



## THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

*HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME*

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

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### **Mayor Sarno Announces Phase Two of Adult Use Marijuana Establishment Applications**

**Springfield, MA** – Mayor Domenic J. Sarno announces that, through a Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals (“**RFQ/P**”) issued today, the City of Springfield, Massachusetts (“City”), seeks to obtain information and qualify Marijuana Establishment Applicants for the purpose of negotiating and executing a Host Community Agreement (“HCA”) for the development, construction and operation of a Marijuana Establishment within the City in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (G.L. c. 94G, §3; 935 CMR 500.100 as amended). This RFQ/P is intended to provide a public selection process, but is not issued pursuant to Mass. Gen. Laws, c. 30B.

Mayor Sarno states he has tasked City Solicitor Attorney Edward Pikula to work with the outside-specialized independent Consultant, Attorney Julie E. Steiner Consulting LLC, and the City’s internal committee, to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and revised application and evaluation process. The process builds upon on the experience gained in the first round of applications and approvals, and the changes adapted by the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission, in order to maximize revenue streams to our city, increase social equity opportunities, and protect public health and safety aspects for our neighborhoods.

The first round of applications resulted in the City issuing four (4) Host Community Agreements. To date, one has opened, two have been approved by the state Cannabis Control Commission and are in the construction process and are expected to open in the coming months. The fourth is pending with the Cannabis Control Commission, and is in the process of amending their Host Community Agreement and will be going before the City Council to seek a change of control and ownership.

For this Second Round of RFQ/P, the City will select up to four (4) qualified Marijuana Retailer enterprises. As part of its ongoing commitment to ensuring a robust, fair and equitable cannabis industry, and in recognition of the fact that parts of the City have been designated by the Cannabis Control Commission (“Commission”) as an “Area of Disproportionate Impact” for the purposes of identifying areas in the Commonwealth that have historically high rates of arrest, conviction, and incarceration related to marijuana crimes between 1971 and 2016. In this RFQ/P, two (2) of the four (4) Marijuana Retailers selected will be reserved for Commission-certified Social Equity, and/or Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants (“Social Equity Reserved HCA”). In the event there is no suitable applicant, then that Social Equity Reserved HCA slot(s) will carry over to subsequent RFQ/P phases.

The City will also select at least one (1) qualified Marijuana Cultivator enterprise, and additional qualified Marijuana Establishment enterprises: Craft Marijuana Cooperative, Independent Testing or Standards Testing Laboratory, Marijuana Courier, Marijuana Delivery Operator, Marijuana Product Manufacturer, Marijuana Research Facility, Marijuana Transporter or Marijuana Microbusiness. Under the City’s Zoning Ordinance, Marijuana Social Consumption Establishments are prohibited.

Per the Commission, the Marijuana Courier and Marijuana Delivery Operator license types will only be offered to Commission-certified Social Equity or Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants for a minimum of three years. Therefore, HCAs for Marijuana Couriers or a Marijuana Delivery Operators will be available solely to Commission-certified Social Equity or Economic Empowerment Priority Applicants during this RFQ/P.

Proposers who are not selected in this RFQ/P are encouraged to submit a response to the City during potential additional phases.

The purpose of this RFQ/P is to qualify Marijuana Establishment applicants desirous of entering into negotiations with the City of Springfield for a Host Community Agreement. Proposals submitted will be evaluated to determine which proposer(s) may be selected to enter into negotiations. This is not a binding RFQ/P, but an invitation for interested parties to submit proposals. Participation in the RFQ/P is required for Marijuana Establishment applicants that want to locate within the City. Each proposal submitted in response to the RFQ/P will be evaluated by the City’s Internal Review Group as determined by the Mayor.

The information provided will also be used in the City’s planning process to develop and revise local land use, health and public safety regulations as necessary and in accordance with current state regulations.

The timetable for the process is set forth in the table below. Unless otherwise specified, the time of day for the following events shall be between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. All other times specified in this RFQ/P are Eastern Standard Time.

Action	Date
1. RFQ/P issued	January 26, 2021
2. Written questions from interested proposers concerning RFQ/P	February 15, 2021
3. Written responses from City to questions posted on COMMBUYS and City website	February 22, 2021
4. Written requests for public presentations	February 26, 2021
5. Public presentations by proposers	March 11, 2021 March 12, 2021
6. RFQ/P responses due by 2:00 p.m.	March 22, 2021
7. City announces name of proposer(s) qualifying for right to negotiate agreement	April 12, 2021

The City may adjust this schedule, as it deems necessary. Notification of any adjustment to the timetable will be posted on the City’s Website at [www.springfield-ma.gov/cos/index.php?id=2976](http://www.springfield-ma.gov/cos/index.php?id=2976) and on COMMBUYS. Applicants are responsible for checking this site for any timetable changes per Section 4(B) of this RFQ/P.

Mayor Sarno stated, “I want to thank Attorney Julie Steiner for working with our city’s Law Department and internal committee. This second round of marijuana RFQ/P’s will build upon my administration’s commitment to holding a fair and transparent evaluation process for applications. This new round of applications will continue my administrations goal of trying to maximizing the city’s revenue potential and just as important create new jobs while balancing the concerns of our residents, neighborhoods and public safety.”

Attorney Julie Steiner states, “I am honored to continue working with the City of Springfield as it implements the voters' mandate to legalize adult and medicinal marijuana. Springfield's approach serves as a model for municipalities. It involves thoughtful expansion into the burgeoning cannabis industry by balancing public safety, equity and economic business opportunity, and all decisions are made after considering the input of a wide variety of government experts.”

“We have conducted a successful first round and I am confident that we will be able to put forth another successful second round based upon the changes to the laws, regulations and public health and safety concerns due to the pandemic,” Mayor Sarno added. “This new round will build upon what we have learned to provide and create an economic impact for the City and new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship.”

The City's internal committee consist of representatives from the Health Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Planning Department, Law Department, Building Department, Department of Public Works, Finance Department, Procurement Department as well as a member of the City Council appointed by the City Council President.

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