



RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

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STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: August 2, 2022 **REPORT:** 22-116
FROM: Planning **FILE:** 7657.00
SUBJECT: CANNABIS RETAIL STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council adopt the Cannabis Retail Policy G-27 attached as Appendix A to this Administrative Report 22-116;

That Council receive the public engagement summary on the proposed approach to administer and regulate cannabis retail through Temporary Use Permits in Whistler; and further

That Council direct staff to bring forward amendments to the following Resort Municipality of Whistler bylaws:

- Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 2015;
- Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 2019, 2012;
- Liquor Licence Application Processing Fee Bylaw No. 2224, 2019;
- Business Licence and Regulation Bylaw No. 2253, 2019; and
- Bylaw Enforcement Notice Bylaw No. 2174, 2018;

for regulation of cannabis retail in Whistler consistent with the framework described in this Administrative Report 22-116.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents a cannabis retail policy (Cannabis Retail Policy or Policy) that outlines the proposed regulatory approach and specifies principles and evaluation criteria for consideration of future applications, as well as a summary of the recommended provisions of the proposed regulatory approach, including bylaw amendments. The report requests that Council adopt the Policy and direct staff to prepare the necessary associated bylaw amendments as outlined in the report. The report also presents the results of community and industry engagement completed in February and March of 2022.

Information Report

Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

On December 7, 2021, Council received [Administrative Report No.21-137](#) presenting a recommended approach to permitting and regulating cannabis retail in Whistler. Staff reviewed the different approaches taken by BC municipalities to regulate cannabis retail, and recommended an approach based on Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) to authorize cannabis retail in Whistler.

The proposed regulatory approach allows for a permitting system for cannabis retail that addresses the location and potential number of cannabis retail stores, and will serve to further identify community priorities such as health, safety, and community well-being, resort and community balance, climate action and sustainability, and reconciliation. Recognizing the Resort Municipality of Whistler's (RMOW's) limited land supply, growth management policies, and ongoing desire for a diverse and vibrant commercial sector, the Cannabis Retail Policy retains discretionary approval for each individual cannabis retail application, providing reasonable access while limiting proliferation. This approach will enable the RMOW to oversee approval and monitoring of cannabis retail, which will be thoughtfully integrated within existing land use patterns, consistent with community objectives and land use planning in Whistler, and supportive of the goals, objectives and policies of the Official Community Plan (OCP).

Staff carried out consultation during the winter and spring of 2022 to gather input from the community, key stakeholders, and the cannabis industry on the proposed approach to regulating cannabis retail in Whistler, how cannabis retail in Whistler can address the needs of the community, and how concerns and potential issues can be mitigated. Community and industry feedback was generally positive towards the proposed approach. Respondents indicated support for restricting cannabis retail to Whistler's commercial nodes, with some suggesting Rainbow as an additional or alternate location. Industry participants noted that the TUP approval system creates some uncertainty for businesses, however, the benefits of the quicker approvals timeline when compared to a rezoning approach was seen as beneficial. Industry participants also showed a clear preference for an approvals system based on evaluation of clear criteria, rather than a lottery system.

A comprehensive summary of the community engagement that was conducted is attached as Appendix C.

Staff have now prepared the Cannabis Retail Policy, to guide the review and consideration of future TUP applications for cannabis retail, as well as the specifics of the proposed regulatory approach. These are presented in this report as follows.

Analysis

The Cannabis Retail Policy outlines objectives for consideration of future TUP applications and details recommended provisions of the proposed regulatory approach (attached as Appendix A). The Policy and regulatory provisions have taken into consideration input and feedback received from the community engagement. It includes guiding principles, location guidelines and evaluation criteria that are recommended to be used to evaluate and consider future applications. The Policy also presents the recommended application consideration procedures.

Cannabis Retail Policy

The Cannabis Retail Policy outlines Whistler's proposed approach to regulating cannabis retail. It

reflects a thoughtful regulatory approach consistent with the community's values and policies expressed in the OCP including upholding the resort experience and balancing community and guest demand with community safety and a family-friendly environment. The Policy sets clear expectations and establishes a transparent process for application intake, review and approvals for new cannabis retail stores.

Applicants will be expected to address each principle and the evaluation criteria in their application package. Evaluation criteria provide a framework to evaluate all TUP applications for their community benefit and impacts related to achieving the vision, goals, and community priorities in the OCP. Applications will also be assessed for compliance with applicable design guidelines and bylaws.

Guiding Principles:

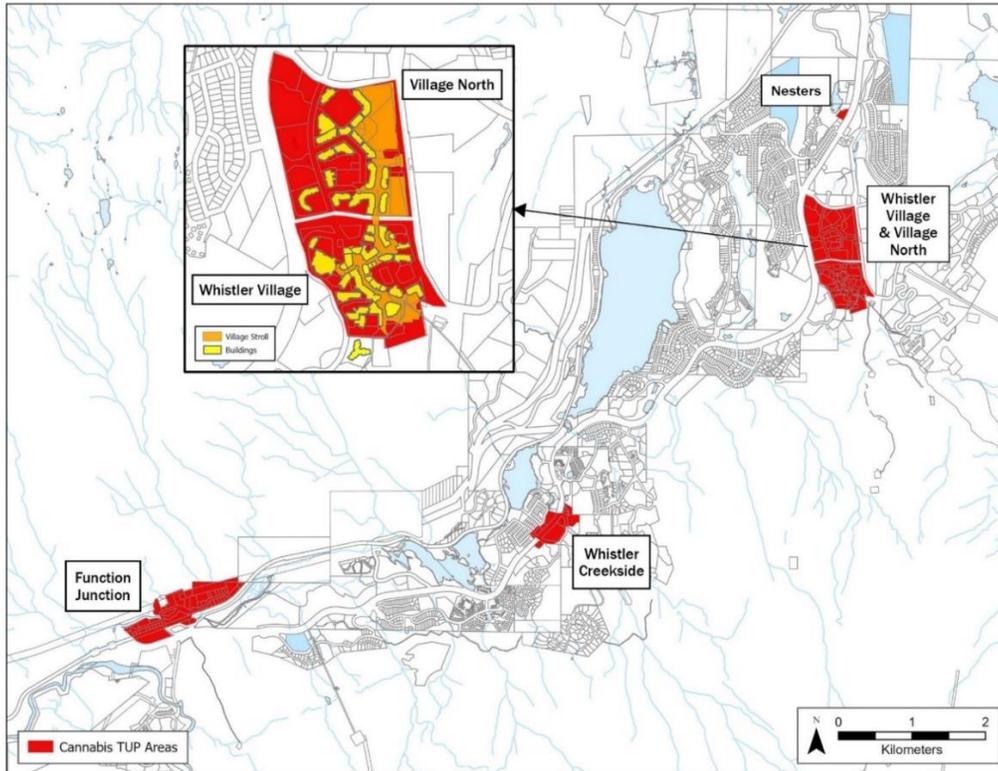
The Cannabis Retail Policy establishes six guiding principles, drawn from existing RMOW policies and regulations:

- Support a thriving and diverse economy;
- Reinforce Whistler's mountain community character;
- Promote community and social well-being;
- Establish a transparent and efficient process;
- Balance community and visitor demand with community safety and Whistler's family-friendly environment; and
- Support and advance reconciliation and economic opportunities with the Skwxwú7mesh and Lilwat7úl people.

Location guidelines

- The Cannabis Retail Policy and associated proposed bylaw amendments recommend support for up to five cannabis retail locations. TUP areas are proposed to be designated in the Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 2015 (Zoning Bylaw) to permit a cannabis retail store use in each of Creekside, Function Junction, the Nesters plaza, the Village, and Village North. Retail stores are proposed to be located a minimum of 750 metres apart (150 metres in the Village), and at least 300 metres from schools and from Meadow Park Recreation Centre. Village and Village North locations should also be located off the Village Stroll.

Figure 1: Proposed Cannabis Retail Temporary Use Permit areas:



Evaluation Criteria

It is proposed that applicants be required to submit a Community Impact Statement, addressing the guiding principles, location guidelines and evaluation criteria in the Cannabis Retail Policy.

The evaluation criteria, also drawn from the goals, objectives and policies of the OCP, are:

- Balancing resort and community needs;
- Provisions for employee housing;
- Commitment to a Living Wage;
- Relationships with or support for community organizations;
- Leadership on sustainability and climate action, with additional reference to Whistler's *Climate Action Big Moves Strategy*, and *Zero Waste Action Plan*;
- Contributions to local economic development and overall character that promote a four-season family-friendly resort destination;
- Commitment to Whistler's community health and social strategy goals; and
- Commitments to reconciliation and providing economic opportunities for the Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation.

Security and nuisance mitigation plans will be reviewed and assessed. The application will also be assessed for compliance with applicable bylaws, plans, and policies, including Development Permit Area form and character guidelines.

Proposed Bylaw Amendments

Several bylaws are required to be amended including Zoning Bylaw to designate the TUP areas for cannabis retail and minimum buffer distances between cannabis retail stores and from schools. Other proposed bylaw amendments include the Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 2019, 2012 (Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw); Liquor Licence Application Processing Fee Bylaw No. 2224, 2019 (Liquor Licence Application Processing Fees Bylaw); the Business Licence and Regulation Bylaw No. 2253, 2019, (Business Licence Bylaw); and the Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw 2174, 2018 (Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw), as necessary.

- The Zoning Bylaw is proposed to be amended to add a definition of cannabis retail, and to remove or revise the RMOW-wide prohibition on cannabis retail that is currently included in Part 4 (General Prohibitions) to allow cannabis retail through a TUP, and to designate five Cannabis Retail TUP areas.
- The Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw is proposed to be amended to include, as necessary, procedures for applications related to cannabis retail TUPs, to confirm that the authority to issue cannabis retail TUPs will not be delegated, and to include a cannabis retail TUP fee and a TUP renewal fee.
- The Liquor Licence Application Processing Fees Bylaw is proposed to be amended to include a fee category for Cannabis Retail Store licence referrals to cover the costs incurred in assessing a provincial Cannabis Retail Store licence application.
- The Business Licence Bylaw is proposed to be amended to include a requirement that Cannabis Retail business licence applications include confirmation of issuance of a provincial Cannabis Retail Store licence, an RMOW Cannabis Retail Good Neighbour Agreement, and proof of a security plan that meets or exceeds the provincial requirements. The Cannabis Retail Business Licence Fee is proposed to be the standard annual licence fee (currently \$190).
- The Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw is proposed to be amended to add a penalty for unauthorized use of land or building for cannabis retail use.

An OCP amendment is not required to designate TUP areas in the Zoning Bylaw for a cannabis retail use in the proposed locations. Section 4.1.4.2 of the OCP is clear that the land use designations do not exclude temporary uses.

The legislative framework of the Province of British Columbia, including the *Community Charter*, *Local Government Act (LGA)*, and the *Cannabis Control and Licensing Act (CCLA)*, provides the basis upon which the RMOW may regulate certain locational and other aspects of cannabis retail stores, as well as procedures for assessing and approving business proposals.

Cannabis Retail Application Process

Subject to adoption of the proposed bylaw amendments, a defined intake period will be established to consider complete Cannabis Retail TUP applications in a batch application process. Applications will be reviewed by staff for completeness, assessed for compliance with the Cannabis Retail Policy, and advanced to Council with recommendations for Council consideration.

Public notification procedures will be followed per bylaw and statutory requirements. The provincial Cannabis Retail Store referral process includes additional notification requirements, which will take place concurrently with the TUP review.

Cannabis retail businesses will also need to apply for and obtain an RMOW business licence if a TUP and provincial Cannabis Retail Store licence have been issued.

Additional permits may be required, including a Development Permit, Building Permit, and Sign Permit.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

[December 7, 2021, Administrative Report No. 21-137](#) presented an overview of the recommended approach to permitting and regulating cannabis retail in Whistler, and to seek endorsement of a work program and engagement strategy to bring forward an OCP-based framework outlining community goals, objectives, and policies to guide consistent decision-making, and related bylaw amendments for regulation of cannabis retail in Whistler.

[January 9, 2018: Administrative Report No. 18-004](#) (pages 11-16) Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Cannabis Retail, Production and Distribution) No. 2159, 2017 first and second readings to clarify and update zoning regulations for cannabis production, distribution and retail in Whistler in anticipation of the federal legalization of “recreational” by replacing the definitions of “marihuana production” and “marihuana distribution” with a definition of “cannabis” mirroring the definition in the *Cannabis Act*. The amendment expanded the existing general prohibition on cannabis production and distribution to also prohibit retailing cannabis anywhere in the RMOW. Bylaw 2159, 2017 was adopted on February 6, 2018.

Corporate Plan

The RMOW Corporate Plan is updated annually and articulates strategic direction for the organization. This section identifies how this report links to the plan.

Council Focus Areas

- Community Balance
*Effectively **balance resort and community needs** through deliberate planning, partnerships and investment*
- Climate Action
*Provide leadership to **accelerate climate action and environmental performance** across the community*
- Housing
*Advance strategic and innovative initiatives to enable and **deliver additional employee housing***
- Pandemic Recovery
*Leadership and support for **community and tourism recovery and sustainability** – priority focuses are where recovery needs intersect with other Council focus areas*
- Not Applicable

Corporate Goals

- Community character and mountain culture is reflected in municipal initiatives
- Municipal decision-making supports the effective stewardship of natural assets and ecological function
- Corporate policies and operations ensure continuous excellence in infrastructure, facility and program management
- A high level of accountability, transparency and community engagement is maintained
- Corporate financial health is optimized to ensure long-term community success
- A vibrant local economy and safe, resilient resort community is effectively reinforced by organizational activities
- Pandemic recovery

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The OCP is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

Chapter 5: Land Use and Development addresses residential and tourist accommodation, commercial and industrial space, and agricultural and extractive uses. In particular, Goal 5.6 seeks to maintain a complementary balance of commercial land use to reinforce Whistler's mountain resort character, the needs of the community, and the local tourism economy.

- 5.6.1 Objective Maintain a balanced supply of commercial and industrial space and associated land uses.
- 5.6.1.6 Policy Evaluate any proposed rezoning for additional space or changes in use for consistency with the intended purpose and roles of the location, compatibility of the surrounding area, the potential displacement of other essential uses, and potential impacts on the vitality and success of other existing developments.
- 5.6.3.19 Policy Work to address potential impacts associated with federal legalization of cannabis.

Further, report recommendations implement the objectives in Chapter 6: Economic Viability. Goal 6.6 supports a vibrant, growing and successful local business community with the objective to strengthen support for local business through using land use and supporting programs, including the following relevant policies:

- 6.6.1.3 Policy Support new and existing businesses that enhance the use of local Whistler skills and expertise and support the authentic mountain culture.
- 6.6.1.4 Policy Explore opportunities to incorporate Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation owned and operated businesses into the local business economy.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Staff time for this work is covered by the Planning Department budget. Once the proposed cannabis retail regulatory scheme has been created, and relevant bylaws amended, application fees will be imposed to offset staff time reviewing and administering cannabis retail temporary use permit and licence applications.

LIL'WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lil'wat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy. This section identifies areas where RMOW activities intersect with these relationships.

Report recommendations are consistent with the goals and objectives contained in OCP Chapter 3: and OCP Chapter 4: Growth Management. Relevant policies from OCP Chapter 3 pertain to participation in Whistler planning and development for the Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation, specifically:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------|--|
| 3.3.3.1 | Policy | The Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation meaningfully participate in the future direction of Whistler and the surrounding region. |
| 3.6 | Goal | The Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation are successfully participating in Whistler's resort economy and regional economic growth. |
| 3.6.1 | Objective | Strengthen cooperation and coordination to realize economic benefits. |

OCP Goal 4.1 is to effectively manage to maintain Whistler's unique sense of place, protect the environment, provide a high quality of life for residents and provide exceptional visitor experiences. The related policy from Chapter 4 pertaining to cooperative relationship building with Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation is:

- | | | |
|---------|--------|---|
| 4.1.2.3 | Policy | Work collaboratively towards both Whistler and the Lil'wat and Squamish Nations benefiting from the local tourism economy and complementary economic development and capacity building opportunities. |
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This approach will further the RMOW's commitment to creating an enduring relationship and enabling participation in Whistler's resort economy.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

- Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Comment(s):

During the winter and spring, staff engaged the community, prospective cannabis retailers, and stakeholder groups, to gather input and insight into cannabis retail in Whistler through a combination of

online forums with industry, in-person meetings with key stakeholders, a public input period, and information sharing via the RMOW's website, supported by social media.

In February and March, 2022, the project engagement process used three distinct engagement methods to collect input on the future of cannabis retail in Whistler outlined in the table below.

Method	Purpose	Participation
Community engagement portal and questionnaire	Provided opportunity for the community to share thoughts through a more detailed series of closed and open-ended questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 274 unique visits to the community engagement page • 87 surveys submitted
Virtual cannabis industry workshop and engagement portal	Sought to provide more depth of each draft section of the document and explore community insights using an interactive Q&A format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 126 unique visits to the cannabis retail engagement page • 84 participants in industry workshop
Targeted stakeholder meetings	Staff hosted one-on-one meetings to provide an overview of the proposed framework and collect, input related to issue mitigation, community needs and policy context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with community organizations, agencies, and service providers (see appendix C for details).

Engagement opportunities were communicated using a dedicated RMOW project webpage, direct invitations to key stakeholders, social media posts, and weekly newspaper advertisements in The Pique. A summary of the process and results has been presented in Appendix C this report.

The engagement process focused on gathering input on the proposed approach to regulating cannabis retail in Whistler and to highlight how the policy can be refined to best suit the needs of the community while addressing concerns or issues through mitigation strategies and working with community partners and industry agencies to leverage knowledge about best practice and implementation.

Input collected from the community, stakeholder and the cannabis industry was overall generally supportive of the proposed framework overall, including the number of stores, their locations and the proposed approach to regulating cannabis retail through Temporary Use Permits. The input highlighted a number of considerations for the policy framework that were identified:

- **Location and distribution:** Feedback indicated general support for the proposed locations of Function Junction, Creekside, Whistler Village, and the Nester's plaza. Some respondents suggested that Rainbow could be an additional location for a local-serving cannabis retail location.
- **Concerns over consumption impacts:** Concerns were raised about cannabis consumption in public places frequented by visitors and community members.
- **Opportunities to coordinate on education:** Feedback opportunities for collaboration and coordination on education and communications, particularly targeted to youth and stakeholders that work with youth and/or vulnerable populations.
- **Legal access provides a safe supply:** Feedback indicated strong support for cannabis retail in Whistler to provide a safe alternative to consumers.

- **Storefront design:** Feedback indicated desire that cannabis retail stores address Whistler's mountain community character and comply with applicable Development Permit Area design guidelines.
- **Business leasing challenges:** The cost and challenge of finding and securing a retail space before having certainty about approval was identified as a barrier. Participants suggested this could be ameliorated by pre-approving a short-list of applicants and then allowing them time to secure a location.
- **Timeline concerns:** Input from the cannabis industry noted preference for a quick application and approval process. The cost to hold a lease through a lengthy approval process is onerous on applicants.
- **Application Evaluation:** There was strong support from the cannabis industry to choose successful applications with a scoring/evaluation system with clear and transparent criteria and minimum requirements rather than a lottery system.
- **Local ownership will drive community benefits:** Comments noted support for local ownership to maximize community benefits, including local economic activity, giving back to the community, and alignment with Whistler's authentic community character.
- **Hours of operation:** Feedback was generally supportive of limiting cannabis retail hours to the provincially permitted operating hours of 9am until 11pm.
- **Licence fee:** Responses indicated that fees should be on par with those paid by liquor stores.

A comprehensive summary of the engagement is attached as Appendix C.

Proposed bylaw amendments will include opportunities for public input and comment as legislated by the Community Charter and LGA.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – draft Cannabis Retail Policy
Appendix B – proposed Bylaw amendments
Appendix C – Engagement Summary

SUMMARY

This report presents a Cannabis Retail Policy that outlines a proposed regulatory approach and specifies policies for consideration of future applications, as well as a summary of the recommended provisions of the proposed regulatory approach, including bylaw amendments. The report also presents a summary of the input and feedback received during community and industry engagement completed in February and March of 2022. The proposed policy and regulatory framework would support up to five locations within the community in existing commercial areas, and has been designed to further identify community priorities including health, safety, and community well-being, resort and community balance, climate action and sustainability, and reconciliation.

SIGN-OFFS

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Appendix B – Proposed Bylaw Amendment Summary

Cannabis Retail Policy Framework Proposed Bylaw Amendments	
Bylaw Name & No.	Proposed Amendments
Zoning and Parking Bylaw No 303, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add definition of Cannabis Retail; • Revise or remove prohibition on Cannabis Retail; • Designate Cannabis Retail Temporary Use Permit Areas in Function Junction, Creekside, Nesters, the Village and Village North, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimum distancing requirements between stores of 750 metres except for in the Village and Village North, where it is required to be a minimum of 150 metres; ○ Minimum distancing requirements of 300 metres from schools and from Meadow Park Recreation Centre; and ○ No cannabis retail with frontage on the Village Stroll.
Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 2019, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Cannabis Retail TUP application procedures, as necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannabis Retail TUP application fee and TUP renewal fee; and ○ Revise so that Cannabis retail TUP approvals are not delegated.
Liquor Licence Application Processing Fees Bylaw No. 2224, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Bylaw title to include Cannabis Retail; and • Add LCRB referral review fee.
Business Licence and Fees Bylaw No. 2253, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Cannabis Retail definition; • Add additional application submission requirements for Cannabis Retail business licence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standard annual business licence fee (currently \$190.00); ○ Confirmation of provincial Cannabis Retail Store licence; ○ Cannabis Retail Good Neighbour Agreement; ○ Proof of security plan that meets or exceeds provincial requirements.
Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw No. 2174, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a penalty for unauthorized use of land or building for cannabis retail use.

Cannabis Retail Policy Framework Public Engagement Summary

This summary document presents the engagement process, methods, key themes and detailed comments from the public engagement undertaken to support the development of the Resort Municipality of Whistler's (RMOW's) approach to introducing, permitting and regulating cannabis retail stores in Whistler.

Engagement Overview

To ensure that the cannabis retail policy framework aligns with the needs and vision of Whistler residents, engagement was undertaken early in the framework development and a consultation process was used to engage directly with the cannabis industry, community members and key stakeholder groups.

Public engagement was undertaken to inform the community, cannabis industry, and key stakeholders about the proposed approach to regulating cannabis retail through a policy framework using Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) to permit and regulate cannabis retail in Whistler. Staff sought input on the proposed approach and policy objectives while addressing concerns and identifying opportunities to best suit the needs of the community.

Engagement was held in February and March, 2022 to receive input from community members, the cannabis industry and community stakeholders through a number of methods and touch points to ensure the community was well informed about the proposed cannabis retail framework policy and bylaw amendment changes. Engagement opportunities included:

- a participatory virtual workshop with members of the cannabis industry;
- a dedicated public engagement web portal with questionnaire and interactive mapping to collect input from interested members of the community; and
- dedicated meetings with key community stakeholders.

Input, inquiries and questions were also collected via a dedicated email mailbox (cannabis@whistler.ca) which has provided on-going touchpoint along with on-going updates to the RMOW's cannabis retail webpage.

How We Informed the Community

Community engagement opportunities were advertised through a media release, multiple weeks of ads in the Pique, the RMOW's e-newsletter, the Mayors notes about what's happening in Whistler at Council meetings and listed on the RMOW cannabis retail webpage. On-going posts across the RMOW's social media platforms, including an information sharing campaign on Instagram and targeted ads on Facebook, provided information about the cannabis retail policy framework and ways for the community to share their input. Staff also reached out to a number of community stakeholders through individual emails inviting them to meet and requested input from stakeholders on who else might be invited.

Planning staff have received inquiries regarding cannabis retail opportunities. Staff have responded letting enquirers know that they will be notified when the RMOW intended to commence consideration of cannabis retail. The majority of emails have been from prospective cannabis retail operators, and staff have responded to each with a commitment to provide information if and when the RMOW began consultation for cannabis retail. This list of several hundred contacts formed the starting point for industry engagement. Engagement opportunities were promoted via the cannabis webpage, the RMOW's social media channels, and direct outreach to cannabis industry trade publications and associations.

Engagement Topics

Community engagement focused on informing the community about the cannabis retail policy framework, and collecting input related to the framework approach, including policy objectives, locations, application process, store design, and hours of operation. The cannabis industry was similarly asked about the same topics from their perspective, as well as about their experience in other communities, particularly as applicants going through the regulatory process where the land use was introduced and ideas about what worked well elsewhere. Community stakeholders were informed about the policy framework and consulted about their service areas/interests to consider how cannabis retail may impact how they operate or those they represent.

Cannabis Industry Virtual Workshop & Engagement Page

On February 17, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, staff hosted a virtual workshop for cannabis industry and prospective cannabis retailers. The list of industry email contacts collected from the RMOWs dedicated cannabis inbox formed the starting point for industry engagement and the session was listed as a community engagement opportunity, open to anyone who was interested in attending with required registration.

The session was hosted on Zoom and input was collected on an industry-dedicated digital engagement portal which remained open for input until the end of the engagement period. In the session and through the engagement portal staff were able to respond to participant questions as needed to clarify the proposed approach and key considerations and gather participant input related to the information presented, including feedback on what is proposed and potential lessons to learn from other communities/businesses to refine the proposed approach.

The workshop generated a high degree of interest and was well attended by individuals and companies from the cannabis industry interested in locating in Whistler. Feedback was generally positive and highlighted several themes related to the cannabis industry, including:

- Challenges or concerns related to securing retail space and impacts to commercial retail real estate;
- Application review should be fair and approval should be awarded based on standard requirements and the merits of the application (i.e. no lottery and use of a matrix or scoring system);
- Support for location distribution and regulations that establish a maximum or a cap to create a more favorable and secure market environment;
- Concerns about timeline, process clarity and the cost of application/licence fees being inflated;
- Mitigating nuisance issues in other communities using a good neighbour agreement has been successful and a general willness from operators to engage about concerns;
- Opportunity to promote local economic development and employment in the community; and
- Preferences for non-transparent windows related to safety for operators and patrons.

Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings were held with community associations, service providers and government agencies to coordinate efforts, strengthen knowledge networks and collect input from key sources who are already positioned locally in Whistler to know the community context and needs.

Staff presented the project and provided background information, policy context, an overview of the proposed recommendations to regulate cannabis retail through a policy framework using TUPs. In the meetings, staff engaged stakeholders on their questions and ideas related to cannabis retail in Whistler to

gather input about how different stakeholders may be affected by the proposed cannabis retail policy framework and how to mitigate for issues or concerns. Staff sought to collect input that may help refine the policy framework and customize it for the needs and interests of Whistler.

The stakeholder meetings highlighted a number of key themes related to public health, safety and enforcement including:

- A high degree of support for cannabis retail stores to provide legal and safe access;
- Support for locating cannabis retail in existing commercial retail areas and creating a limit on the amount of locations;
- Opportunities for coordination on communication and education related to cannabis retail;
- Protecting youth and separating the use from schools or places where youth frequent; and
- Bylaws already regulate no-smoking in most public and private parts of the Village (i.e. Smoking Regulation Bylaw and private strata bylaws prohibit smoking).

Community Engagement Page & Questionnaire

A cannabis retail community engagement portal was created to share information about the proposed policy framework approach, and to collect public input through a community questionnaire about the proposed approach, policy objectives and the preferences for cannabis retail in Whistler.

Generally interest from the public was quite low in comparison to the interest from the cannabis industry. Most participants in the survey were local residents who live in Whistler year-round and most (80% of participants) and highlighted the following community engagement themes:

- Support for the project objectives and policy framework approach to permitting cannabis retail in Whistler;
- The TUP Areas were generally supported and align with the community needs;
- Storefront design should be consistent with the Development Permit Areas in the OCP, and blend into the existing neighbourhood; and
- An opportunity to encourage economic development and sustainable, community-minded business investment in Whistler.

Summary of Key Engagement Themes

Input collected from the community, stakeholder and the cannabis industry was overall generally supportive of the proposed framework overall, including the number of stores, their locations and the approach to regulating cannabis retail through TUPs. The input highlighted a number of considerations for the policy framework that were identified:

Theme	Description	Public	Stakeholder	Industry
Location and Distribution	Feedback indicated general support for the proposed locations of Function Junction, Creekside, Whistler Village, and the Nester's plaza. Some respondents suggested that Rainbow could be an additional location for a local-serving cannabis retail location.	✓	✓	✓
Concerns over consumption impacts	Concerns were raised about cannabis consumption in public places frequented by visitors and community members.	✓	✓	

Theme	Description	Public	Stakeholder	Industry
Opportunities to coordinate on education	Feedback opportunities for collaboration and coordination on education and communications, particularly targeted to youth and stakeholders that work with youth and/or vulnerable populations.		✓	
Legal access provides a safe supply	Feedback indicated strong support for cannabis retail in Whistler to provide a safe alternative to consumers	✓	✓	✓
Storefront Design	Feedback indicated desire that cannabis retail stores address Whistler's mountain community character and comply with applicable Development Permit Area design guidelines.	✓	✓	✓
Business leasing challenges	The cost and challenge of finding and securing a retail space before having certainty about approval was identified as a barrier.			✓
Timeline concerns	Input from the cannabis industry noted preference for a quick application and approval process. The cost to hold a lease through a lengthy approval process is onerous on applicants.			✓
Criteria/scoring system rather than a lottery:	There was strong support from the cannabis industry to choose successful applications with a scoring/evaluation system with clear and transparent criteria and minimum requirements rather than a lottery system.	✓		✓
Local ownership will drive community benefits	Comments noted support for local ownership to maximize community benefits, including local economic activity, giving back to the community, and alignment with Whistler's authentic community character.	✓	✓	✓
Hours of operation	Feedback was generally supportive of limiting cannabis retail hours to the provincially permitted operating hours of 9am until 11pm.	✓		✓
Licence fee	Responses indicated that fees should be on par with those paid by liquor stores.			✓

Engagement Participation

Project engagement targeted a wide spectrum of stakeholders and community members. Interest was generally higher from the cannabis industry and generally low from the community. The table below presents a summary of the engagement methods and participation.

Activity	Summary Description	Results
Social Media and Advertising <i>Level of Engagement: Inform</i>	Information describing the projects and methods to participate in community engagement were shared on RMOW social media streams and through local newspapers.	A media release and printed newspaper ads in the Pique (four weeks) and the Chief (one week). On-going Facebook, Instagram and twitter promotion.
RMOW Website & Email Box <i>Level of Engagement: Inform</i>	Provided up-to-date information about stakeholder engagement opportunities and the proposed framework update.	On-going community touch point and direct email for questions or inquiries.
Cannabis Industry Virtual Workshop and Online Engagement Portal <i>Level of Engagement: Consult</i>	Staff hosted a virtual workshop on February 17 from 10:00 to 11:30 am for members of the cannabis industry and prospective cannabis retailers. Input was collected on the RMOW digital engagement platform (via the Ideas Board tool) which remained open for input until the end of the engagement collection period on March 7, 2022	Approximately 85 total unique people viewers attended the virtual Industry workshop online. The cannabis retail industry engagement page logged 267 visitors with 74 visitors participating in the quick poll tool and 44 visitors making 162 contributions through the Ideas Board tool.

Activity	Summary Description	Results
	<p>In the session, staff presented overview information about the proposed policy framework and policy objectives to regulating cannabis retail in Whistler. The facilitator posed the questions about key topics to participants (also included within the engagement tool), and then participants responded to the question by adding their feedback and ideas into the engagement platform 'Ideas Board.' Participants were also invited to like/vote for the ideas posted by others.</p>	
<p>Community Questionnaire and Online Engagement Portal</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement: Consult</i></p>	<p>The questionnaire was open on the cannabis retail engagement page held on the Bang the Table engagement platform, from February 17, 2022 to March 8, 2022. Hard copies were made available upon request.</p> <p>Project information including background and context, policy objectives, and proposed regulatory approach was shared on the The project engagement webpage. and questionnaire south to provide participants with background information to inform the project context, review policy objectives and proposed regulatory approach. The questionnaire was designed to and collect input and feedback on key project questions. Each area of input had several open-ended response prompts for participants to contribute their input and ideas. All input was reviewed for themes.</p>	<p>274 visitors to the cannabis retail page; completed a total of 87 questionnaires.</p> <p>The mapping tool received a total of 37 visitors. 14 contributors dropped a total of a total of 20 pin submissions. Only three (3) noted undesirable locations with 17 other pins noting desirable locations.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Meetings</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement: Involve</i></p>	<p>Staff met RMOW hosted seven (7) digital stakeholder meetings with local key community associations, agencies and service providers to provide share information about the proposed cannabis retail policy framework and bylaw changes. The meetings provided an opportunity for staff to answer questions, receive feedback on the policy objectives and approach, and to discuss opportunities to mitigate concerns.</p>	<p>RMOW hosted the following stakeholder meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurant Association, February 15 • Whistler RCMP, February 23 • Community Services Society, February 23 • YMCA Cannabis Education Program, March 7 • Vancouver Coastal Health, March 11 • Hotel Association, March 17 • Chamber of Commerce, March 21

Community Engagement Input

Location Feedback

The following summarizes the location feedback received on the comments received on the TUP location maps presented on the cannabis engagement webpage.

The mapping tool received a total of 37 visitors. 14 contributors dropped a total of a total of 20 pin submissions. Out of the 20 pin submissions, only three (3) noted undesirable locations with 17 other pins noting desirable locations.

Generally feedback was supportive of the TUP areas. Concerns noted that cannabis retail and consumption should consider family-oriented and visitor areas.

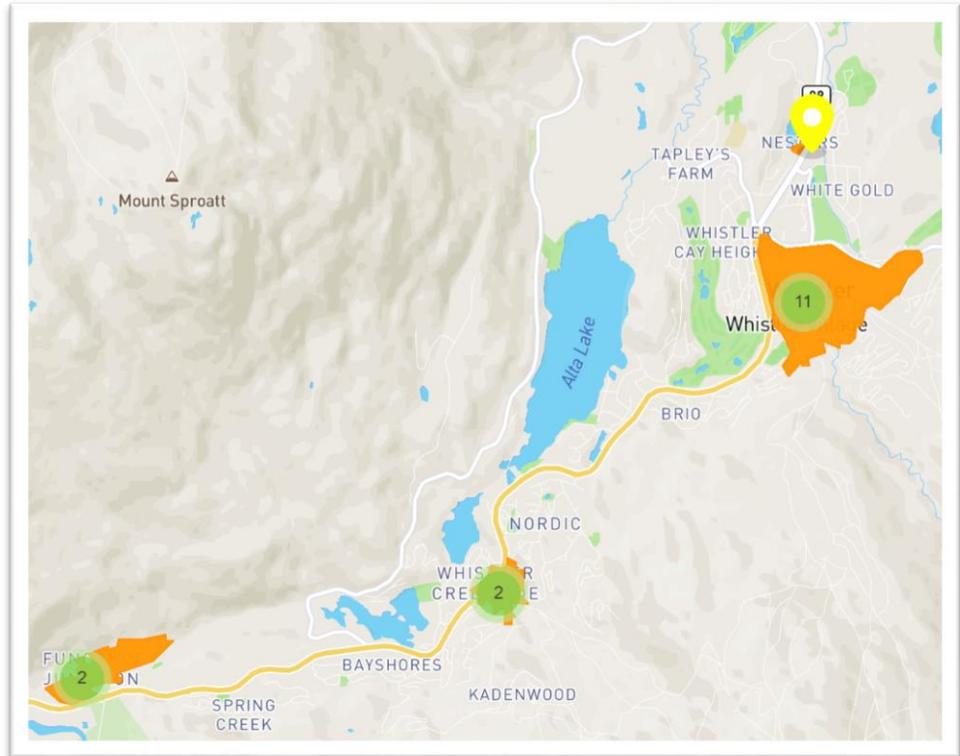
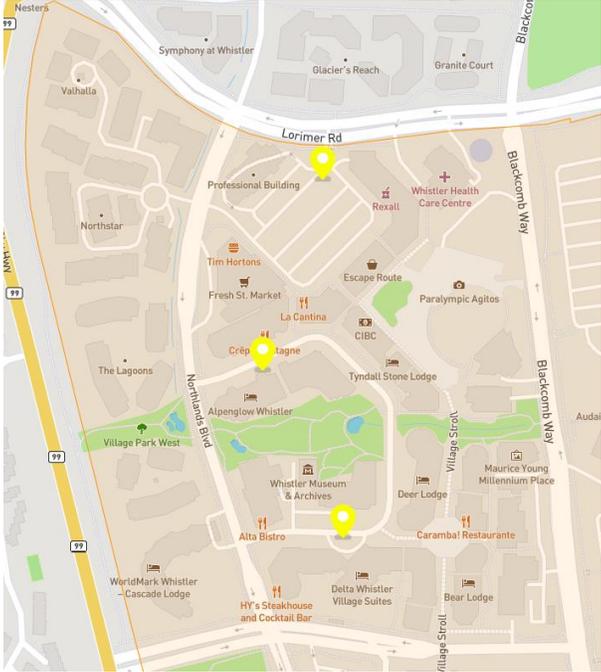
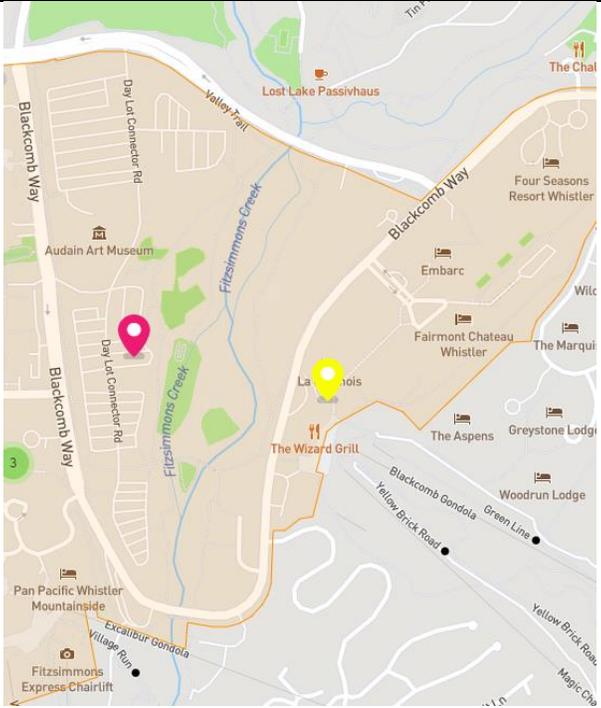
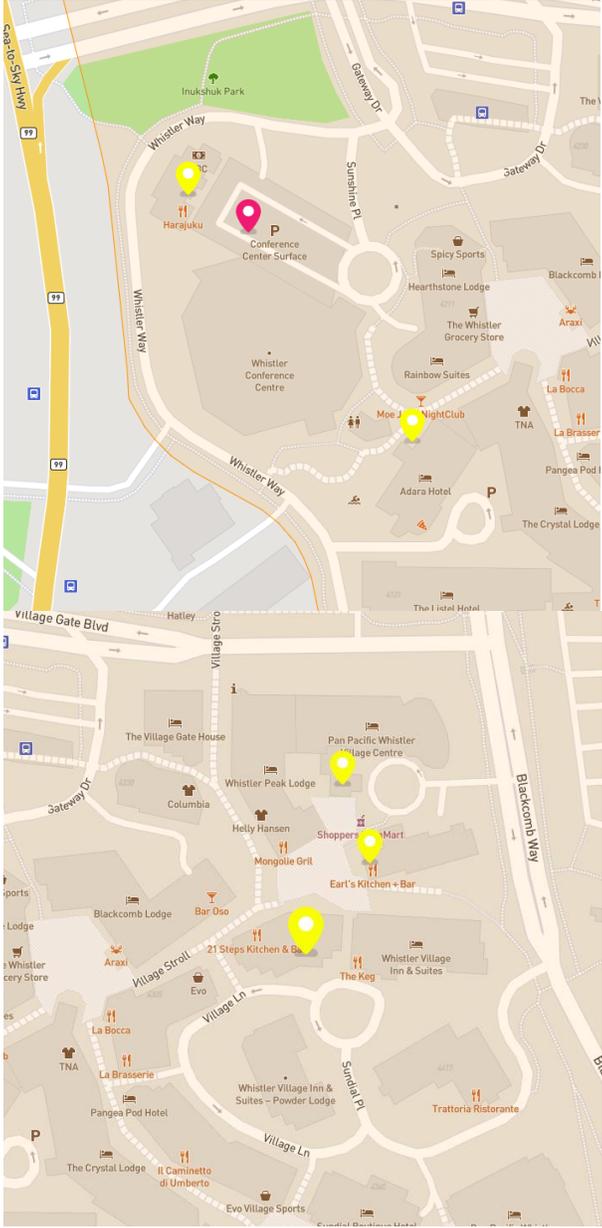
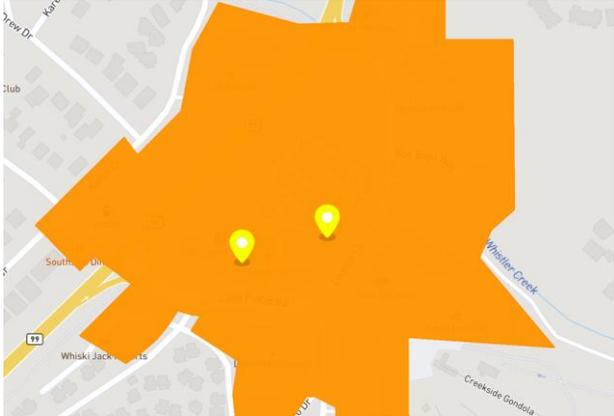
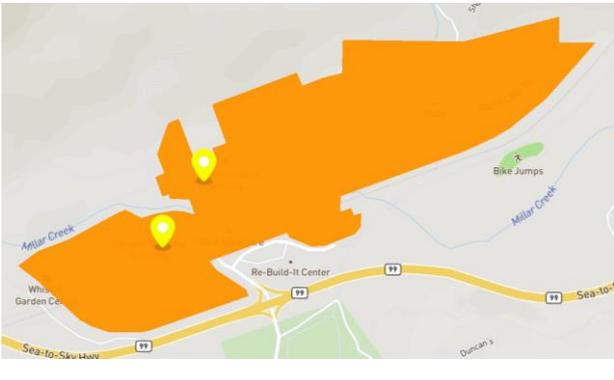


Figure 1 ; Proposed TUP Areas are shown in orange. The numbers note the number of comments by area.

Location	Pins	Comments
Nesters	<p>The inset map shows a specific area in Nesters. A yellow location pin is placed on Nancy Greene Dr. An orange shaded area, representing a TUP, is located to the west of the pin. The map includes labels for Nancy Greene Dr, Nancy Gr, Fivestimons, and Spruce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1008 1325 1382 1352">• Nesters Plaza is convenient

Location	Pins	Comments
<p>Village North</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to day lots for quicker access. • convenient access to legal cannabis should be available to everybody. This includes the handicap. This will help remove the black market cannabis in the resort. Access to parking is important to both accessibility and the success of the business model as it is a shop and go type business. Location in and around marketplace is the best chance a store has of survival given the proximity of parking lots. It is accessible by both car and foot which appeals to residents and tourists alike. Foot traffic only locations will have a harder time with their business model. • Support - central location outside the congested village square and mtn square.
<p>Upper Village & Parking Lots</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be a farmers market local dealer as well. • I don't think Whistler Village is suitable, and that it should be kept to outskirts (eg. Function, Creekside, Nesters)

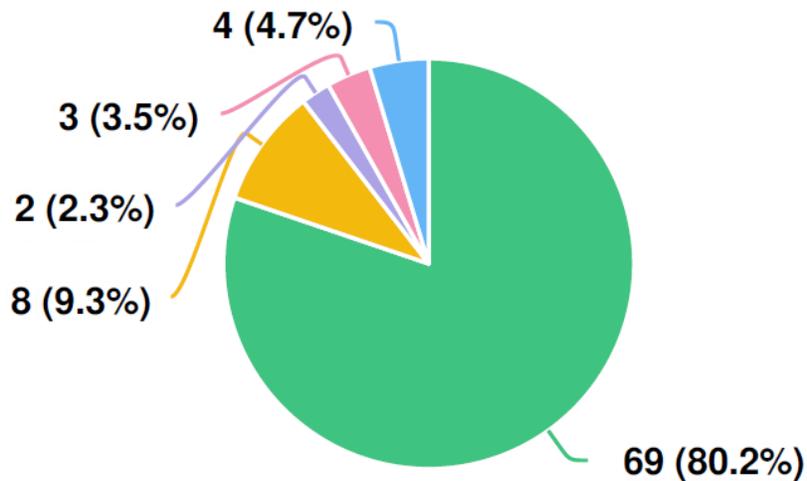
Location	Pins	Comments
<p>Village Centre</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be enough out of the way that people walking through the village aren't seeing it. Discreet placement benefits families and children from staying out of view but also affords the privacy of the buyer. Plus we need locations that can handle cars as not all customers to these stores will be on foot. • Smoking is currently not allowed in the village or parks (bylaw). Where are people staying in hotels/rental suites going to smoke? In the village/parks/trails (fire risk). We have LOTS of visitors. Cannabis smoke seems to fill a large area so in a park or the village it has as an effect on many other users of that space. • 2 Guy With Pipes should get it - Because it's a great location, and they're experts in the industry. • St. Andrews House would be a great location for Cannabis Retail. It is locally owned, and well established. It currently hosts a complimentary variety of Retail and Health Services. Also, easy access for Product delivery and for the consumers themselves. Attractive and discrete location.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many vacant store beside shoppers under earls. • This is a dead space in the village that needs something to bring people here.

Location	Pins	Comments
Creekside	 <p>A map of the Creekside area with several orange highlighted zones. Two yellow pins are placed on the map, one in the upper-left part of the orange area and one in the center. Labels on the map include 'Trev Dr', 'Kare', 'Club', 'Whittier Creek', 'Creekside Gondola', 'Whiski Jack', and 'Seaside Blvd'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already has a grocery store and liquor store. Add a cannabis store and it's one stop shop! • Creekside Village is central and good for both visitors and locals
Function Junction	 <p>A map of the Function Junction area with orange highlighted zones. Two yellow pins are placed on the map, one in the lower-left part of the orange area and one in the center. Labels on the map include 'Amor Creek', 'Whisk Garden C.', 'Re-Build-It Center', 'Bike Jumps', 'Miller Creek', 'Duncan's', 'Sea-to-Sku Hwy', and 'Sea-to-Sk'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial zone - good to have by the breweries. • Available retail locations and close to a bakery!

Questionnaire Feedback

The following input was collected through the project questionnaire. A total of 106 people visited the survey with 93 responses received.

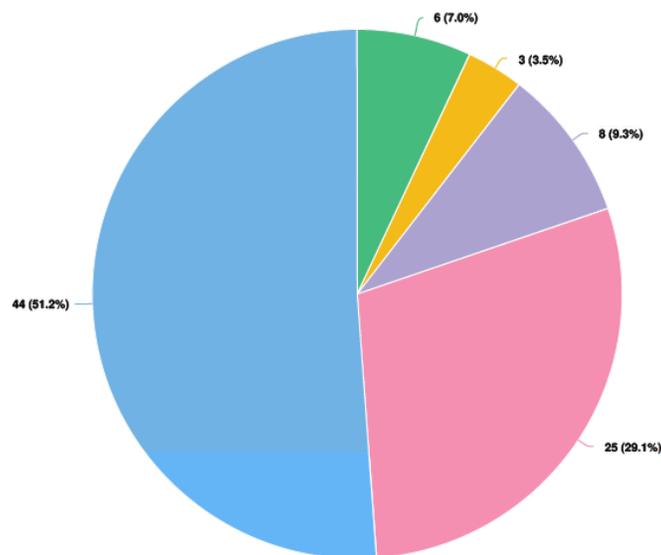
Question 1: I would describe myself as:



Question options

- A Whistler resident who lives locally year-round
- A seasonal / temporary Whistler resident who lives elsewhere for a portion of the year
- Someone who owns property in Whistler but my primary place of residence is elsewhere
- A visitor to Whistler
- Other (please specify)

Question #2: How supportive are you of the policy objectives outlined above guiding the RMOW's approach to permitting cannabis retail in Whistler?



Question options

- Very Unsupportive
- Somewhat Unsupportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat Supportive
- Very Supportive

Question 3: Should any other policy objectives be considered? If so, please share below:

- » Only local operators and favour First Nations
- » Providing shelf space for Indigenous and local small craft producers. Create a destination experience where high end local products are offered. ie People come for the Cannabis products that are exclusive to Whistler or it is part of guest experience.
- » "We seek opportunities for innovation and renewal." - EXPERIENCE: Whistler offers diverse, year-round and authentic experiences that offer exceptional value and sustain visitation.
- » Just put in a weed shop already.
- » Awareness of misuse/addiction/effects in minors
- » An edibles restaurant would be sweet!
- » Get it done years ago. How are you still wasting tax payers money doing surveys??
- » education on the legal use of cannabis
- » Equal opportunity to all small business to run a business
- » Allow for cannabis retail without temporary use permits.
- » Now there is a smoking bylaw in place & still people disregard it, by promoting cannabis in village how will you stop them from smoking in the village?
- » I hope these will not just be government stores. Privately owned stores would be great provided they are licensed and following rules.
- » Do we really need cannabis sales in Whistler? Does the sales of cannabis promote community and social well-being?
- » No, you can legally get belligerently drunk and it's even encouraged so at dozens of places in Whistler. Marijuana should be the least of anyone's concern.
- » Bylaws regarding cannabis use in public spaces.
- » promotion/advertising
- » No smoking on the stroll, bylaw really needs to be doing something about this
- » Supports local jobs and long-term resident retention
- » Why doesn't BC have a standardized cannabis retailer like they have BC Liquor stores? Or even a municipality localized retailer would be useful to standardize the retailers and ensure that they are implemented professionally.
- » Being cautious is important as is being relevant and making decisions in a timely manner.
- » Increased awareness on permitted smoking areas in the village.
- » Fun and Excitement
- » Age restrictions, no vapes
- » Wows visitors
- » Cap on growth
- » Harm reduction
- » Overall well being of the community. Impacts to community at large.

Question 4: Please share any other comments about the proposed policy objectives below:

- » Awesome!
- » Cannabis retail should be as assessable as liquor sales in Whistler.
- » QUALITY OF LIFE: We enjoy good health and high quality of life. Affordable housing and other essentials allow us to meet our needs and participate in Whistler's lifestyle through all stages of life.
- » While taking all necessary steps in order to implement the policy, consideration should be taken to not prolong this process. There is an opportunity for this retail to benefit our town and all action toward this start up should be implemented ASAP
- » I am supportive of the proposed approach. 4-5 stores seems sufficient.
- » Get it done years ago. How are you still wasting tax payers money doing surveys??
- » Any money made on this should go back into the community to help fund social services
- » I'm not sure how a retail store has anything to do with the reconciliation of Skwxwú7mesh and Líl'wat7úl people? This would be a provincial or federal issue and not a private individual issue. please explain.
- » Allow for more cannabis retail in Whistler Village and Creekside. There are lots of empty retail spaces they can fill.

- » Whistler needs a cannabis dispensary. The revenue it would bring to the town could be reinvested in other revitalization projects and community programs
- » I don't feel it reinforces our mountain character of clean air & natural environment. Cannabis smoke extremely strong & affects others in close proximity. How does that promote our social well being to promote smoking which causes lung cancer etc.
- » Please get on with it. It's been legal for over 4 yrs. Squamish is miles ahead.
- » Stores should be limited, many other cities have dispensaries on every corner
- » I support the right for people to do what they choose within the rules, regulations and law.
- » Yeah. Selling weed should have nothing to do with Indigenous persons. Jesus
- » Deliver options should be available for vulnerable folks to access cannabis. There may be a variety of factors which make it difficult to get to the stores and there should be delivery options for cannabis like there is for liquor stores like Nesters.
- » Alcohol is readily available all over town, not having cannabis by available makes no sense to me or many visitors I have interacted with. It is disappointing it has taken this long.
- » Let's see this as a part of a complete tourist offering
- » Cannabis stinks! What value will this add to our town?
- » I'm not sure how the current approach helps to meet any of the objectives other than 'establishing a transparent and efficient process'

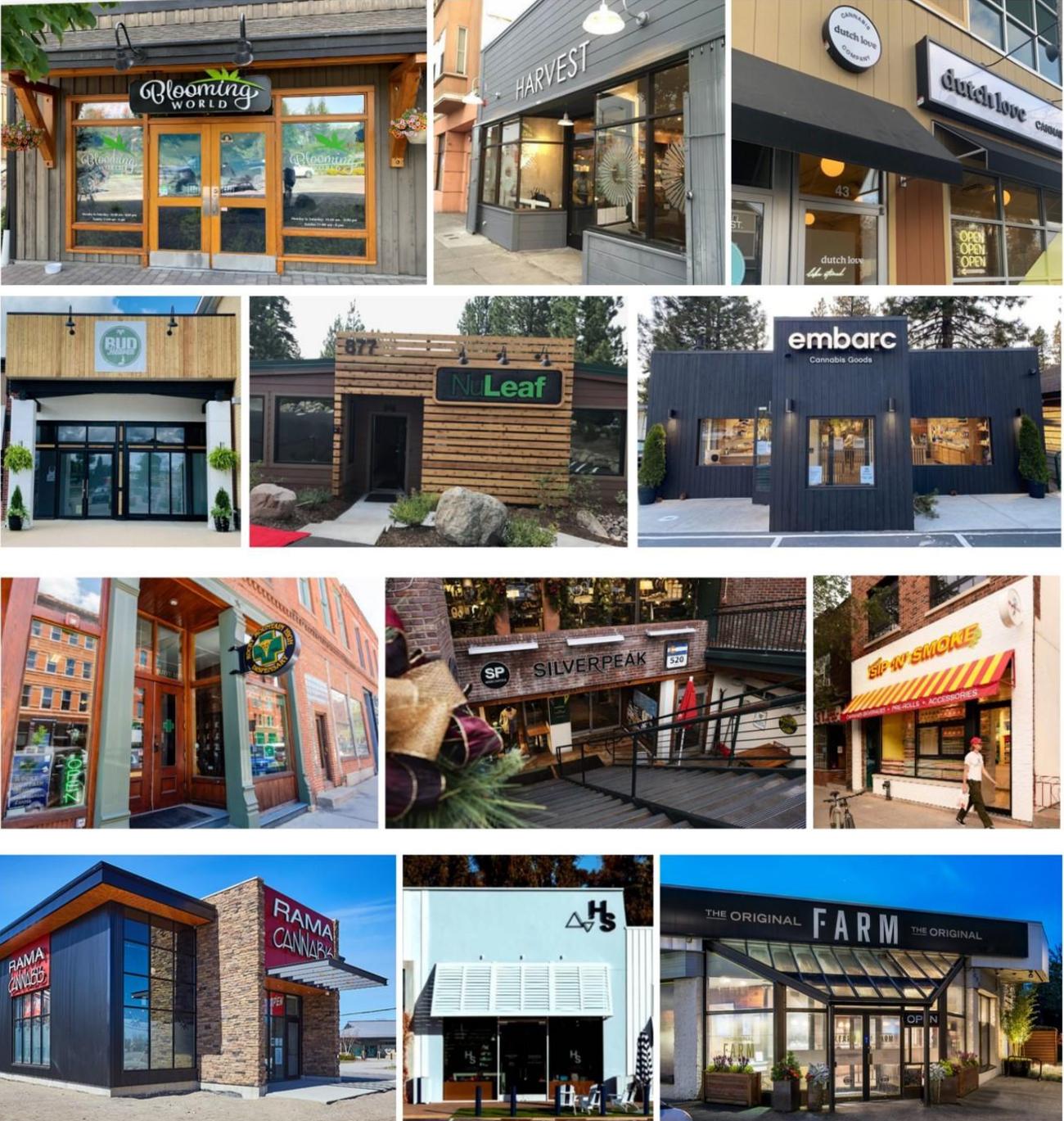
Question 6: Which statement best describes how you feel about operating hours for cannabis stores in Whistler?

- » Follow the same operating hours such as BCliquor
- » 10am to 6pm
- » 9 am to 7 pm
- » Afternoons into Evening
- » Hours should be 9-5
- » Until 6 pm
- » 10-6 pm
- » Zero hours. We do not need this kind of store here
- » I'm against any cannabis stores shortest hours
- » Don't want a cannabis vacation culture in our comm

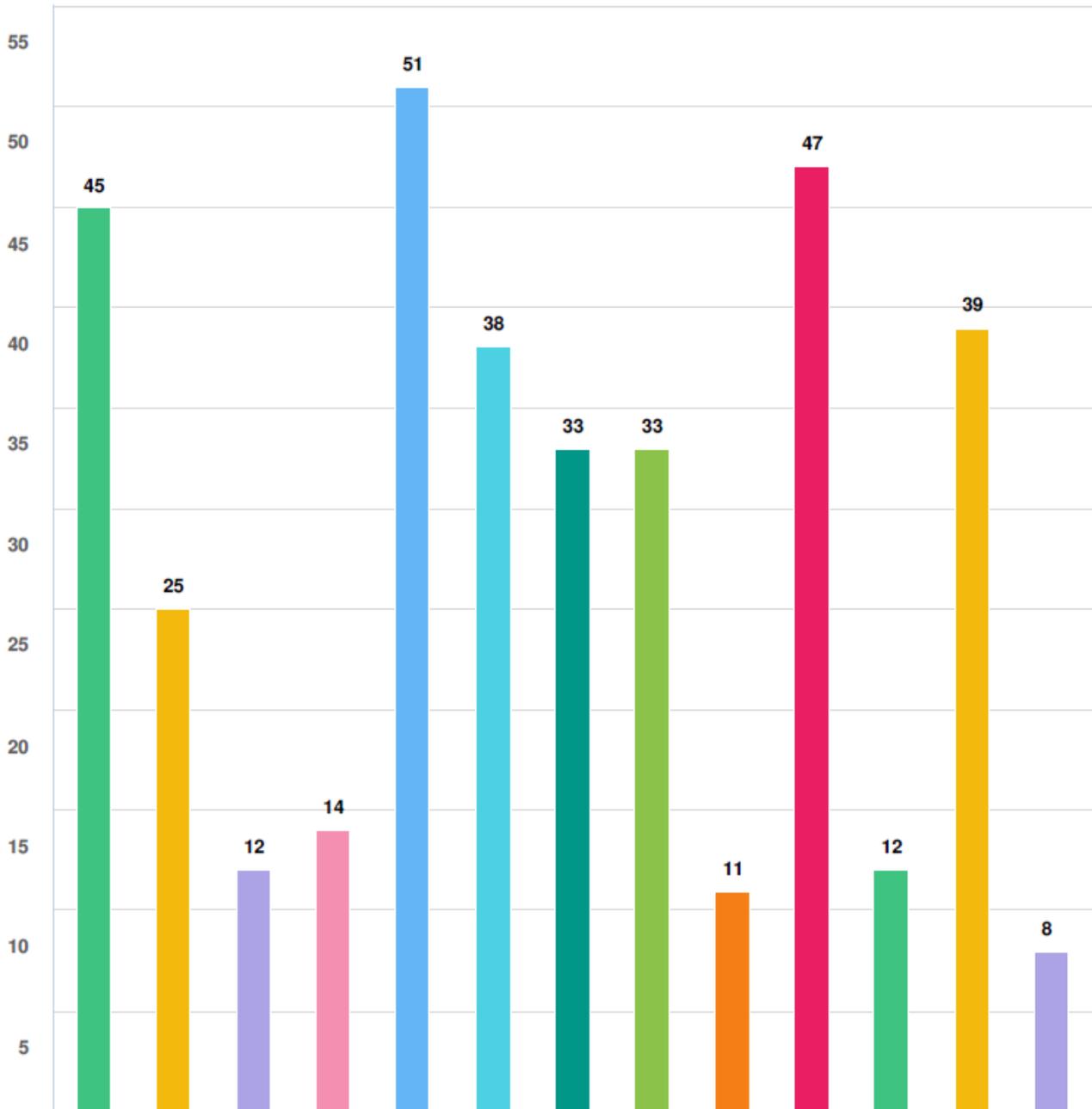
Question 7: If you think all store hours should be shortened, what hours of operation times do you think are appropriate?

- » 11:00-7:00
- » 10-6
- » 10am - 6pm
- » Zero hours. Not appropriate.
- » Shortest hours possible esp in village
- » Do not permit to open. Totally opposed

The following two questions were introduced using the following images to collect input about preferences.



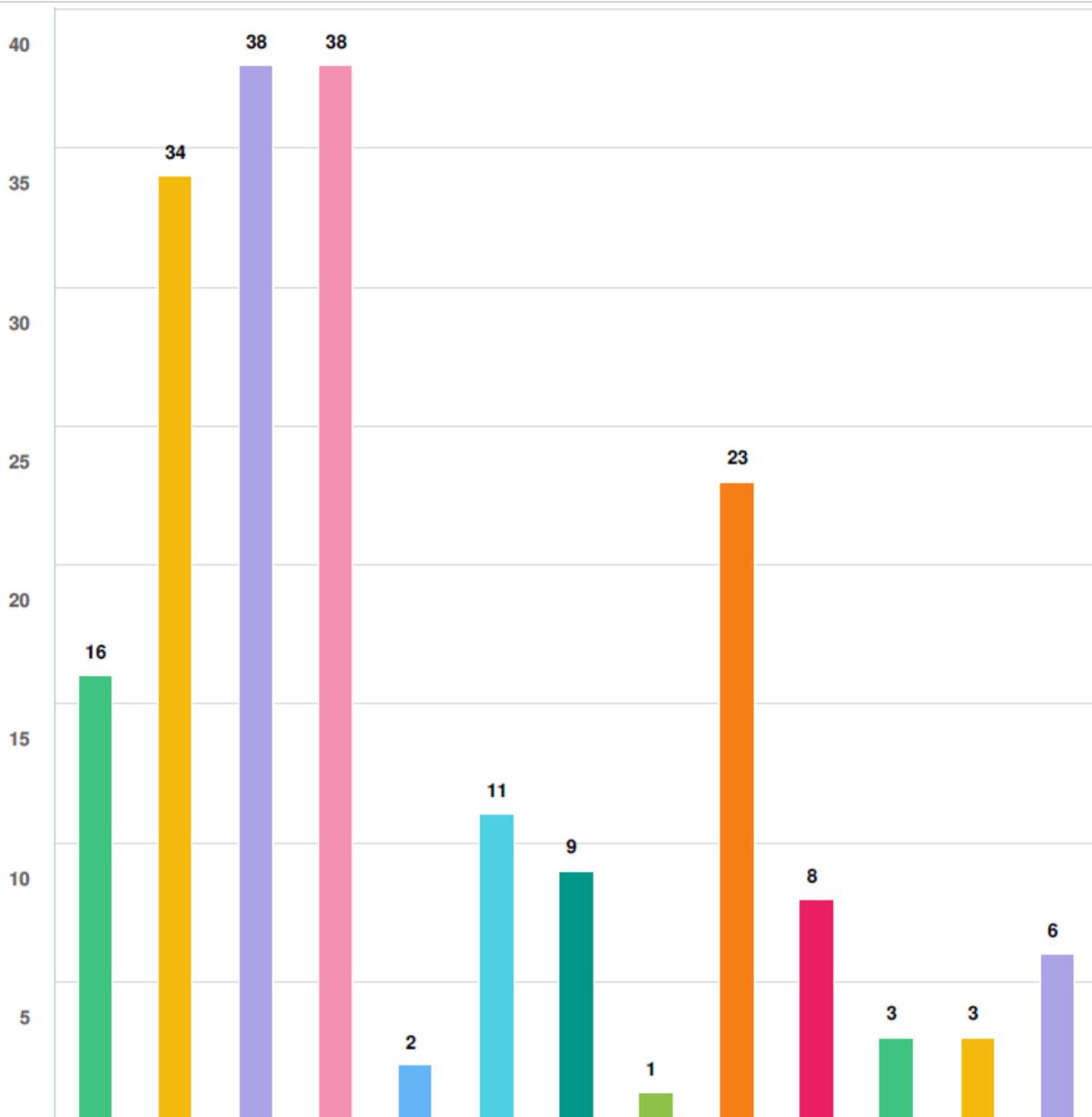
Question 8: Looking at different examples of cannabis stores shown above, what elements do you not like?



Question options

- Transparent windows
 ● Non-transparent
● Printed window coverings
● Cannabis related images
- Building design elements
 ● Signage
● Interesting displays
● Engaging for pedestrian
- Non-street level locations
 ● Accessible locations
● Sheltered pedestrian area
● Lighting
- Other (please specify)

Question 9: Looking at different examples of cannabis stores shown above, what elements do you not like? (Other please specify)



Question options

- Transparent Windows
 ● Non-transparent and printed windows
● Printed window coverings
- Cannabis related images
 ● Building design elements
● Signage
● Engaging for pedestrian
- Accessible locations
 ● Non-street level locations
● Sheltered pedestrian area
● Lighting
● Interesting displays
- Other (please specify)

Question 10: Is there anything else you would like to share about cannabis retail in Whistler? Please do not include any confidential or identifying personal information about yourself or a third party.

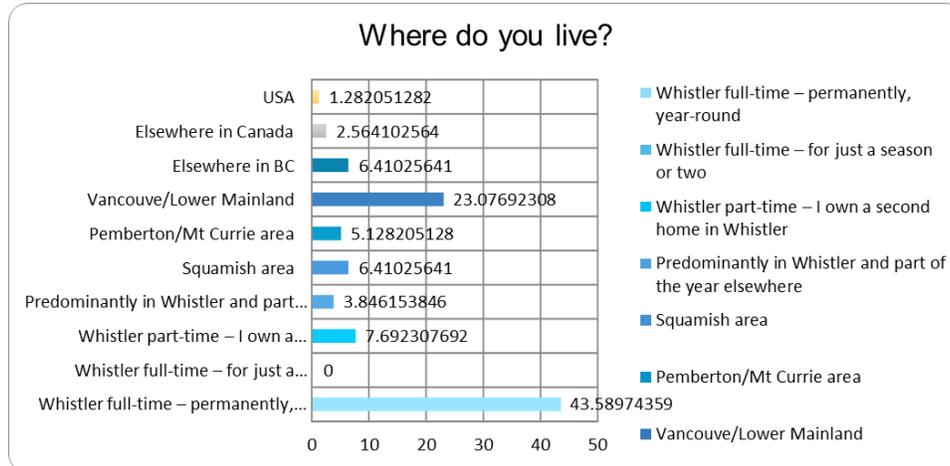
- » Products that are exclusive to the Whistler experience need to be in the stores. Products you can only get in Whistler and no where else.
- » This is great, and necessary for the community. I think these stores should have a small footprint and not displace existing retail, or dominate the retail feel. opaque windows are awful, even when they're on the second floor.
- » Creekside would be a great location to serve local traffic and tourism, but should be kept within a reasonable distance from Whistler Kids ski school
- » I think cannabis retail has worked successfully in other areas in the lower mainland and integrates well with existing retail. I think the RMOW was wise to wait to look to other communities, and to ensure it doesn't detract from Whistler's character
- » Hopefully with the size of our town, more than one licence will be offered, and stores can be spread out between Function and Emerald. The first should be located in the village.
- » I believe this will provide an excellent opportunity for our community and in keeping our store fronts operating, especially within the village where turnover is high. If implemented correctly, we stand to have a lasting business presence in our community
- » Please just put in a marijuana store that sells cape carts, gummies and herb.
- » Long overdue considering other communities proactive approach. Should not be near Olympic Plaza/high traffic areas for minors. I like Marketplace, Creekside, Function, Nesters, Upper Village as possible locations.
- » For the location list, please add Rainbow Plaza and Nesters, and Blackcomb Upper Vill
- » For a town that both wants to promote "party" and "family" the BC Government Cannabis Stores cover this. The Larco area would be perfect. It is a dead zone. It would be destination, bring life back to this area, yet "hidden". "Party"+"Family"
- » Do not support cannabis retail in Whistler
- » Get it done, years ago. How are you still wasting tax payers money doing surveys??
- » Profit from this should be distributed in the community to help the community and not for the profit of a few
- » Cannabis retail is becoming a common storefront in Canada. It should be considered the same as a liquor store. local ownership, organic feel and a style unique to Whistler should be at the top of the list along with proven experience in the industry.
- » Whistler should have cannabis retail locations as it is now legal and discrimination against cannabis users and sales is not acceptable in an inclusive and progressive community such as this
- » Allow for more cannabis retail in Whistler Village and Creekside. Where will visitors smoke if they can't smoke in their hotel or outside? Who will enforce the rules on smoking outside?
- » It's about time. I hope the licensing is fair and goes to locals who are trying to start something, not some big multi store person that has zero interest in Whistler community. This should be an opportunity for someone local to own a slice of the pie.
- » Sad to think we are promoting something like this in our beautiful & natural community. Sad that people can't get high on Whistler's beauty & recreational activities unless in an altered state. Drinking on a patio doesn't affect others but smoking does.
- » Being aware of location for smoking in the village. Travellers can't smoke in hotel rooms so this may be an issue for visitors.
- » I don't believe that there should be ANY stores in Whistler Village, let alone 2... this market is better served on the outskirts of town (eg. Function, Creek, Nesters) and is more appropriate for those locations.
- » Whistler should have a cannabis outlet north of the village as traffic to the south is ridiculous on weekends and holidays.
- » While I understand cannabis is legal in Canada, why does a healthy destination like Whistler need cannabis retail? We don't.
- » Banning the sales of marijuana, you have allowed a grey market area to flourish. People have and always buy and sell marijuana in Whistler. Get with the times and embrace it.
- » There should be mandatory posters about where to get help for addiction
- » JUST LET PEOPLE SELL WEED
- » I don't love this at all, I'd rather not have it, but apparently it's popular not only for locals, visitors ask for it all the time.
- » It's long overdue!
- » Great we are becoming current in this arena.

- » Cannabis needs to be accessible to all who needs it. Cannabis is a drug that is legal now for adults to use and they need safe spaces to use, not just purchase. And there also needs to be work towards ending the stigma against cannabis users.
- » It's time to make a decision on this and move forward, Cannabis has been legal for several years now.
- » After decades working in Whistler bars and hotels I would like to see cannabis readily available to cut down alcohol consumption and issues that brings all over the town.
- » Rainbow neighbourhood should be included
- » This should have been done years ago!
- » A licenced dispensary is much better selling a safe product verses today's reality in Whistler where buying it outside the liquor store or having a delivered product and not knowing what is in it nor the strength of the product.
- » Don't treat Cannabis like it's taboo. Allow great looking stores - should be able to look like Artizia if they want to.
- » I don't think we should have too many stores. They should be discreet. There must be REQUIRED SIGNAGE about how TOXIC cannabis is to dogs: to never throw any form of it on the ground!
- » It's about time! The black market in Whistler is alive and well because there are no stores. Hopefully the packaging won't be as excessive as the stuff you buy online. But I'm sure that's government regulations. Happy this is finally happening.
- » This is a terrible idea. I am strongly opposed.
- » As few as possible preferably none
- » PLEASE, do not permit cannabis stores in Whistler and keep our air clean. It affects the overall health and well being of the entire community from clear air, to driving while intoxicated. Further, cannabis profoundly affects developing minds.

Cannabis Industry Input

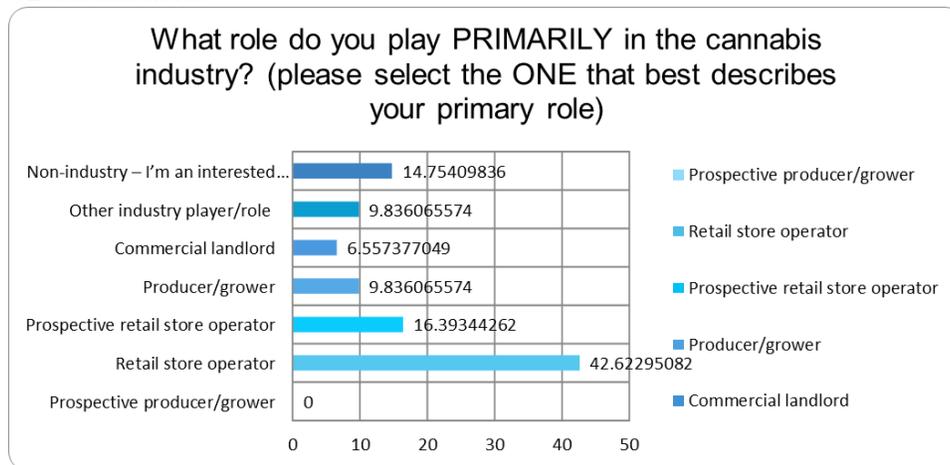
1. Poll #1: Where do you live?

78 submissions



2. Poll #2: What role do you play primarily in the cannabis industry?

61 submissions



3. Regulatory Framework and Policy Objectives Idea Board

There were 16 contributors to this online Ideas Board with a total of 10 submissions.

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
Phenomenal framework and we're very glad you've included living wages, sustainability , and community enhancement.	None provided	

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
hi , we just went through this process in west Vancouver , we were chosen in Ambleside - the process has impacts to landlords/retailors	None provided	
Cannabis & Children	As a mother of 3 young children, I don't believe in 'hiding' locations. In fact, if children ask questions about cannabis, it's a great opportunity to educate. Drug education today is sex education of the 80's.	Store front fall under federal/provincial legislation. Locations can be determined in part by the muni and I agree, "hiding" them is not beneficial to anybody.
Timeframes	The sooner stores can open the sooner the black market can feel the hit. It looks like a store is still quite some time away....	
Lotteries to determine licenses should NOT be considered!	Licenses should be awarded on their merits using some type of matrix scoring system in addition to meeting basic requirements where things like store design, history of responsible retail of cannabis & many other issues are determined to score each application in a clear & transparent process. I realize this is more work for city council, but it also produces the best results. Lotteries are NOT the way to go, as we have seen that leads to lottery applicants merely trying to "win" to sell to someone else to make a quick buck...this would NOT be in the best interests of RMOW. I say this having helped to secure licenses for a cannabis retailer in over 60+ municipalities across Canada, and would be glad to share my experience in this field to help establish the best process here :)	
5 store too many	Has RMOW considered the recommended amount of cannabis retail stores required to service a given population? The reason I ask is in our current operating locations (4 stores) we have noticed a over saturation of stores beyond the recommended store count resulting in depleted revenues to a break-even position. The store count recommendations are 1 store per 10,000 citizens. Has this been considered related to the programmed 5 TUP stores? This higher than required store count can also have a very negative impact on public perception.	
cannabis license cost	price should not be inflated because council has expectation that these stores will make big money, as the reality, is margins will be small with long hours, just like any other business.	
Proposed Geographic Equity and Number of Stores	In our opinion, the RMOW Planning Department has proposed a framework that allows for companies to compete fairly for approvals within the Municipality, and will also allow successful retailers the opportunity to serve the Whistler markets efficiently. The allocation of limited locations across Function Junction, Creekside, the Village and (possibly) Nesters does well to ensure reasonable access across the Municipality without a proliferation of	

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
	stores. Thank you to the RMOW Planning Department for this thoughtful approach!	

4. Retail locations, size, design, operations, etc. Idea Board

There were 20 contributors to this online Ideas Board, with a total of 28 submissions.

Idea title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
Harm Reduction	I support keeping alcohol and cannabis separate to encourage only consuming one drug at a time. I'm not happy with the BC Cannabis placing shops right next to BC Liquor Store as you will see in Cranbrook, BC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed
Window coverage	Full coverage is dangerous for retail staff and unnecessary as all cannabis products are not on display.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Provincial level this requirement was removed last year -so as long as cannabis is not visible from outside. As an existing licensee in BC and other Provinces we have seen most Municipalities default to Provincial requirement for items like this and general security. • They may have removed the law but only if you can have the products hidden. This can be somewhat impossible for many stores. These products come pre-packaged so I do not believe this law should only apply if they are- this is an unsafe practice for the shops and their employees. This should be removed completely, including if products are visible.
Hours of Operation	09-11pm is working well in Fernie, BC and of course parallels the other psychoactive drug, alcohol.	
Linkage of Retail and Delivery. Will retail locations be able to deliver to homes, work addresses, hotels ?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes agreed - definitely allow this. Illegal delivery companies are already working in this space in Whistler, and it's permitted under current regulations, it's a no brainer!
Location	Store accessibility in order to be successful needs to be located close to both foot traffic and parking for both residents and tourists. Logically Whistler village would be best location. Stores are only needed to be small, and storefronts fall under provincial legislation.	

Idea title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
Good neighbour agreement and Target customer base.	I'd like to add that a good neighbour agreement has been very successful for our community at our TUP location in White Rock. Targeting specific demographics isn't something that can/should be doing as it can imply discrimination. We do however offer locals discounts at other stores to further support our local communities.	
Allowing for a diversity of stores (fill different niches) would serve you well as a community. Careful about being too prescriptive		
too many stores creates failures , hours should be to meet the needs , 9-11 , size needs to be able to have people inside store ,	costs of construction, permitting timing all create costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stores indeed do not need to be large in size. In my experience as small as 400 sqft has been sufficient
Locations and store fronts.	All applications to the province require an address attached. With that said many locations are already spoken for prior to framework...this poses many risks for applicants and the RMOW as a whole. What could happen if you have a preferred applicant who cannot obtain a location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would think that without a secure location there is no sense in submitting an application.
Public Consumption	Constant question retailers get from the customers is about where can you smoke in public. deserves lots of thought!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stores should be responsible to have signage educating customers on the rules of cannabis consumption in and around the resort.
Store ownership	Whistler has an opportunity to provide locally owned stores to keep with local vibe and social wellness within the community. Franchises are too "commercialized" for a resort that can offer a different organic experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Licensing	Please don't gouge. Licensing fee should be no more that for a liquor store	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreed^. Most places have reduced the licensing fees to be comparable with other business licenses. We hope Whistler will follow suit.

Idea title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
Protecting rents for non-Cannabis tenants	The prospect of cannabis retail coming to Whistler has the potential to drive up rents for all businesses entering leases or negotiating lease renewals. Are there any tools or approaches used in other areas to prevent this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If RMOW keep cannabis retail licenses down to a sustainable 2 minimum and 4 maximum, then I don't think this would affect current rents/leases.
Security on the premises	Security should be around the retail location to stop cannabis users from using on or near the location. A dedicated smoking area should be assigned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stores are typically required to have a shatterproof glass for security along with cameras and secure storage for cannabis. Smoking cannabis outside in public areas is illegal and the store owner should promote responsible cannabis use in designated areas as a brief education to tourists especially. • we do not need security for this. Smoking laws apply to everyone. Having dedicated smoking areas in their regulations will be the biggest thing. Usually, the same as smoking laws for cigarettes. • We are highly supportive of designated consumption areas. The RMOW has unique smoking bylaws in place which further restrict consumption compared to typical public areas. Easier access could affect this, and we believe consumption areas are important.
Restrict Government shops- support local shop owners by allowing private stores.	Government shops severely undercut the margins, while mom and pop shops are not legally allowed to do that. They drive local retailers into the ground, as has been proven in many cities across BC. They do not provide the community environment that Whistler is wishing to adopt for their cannabis market.	
Consideration for number of stores, locations etc.	It appears the RMOW has done their research prior to proposing both the number of stores limit and geographical layout of potential locations within RMOW. Several cities in BC have either far too many stores, or far too few, and it is our opinion that RMOW Planning Department has found a balanced approach that allows for both reasonable access to the entire Municipality without an over-saturation or proliferation of stores. With regards to the design guidelines for form and character presented in the February 17th, 2022, Cannabis Retail Strategy Presentation, we note that the RMOW's expectations regarding design are directly in line with what they should expect to see from prospective applicants. It is also typical to see interior and exterior renderings as part of the application process, wherein the RMOW will have the opportunity to understand the proposed designs in great detail prior to approvals. There are a number of	

Idea title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
	<p>comments here regarding regulations, window coverings, hours, security etc that are appropriate and warranted comments. It is reassuring to know the Province of BC has placed very strict controls to cover any concerns in those areas, and retailers are both expected to report monthly to the Province and are subject to frequent, unscheduled inspections to ensure stores remain in compliance. We are looking forward to participating and thank the RMOW planning department for how thorough they have been in creating this proposed framework!</p>	

5. Proposed Application Process Idea Board

There were 20 contributors to this online Ideas Board, with a total of 25 submissions.

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
<p>if the goal is for the community to win then you have to prioritize locally owned operators</p>	<p>Because BC GOV is the distributor and competitor no independent retailer will be able to compete while offering community contributions and good paying jobs. Also, the province appears unwilling to share any cannabis funding with municipalities as they promised at the beginning of legalization.</p> <p>prioritize companies that are committed to community contributions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, this is very frustrating to be competing with your distributor. Ideally purchasing from cannabis growers directly and removing the provincial government as the middle barrier would reduce carbon emissions for example. • 100% agree. The BCCS is already putting private retailers out of business. Conflict of interest • Similarly, perhaps considering a local/BC/Indigenous shelf space program. • Agreed. Whistler stores should be locally owned and have a local organic feel. Franchises or govt owned stores would be too cold and commercialized for something as unique as Whistler. • A charitable component to benefit the community should be required. We acknowledge cannabis to be low-harm but not without impact and as a result there should be a required charitable component to benefit the community as such.
<p>Business license fees must be comparable to liquor store fees.</p>	<p>Some municipalities started by gouging significantly. This goes against the Charter, and it is recommended now that fees reflect other provincially regulated stores ie. Liquor</p>	
<p>Our experience has been that knowledgeable staff and owners is highly valued by customers. don't ignore this value in your screening</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge about cannabis specifically

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
Review financials as part of application process	RMOW might consider interviewing existing cannabis retailers experience in operating a sustainable store. I might suggest that the RMOW audits the applicants for previous profitability with existing cannabis stores. There are many retailers / chains that have yet to turn a profit in the years since legalization, and the RMOW should consider a retailer that has a proven path to profitability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be something as part of a points score system in the application process. Points would be awarded to applicant with previous successful experience in cannabis retail. • We couldn't agree more. BC Cannabis has yet to turn a profit as well as other private retailers. While other small operators have proven financially viable and help contribute back to the communities they serve.
Application process	In other provinces they have a "score" rated system for applications. It takes into account proposed location and store design etc.	
Application	Having owned a dispensary, the last time we went through this the city wasn't prepared. Please make sure you have everything you need in the final application. Make sure everything can be done electronically.	
Location Selection	I would suggest that the RMOW selects the applicants, and then gives them a predetermined time frame to select and secure a lease. Otherwise we're already seeing leases taken out by pubcos. Doing this reduces the financial risk taken on by the applicant, and also levels the playing field for all applicants. Also, it reduces the negative experience that landlords will have, when so many retailers will all be looking to lease a unit, hoping to be selected, and then many leases will be terminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be something as part of a points score system in the application process. Points would be awarded to applicant with previous successful experience in cannabis retail. • We couldn't agree more. BC Cannabis has yet to turn a profit as well as other private retailers. While other small operators have proven financially viable and help contribute back to the communities they serve. • Although I somewhat agree with the logic of this, the reality is that there would end up being too many applicants not being able to secure space in final hour thus wasting muni application time and delaying legal cannabis to market. Having space secured is expensive and risky prior to application approval but it weeds out all the wishy-washy applicants. Tenants and landlords will have to have some form of agreement in writing IMO. • We agree with this somewhat. Our concern is with the number of potential vacancies after selection. Say for example there are 25 applications and 5 are selected, that would leave 20 vacancies all at once in the RMOW. This would of course be an issue; we would like to suggest the RMOW complete a pre-screening of applicants as we've seen so many rejected applications provincially in our experience. We suggest something similar to a mortgage pre-approval where pre-screening can be completed to ensure only suitable applicants will be tying up properties.

Idea Title	Idea Description	Other participants' comments in response
A TUP process can lead to great success for both the prospective businesses and the RMOW.	Criteria would need to be clearly defined as to what the RMOW is looking for and what to expect as a new business to the community.	
can 1 applicant apply for multiple stores?		
Timelines with Provincial Applications	<p>When a prospective retailer submits a Provincial application (depending on the Province's bandwidth) it can take sometimes 6-10 months before the Province recommends an applicant to the Municipality.</p> <p>As a licensee that has gone through the process and worked with other Municipalities, we have found there are some best practices that keep the process fair. Namely, one that allows applicants to apply at the Municipal level with proof of Provincial application submission but does not hold the process up based on receiving recommendations from the Province -as timelines of receiving recommendations can vary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think 6-10 is not accurate in my experience unless they have a back log which may be possible
Avoiding Government Stores	Council could say no to an application based on their desire to support small businesses.	
Thank You RMOW Planning Department	Having participated in approval processes across multiple cities in BC for Licensed Cannabis Retail, I note that the TUP process being considered here is a very rational, straightforwad framework that clearly identifies the process for the applicant and respective Landlords. As a retailer, it's exactly what we look for. The other comments here and on the adjacent idea boards regarding risk, license fees, and a preference to private stores over BC Cannabis stores are certainly valid as well in our opinion. It appears the TUP process allows the RMOW to retain the highest level of autonomy in Cannabis Retail approval decisions and control over locations and number of stores, which is a welcome environment for prospective retailers looking to compete for space and approvals. A big thank you to RMOW Planning for this thoughtful, thorough take on Cannabis Retail, we are grateful for the opportunity to participate!	

Question and Answers

During the session, participants were able to submit written questions via the Q&A function in Zoom. Staff addressed the questions listed below, either verbally or via the chat.

Zoom Q&A Questions	Themes / Notes
<p>Has RMOW considered the recommended amount of cannabis retail stores required to service a given population? The reason I ask is in our current operating locations (4 stores) we have noticed a over saturation of stores beyond the recommended store count resulting in depleted revenues to a break-even position. The store count recommendations are 1 store per 10,000 citizens. Has this been considered related to the programmed 5 TUP stores? This higher than required store count can also have a very negative impact on public perception.</p>	<p>Number of locations / market saturation</p>
<p>Will we be notified when the council meeting regarding presenting these findings to council will be?</p>	<p>Council meeting notification</p>
<p>Will there be any preference given to small, local and indigenous retail applicants? I ask because multi location, large retailers have already signed, significantly over asking, retail leases across Whistler. I know of at least 4 cannabis leases that are already in place. Will there be any opportunities for independent retailers? It feels like they are already priced out</p>	<p>Preference for local</p>
<p>What does the application process look like? Given the fact that real estate is limited and at a premium are you going to review any applications that don't already have a lease in place or is it a first come first serve?</p>	<p>Leasing/retail space requirements</p>
<p>Will the RMOW limit the number of stores to 4 to 5?</p>	
<p>The TUP framework will create challenges with business operators and landlords in establishing an effective lease agreement. In my experience it means that the lease rate will come a significant premium which this industry's margins (approx. 35%) cannot support. With the single renewal opportunity, this is a huge risk for businesses. How has RMOW assessed the long-term viability of these cannabis retail businesses?</p>	<p>Lease challenges</p>
<p>will business licenses be in line with other business licenses in the area</p>	<p>Licence fees</p>
<p>Will you be allowing a BC Cannabis Gov store in Whistler?</p>	<p>Government retailer concerns</p>
<p>With limited to no retail space availability, would this be part of the approval process as without the space an application would be moot?</p>	<p>Lease agreement as requirement</p>
<p>For context when considering the proximity and density of Cannabis Retail stores: What are the requirements to obtain a TUP? How will licenses be fairly distributed to small operators to get an approved application?</p>	<p>TUPs Licences</p>
<p>[The] observation on the short-term nature of the TUP is 100% spot on.</p>	<p>TUPs</p>
<p>UNDER normal circumstances, market competition and consumer preference would dictate which of these businesses in the community will thrive and which fail. In the case of regulated cannabis, however, the factors that contribute to the normal success and failure of small business are largely absent. Private cannabis retailers are currently unable to differentiate themselves in a meaningful way from one another based on product diversity, pricing, or marketing. This is the case due to 3 main factors: Products available to private retailers are dictated by the provincially owned distributor. Currently, the variety of products available for sale in the regulated system means that private cannabis shops are carrying a nearly, identical selection of products in their stores. Further to this, the pricing of these products is being largely dictated by the online BC Cannabis Store. The provincial online store represents significant competition to the brick-and-mortar private retailers.</p>	<p>Regulated market challenges</p>
<p>The unregulated, or "black market", cannabis stores and E-Commerce platforms further contribute to margin pressures which currently encompass an estimate 80% of the total market. The marketing options available to licensed cannabis retailers is hugely restricted at a federal level. There is some contention whether private retailers can advertise that their business exists under the current federal marketing regulations, let alone provide the public with compelling advertising that would drive traffic to their location. As a result of these conditions, cannabis retailers find it extremely difficult to distinguish themselves making competition a race to the bottom rather than a meaningful exercise in customer attraction and retention. Further increasing the number of retailers in a region does not meaningfully improve customer experience or price, but rather divides the already small pie of recreational cannabis customers further.</p>	<p>Regulated market challenges</p>

Zoom Q&A Questions	Themes / Notes
Information provided for RMOW future consideration.	
BC Cannabis Stores have taken over. I have worked in private licensed stores and BCCS were our top competitors making it hard for business, while private stores have to purchase from the BCLDB, you cannot compete with the prices at the BCCS. Will you allow privatized stores in Whistler? How about indigenous retail?	Government retailer concerns
We've seen these oversaturation issues drastically impact our existing businesses in other municipalities. I just wanted to provide some content for consideration.	Number of locations / market saturation
Will retail location have an opportunity to offer delivery service within Whistler? Delivery to homes, work and hotels?	Delivery
Will the Gov't operated BCCS store applications receive preferential treatment over privately owned store owners that invest in the community?	Government retailer concerns
will you be interviewing applicants? How will you choose between the many applicants?	Application process
Muni's have no ability to restrict delivery at this time	Delivery
How many jobs do you think that this will bring for Whistler in general? We are having staffing issues in Whistler already as is literally everywhere right now. Training, and housing issues etc.	Existing staffing shortage
What is the cost of a business license be for the three year term ?	Licence fees
Due to a high interest and excitement for new cannabis retail cannabis stores to pop up and low # of locations that will be available, how can one secure a spot and get a TUP approval from the municipality to operate in the area? Please explain step by step process?	Application process
Many commercial leases are for a term of 5 or 10 years. Landlords may be hesitant to engage in a lease with a cannabis retailer if their TUP is for 3 years	Lease challenges
Have you considered parking in the selection of sites? Retail cannabis stores can be a high frequency business, and parking at Nestor's is already constrained.	Parking
Will any applicant need to already own the proposed space or have a lease in place prior to applying for a TUP? If so, this could help to reduce the number of potential applicants	Leasing/retail space requirements
What is the time frame for the application?	Timeline
did you say next fall 2023? for first store?	Timeline
I mean when will you be taking applications	Timeline
Will experienced cannabis (already have existing stores) retailers be given priority over other applicants?	Experience
who will be making the final decision on the applicants?	Application process
I think its quite critical for staff and council to keep in mind that the longer the application process, the more risk/ financial implications to both retailers and landlords. This will inevitably impact the success of the retailers and willingness of landlords to cooperate in this process.	Timeline
Will there be thought given to adding or disallowing additional stores before the end of the "first wave" of approved TUPs?	Store limit
Can landlords who are hoping to have Cannabis Retail in their building get pre-approval to know if the proposed location will be acceptable, so they are not keeping a vacant unit on hold for almost a year?	Location pre-approval
Sorry, can you just touch base on the 3 year with only 1 renewal?? That is a total of only 6 years?	TUP timeline
Do you need to have lease signed before applying for TUP?	Leasing/retail space requirements
marketplace is not being considered?	Location restriction
will Vail have any say in this?	Vail involvement

Zoom Q&A Questions	Themes / Notes
Would you suggest a landlord take on more than one lease agreement or back up into consideration considering that the first one may not get a license because of one reason for another?	Lease challenges
would a one-time donation to a local charity be considered as a community benefit?	Community benefit
Please confirm that the RMOW will NOT consider a "lottery" process to award the licenses as a scoring matrix based on their merits of the key criteria/objectives will yield far superior results :)	Application criteria
Thanks to all of you! Great presentation!	Thanks
Fantastic Meeting RMOW...excellent work! Thank you,	Thanks

Session participants and those using the engagement tool following the session were able to ask questions within the tool. These questions and staff responses are presented here.

Digital Q&A Question Tool	Staff Response (combination of private and public)
If all goes well with the Spring proposal to the council, when do you foresee the RMOW accepting applications?	Thank you for your question. Staff expect to present the policy framework for approval and adoption in the spring and summer. Cannabis retail applications will not be accepted until after the policy framework is approved and adopted.
what are your timelines for a policy - the issue becomes people making offers for retail , tying up retail spaces that sit vacant as whistler goes through the process, no ones fault but creates virtual vacancy	Thank you for your question and input. We expect to return to Council with a summary of the public input period and a draft framework for cannabis retail regulations later this spring.
Will we be able to obtain a copy of the presentation PowerPoint after the webinar?	Thanks for attending today! Here is the link for the PowerPoint.
Should we apply to the province now that we have a lease in hand so you are aware of our design, location and team? or hold on until the process is resolved? I was one of the first 2 people approved in the province for retail cannabis and have a wealth of experience I can lend and hope to. Cheers.	Thanks for the question. The RMOW is not currently accepting applications for cannabis retail stores, and will not support any provincial cannabis retail licence application referrals from the LCRB until the cannabis retail framework is approved and an application for a cannabis retail Temporary Use Permit in Whistler has been accepted.
Given that wholesale black market cannabis is now between \$200 and \$300 lb (compared with \$3000 / lb ten years ago, how will the RMOW protect its retail stakeholders from illegal sales. Ie: Government weed is more expensive and has been since day one. If I am going to spend hundreds of thousands on a store and licensing, how will the RMOW work to make my investment safe?	Thank you for your question. Local governments have the ability to regulate cannabis related to land uses, smoking bylaws and business licencing regarding cannabis sales and production. The division of power over cannabis is established by the Federal Cannabis Act which created a framework for cannabis production and distribution, as well as regulated and enforces criminal offences. In BC, the legal framework for the possession, use, and retail licencing of cannabis is established by the Province through the Cannabis Control and Licencing Act, while the Cannabis Distribution Act established the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) as the wholesale distributor of non-medical cannabis in the province and regulator of BC cannabis stores.
fees need to be set to avoid an auction application process	Thank you for the input.
Can you explain where securing a lease will come in the process?	Thank you for the question. At the time of application, all applicants for a Cannabis Retail Temporary Use Permit will need to identify the proposed location and provide proof of ownership, proof of an existing lease, or proof of an agreement to buy or lease the location if a TUP is approved. Information on provincial licensing, including locational requirements, can be found here: LCRB Non-Medical Licence Location Requirements: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-

business/business/liquor-regulation-licensing/non-medical-cannabis-licenses/apply-non-medical-cannabis-licence/location-requirements

will applicants need provincial "fit and proper" to apply - i think its a good idea

Thank you for your question. All applicants will be required to provide proof of a Provincial cannabis retail licence issued which includes a Fit and Proper Assessment prior to a Temporary Use Permit being issued. The Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) conducts a Fit and Proper Assessments on all provincial cannabis retail licence applicants as a public safety measure, including security screening and financial integrity checks to ensure licensees are eligible to hold a licence. Information about the LCRB cannabis retail licence Fit and Proper Assessments can be found here: Cannabis security screenings and financial integrity checks - Province of British Columbia (gov.bc.ca)

Much of the village commercial space is in mixed-use buildings. Would landlords and/or Cannabis operators need approval from Strata Councils to operate a cannabis retail store in their building? Are there any current requirements for strata approvals for liquor primary establishment and liquor retailers?

Thank you for your question. A complete application with proof of authorization from the property owner is required. This could also be, a lease agreement, or proof of ownership of the unit. If the proposed location is in a strata building, the applicant must prove that the strata permits cannabis retail use.