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## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Yi-An Huang, City Manager

From: Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

Date: September 9, 2022

Re: Policy Order #9, dated August 1, 2022, regarding Cannabis Industry Information

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In response to the above referenced policy order, we submit the following.

Subsequent to the legalization of non-medical cannabis in Massachusetts, the City Council amended the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in December 2018 to expand previous provisions for medical marijuana dispensaries and establish a system of rules for establishments selling cannabis for medical use, non-medical use, or both. The Cannabis Business Permitting Ordinance, Chapter 5.50 of the Cambridge Municipal Code, adopted by the City Council in September 2019, created a local permitting requirement for cannabis businesses, including cannabis retail stores, cannabis cultivators, cannabis product manufacturers, cannabis microbusiness, cannabis courier establishments, cannabis delivery operator establishments. The goal was to ensure that the public interest was protected and to prioritize cannabis businesses owned by communities disproportionately harmed during the war on drugs.

### Priority A Applicants

Through the Cannabis Business Permitting Ordinance, the City Council provided initial permitting preference for cannabis businesses to certain priority applicants. For a two-year period, the only applicants eligible for a Cannabis Business Permit were Priority A, Economic Empowerment (EE) applicants. On September 23, 2021, the City Council voted to extend the permitting preference for EE applicants for an additional year and to also provide a one year permitting preference period for the three other Priority A applicants:

- Social Equity (SE) applicants
- Women or Minority Owned Businesses (as certified by the Commonwealth and/or by the City of Cambridge)
- Cambridge residents earning less than fifty percent (50%) of Area Median Income (AMI)

EE and SE are designations created under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) Equity Programs. Both are designed to assist applicants from communities that have been disproportionately harmed by the criminalization of marijuana and are designed to positively impact those communities. The CCC's EE program is presently closed. The SE program is open and accepting applications for one of four training tracks -- Entrepreneur, Core, Entry, and Ancillary.

More information on the EE and SE programs and how individuals or businesses can apply for these designations is available through the CCC at <https://masscannabiscontrol.com/equity-programs/#for-more-Information>

#### Priority B Applicants

Registered Medical Dispensaries (RMDs) within Cambridge that were licensed or registered by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to sell cannabis products in a Cannabis Retail prior to July 1, 2017, constitute Priority B applicants under the Cannabis Business Permitting Ordinance. Priority B applicants will be eligible for a Cannabis Business Permit when the extended priority period expires on September 23, 2022.

### **Overview of the Local Approval Process**

The process for opening a Cannabis Business requires three City approvals:

- Local Approval 1 (CBP) – Cannabis Business Permit
- Local Approval 2 (SP) – Planning Board Special Permit<sup>1</sup>
- Local Approval 3 (HCA) – Host Community Agreement Review & Execution<sup>2</sup>

In addition, applicants need approvals from the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission (MACCC). More information on the State marijuana license process is available at: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/iwantto/applyforacannabisbusinesspermit>

### **Cannabis Business Applicants**

Thirteen EE applicants have either received or have applied for their Cambridge Cannabis Business Permit. Five additional applicants have applied for a Cannabis Business Permit.

The status of all applications, accurate through August 22, 2022, is provided on the next page in Table-1, Cannabis Business Applicants List.

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<sup>1</sup> A Cannabis Courier Establishment use does not require a special permit

<sup>2</sup> Host Community Agreements are required by State law

Business Name	Location	Local Approval Status			In Construction	In Operation
		CBP	SP	HCA		
Economic Empowerment (Priority A)						
Yamba Market	Central Square	X	X	X		X
Western Front	Central Square	X	X	X		X
Blue River Terps	East Cambridge	X	X	X	X	
The Boston Garden	East Cambridge	X	X	X	X	
Green Soul Organics	Central Square	X	X	X	X	
KG Collective	North Cambridge	X	X	X	X	
Yamba Boutique	Harvard Square	X	X	X	X	
Cookies Harvard Square	Harvard Square	X	X	X		
Sankofa	East Cambridge	X	X	X		
Western Front	Harvard Square	X	X	X		
Green Republic	Inman Square	X	Under review			
Healing Greene	Porter Square	X	Under review			
130 Mass. Ave.	Porter Square	Under review				
Social Equity (Priority A)						
None						
Cambridge Residents (Priority A)						
None						
MWBE-owned (Priority A)						
Bhari, Inc. (MWBE)	Alewife	X	X	Under review		
Herbwell (MWBE)	Porter Square	X	X			
Porter Square Remedies (MWBE)	Porter Square	X	X	X		
Priority B Applicants						
Revolutionary Clinics II (RMD)	Alewife	Not eligible until priority period expires				
Other						
Wellman Farm	East Cambridge	Not eligible				

**Table-1: Cannabis Business Applicants List**

## Business Assistance

Community Development Department, in collaboration with the Inspectional Services Department, Law Department, and City Manager's Office, provide the following support to cannabis business permit applicants:

- Pre-application meetings with CDD staff to provide a single point of contact who can guide applicants through the various steps of the City permitting process
- Guidance on applying to the Cannabis Business Permit, including a Cannabis Business Permit Timeline and Permit Process Guide. This information is available at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/iwantto/applyforacannabisbusinesspermit>
- Waiver of Retail Cannabis Business Permit fee (\$350) for EE applicants for the first year after the application is approved.

- One-on-one technical assistance to applicants

### **Local Tax Revenue**

The FY23 Adopted Budget includes \$500,000 in anticipated tax revenue related to the current and anticipated establishments to be opened in FY23. The first full quarter tax payment will be received at the end of September.