



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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New York, NY 10001  
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[www.nyc.gov/mcb4](http://www.nyc.gov/mcb4)

**JESSICA CHAIT**  
Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**  
District Manager

December 6th, 2024

Chris Alexander  
Executive Director  
NYS of Cannabis Management  
Harriman State Office Building Campus 1220 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12207

Tremaine Wright  
Chairwoman  
Cannabis Control Board  
Harriman State Office Building Campus 1220 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12207

RE: 302 Eighth Avenue – BlazinUP LLC

Dear Mr. Alexander and Ms. Wright,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (“MCB4”) votes by 35 for, 1 against, 1 abstaining, and 0 present-not-eligible to recommend approval of the application of Social & Economic Equity CUARD applicant BlazinUP LLC for an Adult-Use Retail Dispensary at 302 Eighth Avenue.

BlazinUP is owned by Miguel Bernard and Matthew Ward, individuals with deep connections to New York City. Mr. Bernard has worked in the CUNY system for the past 18 years and Mr. Ward has been a consultant in cannabis following a career in affordable housing development and political activism around the country and in his hometown of New York. BlazinUP LLC is seeking an Adult-Use retail dispensary license. Adult-Use retail dispensaries are the principal license to conduct retail sales of adult-use cannabis products to consumers over twenty-one (21) years old. Retail dispensaries are allowed to acquire, possess, sell, and deliver adult-use cannabis products from their own licensed premises and licensed distributors, in addition to other select items including paraphernalia.

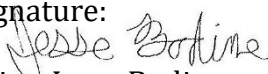
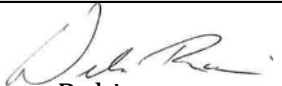

BlazinUP is demonstrating an understanding of the complexity of the OCM regulations with Mr. Ward’s deep experience in cannabis policy and advocacy. The Applicant presented a detailed floor plan, a clear outline of their business operation and a robust security plan. The Applicant has site control of the space, which was a former 7 Eleven and expects to open in January.

MCB4 recommends approval if and only if the Applicant agrees to the following stipulations<sup>1</sup>:

- Actively engage with the local Block Associations and other community stakeholders with the aim of solving problems if they arise
- Clarifying the intended hours of operation and confirming no delivery services
- Attesting to no use of the rear yard for this business
- The Applicant will operate the dispensary in accordance with the methods outlined in the applicant’s MCB4 Cannabis Task Force application and following letter (annexed hereto as (Exhibit A&B)).

MCB4 votes to approve this CUARD Applicant for the proposed location. This application reminded us of the many obstacles CUARD applicants have faced. BlazinUP after being awarded a license essentially lost their “spot” to another applicant. MCB4 does not believe that those who have followed the law by waiting for a license, such as this Applicant, should be penalized by a faulty rollout of legalized cannabis in New York and the ensuing proliferation of illegal smoke-shops and dispensaries in our district. However, it continues to be increasingly difficult to recommend approval on blocks already saturated with such illicit dispensaries.

MCB4 remains supportive of increased enforcement against illegal enterprises. Despite the current landscape, the community remains hopeful that a cannabis dispensary, when operated in a legal, responsible, and neighborly way, can: (a) compete with, and displace, illicit and dangerous dispensaries and smoke-shops; (b) create jobs within our district; (c) contribute to New York’s tax revenue.

MCB4 District Office	MCB4 Cannabis Task Force	Date
Signature:  Print: Jesse Bodine	Signature:  Print: Delores Rubin	Date: 12/6/24
<b>Applicant</b>		
Print: <b>Matthew Ward</b>	Signature: 	Date: <b>12/06/ 2024</b>

Sincerely,

Jessica Chait  
Chair, MCB4



Delores Rubin  
Chair, MCB4 Cannabis Task Force



<sup>1</sup> Applicant agrees to these stipulations as the basis for the community support of this application and acknowledges that all of these stipulations are essential prerequisites to the MCB4 recommendation regarding this application. Applicant agrees to have these stipulations incorporated in the method of operation of its dispensary license. The stipulations in this application constitute the entire agreement between MCB4 and applicant and may only be altered in writing signed by MCB4 and applicant. These stipulations supersede any oral statements or representations in connection with this application



November 9th, 2024

**BlazinUP, LLC**  
302 8th Avenue  
New York, NY 10001

**Manhattan Community Board 4**  
Cannabis Task Force  
330 W. 42nd Street, 26th Floor  
New York, NY 10036

Dear Members of the Manhattan Community Board 4 Cannabis Task Force,

Subject: Amendment to BlazinUP LLC Applicant Questionnaire for Retail Dispensary at 302 8th Avenue, NY, NY 10001

We are writing to amend and clarify certain responses provided in BlazinUP LLC's initial applicant questionnaire as we seek community board approval to operate our New York State-licensed retail cannabis dispensary at 302 8th Avenue. The amendments we wish to make pertain to the following categories:

### **1. Hours of Operation**

BlazinUP LLC intends to establish hours of operation that are mindful of local residents and business neighbors, while also accommodating our customers' needs. We propose to amend our operating hours as follows:

- **Monday through Thursday:** 10:00 AM – 9:00 PM
- **Friday and Saturday:** 10:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- **Sunday:** 11:00 AM – 8:00 PM

These hours reflect our commitment to reducing late-night activity while ensuring that customers have ample opportunity to shop during peak periods. We will reassess hours periodically based on community feedback and operational needs.

## **2. Delivery Service**

To further serve our customers and reduce foot traffic, we plan to offer a streamlined delivery service. All deliveries will be conducted by licensed, trained personnel with a focus on minimizing disruption and ensuring security in transit. Additionally:

- Delivery services will be available from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM, daily.
- Delivery vehicles will use designated loading areas to avoid congestion, and no vehicles will idle on the premises.
- All delivery packaging will be discreet and comply with New York State regulations to protect customer privacy and reduce visibility of cannabis products.

We are committed to minimizing any potential impact delivery operations may have on the surrounding neighborhood.

## **3. Backyard Space Use**

Per the terms of our lease, the use of the backyard space is not permissible. Additionally, we have no intention of amending the lease to ever make use of the space.

These amendments reflect our commitment to being a responsible community member, and we are open to ongoing dialogue to address any additional concerns. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with the Community Board and look forward to your feedback on our proposed amendments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Managing Partner,

BlazinUP LLC

# MCB4 Cannabis Licensee Application

Email \*

matt@64sqrs.com

Corporation Name \*

BlazinUP LLC

\*Doing Business As \*

BlazinUP LLC

Address (or intended address) \*

302 8th Ave, New York, NY 10001

Attorney/Representative

Axel Bernabe

Owner \*

Miguel Bernard and Matthew Ward

Please list all individuals and entities with financial interest in this business and percentage of ownership: \*

Miguel Bernard 51%, Matthew Ward 49%

Phone Number/Email Address \*

916-340-4262


Application Type \*

- Adult-Use Retail Dispensary
- Adult-Use Retail Dispensary & Consumption Facility
- Microbusiness
- Registered organization (ROD)
- Other: .....

Does the Applicant have a fully executed lease? \*

- Yes
- No

Please upload an Executed Lease or Landlord Letter of Intent (LOI) for your intended location.

 302 eigh Lease ...

 Add file

Please upload the Site & Security plans for your business.

 SECURITY PLAN ...

 Add file

Property Owner Information: Name, Phone Number, Business Address & Email Address \*

Herschel Torkin, 646-932-3124, nevin@torkiangroup.com

### Applicant Priority

- Social & Economic Equity Applicant
- CAURD Licensee
- CAURD Applicant
- N/A

Has the owner filed with the Cannabis Control Board/OCM? \*

Yes

No

If no, when does the owner plan on filing?

.....

Pursuant to § 119.1 of the Adult-Use Cannabis Regulations, has the applicant confirmed that the location is **NOT** (a) on the same road and within 200 feet of a building occupied exclusively as a house of worship? \*

Yes

No

(b) on the same road and within 500 feet of the entrance of a building occupied exclusively as a school? \*

Yes

No



(c) on the same road and within 500 feet of a structure and its grounds occupied exclusively as a public youth facility? \*

- Yes
- No
- N/A (see § 119.1 (3))

Are there any drug treatment facilities, harm reduction facilities, playgrounds or parks within 1000 ft. of the proposed cannabis business location? If yes, please list: \*

NO

### Community Notification/Relations

List all: block associations; tenant associations, co-op boards or condo boards of residential buildings; and community groups that applicant has notified regarding its application. For each please list both the organization and individual you contacted. \*

- Option 1

If the location has residential units in the same building, please list both the method and date of when notice was provided to those residential units and can you confirm the residential units are aware of this application?

Landlord and Broker made tenants aware of the location's intended use. Notification was made to tenants at 302 8th Ave, New York, NY 10001, before BlazinUP LLC entered into the attached lease. (Landlord was actively marketing the location to cannabis tenants, specifically CAURD licensees)

Will applicant provide owner cell phone number to neighbors and respond to complaints that arise? \*

Yes

No

Will applicant inform the Community Board of its job openings and/or provide a hyperlink to applicants jobs webpage? \*

Yes

No

### Background

Does the owner(s) have a connection to Community District 4? \*

Business Owner

Resident

Other

None

Please provide a brief overview of the applicant's previous business experience. Please list all owned/operated businesses within Community District 4. \*

Miguel Bernard has worked for the CUNY system as a higher-ed administrator for the past 18 years, specifically in an A/V supporting role.

Matthew Ward works in two capacities: A.) Progressive issue and democratic political consultant, at the local, state and federal levels. He focuses on climate policy, AAPI and Latino candidates. B.) Cannabis consultant, specializing in social equity applicants and operators like myself - to build profitable and equitable businesses for both owners, employees, customers and fellow community members.

If the applicant has previous experience in the cannabis industry, please explain.

Matthew Ward has consulted in the cannabis industry for 7 (seven) years, working to legalize local and state markets in Michigan, Oklahoma, California and now in my home state of New York, utilizing the ballot initiative and legislative processes. Additionally, he has consulted post market legislation and regulation, advising on securing licenses, real estate, investor support and operator guidance for businesses across the supply chain. Because of his progressive democratic roots, he specializes in social equity policy and implementation. New York's regulated cannabis vision has equity as its guiding light. he is excited to be a pioneer of New York's market, in his home borough.

Is there any other information the applicant would like to provide the Board regarding work or life experience?

Matthew Ward began his career originally as an affordable housing project developer, specializing in low-income and homeless housing solutions. He has a deep understanding of how to lift up struggling communities, balancing the interests of businesses and residents, while creating more equitable neighborhoods.

## Operational Details

State the name and type of business previously located in this space. \*

7/11 (Convenience Store)


What are the hours of operation M-F? \*

10:30AM - 9:30PM

What are the hours of operation Sat-Sun? \*

10:00AM - 1:00PM (SAT), 10:00AM - 7:00PM (SUN)

Please upload applicants security plan or provide detailed description in the next response. \*

 SECURITY PLAN ...

 Add file

Please provide the applicant's detailed security plan (if the plan was uploaded, enter "Uploaded") \*

uploaded

What is the anticipated increase in sidewalk traffic? How will you manage the sidewalk, crowd control, vehicular traffic? Will you use utilize stanchions and ropes? \*

We do expect increased sidewalk traffic in the opening months of operation. We will implement best practices for managing lines with stanchions and ropes so that we can control the traffic efficiently. Additionally we will have staff and security monitoring the sidewalk so that we are safely controlling traffic.

How many employees does the applicant expect to employ? How many full-time/part-time? \*

We expect to employ at least 10 full time employees and 3 part time employees.

Please provide the applicant's hiring plan; please explain if the applicant will take steps to hire from CB4. \*

As a minority owned business, it's important to me that we are hiring from the community and that the store workers reflect the consumers we are servicing. We plan to post the job opportunities on job boards that target residents of CB4. We will also post flyers in the areas surrounding the store. To attract the best talent, we provide competitive compensation and benefits relative to the market.

What products does the applicant expect to carry? \*

We expect to carry the following products from licensed cultivators and processors in the State: cannabis flower, vapes, tinctures, gummies, beverages, and ointments. Our focus will be on products that allow customers to experience the healing benefits of the plant. We will offer educational events and social gatherings for the city to provide our customers with an understanding of the benefits of the products in our stores.

Will the applicant accept online or telephone orders? If yes, how will the applicant verify the purchaser is over the age of 21? (See § 123.10 (d)(4)) \*

YES we will accept orders online. We will verify the ID of the applicant online before we complete the transaction.

Does the applicant intend to operate a delivery service? \*

As of 5/28/2023, the revised Adult-Use Regulations do now allow a business licensed to sell adult-use cannabis to simultaneously hold a delivery license/make deliveries. (See § 123.20 (c)(1))

Yes

No

If this dispensary includes or plans to include on-site consumption at any point, please describe \* how it will be managed. What is the capacity? What environmental monitoring and ventilation measures will be taken to protect shoppers and staff from second hand smoke and other potential hazards? If not, please write n/a.

NO onsite consumption.

Do you use/plan to use any outdoor space? If so, please explain how you intend to use the \* space.

NO outdoor space.

Is the entrance of the store ADA compliant?

Yes

No

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