

To: City of Nanaimo – Planning and Development Committee

From: Timothy Austin, Owner & Operator, Kaya Connection Ltd.

Subject: Rezoning Support Letter – Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at Unit D3, Brooks Landing

Dear Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Timothy Austin, and I am the owner and operator of Kaya Connection Ltd., a locally owned and family-run cannabis retail business based in Parksville, BC. I am writing to express my full support for the rezoning application for a new Kaya Connection location at Unit D3, Brooks Landing in Nanaimo, and to provide a comprehensive rationale demonstrating how this location meets both municipal criteria and broader community interests.

This proposed location carries personal meaning for me beyond just business. I was born and raised in Nanaimo, and I still live in the area today. I attended Cilaire Elementary School and later Woodlands Secondary School, and my father continues to reside in the Cilaire neighbourhood. Bringing Kaya Connection to Brooks Landing is an opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the community I grew up in — not only as a local business owner, but as a lifelong resident who cares deeply about the people and values of this city.

1. Strategic Location – Brooks Landing

The proposed cannabis retail store at Unit D3, Brooks Landing meets and exceeds key site suitability criteria:

- Located in a modern, newly constructed building within a well-established commercial plaza.
- Surrounded by complementary businesses such as a grocery store, liquor store, pet supply store, gas station, health authority office, bank, gym, and restaurants — aligning with an adult-use retail setting.
- Offers excellent accessibility by car, public transit, and bicycle, with ample parking and a designated delivery/loading zone to minimize congestion.
- Situated along major road corridors, away from residential clusters and designed for smooth traffic flow.
- Maintains significant spacing from existing cannabis retailers, including:
 - 1.8 km from Coast Salish Canna
 - 2.7 km from The Daily Bud
 - 2.5 km from Island Cannabis Company Ltd.

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Separation from Sensitive Uses

A licensed daycare, Zigwids Family Childcare, is approximately 175 metres away from the proposed store but is located at the back of the mall, with no shared access and no visual exposure.

A major two-lane roadway separates the proposed store from both the daycare and Cilaire Elementary School, ensuring no line of sight and a clear physical buffer.

We take our responsibility to operate near child-serving institutions very seriously, and have a proven record of doing so respectfully and in full regulatory compliance.

Precedent and Fair Consideration

We understand the sensitivity surrounding cannabis retail near schools and daycares. However, multiple approved Nanaimo locations demonstrate that cannabis retail can operate safely and responsibly in proximity to these uses when properly managed:

- Island Cannabis Company Ltd. operates:
 - Within 200 metres of Never Land Family Childcare
 - Within 200 metres of Laughing Kids Nanaimo
 - Within 200 metres of Nanaimo After School Kids Klub
 - In proximity to Foster Park Elementary
- Trees Cannabis is:
 - Located next to After School Kids Club – Bowen Park
 - Directly across from Quarterway Elementary School

These businesses have operated for years without known issues, proving that cannabis retail can coexist respectfully within family-focused neighbourhoods when managed professionally.

At Kaya Connection, we are committed to mirroring these positive examples through:

- Professional operations
- Discreet, compliant signage and layout
- Ongoing dialogue with nearby institutions

Our existing location in downtown Parksville, directly across from West Oak Child Care, has operated since 2022 without a single complaint. We are proud to include a letter of support from West Oak Child Care in our application, further affirming our track record as a respectful and community-oriented operator.

2. Positive Community Contributions

a. Economic Impact

Our new Nanaimo store will create approximately 10 new jobs for local residents.

We are committed to sourcing goods and services locally whenever possible.

We will invest in property improvements and beautification to enhance the Brooks Landing site and its surroundings.

b. Community Involvement

Kaya Connection is a proud and active community sponsor in Parksville, supporting the world-famous Sandcastle Competition for four consecutive years, as well as local sports teams and events.

We are excited to bring this same level of engagement and sponsorship to Nanaimo through partnerships, donations, and community participation.

c. Social Responsibility

All staff are trained to educate customers on responsible use, harm reduction, and product safety.

We include educational materials with every purchase to promote safe cannabis consumption.

We are proud to donate annually to the Canadian Cancer Society, supporting national and local health efforts.

d. Prevention of Youth Access

All staff are certified in ID verification and undergo ongoing compliance training.

Prominent age-restriction signage is displayed throughout the premises.

Our branding and store layout are adult-oriented, carefully curated to avoid any appeal to youth.

3. Site Compliance and Safety

e. Traffic and Parking

The site complies with parking and access requirements under DP1286.

A dedicated delivery/loading zone helps minimize disruption to traffic.

The store's accessibility by bus, bicycle, and car reduces pressure on vehicle parking and promotes responsible access.

f. Security and Safety

The premises will feature:

- 24/7 monitored video surveillance
- Monitored alarm systems
- On-site mall security patrols

- Enhanced lighting and secure entry systems

These measures ensure a safe and secure environment for customers, staff, and the broader community.

4. Conclusion

The proposed Kaya Connection location at Unit D3, Brooks Landing aligns fully with the City of Nanaimo's rezoning and cannabis retail guidelines.

With a strategic commercial location, clear separation from sensitive uses, fair alignment with local precedents, and a strong record of responsible operation, we are confident that this store will be a positive and community-minded addition to the area.

As a lifelong Nanaimo resident with personal roots in the Cilaire neighbourhood, I am deeply invested in seeing this location succeed — not just as a business, but as a respectful, community-focused contribution to the city I grew up in.

Thank you for your time, service, and thoughtful consideration. I welcome the opportunity to speak further or provide additional details.

Sincerely,

Timothy Austin

Owner & Operator, Kaya Connection Ltd.

📍 Proposed Location: Unit D3, Brooks Landing, Nanaimo

☎ 250-586-6640

✉ tim@kaya-connection.com

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