

October 5, 2021

Dear Zoning Commissioners,

Thank you for the commitment you've made to our community by serving on this board. It's not lost on me how much of a time and energy commitment it takes to serve the public on a commission like this. I have served on various boards for the city in the past and am a current member of the Energy and Conservation Commission. Additionally, I was a member of one of the subcommittees that helped craft the new zoning regulations, project Re-Code.

I'm writing to you all to encourage you to provide more flexibility in the zoning regulations that are before you regarding cannabis businesses. I have been an interested member of the public in this process and have offered consultation to the city staff and council throughout this process. The mayor, several council members, and the city administrator, have been provided a behind the scenes tour of a dispensary and cannabis farm that I own, The Green Bee. I have been as transparent and forthcoming as possible in an effort to educate and provide knowledge of the industry.

The state has categorized the industry into seven 'types' of business, depending on what the business performs. In a letter I wrote to council, I suggested that zoning regulations reflect these business types, as they are different and require different space, access, etc... I am encouraged to see that planning staff has taken that direction and has begun to implement different zoning regulations based on these business types. However, I would like to see more flexibility built into the regulations. Retail services, as currently written, would be required to be located in hard to find industrial areas. That approach does not encourage retail services, and in fact discourages businesses from locating in our community. Maybe that's the point, I don't know. I do know there are many empty retail spaces available throughout Billings. I encourage you to consider the addition of zoning districts to the retail business types.

I encourage regulate all retail cannabis businesses with the same setback requirements as bars/casinos. The current draft regulation is much more stringent with setbacks from arterial streets and existing land uses. Again, this effectively bans businesses from locating in Billings.

I will attend this meeting and will be available to answer any questions. I look forward to hearing discussion on this issue.

Sincerely,

**Neil R. Kiner**  
*Landscape Architect*



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