

Cannabis Equity in Our Community Survey – June 1 through September 1, 2020

A survey was conducted between June 1 and September 1, 2020. The survey was shared with community members and stakeholders of the Cannabis Equity in Our Community project through an email list and community members. The survey was available in four languages, Amharic, English, Oromo and Spanish available both online and on paper. We received a total of 123 responses, 19 on paper and 104 online. Details of the survey responses are below.

**1. What will help address the impacts of marijuana enforcement on Black individuals and Black communities?**

The strong majority expressed the need for a portion of the cannabis excise tax to be invested in Black communities historically harmed by marijuana enforcement. Close behind that was to offer cannabis licenses to Black applicants in the state social equity program. A similar themed answer of using the cannabis excise tax to support social equity licensed businesses was selected by 60% of the respondents.

75%	Use a portion of cannabis excise tax to invest in Black communities historically harmed by marijuana enforcement.
68%	Make cannabis business licenses in Seattle available to Black qualifying applicants of the state social equity program.
60%	Use a portion of cannabis excise tax to help support businesses licensed through the state social equity program.
15%	Other *
2%	No answer
	* Other answers included comments in the following categories:
	Community investment - 4
	Education/scholarships - 3
	Vertical integration of social equity cannabis licenses - 2
	No special considerations - 2
	Give/reallocate licenses to Blacks - 2
	Expunge all cannabis convictions - 2
	Reparation - 1
	Health services - 1

**2. Who is an applicant for a license through the state social equity program?**

Black persons and Black persons impacted by the integration of medical into recreational cannabis businesses were the most selected answers.

69%	Black Persons impacted by legalization and integration of medical to recreational cannabis.
58%	Black Persons
52%	Applicant has been convicted of a marijuana offense or is a family member of such an individual.
49%	Applicant has resided for at least 5 of the preceding 10 years in a disproportionately impacted area.
44%	People of Color
9%	Other *
2%	No answer

	* Other answers included comments in the following categories:
	Native Americans - 2
	Legacy cannabis businesses - 2
	People in disproportionately impacted areas - 1
	People with disabilities - 1

**3. What do you feel are the barriers and/or hurdles to owning a cannabis business?**

Almost 60% of respondents indicated that access to capital, loans and banking are the primary barriers to owning a cannabis business. Racism and racist treatment toward BIPOC communities ranked as the second greatest barrier at 24%, which almost tied with hurdles associated with the application process and red tape at 23%.

59%	Access to Capital: Business Start-up cost, Banks, Loans, Insurance Cost
24%	Gentrification, Racism, Systemic Racism, Treatment of POC, Stigma
23%	License Access, Application Process, Red Tape
15%	FEDS, LCB, Regulation
14%	Business knowledge, Experience, Education
8%	Prior convictions as barrier
7%	Zoning - Viable locations - compliant locations
4%	Legal Help
4%	Lack of Information, outreach, language

**4. What were the barriers and/or hurdles you overcame to start in the cannabis industry?**

Current cannabis business owners stated that capital was the primary hurdle they needed to overcome to get started in the cannabis industry. The second most challenging hurdle to getting started was overcoming their lack of industry knowledge and education about the product and industry.

9%	Capital
5%	Lack of Education, Industry, knowledge
3%	Racism, Access by whites
2%	Barriers to Entry - Restrictions
2%	Finding Ethical Company, Business Partner
2%	Language
2%	Licensing
1%	FEDS
1%	Location
1%	Government

**5. What connections or organizations should the City partner with to assist with opening a cannabis business?**

Several responses and suggestions were provided for the City to consider as potential partners. Black Excellence in Cannabis was the stand-out recommendation followed by the Black community/POC and business assistance/mentorship.

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18%	Black Excellence in Cannabis
7%	Black Community - POC
7%	Business Assistance - Mentorship - OED
6%	Community & Business Orgs
6%	Government orgs, educational institutions, law enforcement
4%	Black Cannabis Coalition
4%	King County Equity Now
3%	Cannabis Alliance
3%	Medical Owners, existing businesses
2%	NAACP
2%	Hollingsworth Family
2%	Banks - Commercial Financial Institution
2%	Arts
2%	Urban League
1%	Canada
1%	Gates Foundation
1%	Decriminalize Seattle
1%	Arthur Wheeler
1%	Green Wolf Consulting
1%	Ministry
1%	Community Elders
1%	Peoples Party
1%	Creative Justice
1%	Canada
1%	Gates Foundation
1%	Arthur Wheeler
1%	Green Wolf Consulting
1%	Minority Cannabis Business Association
1%	Ministry
1%	Community Elders
1%	Peoples Party
1%	Creative Justice
1%	Youth Gyms
1%	FMS Global Strategies
1%	LCB
1%	Ventures Non-profit
1%	Naomi Granger- Dope CFO

**6. If offered the opportunity, would you apply for a cannabis license? Why or why not?**

Roughly half of the respondents expressed interest in applying for a license and slightly less than half said they had no interest. The reasons for the interest and no interest were varied. However, a greater

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number of those interested in obtaining a license expressed desire to improve their finances by being involved in a lucrative growing industry.

55%	Yes
41%	No
20%	No answer
	Those answering Yes gave the following reasons: Responses were group under a common theme.
	Lucrative growing industry - 10
	Medical/community - 6
	Generational wealth - 4
	Previously in industry - 3
	Black woman wanting to be involved in industry - 2
	User and want to become involved in industry - 1
	Other - 1
	Need startup capital - 2
	Must have license to operate cannabis business - 1
	Interest in testing/product development - 1
	Income - 2
	Federal regulations - 1
	Benefit BIPOC - 1
	Those answering No gave the following reasons: Responses were group under a common theme.
	Not interested - 13
	Not my field - 6
	Enough white owned shops - 4
	Startup capital - 3
	Regulatory restrictions - 3
	Already licensed - 3
	Business environment not ready - 2
	Cultural reasons - 1
	LCB - 1
	Other - 2

**7. Are you a current or past resident of Seattle? Please provide your Seattle zip code.**

Respondents were predominantly current residents of Seattle or had been a resident in the past. Residency was highest in Beacon Hill, Rainier Valley, Central District, and South Seattle neighborhoods.

62%	Current
20%	Never

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13%	Prior
6%	No response

Breakdown of neighborhoods for current residents:		
9.8%	Beacon Hill/Rainier Valley	98118
8.9%	Central District	98122
5.7%	Georgetown/South Seattle	98108
5.7%	Rainier Valley	98178
4.9%	Eastlake	98102
4.1%	Lake City/Northgate	98125
3.3%	Delridge/Highland Park	98106
3.3%	Beacon Hill/Central/Rainier Valley/Seward Park	98144
2.4%	Beacon Hill	98168
1.6%	Wallingford/Fremont	98103
1.6%	University District	98105
1.6%	Wedgewood/Northgate	98115
1.6%	Northgate	98133
1.6%	West Seattle	98136
0.8%	Belltown	98101
0.8%	Downtown/Pioneer Square	98104
0.8%	Queen Anne	98109
0.8%	Capitol Hill/Montlake/Madison Park	98112
0.8%	Ballard	98117
0.8%	South Lake Union/Downtown	98121
0.8%	Delridge/Highpoint	98126

Breakdown of neighborhoods for prior residents:		
3.3%	Beacon Hill/Rainier Valley	98118
2.4%	Rainier Valley	98178
0.1%	Eastlake	98102
0.1%	Downtown/Pioneer Square	98104
0.1%	Delridge/Highland Park	98106
0.1%	Ballard	98117
0.1%	South Lake Union/Downtown	98121
0.1%	Central	98122
0.1%	Lake City/Northgate	98125
0.1%	Beacon Hill/Central/Rainier Valley/Seward Park	98144

**8. Race or ethnicity of survey taker:** Responses were identified as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) or White.

Only 59% of survey takers provided this information.

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47%	BIPOC	58
12%	White	15
59%	Total	73