

## MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT

**THIS MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT** (this “Agreement”) is entered into as of 2/23/2022, 2022 (the “Agreement Date”) by and between Hinderliter de Llamas and Associates (“Consultant”), and Town of Los Gatos (“Client”), which is located within the state of California (the “State”).

### WITNESSETH:

**WHEREAS**, Consultant is engaged in the business of providing consulting, software and other services that help public agencies understand and maximize their collection of sales, use and transactions taxes, business license taxes, property and lodging taxes, and other revenues, as well as their delivery of other public services (collectively, “Consultant’s Business”); and

**WHEREAS**, Client desires to contract with Consultant to obtain one or more of the services included within Consultant’s Business (as provided for in Section 1) upon the terms and conditions contained in this Agreement;

**WHEREAS**, Consultant desires to contract with Client to render such services upon the terms and conditions contained in this Agreement.

**NOW THEREFORE**, in consideration of the covenants and promises contained herein, Client and Consultant mutually agree as follows:

#### 1. Services.

1.1 Consultant will perform those services included within Consultant’s Business that are described in any and all schedule(s) referencing this Agreement and signed by Client and Consultant as of the Agreement Date or hereafter (individually and collectively, the “Schedule(s)”), upon the terms and conditions contained in this Agreement (including the Schedules) (such services are, collectively, the “Services”). In performing the Services, Consultant is acting as an independent contractor (and not as an agent or employee of Client).

1.2 Client acknowledges and agrees that any other public agency (including, without limitation, any participating government agency) located within or outside of the State (e.g., city, municipality, county, district, public authority or other political subdivision) may procure services for fees and other terms and conditions that are substantially similar to any of the Services, Fees and other terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement, provided that such other public agency executes a separate agreement with Consultant wherein the services rendered to such other public agency, the fees payable by such other public agency, and the other terms and conditions of such separate agreement are the responsibility of Consultant and such other public agency and not Client.

1.3 This Agreement does not limit the right of Consultant to enter into additional contracts with Client or to contract with third parties to provide them with merchandise or services of any kind whatsoever, including, but not limited to, services similar to the Services. During the Term of this Agreement, Client will not, directly or indirectly (except through Consultant), engage any third party to provide services similar to the Services.

**2. Fees.** As compensation for performing the Services, Client will pay Consultant the fees, costs and expenses as described in the Schedules (individually and collectively these fees and costs are, the “Fees”). Consultant may perform the Services using professionals from its staff or Consultant’s affiliated entities, and such Services will be invoiced to Client under the same terms applicable to Consultant’s staff. Consultant may increase the Fees from time to time (including, without limitation, as may be described in any of the Schedules). Other than a Fee increase as described in the Schedules, Client may notify Consultant of a request that such Fee increase be modified or revoked and, if Consultant fails to do so to Client’s satisfaction within thirty (30) days after the receipt of such request, Client may terminate this Agreement without cause pursuant to Section 7.3.

**3. Invoices; Payment.**

3.1 Consultant will invoice Client for the Fees earned and/or incurred by Consultant pursuant to this Agreement.

3.2 Invoices are due and payable upon receipt. Interest will begin to accrue on the thirty-first (31st) day following the invoice date on all unpaid balances at a rate of one and one-half percent (1½%) per month, or the maximum rate permitted by law, whichever is less. Payments will first be credited to interest and then to principal. In the event that Client disputes an invoice, only that portion so disputed in good faith will be withheld from payment, and the undisputed portion must be timely paid. Interest will accrue on any disputed portion of the invoice not timely paid and will be payable immediately if the disputed invoice is resolved in favor of Consultant.

3.3 If Client fails to fully pay an invoice within 30 days after the invoice date, Consultant may, after giving five (5) days’ prior written notice to Client, suspend the rendering of Services under this Agreement until said invoice is paid in full, together with all interest that has accrued thereon. In the event of such a suspension of Services, Consultant will have no liability to Client for any delays or damages arising therefrom.

**4. Insurance.** Throughout the term of this Agreement, Consultant will maintain the following insurance in not less than the referenced amounts: (a) workers compensation and employers liability insurance as may be required by the State; (b) property damage liability of \$1,000,000 per incident; (c) bodily injury liability of \$1,000,000 per incident; and (d) professional liability for any errors or omissions of \$1,000,000.

**5. Client Support.**

5.1 Client will promptly provide in writing to Consultant all data and other information relating to or which may be necessary for Consultant’s performance of the Services. Without limiting the foregoing, Client will keep Consultant informed on a timely basis in writing as to the existence and amendments of the laws, ordinances and/or regulations under which Consultant is performing the Services (including any adopted by Client). Consultant will be permitted to rely on the accuracy, timeliness and completeness of the information provided by Client, and in no event will Consultant be liable to Client or others as a result of such reliance.

5.2 Client will examine all of Consultant's reports, specifications, notices, proposals and other documents. In the event that Consultant asks for a decision from Client in order for Consultant to perform the Services, Client will render such decision in writing in a timely manner.

5.3 Promptly following any request from Consultant, Client will adopt and maintain in full force and effect resolutions in forms acceptable to Client and in accordance with applicable law authorizing Consultant to examine the confidential sales tax and other relevant records of Client throughout the Term and, for so long as any Fees are still accruing pursuant to this Agreement, after the Term.

5.4 Client will assist Consultant in obtaining such licenses, permits and approvals as may be required by law for performing the Services, and Client will pay all fees, assessments and taxes related to the application, issuance and maintenance thereof.

5.5 The Services do not include services to support, prepare, document, bring, respond to subpoenas, act as a witness, defend or otherwise assist in litigation undertaken or defended by Client, which Consultant may be required by legal process or otherwise or requested by Client to provide (collectively, "Litigation Services"). In this regard, if Consultant agrees with Client or is otherwise required to perform Litigation Services, Client will promptly pay or reimburse Consultant for all of Consultant's costs and expenses related to Litigation Services (including, without limitation, Consultant's attorneys' fees and costs) at Consultant's actual cost, plus ten percent (10%) thereof (all of which are deemed to be additional Fees).

## **6. Confidentiality; Software Use and Warranty; Records.**

6.1 Consultant will comply with the requirements of the applicable laws, ordinances and/or regulations of which it has been informed by Client pursuant to Section 5.1 concerning the confidentiality of tax records. Consultant may publicly state that it performs the Services for Client.

6.2 As used herein, the term "proprietary information" means all information, techniques, processes, services or material that has or could have commercial value or other utility for Consultant in Consultant's Business, including without limitation, (i) software, computer or data processing programs; (ii) data processing applications, routines, subroutines, techniques or systems; (iii) desktop or web-based software; (iv) audit, tax or fee collection/administration or business processes, methods or routines; (v) marketing plans, analyses and strategies; (vi) materials, techniques and intellectual property used; and (vii) the Software and the Software's documentation. Except as otherwise required by law, Client must hold in confidence and may not use (except as expressly authorized by this Agreement) or disclose to any other party any proprietary information provided, learned of or obtained by Client in connection with this Agreement. The terms of this Section 6.2 do not apply to information that is public information; provided, however, that proprietary information will not qualify as public information if it became public due to Client's (or its employees' or agents') disclosure.

6.3 If access to any software which Consultant owns is provided to Client as part of the Services under this Agreement (including, without limitation, if Client chooses to subscribe to such software and/or related reports as part of the Services pursuant to a Schedule to this Agreement) (such Consultant-owned software is, collectively, the "Software"), Consultant hereby provides a limited, non-exclusive, non-transferable license to Client (including such of Client's staff as may be

designated from time to time by Client and approved by Consultant in writing) to use the Software pursuant to and during the Term of this Agreement.

6.4 The Software must only be used by such authorized Client staff, and Client must not sublicense, sublet, duplicate, modify, decompile, reverse engineer, disassemble, or attempt to derive the source code of the Software. The license granted hereunder does not imply ownership by Client or any of Client's staff of the Software nor any rights of Client or any of Client's staff to sublicense, transfer or sell the Software, or rights to use the Software for the benefit of others. Client may not create (or allow the creation of) any derivative work or product based on or derived from the Software or the Software's documentation, nor modify (or allow the modification of) the Software or the Software's documentation without the prior written consent of Consultant. In the event of a breach of this provision (and without limiting Consultant's remedies), such modification, derivative work or product based on the Software or the Software's documentation is hereby deemed assigned to Consultant. Upon termination of this Agreement or this Software license, this Software license will be deemed to have expired and Client must immediately deactivate, cease using and remove, delete and destroy all the Software (including, without limitation, from Client's computers and network). **Consultant warrants that the Software will perform in accordance with the Software's documentation.**

6.5 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Agreement (including any Schedule hereto), if access to any software which Consultant does not own is provided to Client as part of the Services pursuant to this Agreement (including pursuant to any Schedule hereto), Client hereby agrees (i) to comply with all of the terms and conditions imposed on Client's access to such software (including, without limitation, by Consultant, such software's owner, and pursuant to applicable law), and (ii) Consultant has no obligation during the Term of this Agreement or thereafter to provide Client with access to such software.

6.6 All documents, preliminary drafts, communications and any and all other work product related to the Services and provided by Consultant to Client either in hard copy or electronically are the joint property of Client and Consultant. This does not include the Software or any other software, any programs, any methodologies or any systems used in the creation of such work product, nor does it include any drafts, notes or internal communications prepared by Consultant in the course of performing the Services that were not otherwise provided to Client in either hardcopy or electronic form, all of which may be protected by Consultant or third party copyrights or other intellectual property and remain Consultant's or such third parties' exclusive property (as the case may be). It is possible that any documents, drafts, communications or other work product provided to Client may be alleged to be public records under applicable law and/or may be discoverable through litigation. Well in advance of when Client may disclose such information in response to any request for public records, Client must notify Consultant in writing about the request and, if Consultant requests it, Client must apply for any potential exemption from disclosure that may exist under applicable law.

6.7 Subject to applicable law, Consultant is responsible for retaining all final documents and other final work product related to the Services for a period of not less than three (3) years from the date provided to Client. Retention of any other documents, preliminary drafts, communications and any and all other work product provided to Client by Consultant is the responsibility of Client. Consultant has no responsibility to retain any drafts, notes, communications, emails or other writings created or received by Client in the course of performing the Services (other than the final

documents and other final work product related to the Services and provided to Client for the term of years referenced above).

## **7. Term and Termination.**

7.1 The initial term of this Agreement commences as of the Agreement Date and, unless terminated earlier pursuant to any of this Agreement's express provisions, will continue in effect until twelve (12) months from such date (the "Initial Term"). This Agreement will automatically renew for successive twelve (12) month terms unless earlier terminated as set forth in Section 7.2 or 7.3 or either party gives the other party written notice of non-renewal at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the expiration of the then-current term (each a "Renewal Term" and, collectively, together with the Initial Term, the "Term").

7.2 This Agreement may be terminated by either party for cause upon not less than forty-five (45) days' prior written notice given to and received by the other party, if the other party has materially breached this Agreement through no fault of the notifying party and fails to (i) commence correction of such material breach within thirty (30) days of receipt of the above-referenced written notice and (ii) diligently complete the correction thereafter.

7.3 In addition, either party may terminate this Agreement without cause upon not less than one hundred twenty (120) days' prior written notice to the other party.

7.4 On termination, Client will pay Consultant for all Fees and other compensation (including for Litigation Services) earned and/or incurred through the termination date and will thereafter timely pay Consultant for all other Fees and compensation to which Consultant may be entitled pursuant to this Agreement (including the Schedules hereto).

## **8. Indemnification.**

8.1 Consultant, on behalf of itself and its directors, officers, employees, agents, direct and indirect equity holders, and affiliates (collectively, "Consultant Group"), agrees to fully and promptly protect, indemnify, reimburse and hold harmless Client, its directors, officers, employees, agents, direct and indirect equity holders, and affiliates (collectively, "Client Group"), from and against any and all liabilities, losses, claims, damages, personal injuries, death, expenses, and costs (including, without limitation, for attorneys' fees and costs) (each, a "Liability", and collectively, "Liabilities") which are the direct or indirect result of (a) any breach of any representation, warranty or covenant made by or given on behalf of Consultant under this Agreement, or (b) any gross negligence or willful misconduct on the part of any one or more of Consultant Group.

8.2 Client, on behalf of itself and the other members of Client Group, agrees to fully and promptly protect, indemnify, reimburse and hold harmless Consultant and the other members of Consultant Group from and against any and all Liabilities which are the direct or indirect result of (a) any breach of any representation, warranty or covenant made by or given on behalf of Client under this Agreement, or (b) any action or failure to act on the part of any one or more of Consultant Group where such action or failure to act was in good faith believed by any of Consultant Group at the time to be in conformity with this Agreement, or (c) otherwise related to or arising out of any act or omission by any one or more Client Group. In this regard, Client hereby acknowledges that it is responsible for instructing Consultant regarding Consultant's performance of Services under this

Agreement, as well as the interpretation and meaning of the ordinances and/or regulations under which Consultant is performing Services under this Agreement.

8.3 Client's obligation under this Agreement to protect, defend, indemnify, reimburse and hold harmless Consultant Group includes, but is not limited to, Liabilities arising directly or indirectly from the consumption or use of, any civil, criminal or regulatory action or proceeding (including, without limitation, any proceeding based on a petition for a writ of mandate) involving the validity or legality of any ordinance allowing the sale of, and/or any interpretation of the meaning of any ordinance allowing the sale of, any cannabis and/or cannabis containing products (including, without limitation, marijuana -- whether or not Consultant had a role in the drafting of any such ordinance), and/or the review of cannabis business applications and/or the issuance or non-issuance of cannabis business permits.

8.4 Promptly after any member of Client Group or any member of Consultant Group (in each case, the "Indemnified Group") receives notice of the commencement of any proceeding for which Client or Consultant (as the case may be) intends to make a claim for indemnification under this Agreement, it should notify the other party (the "Indemnifying Party"), but the failure to so notify will not result in the loss of any rights of any of the Indemnified Group to indemnification hereunder except to the extent that the Indemnifying Party does not otherwise become aware of such proceeding and is actually adversely affected thereby to a material extent. The Indemnifying Party will assume the defense of the Indemnified Group (including the employment of legal counsel reasonably satisfactory to the Indemnified Group) and payment of such counsel's fees and disbursements (including retainers). Should the Indemnified Group reasonably determine that separate counsel is necessary (whether due to the existence of different defenses, potential conflicts of interest or otherwise), or if the Indemnifying Party has not assumed the defense, then any of the Indemnified Group may employ separate legal counsel, and the Indemnifying Party will pay such counsel's reasonable fees and disbursements as incurred (including retainers). The obligations of defense and indemnification under this Agreement apply, without limitation, to those situations where someone brings a cross claim for indemnity or contribution against any one or more of the Indemnified Group.

8.5 Neither Consultant nor Client shall, without the other party's prior written consent, settle, compromise or consent to the entry of any judgment in any pending or threatened claim, action, or proceeding or investigation in respect of which indemnification could be sought hereunder (whether or not any of the other party or any other member of the Indemnified Group is an actual or potential party to such claim, action or proceeding or investigation), unless such settlement, compromise or consent includes an unconditional release of the other party and any other member of the Indemnified Group from all liability arising out of such claim, action, proceeding or investigation and includes an explicit disclaimer of responsibility of any kind on the part of the other party and any other member of the Indemnified Group.

## **9. Liability Limitations; Governing Law; Dispute Resolution.**

9.1 To the maximum extent permitted by law and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Agreement:

9.1.1 Except for Consultant's gross negligence or willful misconduct in connection with the performance of its obligations under this Agreement, Client's sole and exclusive remedies for any breaches of Consultant's obligations under this Agreement (including,

without limitation, for any breaches relating to the Services or the Software, including any breaches of warranty, express or implied) (i) are limited to making reasonable and necessary repairs, replacements or corrections without additional cost to the Client, and (ii) will not exceed, under any circumstances, the amount of the Fees paid by Client to Consultant for the twelve-month period prior to the alleged breaches, calculated without reference to any payments constituting the payment of costs or expenses. All amounts paid to Consultant hereunder are deemed first to be for the reimbursement of costs or expenses and then any excess will be regarded as payments for other portions of the Fees under this Agreement. Any references to breaches of this Agreement will include any supplements, additions or amendments to this Agreement.

9.1.2 Except as may otherwise be expressly set forth in this Agreement, Consultant makes no warranty of any kind with respect to the Services or the Software, express or implied. Consultant hereby disclaims all other warranties, express or implied, including the implied warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non infringement. Consultant disclaims all warranties and responsibility for third party software.

9.1.3 In no event will any of Consultant Group be liable for any lost revenues or lost profits, or any special, incidental, or consequential damages of any nature whatsoever, even if such restrictions deprive one or more remedies of their essential purpose. This damage exclusion is independent of any remedies provided for herein.

9.1.4 None of Consultant Group will have any Liability (whether direct or indirect, in contract or tort or otherwise) related to, arising out of, or in connection with this Agreement or to any of Client Group acting on any advice given or opinion rendered by any of Consultant Group, except to the extent that such Liability is found by a court of competent jurisdiction in a judgment which has become final and that it is no longer subject to appeal or review to have resulted solely from such Consultant Group's willful misconduct or gross negligence.

9.1.5 No claim may be brought by Client against any one or more of Consultant Group arising out of this Agreement (including, without limitation, in connection with the Services or the Software) more than one year after the date on which such claim arose (regardless of the date when Client may have discovered a basis for the claim).

9.1.6 Client acknowledges that this Agreement is with Consultant in its capacity as a corporation or a limited liability company, and Client agrees that in no event will it seek to hold any of the Consultant Group (other than Consultant) responsible for any Liabilities.

9.2 The law of the State will govern the validity of this Agreement, its interpretation and performance, and any other claims related to it, without regard to the State's conflict of laws rules. Venue for any legal action arising out of this Agreement will be proper only in the State courts or the federal courts located within the State. The parties hereby submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of such courts and waive any other venue to which either party might be entitled by domicile or otherwise.

9.3 If either party is required to bring legal action to enforce its rights under this Agreement or as the result of a breach of this Agreement, the costs and expenses of the prevailing party, including reasonable attorneys' fees, will be paid by the non-prevailing party.

9.4 A breach of this Agreement by either party may cause the other party hereto irreparable harm, the amount of which may be difficult to ascertain, and therefore such other party will have the right to apply to a court of competent jurisdiction for specific performance and/or an order restraining and enjoining any further breach and for such other relief as such other party may deem appropriate. Such right is in addition to the remedies otherwise available to such other party at law or in equity. The parties hereto expressly waive the defense that a remedy in damages will be adequate and any requirement in an action for specific performance or injunction hereunder for the posting of a bond.

## **10. General Legal Provisions.**

10.1 Authorization to Proceed. Each Schedule must be signed by both Client and Consultant before such Schedule will be binding on the parties hereto.

10.2 Force Majeure. Consultant is not responsible for damages or delay in performance caused by acts of God, strikes, lockouts, accidents, epidemics, pandemics or other health emergencies, or other events beyond the control of Consultant.

10.3 Amendment; Waiver. Any provisions of this Agreement (including, without limitation, any Schedules or provisions within any Schedules) may be amended or terminated if in writing and signed by both Client and Consultant. No waiver by any party of any default, misrepresentation or breach of warranty or covenant hereunder, whether intentional or not, will be deemed to be valid unless acknowledged by such party in writing, and such waiver will not extend to any prior or subsequent default, misrepresentation or breach of warranty or covenant hereunder or affect in any way any rights arising by virtue of any prior or subsequent such occurrence.

10.4 Severability and Survival. If any provision in this Agreement is held illegal, invalid or unenforceable, the enforceability of the remaining provisions will not be impaired thereby. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Agreement (including, without limitation, Section 7), Sections 3, 5.5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 will survive the termination of this Agreement.

10.5 No Third-Party Beneficiaries; Services Limited to Agreement. Except as set forth in Section 8, this Agreement gives no rights or benefits to anyone other than Client and Consultant and has no third-party beneficiaries. The Services to be performed for Client by Consultant are defined solely by this Agreement (including the Schedules), and not by any other contract or agreement that may be associated with performing the Services.

10.6 Assignment. This is a bilateral personal services agreement. Neither party will have the power to or will assign any of the duties or rights or any claim arising out of or related to this Agreement, whether arising in tort, contract or otherwise, without the written consent of the other party. Any unauthorized assignment is void and unenforceable. This Agreement is binding on the successors and assigns of the parties hereto. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, Consultant may, from time to time, utilize one or more third parties to provide certain of the Services (including, but not limited to, as may be set forth in one or more of the Schedules).

10.7 Notices. All notices under this Agreement must be in writing and will be deemed to have been given when such notice is received (i) from United States Postal Service First Class Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, (ii) by courier service, or (iii) by email; provided,

however, that notices received on a weekend or holiday or on a business day after 4:00 p.m. local time will be deemed to have been received on the next business day. Notices will, unless another address is specified in writing, be sent to the addresses indicated below (each of which must include a street address and an email address): Consultant: 120 S. State College Blvd. #200, Brea CA 92821, Attn: David McPherson, Email: [dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com](mailto:dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com) ; and Client: 110 E. Main St. Los Gatos, CA 95030, Attn: Robert Schultz, Email: [RSchultz@losgatosca.gov](mailto:RSchultz@losgatosca.gov) .

**10.8 Entire Agreement; Conflict.** This Agreement (which includes any Schedules or amendments dated as of the Agreement Date or hereafter, including without limitation, amendments of the main body of this Agreement or the Schedules that may add to, subtract from, modify or clarify the Term, the scope of Services and/or the amount of Fees) constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes any prior understandings, agreements, or representations by or between the parties, written or oral, to the extent they relate in any way to the subject matter hereof. Should there ever be a conflict between the terms and conditions of any Schedules and the remainder of this Agreement as set forth in the main body of this Agreement, the terms and conditions of the remainder of this Agreement as set forth in the main body of this Agreement will prevail and be controlling; provided, however, that should there ever be a conflict between the terms and conditions of this Agreement (including any Schedules) and (i) any amendments hereof, the terms and conditions of the amendments hereof will prevail and be controlling, and (ii) the terms and conditions of any Schedule that expressly provides for them to supersede any terms and conditions of the main body of this Agreement, such terms and conditions of such Schedule will prevail and be controlling.

**10.9 Counterparts; Electronic Signatures; Authority.** This Agreement may be signed in any number of counterparts, each of which will constitute an original and all of which, when taken together, will constitute one agreement. Any signed signature pages of this Agreement transmitted by email or other electronic means in a portable document format (PDF) or other clear and visible electronic format will have the same legal effect as an original. Each of the persons signing on behalf of a party hereto represents that he or she has the authority to sign this Agreement on such party's behalf.

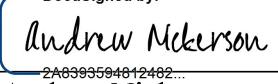
**10.10 No Adverse Construction.** Both parties acknowledge having had the opportunity to participate in the drafting of this Agreement. This Agreement will not be construed against either party based upon authorship. The section headings contained in this Agreement are inserted for convenience only and will not affect in any way the meaning or interpretation of this Agreement.

[Signatures are on the next page]

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereto have entered into this Agreement through their duly authorized representatives as of the Agreement Date.

**CONSULTANT:**

Hinderliter de Llamas and Associates

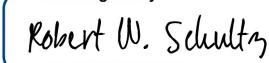
DocuSigned by:  
  
By: Andrew Nickerson  
Andrew Nickerson  
Its: President

2A0393594012402...

**CLIENT:**

Town of Los Gatos

DocuSigned by:  
  
By: Laurel Prevetti 2/23/2022  
Its: Town Manager

DocuSigned by:  
  
By: Robert W. Schultz  
Its: Town Attorney  
2/23/2022

[Any Schedule or Schedules may (but is/are not required to) be attached hereto]



# Town of Los Gatos

## **Cannabis Management Services**

January 24, 2022

**HdL** Companies

**SUBMITTED BY**

HdL Companies  
120 S. State College Blvd., Ste 200  
Brea, CA 92821  
[hdlcompanies.com](http://hdlcompanies.com)

**CONTACT**

David McPherson  
T: 714.879.5000  
E: [dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com](mailto:dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com)

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*Proposal for Cannabis Management Services  
for the Town of Los Gatos*

January 24, 2022

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## I. COVER LETTER

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January 24, 2022

Robert Schultz  
Town Attorney  
Town of Los Gatos  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95030

**Re: Proposal for Cannabis Outreach and Policy Development**

Dear Mr. Schultz,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal for cannabis management services for the Town of Los Gatos. The enclosed scope of services provides a comprehensive program to assist the City with presentations at meetings and workshops, a community survey, an analysis of the potential impacts and revenues that may be generated by cannabis businesses, development of a draft regulatory ordinance and a tax ordinance, and additional hours of general subject matter expertise to be used as needed by the Town.

HdL is recognized as the industry leader in the development, implementation and enforcement of cannabis management programs for local governments in California. We have partnered with over 175 California cities and counties on cannabis-related programs, including ordinance development and review, community outreach and education, merit-based application and permitting processes, cost recovery studies, compliance inspections, financial audits, fiscal analyses and law enforcement training.

Our cannabis team has unmatched expertise, with more than 65 years' combined experience in the development, implementation and enforcement of cannabis regulatory and tax programs. Our team members have conducted over 18,000 cannabis compliance inspections and financial audits in California, Colorado and Nevada, and have reviewed, scored and processed over 3,500 cannabis business applications in the last six years in California. HdL Companies works solely with public agencies and has no private-sector clients in the cannabis industry.

We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the Town of Los Gatos in developing a strategy which meets your program needs. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me by email at [anickerson@hdlcompanies.com](mailto:anickerson@hdlcompanies.com) or David McPherson at [dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com](mailto:dmcpherson@hdlcompanies.com) or by phone at 714.879.5000.

Sincerely,



Andy Nickerson  
President, HdL Companies

## **II. PROPOSED SCOPE OF SERVICES**

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The Town of Los Gatos currently prohibits any and all commercial cannabis businesses. In January of 2021, the Los Gatos Town Council gave direction to staff to explore possibilities for allowing licensed cannabis business within the town limits.

In response to this direction, the Town Attorney held a series of 10 meetings with various community groups to gather input from the public. The majority of the public in attendance expressed an interest in allowing cannabis businesses within the Town as a means of generating revenue, but also expressed concerns about potential health and safety impacts. Staff also conducted an online survey to gauge the community's interest, opposition or concerns.

On January 18th, staff provided an update and report to the Council outlining the responses from the community and requesting authorization to engage the services of a cannabis consultant to evaluate potential amendments to the Town's cannabis ordinance and the development of a cannabis tax ordinance to be placed before the voters at the November general election. The Council approved this request on a 4 to 1 vote and approved a budget adjustment of \$50,000 for this work.

It is anticipated the selected consultant will conduct further outreach to the community and will develop information to help inform the Council's decision making on the issue. This may include preparation of a fiscal analysis to provide projections for the impacts and potential revenues that may be generated from a cannabis tax, as well as presentations to the Council, Planning Commission, Finance Commission or other boards or committees, along with public workshops and an online community survey.

The consultant would also assist the Town in developing a new or amended cannabis regulatory ordinance and a commercial cannabis business tax ordinance to be placed before the voters at the November ballot. It is anticipated that approval and implementation of the regulatory ordinance would likely be dependent upon voter approval of the tax measure. It is also understood that approval of any cannabis regulatory ordinance would require some level of CEQA review, which would likely not occur until the voters have provided their concurrence.

It's anticipated that the Town may allow up to 3 cannabis retailers, but that there is likely not demand or support for cultivation, manufacturing or distribution businesses. Direction regarding the number and type of businesses to allow will ultimately be up to the Town Council.

To assist with this endeavor, the town is now requesting that HdL provide a proposal with the following scope of services:

- A series of meetings with individual Town Council Members to provide a common baseline understanding of the legal cannabis industry and to address questions or concerns they may have.
- Attendance or presentations at up to 4 public meetings or workshops to explore issues or concerns from the community.
- Conducting an online community survey to gauge overall support or opposition.

- A fiscal study to analyze the impacts and potential revenues that could be generated by cannabis businesses, as well as sales tax revenues that are currently being lost through leakage to deliveries from nearby communities.
- Developing a draft cannabis tax ordinance and associated ballot measure to be placed before the voters in November.
- Developing a draft cannabis regulatory ordinance to provide a regulatory program, should the tax measure be approved by the voters.
- Additional hours of general subject matter expertise to be used as needed.

Each of these service objectives is described in greater detail below.

**Objective 1: Attendance, Support or Presentations at Meetings or Workshops**

HdL shall provide attendance or presentations at up to 5 meetings or workshops to help inform discussion and development of a potential cannabis ordinance and associated regulatory program. It is anticipated that this objective may include a series of individual meetings with each Council Member, a public meeting of the Town Council to provide policy direction, attendance at meetings of the Planning Commission, Finance Commission or other boards or committees, and the first reading of the draft regulatory ordinance. These meetings are described below.

- A series of meetings with individual members of the Town Council to discuss issues and to address potential questions or concerns from the community. This series of meetings would count as a single meeting for purposes of this proposal.
- A presentation at a public meeting or workshop to provide an overview of what a regulated cannabis industry might look like for the Town, including revenue projections. This meeting would also provide an opportunity for the Town Council to provide policy direction to staff for development of a regulatory ordinance.
- Attendance and support at a Planning Commission hearing for consideration of the draft cannabis regulatory ordinance.
- Attendance and support at a meeting of the Finance Commission or other boards or committees as needed or requested
- Attendance and support at the first reading of the cannabis regulatory ordinance before the Town Council.

The cost for this objective includes planning and coordination with staff, preparation of a presentation or materials as necessary, meetings attendance, and any follow up. The actual use and scheduling of these meetings would be determined in consultation with Town staff. This objective assumes that all meeting attendance would be virtual. Physical attendance would incur an additional travel charge.

### **Objective 2: Conduct a Community Survey**

HdL shall design and conduct an online community survey that will gather input from residents to gauge their level of support, opposition, interest or specific areas of concern regarding possible commercial cannabis businesses in the Town of Los Gatos. The survey will be designed so that responses can be keyed to the demographics of the Town to ensure they accurately reflect the sentiments of Los Gatos residents and to minimize the potential for intentionally skewing the results.

HdL will prepare a list of questions and any other content for the survey. The Town will host the survey on its website using a readily-available service such as Survey Monkey or OpenGov. Surveys may also be circulated in hard-copy at in-person community meetings, if so desired by the Town. HdL shall compile all survey responses and shall provide a written report summarizing the results.

### **Objective 3: Conduct a Fiscal Analysis**

Consultant HdL shall conduct a fiscal analysis of the potential cannabis industry in the Town of Los Gatos to help inform development of a commercial cannabis business tax ordinance and associated ballot measure. The analysis would seek to develop estimates for the number and size of each type of commercial cannabis business that may seek to locate in the Town, as well as estimates for the gross receipts and tax revenue that may be generated from each type of business under a variety of tax structures and rates.

The analysis would focus primarily on cannabis storefront retailers as the most likely business type to establish itself within the Town. The analysis would discuss both the potential for collecting new revenue through a cannabis business tax and the potential to recapture existing retail taxes that are currently being lost through leakage to deliveries made into the Town by cannabis retailers from nearby communities.

This proposal assumes that HdL will provide one initial draft report for staff to review and critique plus one iterative draft that will incorporate any requested revisions prior to providing the final report. Any additional drafts, iterations or documentation that may be requested by the City would be in addition to the costs shown in the table below and shall be billed at HdL's hourly rate. HdL will advise the Town in advance if additional requested revisions may result in potential exceedances.

### **Objective 4: Develop Draft Cannabis Regulatory Ordinance**

HdL shall develop a draft commercial cannabis regulatory ordinance that is consistent with State laws and reflects industry best practices. HdL will work with Town staff to identify local concerns and priorities, including land use issues and sensitive uses, and to design appropriate regulatory processes and mitigations as necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community. The ordinance will allow the Town to specify the number and types of businesses to be permitted, application and renewal procedures, location requirements, site security measures, inspections and enforcement protocols, operational procedures, and other requirements specific to each allowable type of cannabis business.

**Objective 5: Develop Draft Cannabis Tax Ordinance**

HdL shall develop a draft commercial cannabis tax ordinance to generate Town revenues from licensed cannabis businesses. The ordinance will set maximum tax rates for each type of cannabis business permitted by the Town and will allow the Town Council to set the rates as desired up to the maximum rate. The ordinance shall also specify the schedule and procedures for remitting taxes and shall allow the Town to conduct audits of cannabis businesses to ensure they are reporting and remitting the proper amounts.

HdL shall also provide the ballot resolution as necessary to place the tax measure on the ballot and shall provide revenue projections as required for the ballot statement.

**Objective 5: Technical Assistance and Subject Matter Expertise**

HdL will provide up to 20 hours of general consulting to be utilized on an as-needed basis at the Town's request. Such assistance may include technical assistance, subject matter expertise, education, monitoring of changes to State laws and regulations, participation in conference calls, responding to staff inquires via phone and email, reviewing staff reports to the Town Council, assisting with responses to inquiries from the public, or other issues yet to be determined as requested by the Town.

### **III. COST**

The proposed services are broken down into specific line items in the cost table below. This proposal does not include any additional items that are not contemplated by this scope of services. Any additional services requested by the City will be billed at HdL's hourly rate.

Prices are valid for 90 days from the date of this proposal to allow time for consideration and negotiating a service agreement. Once under contract, prices shall be honored for the first full year, with successive years subject to an annual increase based upon the Consumer Price Index for the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim region.

Scope of Service Objectives	Estimated Cost
<b>Objective 1: Attendance or Presentations at Meetings or Workshops</b> Assumes 5 remote meetings @ \$2,000 each	\$10,000
<b>Objective 2: Conduct a Community Survey</b>	\$9,000
<b>Objective 3: Conduct a Fiscal Analysis</b> Generally \$10,000 to \$20,000; depends on specifics	\$10,000
<b>Objective 4: Develop a Draft Cannabis Regulatory Ordinance</b>	\$8,000
<b>Objective 5: Develop a Draft Cannabis Tax Ordinance</b>	\$8,000
<b>Objective 6: Technical Assistance and Subject Matter Expertise</b> Assumes 20 hours at \$250/hr	\$5,000
<b>Travel</b> (if and as needed for meeting attendance)	\$100 per day
<b>TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
All City costs other than those associated with development of the cannabis tax measure may be fully recoverable from applicants or permittees.	

#### **Conflicts of Interest and Non-Disclosure**

HdL Companies works solely with public agencies and has no private-sector clients in the cannabis industry.

#### **Drafts and Final Work Products**

All work products assume one initial draft for review and comment, one iterative draft to incorporate any desired changes, and one final draft for presentation or publication. Additional drafts requested by the client may result in additional charges at HdL's hourly rate.

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## IV. OPTIONAL SERVICES

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### **Cost Recovery Fee Analysis**

HdL will conduct a fiscal analysis to determine appropriate application and permitting fees. The analysis shall consider the costs of all Town staff time, overhead, fringe benefits, consultants and any other services associated with each step of the cannabis permitting and regulatory process, including both initial application processing and annual permit renewals. HdL staff has experience developing cannabis regulatory fees and doing a "fit gap" analysis of staff responsibilities and time allotted to this program to establish appropriate fees for the Town's level of oversight and enforcement of the regulatory process.

### **Application Process Development**

HdL shall design an application process that includes review, scoring, ranking, interviews and assistance with final selection of cannabis business permittees. The process shall be tailored to provide merit-based ranking or a lottery where appropriate or required for awarding a specified number of permits and to provide a quality assurance standard for those business types where there is no such limit. The process shall include evaluation criteria consistent with state law and the Town's ordinance, to ensure that applicants have addressed all requirements before being allowed to move forward to the permitting process.

HdL will advise the Town on the most appropriate process for its needs, depending upon the number of permits available and the anticipated number of applicants. HdL shall provide all necessary application forms, as well as procedures, guidelines, indemnification forms, background information releases, and other required documents and shall ensure that all information desired by the Town is incorporated into the application form and procedures.

### **Application Reviews, Ranking and Interviews**

HdL staff will conduct an initial screening of all applications for completeness based upon an objective checklist of required documentation. Applications which have been deemed complete will move forward for a full review, including scoring and ranking. Applicants must provide detailed information on how they plan to meet the required criteria. An applicant's point score shall be based on their demonstrated ability to meet or exceed minimum requirements in each category.

Reviews shall include narrative comments that identify both strengths and weaknesses of each application as well as any deficiencies or areas of concern. Reviews shall be adequately detailed to inform the subsequent interview process but shall not contain any recommendations for approval or denial, other than a numerical score.

HdL will design and conduct an interview panel for all applicants that receive passing scores. The interview panel shall consist of designated Town staff, assisted by a subject-matter expert from HdL serving as facilitator. Interviews shall be one hour long, with a half hour between to allow for reaction, discussion and note taking by the panel.

### **Supplemental Background Checks**

HdL is qualified to provide background checks of all owners, principals, managers and employees of cannabis businesses to supplement the State-required Live Scan fingerprint check, which will only disclose Department of Justice (DOJ) records regarding arrests or convictions. Our supplemental background process expands upon the Live Scan information by checking the subject's social security number and up to 5 variations of their name or aliases against over 200 million databases nationwide.

Our supplemental background checks can identify other factors that local governments may wish to consider before granting discretionary business licenses or permits, including other felony offenses, misdemeanor convictions, arrest records, civil judgements, restraining orders, the terrorist screening database, the national sex offender registry, delinquent child support payments, bankruptcies, employment and credit records, and more.

HdL provides an online portal for applicants to submit their application and authorization for background checks and all necessary documentation. Applicants provide their payment directly to HdL through the portal, so there is no cost to the City.

## **V. EXPERIENCE AND RESOURCES**

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### **Company Profile**

Founded in 1983, HdL is a consortium of three companies established to maximize local government revenues by providing audit, compliance, economic development, consulting services and software products. Its audit and consulting services include sales, use and transaction taxes, property taxes, transient occupancy taxes, and a Cannabis Management Program. The firm also provides a variety of enterprise software processing tools for business licensing, code enforcement, animal control, building permits and tracking/billing of false alarms. HdL's systematic and coordinated approach to revenue management and economic data analysis is currently being utilized by over 500 agencies in six states. The firm currently serves 49 counties, 311 cities and 132 transactions tax districts in California.

HdL's key staff has extensive experience serving local government and many have previously held positions in city management, finance, planning, economic development or revenue collection. HdL is a Corporate Partner of the League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties and works extensively with the County Auditor's Association of California, California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (CSMFO) and California Municipal Revenue and Tax Association (CMRTA) on anticipation and planning of programs to strengthen local government revenues.

This close understanding of local government needs coupled with extensive databases and advanced methodology provides for the most relevant, productive and responsive revenue recovery; forecasting; and economic services available.

Our team of professionals has over 65 years of direct experience establishing and implementing cannabis regulatory and taxation programs, including establishing land-use regulations, permit processes, staffing plans, and cost recovery fees; structuring cannabis business tax fees; regulatory compliance; financial audits; and law enforcement training. Our team has conducted over 18,000 cannabis compliance inspections and investigations in California, Colorado and Nevada.

### **Key Personnel**

#### **David McPherson, Compliance Director**

David McPherson works with local agencies to prepare them to mitigate regulatory issues surrounding Proposition 64 and SB 94. Prior to joining HdL, David served 28 years in local government for the County of Orange and the cities of Newport Beach, San Jose and Oakland. David's experience as a law enforcement officer, compliance auditor, and tax administrator has provided him a wealth of experience that makes him uniquely qualified to manage HdL's Cannabis Management Program. While working for the City of Oakland, he became the first Tax Administrator in the country to successfully tax, regulate and audit medical marijuana businesses. David has over 10 years of experience working with cannabis regulatory programs.

David is one of the state's most recognized experts in cannabis regulatory policies, compliance implementation and tax policies. His unique knowledge in horticulture, processing and dispensary operations while working for the City of Oakland has made him one of the pioneers in creating a Cannabis Management Program. He uses his experience to assist local and state agencies in developing cannabis policies for regulation, compliance, auditing and economic development. He worked closely with the League of Cities on the development of the Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA) and helped shape SB 94, the Medicinal Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA).

David provides technical support on cannabis-related matters to the League of Cities, the Police Chief's Association, Rural County Representatives of California and the California State Association of Counties. In addition, David is working collaboratively with the Department of Consumers Affairs, Department of Food & Agriculture, Department of Health Services and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration on the implementation of best practices for regulating the cannabis industry for local agencies.

David received his Bachelor's Degree in History from California State University, Fullerton and his Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University, Long Beach. While at Long Beach, he was named "Future Urban Administrator of the Year".

#### **Matt Eaton, Deputy Compliance Director**

Matt Eaton is the Deputy Compliance Director at HdL and plays a critical role in implementing the Cannabis Compliance Program for local agencies. Prior to joining the firm, he was a progressive law enforcement professional with 30 years' experience conducting criminal/regulatory investigations, and corporate/individual background investigations.

While working as a Supervisory Investigator at the Colorado Department of Revenue in the Marijuana Enforcement Division (MED), Matt managed criminal investigators and civilian staff in the Denver Metro and Longmont field offices. During his six-year tenure at the MED, he conducted approximately 10,000 criminal investigations and compliance reviews, including regulatory and financial investigations. He is a subject matter expert on track and trace systems and understands the complexity of reviewing data to ensure businesses are in compliance with state and local regulations. Matt was responsible for planning, developing and implementing report and field inspection protocols for the agency. He also played an instrumental role in recommending changes to current regulations and identifying essential language for new legislation in Colorado. Matt is well known for his ability to maintain working relationships with cannabis industry leaders and external stakeholders in resolving issues.

Matt received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Biola University and maintained Police Officer Service Training (POST) certification for over 30 years in California and Colorado. He has also served as an adjunct instructor teaching law enforcement principle related to criminology, correctional processes, procedural law, interviews, interrogations and criminal evidence at AIMS Community College in Greeley, Colorado.

### **Ajay Kolluri, Deputy Director of Policy and Audits**

Ajay Kolluri is the Deputy Director of Audits and Operations for HdL's Cannabis Division. Ajay is responsible for overseeing the cannabis audit team and the daily operations of the division, which includes special projects such as community outreach, surveys, grant solicitation, revenue analysis, cost recovery fee studies, contracts, budgeting, and marketing. Ajay previously served as Program Manager for the Office of Cannabis Oversight (OCO) at City of Long Beach. Working within the City Manager's Office, Ajay was responsible for the licensing, regulation and enforcement of all commercial cannabis activity in the City, with one of the largest legal cannabis markets in the state. During his tenure with the OCO, Ajay oversaw the issuance over 200 cannabis business licenses, generating over \$10 million in annual revenue for the City. Ajay has experience in all aspects of cannabis oversight, including public health and education, planning and zoning, building inspections, enforcement, social equity, fee development, economic analysis and revenue projections.

Prior to overseeing the OCO, Ajay worked in public finance, serving as Budget Analyst for the Department of Financial Management in the City of Long Beach. Ajay holds a Bachelor's degree in business economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a Master's degree in public policy from the University of Michigan.

### **Mark Lovelace, Senior Policy Advisor**

Mark Lovelace has 16 years of broad experience in public policy, community engagement and advocacy and is recognized as a leader in advancing the statewide discussion of medical and recreational cannabis as a policy issue in California.

Mark served on the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors from 2009 through 2016 where he was instrumental in developing a comprehensive approach to regulating cannabis, including a voter-approved tax on commercial cultivation and an innovative track and trace pilot program. Mark established and co-chaired the Medical Marijuana Working Group for the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and helped draft CSAC's legislative platform for cannabis issues. Mark pioneered the first regional summit on cannabis issues in 2015 which helped guide the development of SB 643 and AB 243, two components of the Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA).

Mark has worked extensively with public agencies and statewide associations on cannabis issues, including CSAC, Rural County Representatives of California, the Association of California Water Agencies, the North Coast Resource Partnership, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Board, the North Coast Regional Water Board, the Bureau of Cannabis Control, State legislators, and others. He has led numerous presentations, workshops and panel discussions on cannabis issues and has been a sought-after speaker on the topic for government agencies, community organizations and industry groups.

Mark received his Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Design from San Jose State University. Prior to his time on the Board, he worked for many years as a respected advocate on land use, planning, development and environmental issues.

### **David Ross, Senior Compliance Inspector**

David Ross is a Certified Fraud Examiner with 7 years of experience conducting gaming and non-gaming audits and investigations of tribal gaming facilities. David's experience includes conducting forensic accounting investigations into cash larceny, expense reimbursement fraud, check fraud, credit card fraud, payroll fraud, wire fraud, insider trading, construction fraud in addition to litigation support.

David previously worked as Surveillance Officer and Internal Auditor for the Shingle Springs Tribal Gaming Commission, where he was responsible for analyzing financial statements for a facility with revenues exceeding \$20 million per month. David also analyzed internal controls and established policies and procedures to ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations. In addition, David conducted surveillance reviews and investigations into criminal activity including check and credit card fraud, skimming, money laundering, drug activity and other violations.

David holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Vanguard University in Costa Mesa and a Master's Degree in Finance from California State University San Bernardino. He is a member of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners.

### **Michelle Shaw, Compliance Inspector**

Michelle conducts onsite inspections, examinations and other actions to monitor compliance with established standards for local licensed cannabis businesses. Prior to joining HdL, she was a Compliance Specialist Officer at a large, multinational bank where she managed, validated and oversaw the effectiveness and accuracy of numerous compliance issues within the consumer retail space. Throughout her eight years of experience at the bank, she performed assessments of affiliate businesses to determine compliance/non-compliance of their processes and procedures pursuant to bank standards and state regulations.

A graduate of Cypress College, Michelle holds a Foundations of Banking Risk certificate from the Global Association of Risk Professionals and a paralegal certificate from the Southern California College of Business and Law.

### **Jeff Burris, Background Investigator / Compliance Inspector**

Jeff Burris has over 28 years' experience as a Law Enforcement Professional. Jeff began his career with the Orange County Sheriff's Office before moving to the Ontario Police Department, where he advanced to Corporal, Police Detective and Sergeant before retiring as a Lieutenant.

Jeff worked various investigative assignments during his career, including both criminal and non-criminal investigations. While working as a Police Detective Jeff conducted personnel background investigations for sworn, non-sworn, administrative, and confidential employees. These investigations included criminal checks, credit checks, prior employment verification, personal reference verification, driving records, pre-polygraph questioning, neighborhood canvassing, and oral interviews. His assignments also included annual State audits for regulatory compliance.

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Jeff received his Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Management from the California State University in Long Beach. Jeff has completed numerous specialized training courses in investigative techniques, including a course in background investigations by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (CA POST), and is a former member of the California Background Investigators Association (CBIA).

#### **Elizabeth Eumurian, Senior Auditor**

Elizabeth Eumurian is a Senior Auditor at HdL. Her primary role is to conduct financial audits, evaluate cannabis applications and conduct background checks. As part of the audit program, she will be conducting and preparing analytical information through the CATS™ program to prepare Tax Analytical Remittance Reports (TARR) summaries to evaluate under reporting or anomalies in the remittance of tax payments to local jurisdictions.

Elizabeth previously worked as a senior auditor in the entertainment industry. In this role, she executed testing procedures for targeted audit programs, analyzed findings and prepared audit and compliance reports. She also has experience working for a large financial institution analyzing data for reporting anomalies and performing internal audits. Elizabeth has recently done work for Blythe, California City, Coachella, Cotati, Desert Hot Springs, Long Beach, Mammoth Lakes, Moreno Valley, Perris, San Bernardino, and Vallejo.

Elizabeth earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in History from California State University and holds a certificate in CannaBusiness from Oaksterdam University.

#### **Odette Mikhail, Auditor**

Odette Mikhail conducts cannabis revenue audits at HdL. Odette previously worked as a senior auditor at public accounting firms. In this role, she executed testing procedures for audit and review engagements, identified accounting issues, reviewed internal controls, and prepared financial reports and statements. Odette earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting and Business Administration from Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt.

#### **Tao Lu, Auditor**

Tao Lu works as an Auditor for HdL's Cannabis Management Team. Tao has two and a half years' experience as an accountant with an emphasis in information technology and food manufacturing industries. He also has public audit work experience at RSM China. Tao was born and raised in China. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance from Syracuse University in New York before relocating to Southern California with his family.

### **Valerie Carter, Auditor**

Valerie Carter works as an Auditor for HdL's Cannabis Management Team. Valerie has over 5 years of public sector work experience focusing on public policy, auditing and revenue tax implementation. She was a Tax Auditor II for the City of Oakland's Revenue Management Bureau and an Assistant Management Analyst for the City of Berkeley's Transportation division. Valerie earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Cal Poly Pomona, with an emphasis on Finance, Real Estate, and Law.

### **Eric Magana, Auditor**

Eric Magana works as an Auditor for HdL's Cannabis Management Team, conducting revenue audits of licensed cannabis businesses to ensure they are accurately reporting their revenues and remitting the proper amount of fees or taxes. Prior to joining HdL, Eric worked as a Loan Specialist for the U.S. Small Business Administration, where he processed over 5,000 business loans and grant applications. Eric holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Administrative Studies from University of California at Riverside.

### **Teresa Schneider, Background Investigator / Compliance Inspector**

Teresa Schneider served for 28 years with the Montclair Police Department, including 12 years in the Background Investigations Unit. In this capacity, Teresa was responsible for conducting background investigations of all City business license applicants, as well as all sworn and non-sworn positions within the police and fire departments and of civilians requesting access to police department records.

Teresa previously served 4 years in the U.S. Army's nursing program at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. During this time she attended college at the University of Kentucky and Austin Peay State University. After receiving an Honorable Discharge in 1990, Teresa was hired by the Montclair Police Department. During her 28-year career, she worked numerous assignments, including patrol, K9, detective bureau, court liaison, volunteer coordinator, and red-light automated enforcement. Teresa received many awards throughout her career, including Officer of the Year.

### **Cheryl Lee-Steele, Business Application Reviewer**

Cheryl Lee-Steele is a Business Application Reviewer at HdL whose primary role is to evaluate cannabis business applications for compliance with State law, local ordinance and industry best practices. A small business owner and bookkeeper for over 30 years, she has direct knowledge of best business practices and how to comply with regulatory requirements.

Cheryl attended Chaffee College for accounting and is a Certified Public Bookkeeper through the National Association of Certified Public Bookkeepers.

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**Lisa Davis, Business Application Reviewer**

Lisa Davis is a Business Application Reviewer at HdL whose primary role is to evaluate cannabis business applications for compliance with State law, local ordinance and industry best practices. A small business owner and operator for 20 years prior to joining the firm, she is familiar with operational best practices, inventory control measures and compliance with government and industry regulations and standards.

**Kristi Lervold, Administrative Assistant**

Kristi is the Administrative Assistant for cannabis team. In this role she supports individual team members, coordinates internal processes, and assists with client requests, contracts, billing reconciliation and invoicing. Kristi's 18-year career includes ten years as the administrative assistant to HdL's CFO, handling various operational responsibilities and supporting financial functions, as well as experience in the occupational health industry, facilitating services for federal, state, and local government clients.

Kristi holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in Business Management with a minor in Business Administration.

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## **VI. REFERENCES**

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