in B.C.'s alcohol distribution system come from "on-premise consumption," with roughly 15% of alcohol purchases occurring at licensed consumption establishments. Similarly, we believe that a mature cannabis market should include a licensing class where customers can consume edibles, beverages and other cannabis products "on-premise", with oversight from knowledgeable professionals.

Consumption lounges provide an option for adult-use consumers and patients to legally consume cannabis outside their homes, all while minimizing illegal public consumption, creating new business opportunities and jobs, bringing in tax revenue and shrinking the unregulated market. Additionally, we know this is popular policy. According to research conducted by Navigator last year, a strong majority of British Columbians support the licensing and regulation of consumption lounges. We would be happy to share this research upon request.

The following submission summarizes our recommendations with direct responses to the B.C. government's discussion paper questions.

### **1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in the discussion paper? Why or why not?**

Weedmaps appreciates the Cannabis Secretariat's preliminary engagement on this file and generally agrees with the guiding principles put forward. Our expanded comments on each individual principle are as follows.

**Prioritize public health and safety.**

We believe that the licensing of consumption lounges is compatible with B.C.'s public health and safety goals. Particularly for edibles and beverages, which have slower onset times, customers are less likely to over-consume if served and supported by knowledgeable staff. In many regulatory models, consumption lounge employees are required to have specialized training to manage complex scenarios with customers seeking to be "overserved".

Additionally, by normalizing *experiences* that surround non-smoking forms of cannabis consumption (i.e., a restaurant that serves a spreadable cannabis butter or a spa that allows for CBD-based ointment) we believe that the B.C. government can have an impact on consumer behaviour, with non-smoking or vaping categories increasing in market share. Other policies that we support to uphold health and safety goals include:

- Requiring all patrons to be 19 and older;
- Accompany this licensing regime with an education campaign that provides resources and information for adults who choose to consume cannabis, including on *where* they can consume it legally and safely

**Encourage consumers to transition to regulated products.**

We support the objective to help B.C.'s licensed cannabis market overtake its unlicensed one. The most efficient way of doing this is expanding access points and *experiences* that cannot be replicated on the unlicensed market.

Just as the regulation and licensing of retail storefronts and cannabis delivery have made headway in stifling the unlicensed market, we believe that consumption lounges are the next step, and can drive out existing unlicensed lounges. When it comes to special event permits at outdoor events like festivals and concerts, we know that cannabis consumption is already popular.

Providing legal access points to purchase and consume products will help eliminate unregulated activity. Further, lounges that allow for BYO cannabis products can mandate that only licensed products are allowed on site, creating another incentive for customers to purchase through legal channels.

**"Start low and go slow".**

Weedmaps agrees with the "start slow and go slow" principle to the extent that governments may need to take a phased approach to rolling out new policies. We do not, however, agree with the suggestion that the B.C. government should start with the licensing of special event permits in isolation.

B.C. is armed with a wealth of insights and best practices from jurisdictions that have successfully licensed consumption lounges, including bakeries, coffee shops/cafes, restaurants and comedy clubs. Additional details about these existing regulatory models can be found on page nine of our [policy paper](#).

Canadian provinces have started slowly by prioritizing off-premise consumption frameworks, but the time is right to learn from the successes and challenges of other jurisdictions with a B.C.-based framework for licensed consumption lounges.

**Collaborate with Indigenous Peoples.**

We fully support this principle. At Weedmaps, we recognize that the Canadian and American cannabis industries have a long way to go when it comes to enabling opportunities for Black and Indigenous people, who have historically been the most directly hurt by cannabis prohibition.

There is an expansive oral history, as well as academic studies and archeological findings on the historical use of cannabis and hemp by Indigenous people well before settlers came to North America. However, just 0.5 per cent of Health Canada's licensees are located on Canada's 3,100 Indigenous reservations, according to [MJBizDaily](#).

The B.C. government has shown a strong interest in supporting Indigenous partners in the sector through its [shelf-space pilot program](#). This emerging area of public policy presents another opportunity for the government to reach agreements with First Nations so that local entrepreneurs can start businesses and local governing bodies are able to assert jurisdiction, while working cooperatively with the provincial government to achieve shared health and safety goals. If B.C. decides to limit the number of consumption lounge licences offered, we would support a social equity program that provides a reserved set of licences for Indigenous-owned businesses.

### **Respect local control over land-use decisions.**

It is in the best interests of lawmakers to strike a balance between exerting local control and enabling consumption lounges to exist without excessively burdensome laws. Generally speaking, we feel the licensing process is more predictable for businesses and communities with clear, province-wide standards. Overly burdensome municipal zoning rules have the effect of stigmatizing the cannabis industry and can embolden critics who wish to keep the licensed industry out of operation altogether. British Columbia has experienced this dynamic with the licensing of cannabis retail establishments, with some municipalities creating impediments to legal retailers, which in turn enables and perpetuates the illicit market.

Having said that, we also acknowledge that these licences are likely to receive the highest levels of support in host communities if regulated with similar standards to cannabis retailers.

### ***2. What are specific examples of cannabis consumption spaces that you would like to see allowed? What would make these spaces economically feasible as businesses? How do you think challenges raised in this paper could be addressed (for example, preventing impaired driving)?***

In addition to our above comments, which address the economic feasibility and health and safety concerns around consumption lounges, we support the licensing and regulating of each consumption space outlined in the discussion paper, including retail experience, special events and cannabis lounges. For the purpose of this submission, we are grouping consumption lounges into the following categories:

- **Retail consumption lounge:** A licensed retailer with an additional permit to operate a consumption lounge, adjacent to their retail location. This would include “farmgate” retail stores located on production facilities.
- **Independent consumption lounge:** A licence that allows for lounges unassociated with existing retailers. Separate permits may be granted for independent lounges that sell or deliver cannabis products directly on site, versus sites that only allow for consumption but do not sell products (ex. an outdoor area adjacent to a comedy club).

- **Special event permits.** Festivals or events that may apply separately for licensed cannabis consumption for a specific occasion.

Permitting these retail and independent lounges give business owners more flexibility in choosing a model and allows new market entrants to participate in the industry. This also may help ease the path for new and innovative business designs and give consumers more options on the licensed market. Both models are economically viable, and will come with greater opportunities for sustained, safe and profitable operations if the following policies are met:

- **Authorize independent consumption lounges to sell single-use and ready-to-consume cannabis products.** To the extent possible, businesses should be able to sell legal-lab-tested cannabis products for on-the-spot consumption. This would give licensees more than one revenue stream (entry and purchase). We recognize that licensees may be limited by federal law requiring cannabis products to be sold in original sealed packaging, however, for certain products such as teas, butters or edibles, trained staff could support customers in serving these products alongside other food and beverages for convenient co-use.
- **Independent consumption lounges should be allowed to decide if consumers can bring their own products, similar to restaurants that charge a corkage fee.** While it may not always be feasible (ex. outdoor areas with special event permits) a model could be proposed that requires patrons to demonstrate that their cannabis products were purchased legally and remain in their sealed packaging.
- **Allow cannabis to be delivered to consumption lounges that permit outside cannabis products.** Consumers should be able to have cannabis delivered from a licensed operator to a consumption lounge that chooses to allow outside products. This provides flexibility to both consumers and business owners and can be the source of strategic partnerships.
- **Enable consumption lounges to sell non-cannabis food and beverages upon obtaining the proper license(s).** We know that smoking makes up more than two thirds of the licensed cannabis market in B.C. If the government wishes to licence consumption lounges *without* this category, it will be essential to create new experiences that contribute to the growth of edibles, beverages and topical products. Allowing businesses such as cannabis bakeries, coffee shops/cafes, restaurants and comedy clubs that co-locate some combination of food and cannabis products will be an important step in supporting these product categories.
- **Allow consumption lounges to sell or temporarily provide cannabis consumption accessories.** Lounges should be allowed to provide necessary equipment to customers, given the customer's product choice and preferences. The use of accessories, such as glass pipes or vaporizers may be desirable for certain businesses and customers should be allowed, so long as proper sanitation and disposal procedures are adhered to. Accessories and equipment provided to consumers for temporary on-site use should not leave the premises.
- **Allow consumption lounges to use outdoor areas for smoking and vaping.** As recognized in the province's comments, flower remains by far the most popular way to consume cannabis. However the province also states that indoor smoking and vaping will

not be considered. Given the popularity of cannabis flower and vape products, if the province hopes to achieve its goals of transitioning consumers away from the unlicensed market, it will be critical to offer licenses that allow for the creation of outdoor spaces to consume these popular products.

***Are there types of consumption spaces that should not be considered? Why?***

We support licensing and regulating all the models of consumption space that the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has outlined in its discussion paper.

**Conclusion**

We are grateful to the B.C. Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General for publishing a thoughtful discussion paper on this important public policy. We believe that consumption lounges will play an important role in creating new business opportunities and jobs, expanding tax revenue and further diverting resources away from the unlicensed market.

B.C. has historically been at the vanguard of Canadian cannabis culture and we believe this is an exciting opportunity to build on this legacy. We are enthusiastic about contributing to the process and providing insights from the other jurisdictions that we operate in. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out directly at [igrady@weedmaps.com](mailto:igrady@weedmaps.com).