



## **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

**Title:** RETAIL SALES OF CANNABIS AND CANNABIS RELATED  
PRODUCTS

**Reference No.:** 1220-050-2024-013

(General Services)

Issue Date: July 19, 2024

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## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest / Statements of Qualifications (the “**RFEOI/SOQ**”) is to invite submissions (the “**Submission**”) from interested and qualified individuals and/or organizations (each a “**Respondent**”) indicating their interest in and qualifications to undertake the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis related products within City boundaries.

The City may at any time and at its sole discretion decide to cancel this process for any reason.

#### 1.2 Eligibility

The RFEOI/SOQ is open to any interested party, including teams composed of individuals and/or firms.

#### 1.3 Context and Background

The Government of Canada (“Canada”) introduced and approved Bill C-45 legislation that legalized the production, processing, sale, and use of recreational cannabis in Canada.

The Province of British Columbia, through the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (“LCRB”), is responsible for the procurement and wholesale distribution of recreational cannabis to local retailers.

Canada and the Province of British Columbia, through the LCRB have established a regulatory framework (the “**Regulatory Framework**”) authorizing the retail sales of cannabis and cannabis related products. This Regulatory Framework establishes a number of guiding principles. These guiding principles are available to view on the Province of British Columbia, LCRB website at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/liquor-regulation-licensing>

The City has established a framework for regulating cannabis retail stores that initially limits the number of store locations to up to two retail stores per Surrey community – Whalley/City Centre, Guildford, Fleetwood, Newton, South Surrey, and Cloverdale – to be permitted only in areas designated City Centre, Town Centre, or Commercial in the OCP and on lots zoned C-5 Neighborhood Commercial Zone, C-8 Community Commercial Zone, C-15 Town Centre Commercial Zone, C-35 Downtown Commercial Zone, or CHI Highway Commercial Industrial Zone in the Zoning By-law.

#### 1.4 Objective and Purpose

The City recognizes that there is a desire by some of the City’s residents to be able to purchase cannabis and cannabis related products from local retail businesses.

The City also recognizes that there are other considerations to providing the retail sales of cannabis and cannabis related products for use within the City's boundaries. Those considerations include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) Determining the number of locations, if any, where the retail sale of cannabis products should be permitted within City boundaries;
- (b) Determining the appropriate location(s), if any, where the retail sale of cannabis products should be permitted within the City boundaries;
- (c) Identifying and addressing the neighborhood impacts of permitting in a particular location with the City's boundaries the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis related products;
- (d) Bylaw enforcement and administrative costs associated with:
  - Ensuring that the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis related products are for sale in particular locations and in compliance with the Regulatory Framework and all applicable City bylaws; and
  - Addressing nuisance issues relating to public use of cannabis.

To address these challenges, the City has implemented a policy framework that must be applied in determining the location(s), where the retail sale of cannabis products can occur within the boundaries of the City (the "**Policy Framework**"). In this regard, the retail sale of cannabis products must not be located within:

A minimum of 200-metres from the following sensitive uses, as measured from the front door of the store to the nearest property line of the sensitive use location:

- Public or Provincially funded Independent Schools;
- City Community Centres and Recreation Centres; and
- Existing cannabis retail or production locations within Surrey

The City Council-approved Policy Framework is found in [Corporate Report No. R055; 2024](#) linked from the City of Surrey website.

## 1.5 Definitions

In this RFEOI/SOQ the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) "**BC Bid Website**" means [www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca);
- (b) "**City**" means the City of Surrey;
- (c) "**City Representative**" has the meaning set out in Section 2.3;
- (d) "**City Website**" means [www.surrey.ca](http://www.surrey.ca);
- (e) "**Date**" has the meaning set out in Section 2.2;
- (f) "**Evaluation Team**" means the team appointed by the City;
- (g) "**Preferred Respondent(s)**" means the Respondent(s) selected by the Evaluation Team;

- (h) **“Respondents”** (individually the “Respondent”) means an entity that submits a Submission in response to the RFEOI/SOQ issued by the City;
- (i) **“RFEOI/SOQ”** means this Request for Expression of Interest and Statements of Qualifications;
- (j) **“Submission”** means a submission submitted in response to this RFEOI/SOQ.

## 2. INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

### 2.1 Address for Submission Delivery

The Respondent should submit the Submission **electronically** in a single PDF file which must be received by the City by email at: [purchasing@surrey.ca](mailto:purchasing@surrey.ca)

Confirmation of receipt of email will be issued. Submissions that cannot be opened or viewed may be rejected. A Respondent bears all risk that the City’s receiving equipment functions properly so that the City receives the Submission.

**Note:** The maximum file size the City can receive is 10Mb. If sending large email attachments, Respondents should phone [604-590-7274] to confirm receipt.

### 2.2 Date

The City would prefer to receive Submissions on or before September 17, 2024. (the **“Date”**)

### 2.3 Inquiries

All inquiries related to this RFEOI/SOQ should be directed in writing to the person named below (the **“City Representative”**). Information obtained from any person or source other than the City Representative may not be relied upon.

Name: Sunny Kaila, Manager, Procurement Services  
Email: [purchasing@surrey.ca](mailto:purchasing@surrey.ca)  
Reference No.: 1220-050-2024-013

Inquiries should be made no later than seven (7) business days before the Date. The City reserves the right not to respond to inquiries made within seven (7) business days of the Date. Inquiries and responses will be recorded and may be distributed to all Respondents at the discretion of the City.

Respondents finding discrepancies or omissions in the RFEOI/SOQ documentation or having doubts as to the meaning or intent of any provision should immediately notify the City Representative. If the City determines that an amendment is required to this

RFEOI/SOQ, the City Representative will issue an addendum in accordance with Section 2.4. No oral conversation will affect or modify the terms of this RFEOI/SOQ nor be relied upon by any Respondent.

## **2.4 Addenda**

If the City determines that an amendment is required to this RFEOI/SOQ, the City Representative will issue a written addendum by posting it on the BC Bid Website at [www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca) (the “BC Bid Website”) and the City Website at [www.surrey.ca](http://www.surrey.ca) (the “City Website”) “(collectively, the “Websites”), and upon posting, any addenda will form part of this RFEOI/SOQ. It is the responsibility of Respondents to check the Websites for addenda. The only way this RFEOI/SOQ may be added to, or amended in any way, is by a formal written addendum. No other communication, whether written or oral, from any person will affect or modify the terms of this RFEOI/SOQ or may be relied upon by any Respondent. By delivery of a Submission, the Respondent is deemed to have received, accepted and understood the entire RFEOI/SOQ, including any and all addenda.

## **2.5 Status Inquiries**

All inquiries related to the status of this RFEOI/SOQ, including whether or not a Respondent has been selected, should be directed to the City Website and not to the City Representative.

The City anticipates to respond back to all Respondents within four to six weeks following the close of this RFEOI/SOQ period, this will ultimately depend on the number of Submissions received and the availability of the City’s Evaluation Team members.

## **3. SUBMISSION FORM AND CONTENTS**

### **3.1 Relevant Experience**

Due to the nature of the proposed Services, the Respondent’s experience should include examples of successful operations of a similar nature. The operation of the retail outlets is expected to be of the highest calibre, providing access to regulated products in a manner that is an asset to the community.

### **3.2 Qualifications and Experience**

#### **Relevant Experience would include:**

- Experience with successfully operating the retail sales of cannabis and cannabis related products;
- Experience of a similar nature related to regulated retail sales operations;
- Collaboration and working closely with owners and key stakeholders to ensure effective service delivery; and

- Proven ability to understand operations needs, identify space requirements and limitations, and configure and design improvements to reflect regulated retail sales objectives.

### 3.3 Form and Contents of Submission

Respondents should carefully review the evaluation criteria when preparing their Submission to ensure they receive full consideration during the evaluation.

A Submission should include:

- (a) **Table of Contents:** Respondent's responses should include a table of contents listing the individual sections of the Submission and their corresponding page number.
- (b) **Letter of Introduction:** Submission responses should include a description of the Respondent's capabilities and approach and provide a brief synopsis of the highlights of the Submission and overall benefits of the Submission to the City.
- (c) Respondents are expected to include, as a minimum, the information below in their Submission:

**Executive Summary and Operator Experience:**

- Provide a brief description of your company and its history as it relates to the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis related products.
- Business location(s), years in business, and number of employees.
- Locations and number of years in operation of each cannabis dispensary that is currently operated by the Respondent.
- Location and number of years in operation of other businesses that are currently operated by the Respondent.
- Brief description of the Company's competitive advantage or unique approach to the Services of this RFEOI/SOQ.

**Proposed Site Location**

- The civic address and unit number (where appropriate) of the proposed cannabis retail location.
- The current OCP designation and zoning district of the proposed cannabis retail location.
- Proof (in an acceptable form as deemed by the City) that Respondent has valid ownership/lease of the proposed cannabis retail location and letter of permission from owner/strata.
- Proof (in an acceptable form as deemed by the City) of an application for a Cannabis Retail Store Licence to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB).

**Site Plan**

A suitable site plan drawn to an appropriate scale (with dimensions) that clearly shows the following information:

- The entire property of the proposed cannabis retail operations, showing existing buildings, parking, access/egress (driveways), loading, and landscape areas;
- A floor plan of the proposed retail unit drawn to an appropriate scale (with dimensions) that clearly shows doors, windows, retail sales areas, and storage areas; and
- Building elevations and/or renderings that clearly show:
  - Front façade and main entrance design, including proposed building materials; and
  - Signage, including proposed signage type, location(s), dimensions, materials, colour, and text.
- Parking
  - Indication on the site plan of location and number of dedicated off-street parking stalls.
  - Access/egress from parking (driveways).

**Security and Lighting Plan**

- A lighting plan showing existing and proposed exterior premises and interior lighting levels.
- Proposed locations of alarms and security surveillance cameras.
- Demonstrate that the security surveillance video shall be maintained for a minimum of thirty (30) business days and shall be made available in compliance with legal requirements. (Note: The video system for security cameras must be located in a locked, tamper-proof compartment. A professionally monitored robbery alarm system shall be installed and maintained in good working order.).
- Other CPTED considerations, including visibility and sightlines around the retail premises.

**Mitigation of Potential Impacts**

A description of the methods by which the Respondent would mitigate any potentially adverse impacts, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Odour absorbing ventilation including exhaust systems; and
- Loitering and other undesirable behaviour around the premises.

Upon submitting a Submission to this RFEOI/SOQ, Respondents consent to the City checking and verifying any information provided. References may be contacted.

The City reserves the right to request Respondents to submit additional information as may be required to complete or evaluate the Submissions.



### **3.4 Signature**

The Submission should be signed by a person authorized to sign on behalf of the Respondent and include the following:

- (a) If the Respondent is a corporation then the full name of the corporation should be included, together with the names of authorized signatories. The Submission should be executed by all of the authorized signatories or by one or more of them provided that a copy of the corporate resolution authorizing those persons to execute the Submission on behalf of the corporation is submitted;
- (b) If the Respondent is a partnership or joint venture then the name of the partnership or joint venture and the name of each partner or joint venturer should be included, and each partner or joint venturer should sign personally (or, if one or more person(s) have signing authority for the partnership or joint venture, the partnership or joint venture should provide evidence to the satisfaction of the City that the person(s) signing have signing authority for the partnership or joint venture). If a partner or joint venturer is a corporation then such corporation should sign as indicated in subsection (a) above; or
- (c) If the Respondent is an individual, including a sole proprietorship, the name of the individual should be included.

## **4. EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

### **4.1 Evaluation Team**

The evaluation of Submissions will be undertaken on behalf of the City by the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team may consult with others, including City staff members, third party consultants, and references, as the Evaluation Team may, in its discretion, decide is required. The Evaluation Team will give a written recommendation for the selection of a Preferred Respondent or Preferred Respondents to the City. Such discussions will not in any way create a binding contract between the City and any such Respondents.

The City will make the final decision regarding any Respondent or terminate the RFEOI/SOQ process at its sole discretion. The City will then advise all Respondents and the selected Respondent (if one is chosen) in writing of the City's decision.

The Evaluation Team will be responsible for verifying the factual information in the Submission, including names, addresses and other information on the Respondent and employees of the proposed retail operator.

The Evaluation Team will provide commentary on the adequacy of security measures that are described in the Submission, e.g., the security and lighting plan, the site and floor plan, and other relevant aspects of the Submission.

## 4.2 Evaluation and Scoring of Respondents

In the evaluation and scoring of Respondents, the City will consider the information submitted in the RFEOI/SOQ including interviews and presentations (if any) with respect to the evaluation criteria set forth below. The result of the evaluation will be a comparative scoring of Respondents per the approved policy framework.

The relative steps of the evaluation review for this RFEOI/SOQ are as follows:

### **Step 1: Administrative Screening Review (Pass / Fail)**

Respondents are required to complete the Submission response information requested in this RFEOI/SOQ. After the City receives the Submission, the Administrative Screening Review will begin, using the criteria below:

- Completeness of Submission, noting any comments, additions, deletions, etc., that conflict with the RFEOI/SOQ document.
- Compliance with:
  - the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis related products for sale in a particular location is in compliance with the Regulatory Framework and all applicable City bylaws;
  - each proposed retail site complies with:
    - the current zoning requirements of (C-5, C-8, C-15, C-35, CHI); and
    - OCP designations as outlined in the approved Policy Framework<sup>1</sup>.
  - Separation Distances (refer to Section 1.4 – Objectives and Purpose for additional information);
  - Proof that Respondent has valid ownership/lease of proposed location and letter of permission from owner/strata; and
  - Proof of an application for a Cannabis Retail Store Licence to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB).

### **Step 2: Completion of the Administrative Screening Review**

Upon completion of the initial Submission evaluation, the City will reject any Submission that fails to meet any of the criteria above.

### **Step 3: Determination of Eligible Respondents**

Any Submission that is not rejected upon the completion of the initial review will be deemed an eligible Submission and will be considered for the final evaluation phase of the solicitation process. At the conclusion of the initial Submission reviews, the City will notify each Respondent of the status of their Submission. All Submissions that pass the initial Submission review will be submitted to the Evaluation Team for the final Submission evaluation.

<sup>1</sup>For additional information, refer to the City of Surrey's webtool developed to search for sites at: <https://giswebportal.surrey.ca/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=233589a1a4754cf1a4e25e8e22ed652f>

#### **Step 4: Final Evaluation Process**

The final evaluation process will include selection from the eligible Submission of the Respondents. The City's objective is to grant business license approval to the Respondent or Respondents that represent the best quality Submissions as determined by the Evaluation Team, such approval being subject to Council's rezoning decision.

Each of the final evaluation criteria below will be used in ranking and determining the quality of Submissions. Submissions will be evaluated according to each final evaluation criterion.

The final evaluation process may include a two-stage approach comprising and evaluation of the written Submission and preliminary ranking to develop a shortlist of Respondents that will continue to the final stage of oral interviews, site visits, and reference checks.

All Respondents will be notified of the shortlist; however, the preliminary ranking at that time will not be disclosed.

#### **4.3 Evaluation Criteria**

The Evaluation Team will compare and evaluate all Submissions to determine the Respondent's strengths and ability to provide the Services in order to determine the Submission (or Submissions) which is/are most advantageous to the City using the following criteria:

- Location (20 points)
  - o OCP designation:
    - Town Centre/City Centre preferred.
  - o Overall desirability.
- Separation distances (10 points)
  - o Minimum 200m from sensitive uses:
    - Public or provincially funded independent schools.
    - City community centres and recreation centres.
    - Existing cannabis retail or production locations within Surrey.
- Related experience of the operator (25 points)
  - o Seeking established business models within cannabis retail and/or within a business regulated in a similar manner.
  - o Number of stores and length of time in operation:
    - Cannabis dispensaries;
    - BCLCRB regulated businesses;
    - Pharmacies regulated by College of Pharmacists of BC;
    - Other related businesses that are subject to a similar regulatory environment;
    - Related but non-regulated businesses.

- Parking and access plan (10 points)
  - o Number of parking spots.
  - o Desirability of access/egress from parking lot.
  
- Visibility, lighting, design, and CPTED elements (10 points)

The Evaluation Team will evaluate each of the above criteria in alignment with the approved Policy Framework. The City will determine the highest scored finalist and notify all finalists in writing of its determination.

In evaluating each of the criteria, the Evaluation Team will identify significant and minor strengths and weaknesses from the Submissions.

The City and its officials, employees, agents, consultants and advisors will not be liable to any Respondents, or any firm, corporation or individual member of a Respondent, for any claims, whether for costs, expenses, losses or damages, or loss of anticipated profits, or for any matter whatsoever, incurred by the Respondent, or any firm, corporation or individual member of a Respondent, in preparing and submitting a Submission or any other activity related to or arising out of this RFEOI/SOQ.

Staff may inform applicants of the results of the RFEOI/SOQ selection process, and up to two applications per community would then advance to Council for consideration of site-specific rezoning, including a public hearing. Various requirements may then be needed ahead of retail operations, including (but not limited to) a suitability letter from the provincial licensing authority, a valid license from the LCRB, a valid business license from the City, and any required building permit for tenant improvements, development permit, and/or sign permit.

#### **4.4 Evaluation Process**

To assist in the evaluation of Submissions, the Evaluation Team may, in its sole and absolute discretion, but is not required to:

- (a) conduct reference checks relevant to the project and background investigations of the Respondent, and any subcontractors proposed in the Submission, with internal and/or external sources, and consider and rely on any relevant information received from the references and from any background investigations in the evaluation of Submissions;
  
- (b) seek clarification or additional information from any, some, or all Respondents with respect to their Submission, and consider and rely on such supplementary information in the evaluation of Submissions;
  
- (c) request interviews/presentations with any, some, or all Respondents to clarify any questions or considerations based on the information included in Submissions, and

consider and rely on any supplementary information received from interviews/presentations in the evaluation of Submissions; and

- (d) seek confirmation that the inclusion of any personal information about an individual in a Submission has been consented to by that individual.

The Evaluation Team is not obligated to complete detailed evaluations of all Submissions and may, after completing a preliminary review of all Submissions, identify and drop from any detailed evaluation any Respondent which, when compared to the other Respondents, the Evaluation Team judges, in its sole discretion, to not be in contention to be selected as the Preferred Respondent.

#### **4.5 Litigation**

In addition to any other provision of this RFEOI/SOQ, the City may, in its absolute discretion, reject a Submission if the Respondent, or any officer or director of the Respondent submitting the Submission, is or has been engaged directly or indirectly in a legal action against the City, its elected or appointed officers, representatives, or employees in relation to any matter, or if the City has initiated legal action.

In determining whether or not to reject a Submission under this section, the City will consider whether the litigation is likely to affect the Respondent's ability to work with the City, its consultants, and its representatives, and whether the City's experience with the Respondent indicates that there is a risk the City will incur increased staff and legal costs if the RFEOI/SOQ is awarded to the Respondent.

### **5. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

#### **5.1 No City Obligation**

This RFEOI/SOQ is simply an invitation for Submissions for the convenience of all parties. It is not a tender or a request for proposals and does not commit the City in any way to pre-qualify a Respondent(s), and the City reserves the complete right to at any time reject all Submissions, and to terminate this RFEOI/SOQ process.

It shall be at the discretion of the City to accept or reject responses from any Respondent who elects to submit a Submission.

The City reserves the right to not accept any Submission and to reissue this prequalification at the sole discretion of the City.

#### **5.2 Respondent's Expenses**

Respondents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing and submitting a Submission, and for any meetings, negotiations, or discussions with the City or its representatives, consultants, and advisors, relating to or arising from this RFEOI/SOQ.

The City and its representatives, agents, consultants, and advisors will not be liable to any Respondent for any claims, whether for costs, expenses, losses or damages, or loss of anticipated profits, or for any other matter whatsoever, incurred by the Respondent in preparing and submitting a Submission, or participating in subsequent proposal requests, negotiations, or other activity related to or arising out of this RFEOI/SOQ.

### **5.3 No Agreement**

By submitting a Submission and participating in the process as outlined in this RFEOI/SOQ, Respondents expressly agree that no contract of any kind is formed under, or arises from, this RFEOI/SOQ, prior to the signing of a formal written agreement(s) by all parties.

### **5.4 Conflict of Interest**

A Respondent shall disclose in its Submission any actual or potential conflicts of interest and existing business relationships it may have with the City, its elected or appointed officials, or employees. The City may rely on such disclosure.

### **5.5 Solicitation of Council Members and City Staff**

Respondents and their agents will not contact any member of the City Council or City staff with respect to this RFEOI/SOQ, other than the City Representative, at any time prior to the award of an agreement or the cancellation of this RFEOI/SOQ, which could be viewed as one Respondent attempting to seek an unfair advantage over other Respondents.

### **5.6 Confidentiality**

All Submissions become the property of the City and will not be returned to the Respondent. All Submissions will be held in confidence by the City unless otherwise required by law. Respondents should be aware the City is a "public body" defined by and subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* of British Columbia.

## **6. CITY DISCLAIMER**

- (a) The information in this RFEOI/SOQ and any further supporting documentation is provided for reference purposes only. It is the responsibility of interested parties to confirm the accuracy and applicability of this information. All costs related to updating or acquiring additional information shall be born solely by the Respondent. The information contained in this RFEOI/SOQ has been prepared, in part, on information provided by others, and such information is believed to be accurate and reliable. However, by its receipt of this RFEOI/SOQ, each Respondent remises, releases, and forever discharges the City and its representatives (including staff and consultants and other professional advisors) from any and all claims which such person has, have, or may hereafter have arising out of any information contained herein. Any party who intends to submit a

response to this RFEOI/SOQ is specifically invited to independently verify the accuracy of the information contained herein.

- (b) The City shall not be obligated to review or accept any Submission and may reject any or all Submissions without giving reasons therefore.
- (c) All negotiations and discussions with Respondents are on a “without prejudice” basis and cannot be construed as an agreement, unless expressly approved by City Council and a written agreement is signed by the City.
- (d) The City may negotiate with any one or more of the Respondents without having any duty or obligation to advise or allow any other Respondents to vary their Submission or otherwise negotiate with the City.
- (e) The City may enter into discussions to clarify issues related to any Submission. If at any time the City reasonably forms the opinion that a mutually acceptable agreement is not likely to be reached, the City may give notice terminating discussions, but is under no obligation to do so.
- (f) The City does not authorize any other person or agency to represent the Project on its behalf without the prior written approval of the City.

## **7. Disclaimer**

Despite anything contained herein, the Respondent agrees that it shall take all necessary steps to confirm the accuracy of this RFEOI/SOQ and agrees that the City shall have no liability whatsoever in respect of any losses or damages of any kind howsoever arising in relation to this RFEOI/SOQ.

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