

# Sira Naturals

829 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA

Boston Cannabis Board  
October 14, 2020



SIRA  NATURALS

# Our Team



## Experienced Local Professionals Focused on Community



**David Rosenberg**

*Founder, President & Board Member*



**Lou Karger**

*Founder, Treasurer & Board Member*



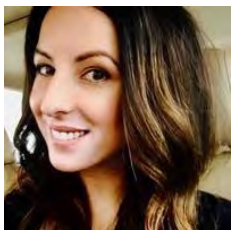
**Dwan Packnett**

*VP Government Relations & Community Investment*



**Yareni (Yari) Sanchez**

*Goulston & Storrs*



**Michelle Foley**

*Regional Dispensary Manager*



**Christian Regnier**

*Goulston & Storrs*

# Who Are We?



Founded in 2013, Sira Naturals is one of the most respected vertically integrated cannabis companies and one of the largest cannabis industry employers in the state, with over 200 employees and growing.

Sira Naturals is the first and only company in Massachusetts under a Collective Bargaining Agreement, voluntarily unionizing with UFCW Local 1445. Sira Naturals is dedicated to creating living wage jobs for Boston residents, meaningfully ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce by developing deep partnerships with our neighbors and investing directly in the needs of the City of Boston.

Since becoming operational in 2014, Sira Naturals has had zero deficiencies and zero incidences – the only cannabis operator with this accomplishment in the Commonwealth. Sira Naturals' operations are often used and cited as the gold standard by state and local agencies.

Focused on diversity and inclusion, Sira Naturals founded the first in the state Accelerator program to encourage empowerment entrepreneurs, and is a co-founder of CultivatED, the first in the nation jails-to-jobs program.



# Operational Experience. Community Focused.

## Expanding a Diverse Leadership Team & Community Investment Strategy

- Creation of Government Relations & Community Investment Department as part of Leadership Team
- Regional Director added to Leadership Team
- Creation of Advisory Board, chaired by Linda Champion
- Creation of *Sira.Community*
- Voluntarily Unionized with UFCW Local 1445
- Creation and expansion of the state's first Accelerator program to support Economic Empowerment entrepreneurs
- Over \$475,000/year directed to Back Bay, City of Boston, and economic empowerment licensing

## Sira Naturals Successful Compliance Record

- Zero incidents for Break-ins or Theft
- Zero incidents for Diversion
- Zero incidents for Public Nuisance



Slide numbers are color coded to correlate with BCB Scoring Criteria

# Boston Cannabis Board Scoring Guide

## Slide Index



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# Diversity and Inclusion



*Sira Accelerator Fellow - First Economic Empowerment Team to Receive Compensation from industry License (Purient)*



*One on One Mentorship with Sira Naturals Ownership*

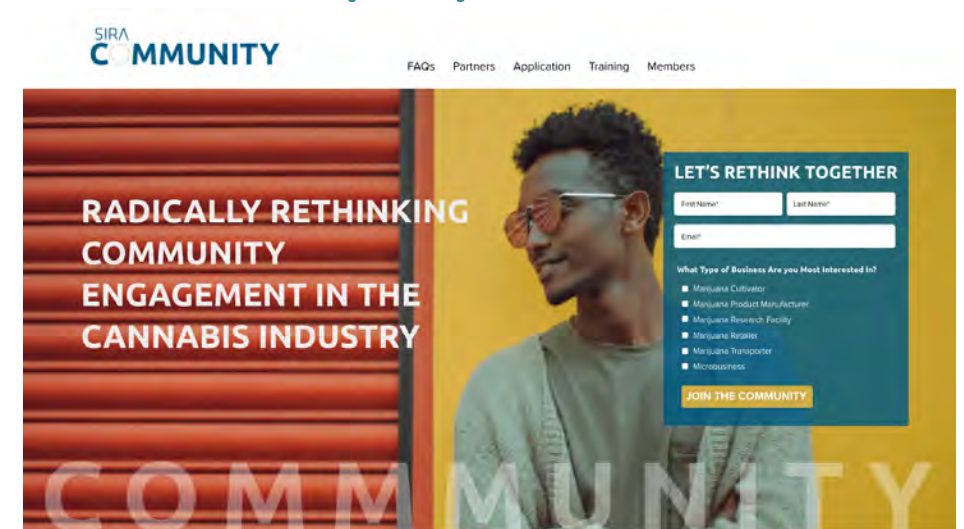


*Linda Champion, Chair of Sira Naturals Board of Advisors*



# Radically Rethinking Community Engagement for Equity & Social Justice

People of color from communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs want more than just a job in the cannabis industry. They want and deserve the opportunity to build a career, to own an adult use cannabis business beyond a retail store or thrive within the structure and security of a publicly traded cannabis company. Most of all, having languished under unjust laws and systemic racism, they deserve the right to choose their own destiny and place in the legal cannabis industry.



**Sira.Community is a three-phased equity driven Diversity & Inclusion and Employment program** of community engagement, work force development and mentoring entrepreneurs designed to provide people in disaffected communities information and opportunities that open a path toward a career in cannabis.

## Sira.Community Goals

**ENGAGE:** Support job opportunities & local organizations

**HIRE:** Actively identify, recruit, and provide useful resources for employment and entrepreneurship

**ACCELERATE:** Provide coaching, workshops & business strategies to support entrepreneurial journeys at every stage



# Sira.Community

Community Members

1. You Can't Be What You Can't See



2. There's a Place for You in the Cannabis Industry



3. Empowering Entrepreneurs



Sira Community Partner & Alumni Network



Economic Mobility



# Diversity & Inclusion | Goals



Sira Naturals is pleased to support, create and develop programs and partnerships benefitting Bostonians to ensure our business reflects the demographics of the City of Boston for minorities, women, veterans, persons with disabilities, immigrant populations, and people of all gender identities and sexual orientation by promoting the following goals:

- Build careers with opportunities for economic mobility by embracing diversity through targeted outreach including informational seminars, workforce development training programs, *UFCW Local 1445 Apprentice programs*, robust community engagement, and social media campaigns through Sira.Community to attract and hire people living in Dorchester, Mattapan & Roxbury - Boston communities disproportionately impacted by the Failed War on Drugs
- Provide mentorship opportunities for Economic Empowerment and Social Equity entrepreneurs through our Accelerator program to create a new generation of cannabis businesses in the greater Boston area
- Engage in innovative outreach tools through partnerships with legal service agencies, faith-based organizations, and law enforcement organizations (*e.g.* Suffolk D.A. and Sheriff's Offices) and participation in local "jail-to jobs" programs like Boston's very own *Operation Exit* or the state-funded fellowship-based *CultivatED* program
- Incorporate diversity and inclusion values throughout all levels of Sira Naturals, with a particular focus on minorities and women for hiring, promotion and retention both internally and through our vendor, professional, and contracted services relationships.

# Diversity & Inclusion | Programs

*Sira has three distinct programs that will promote equity among the demographic populations identified by the Boston Cannabis Board*

## **You Can't Be What You Can't See – Community Engagement**

- Engage community members where they are by holding community meetings to provide access to information about the cannabis industry to address the history and stigma of cannabis for those skeptical of the industry
- Present historical and contextual information to build careers in cannabis
- Hold informational seminars in all areas of disproportionate impact

## **There's A Place for You in the Cannabis Industry – Workforce Development**

- Engaging in targeted workforce development and training
- Expanded outreach for all Sira Naturals job postings and contracts for services
- UFCW Apprenticeship Program and outreach efforts

## **Sira Accelerator – Empowering Entrepreneurs**

- First accelerator program in Massachusetts for social equity and economic empowerment applicants offering mentorship from Sira's experienced from Sira business executives, partners, and community leaders
- Accelerator Fellows leverage Sira's manufacturing and distribution networks as well as cannabis industry experts
- Access to Sira Wholesale Agreements

# Diversity & Inclusion | Measurements

## You Can't Be What You Can't See

- A series of 12-15 community engagement events/social activities/informational seminars annually in Dorchester, Mattapan & Roxbury
- Tracking participant engagement through attendance and electronic sign up (EventBrite or Salesforce), creating database of participant profiles and measuring interest through continued and sustained in-person engagement and a robust social media campaign including Sira.Community, texts, emails, Facebook, Snap Chat & Instagram

## There's A Place for You in the Cannabis Industry

- Hosting 2 Cannabis Job Fairs annually in partnership with IBEW, Sira Fellows, Mass Hire, Boston Office of Economic Development, UFCW Local 1445 and Boston Workforce Development & Urban League
- Tracking the number of participants applying for jobs in the Cannabis industry and rate of success. Follow up interviews with participant statistical sample to gauge program effectiveness

## Sira Accelerator

- Invitation to program based on referral/recommendation; tours of Sira's cultivation, manufacturing and retail facilities
- Tracking participants' ability to move through the program milestones towards a license and opening the business



# Supporting Entrepreneurs



## Program Goals

Sira will continue our work through Accelerator 2.0 to assist disproportionately impacted, economic empowerment, and social justice entrepreneurs entering the Massachusetts cannabis industry.

## Program Metrics

Accelerator 2.0 will be assessed annually and measured by the following:

- Number of groups accepted to the Program
- Progress through various stages of the Program
- Number of groups that successfully complete the Program
- Qualitative surveys of participants to gauge perceptions of the Program
- Number of cannabis licenses given to Program participants
- Number of businesses owned or controlled by Program Groups

Sira is actively working toward these goals with two of our Sira Fellows already achieving license approvals from the Cannabis Control Commission

Along with students and faculty from the Harvard Business School and Harvard Law School, the Sira Accelerator curriculum covers a range of topics specific to the cannabis industry, including:

- 1) Setting up your LLC or other structure, including tax implications, accommodating investors, etc.
- 2) Negotiating Leases
- 3) Negotiating Host Community Agreements
- 4) Standard Operating Procedures

# Employment & Workforce Development



Sira Naturals – The First & Only Union CBA in Massachusetts

# Employment Plan



## Historic, Voluntary Partnership with UFCW Local 1445

- The first and only Cannabis Union Employer in Massachusetts
- Living wages, comprehensive benefits and career pathways
- Creation of first ever UFCW Cannabis Apprenticeship Program

## Boston First

- Implement local hiring preference for Boston residents
- Commitment to reflect the demographics of the City of Boston

## The CultivatED Program

- Co-founders of the first in the nation cannabis jail-to-jobs program
- Innovative partnerships with Greater Boston Legal Services, Lawyers for Civil Rights, Roxbury Community College, MA Association of Community Colleges, Suffolk County Sheriff's Dept., and the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts



*Announcing CultivatED with Partner Organizations*



# Employment Plan | Hiring Boston Residents

## Specific, Measurable Goal

Our goal for local employment of Boston residents is to hire 75% of our Boylston store employees from Boston neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by the Failed War on Drugs. Such a goal is critical to ensure that these communities know that there is a place for them in the cannabis industry in the iconic Back Bay.

## Programs

- Sira has created “**Boston First**” to prioritize our job advertisements and recruit Boston residents living in Dorchester, Mattapan and Roxbury – Boston communities disproportionately impacted by the Failed War on Drugs.
- **You Can’t Be What You Can’t See** – By working closely with community members, Sira can help address the suspicion and disconnect of the cannabis industry that may prevent people living in disproportionately impacted communities from pursuing careers in cannabis and opportunity for economic mobility.
- **There’s a Place for You in the Cannabis Industry** – Sira voluntarily sought a Collective Bargaining Agreement with UFCW Local 1445 and we are very pleased that our employees ratified the Agreement this past August and will now have access to living wage “portable” union jobs.

# Employment Plan | Employing Minorities & Women

## Specific, Measurable Goals

Our vision for Sira Naturals is that we are a company whose workforce at our Boylston store reflects the City of Boston. To hold ourselves accountable to this vision, we set a goal that our workforce will be 60% people of color and 50% women.

## Programs

**You Can't Be What You Can't See** – Many potential job candidates may not be aware of the cannabis industry or be aware that it could be a career option. Our community engagement will face the issue of discrimination and social injustice in the cannabis industry, provide access to job information, and directly address the history and stigma of cannabis. Sira Naturals' outreach efforts will encompass all areas of disproportionate impact in Boston in order to recruit more women and people of color into our workforce.

**There's A Place for You in the Cannabis Industry** – By targeting workforce development and training sessions to Boston neighborhoods, Sira Naturals can ensure that job postings and contracts for services reach a wide audience of women and people of color. Sira will screen out resume criteria that inadvertently leads to adverse impact discrimination (e.g. education level, physical ability), offer flexible work schedules, and encourage referrals from people of color and women. Job candidates can also find information through our Sira.Community website – a unique, media rich page showcasing Sira's culture, leadership and employees.

# Employment Plan | Competitive Wages & Benefits

## Specific, Measurable Goals

By voluntarily becoming a union employer, Sira Naturals empowers our employees to negotiate competitive wages and benefits.

## Programs

- **Working with UFCW Local 1445**, Sira Naturals has negotiated competitive wages and benefits guaranteed by collective bargaining agreement
- **Sira Naturals has industry-leading employee benefits:** Living Wages, 401k, Stock Options, Health Care Options
- **Transportation Subsidies** - Sira subsidizes MBTA Passes & Blue Bikes memberships for all employees and promotes from within, Paid Time Off, Sick Leave, UFCW Apprenticeship Program
- **Culture Committee** - Sira has an active Culture Committee led by our employees who regularly engage in community activities of their choice. Our energized and committed Sira Somerville employees participating in a “community clean-up” in August and our employee-based Voter Registration & 2020 Census Drives



# Employment Plan | Employing Individuals with Criminal Records

## Specific, Measurable Goals

1. Over the course of the next year, Sira Naturals will continue its partnership with the CultivatED Program, resulting in the hiring of at least one individual per CultivatED cohort.
2. Sira Naturals will implement an employment policy to provide otherwise qualified applicants with sealing and expungement services to remove the CORI from their records.

## Programs

- Sira is a Founding Member of the CultivatED program and will continue our longstanding support of CultivatED (\$25,000/year) to assist in the efforts to expunge court records and work to recruit, hire, and train CultivatED Program graduates
- In partnership with Greater Boston Legal Services and other community legal service agencies, Sira Naturals will seek to accomplish its goals to seal or expunge court records by individuals that are adversely impacted by the Failed War on Drugs



MASS CultivatED

# Community Support & Feedback



# Community Investment | Boston

## Community Investment in the Back Bay

- Committed \$150,000 Annually

## Sira Accelerator Program

- \$300,000 Annually for Economic Empowerment Entrepreneurs

## The CultivatED Program

- \$25,000 annually as a Founding Member



*PPE Donation to  
Boston Police Union  
w/Korean American  
Association*

Engagement, Education & Employment





# Community Support



## Letters from Public Officials

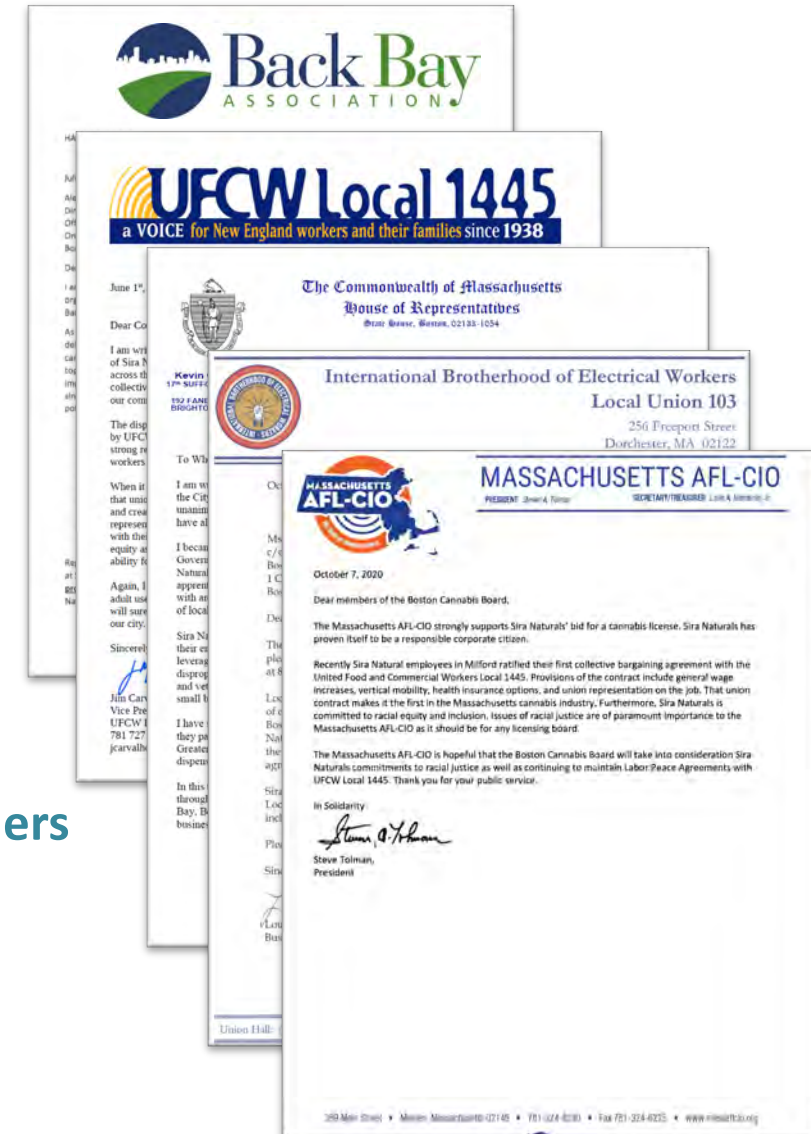
- City Councilor Kenzie Bok
- State Senator William Brownsberger
- State Senator Nicholas Collins
- State Representative Chyna Tyler  
*(Chair of Black & Latino Caucus, Chair of the Boston Delegation)*
- State Representative Kevin Honan

## Letters from Community Groups

- Back Bay Association
- UFCW Local 1445
- IBEW Local 103
- Steven Tolman, President, Massachusetts AFL-CIO

## Community Members, Abutters, Community Organizations & Stakeholders

- David Gibbs, Community Action Agency of Somerville
- Dennis Benzan, Manager of Western Front LLC
- Jody Mendoza, Mojitos Country Club
- Mass Greenwoods, LLC
- Paul Politis, John & Nick's Garage





# Sira Open House

*Our Community Feedback Loop*



**Maintain Frequent  
Communication  
with the Neighborhood**

Quarterly Community Meetings with  
Retail Management & Community  
Investment Teams

**Michelle Foley**

Regional Dispensary Manager

**Dwan Packnett**

VP Government Relations  
& Community Investment

**Open to All Abutters**



# Location



SIR  NATURALALS



# 827-829 Boylston Street

Current



Proposed



## Property Description

- 18 Residential Units
  - 12: 1/BR/1BA
  - 6: 2/BR/1BA
- 4 Commercial Units
- All owned by Panther Properties

## New Location Description

- Safe and secure facility located at basement level
- Ideal location and purposefully constructed to be modest and inconspicuous
- Sira's operational experience and intentional design principles minimize any disruption to surrounding commercial areas



# Timeline & Proposed Location



**Initial Application Filed August 21, 2018**

**Community Meeting Held April 8, 2019**

**827-829 Boylston Street in Back Bay**

- Intentionally designed with minimal frontage and exposure
- Reflects Sira Naturals' exceptional safety record and gold standard operations with current medical establishments in Somerville & Needham

**Back Bay Architectural Board Review & Approval**

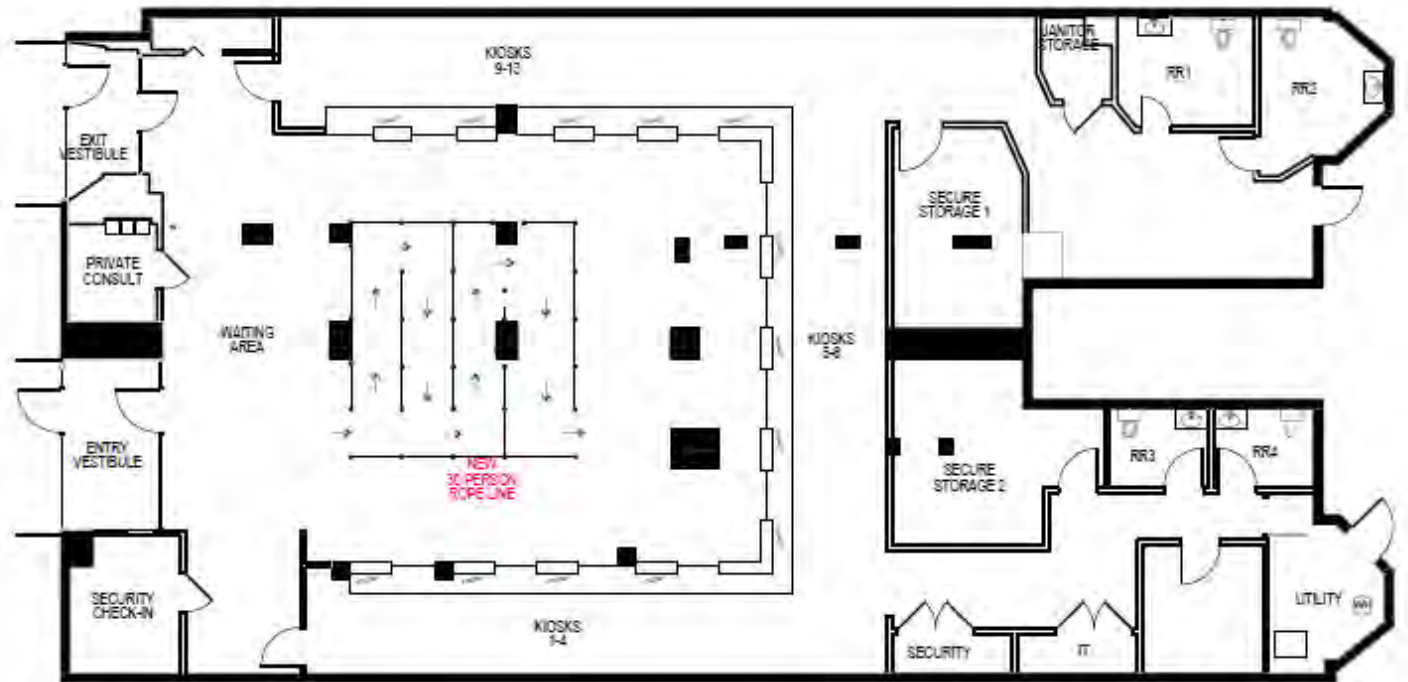
- Responding to Back Bay community requests, Sira Naturals will install a mobility lift at front entrance





# Floor Plan

- 4,500 sq. feet
- No Outdoor Queuing
- Mobility Lift at Front Entrance
- Safe & Secure Premises



# Safety & Security



## Experienced Security and Operations Team

- Highly professional team with decades of experience supervising DEA investigations and operating wholesale alcohol distribution networks throughout New England
- Our security measures meet or exceed the standards for local banks and financial institutions

## Cannabis Control Commission Inspectors Train at Sira Naturals Facilities

## Focused on Keeping Neighborhoods Safe & Preserving Public Health

- Selling Only Inseparable Packs of at Least Four (4) Pre-Rolls
- Appointment Only Launch
- Zero Tolerance Policy & Banning Any Customer who Violates Policies from ALL Sira Stores

## Sira Naturals Successful Compliance Record

- Zero incidents for Break-ins or Theft
- Zero incidents for Diversion
- Zero incidents for Public Nuisance

## Professional Security Personnel & 24/7 Camera Monitoring System

- All products strictly controlled, with limited employee access, stored in a separate, secure vault and monitored by 24/7 redundant security cameras and alarms to prevent theft
- Zero Tolerance Policy for use of product on premises including a "Ban List" where Sira security strictly prohibits the use of any product on premises and bans any customer who violates our security policies from ALL Sira stores
- Security is the first to greet customers and wait times are strictly monitored. Sira utilizes express reservation systems, state-integrated POS systems, and wireless debit terminals that have reduced wait times by over 50% in order to prevent loitering
- Sira will employ agents to monitor the sales floor, keep customers moving as swiftly as possible, and offer complimentary or discounted service provided by local area businesses to eliminate any external queuing
- On-site security regularly monitors the premises to prevent outdoor lines or queuing, loitering, product usage and to prevent litter. All employees receive security training to ensure safety of customers, staff and the public
- Each day, retail management checks, tests, and monitors all door entries, cameras, monitoring and video playback, as well as building and vault alarms. A full test of the entire security system is completed monthly by NetWatch, Inc., including all panic alarms, locks, cameras and security equipment to ensure safety and compliance



## Sira Sets the Standard for Safety & Security

- Sira has a proven record of going above and beyond current CCC safety and security regulations, resulting in zero deficiencies at any of our locations. State agencies also train personnel at Sira's facilities – considered the gold standard among cannabis companies
- Sira is an experienced operator and purposely designs our retail facilities to be non-descript and minimally disruptive
- Our 829 Boylston Street design takes advantage of the low-visibility at the basement level as well as both active and passive security measures to create a safe environment for the residents living in and around our facility

## Product Security

- All cannabis products will be placed in a securely monitored and locked storage vault with limited access, and monitored by 24/7 redundant security cameras and alarms
- Access to storage areas will be restricted to only specific employees
- Multiple inventory counts performed throughout daily operations
- Sira uses seed-to-sale inventory software to track the location and weight of all cannabis products

# Prevention of Diversion Plan



## Restricted Access to Sira Facilities

- Customers enter through a secure vestibule and may not enter the sales floor without first presenting valid identification. Security personnel have sole discretion to refuse entry for any reason
- Entry restricted to properly identified individuals 21+ only and customers are greeted first by security. All ID's will be scanned prior to entry to detect underage, fraudulent, or expired identification cards
- Sira security personnel will perform regular sweeps of the area around the facility to monitor the safety of the general public and prevent any diversion events from occurring

## Preventing Diversion to Minors

- Sira will only sell inseparable packs of at least four (4) pre-rolls in order to prevent diversion of single joints to minors
- Sira will not sell any product that could be attractive to minors. Sira products are sold in non-descript, odorless, secure childproof packaging
- Literature is distributed reminding customers to prevent usage by minors, educating guests on the safe storage of cannabis and reinforcing the dangers of distribution to and use by minors
- **Zero Tolerance Policy** for the removal or diversion of cannabis products resulting in immediate dismissal and notification of appropriate law enforcement authorities. If any dispensary agent is in a secure product vault without prior authorization, or good reason, they will face immediate termination

# Parking & Transportation



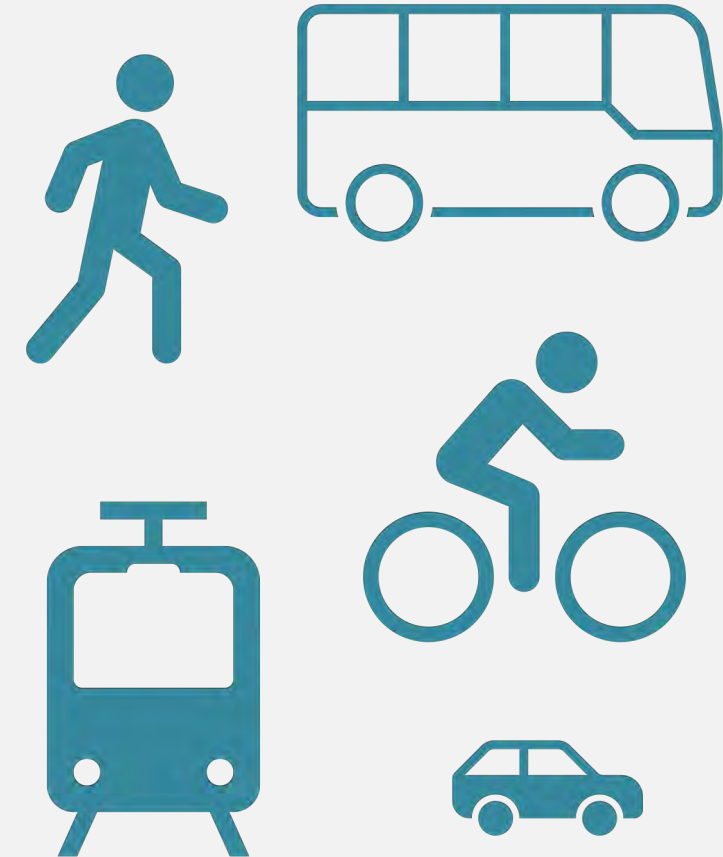
## Centrally Located, Easily Accessible Local Retail

- Sira Naturals intentionally chose this location with the understanding that our neighborhood-based customers will walk, ride or utilize the numerous and convenient public transit options available in the area
- Located in one of Boston's most accessible communities for walking, biking, and public transit, our 829 Boylston Street location will be one of the most transit-friendly cannabis operations in the City of Boston
- Extensive public parking options are also available at existing private and public parking facilities surrounding 829 Boylston Street

## Transportation Options

*Sira subsidizes MBTA Passes & Blue Bikes memberships for all employees*

- Green Line (Copley Square)
- Commuter Rail (Back Bay)
- Orange Line (Back Bay)
- Bus Routes (9,10,39,55,57,502,504)
- Blue Bike Station (829 Boylston)





# Transportation Options

1/4 Mile Radius



Subway



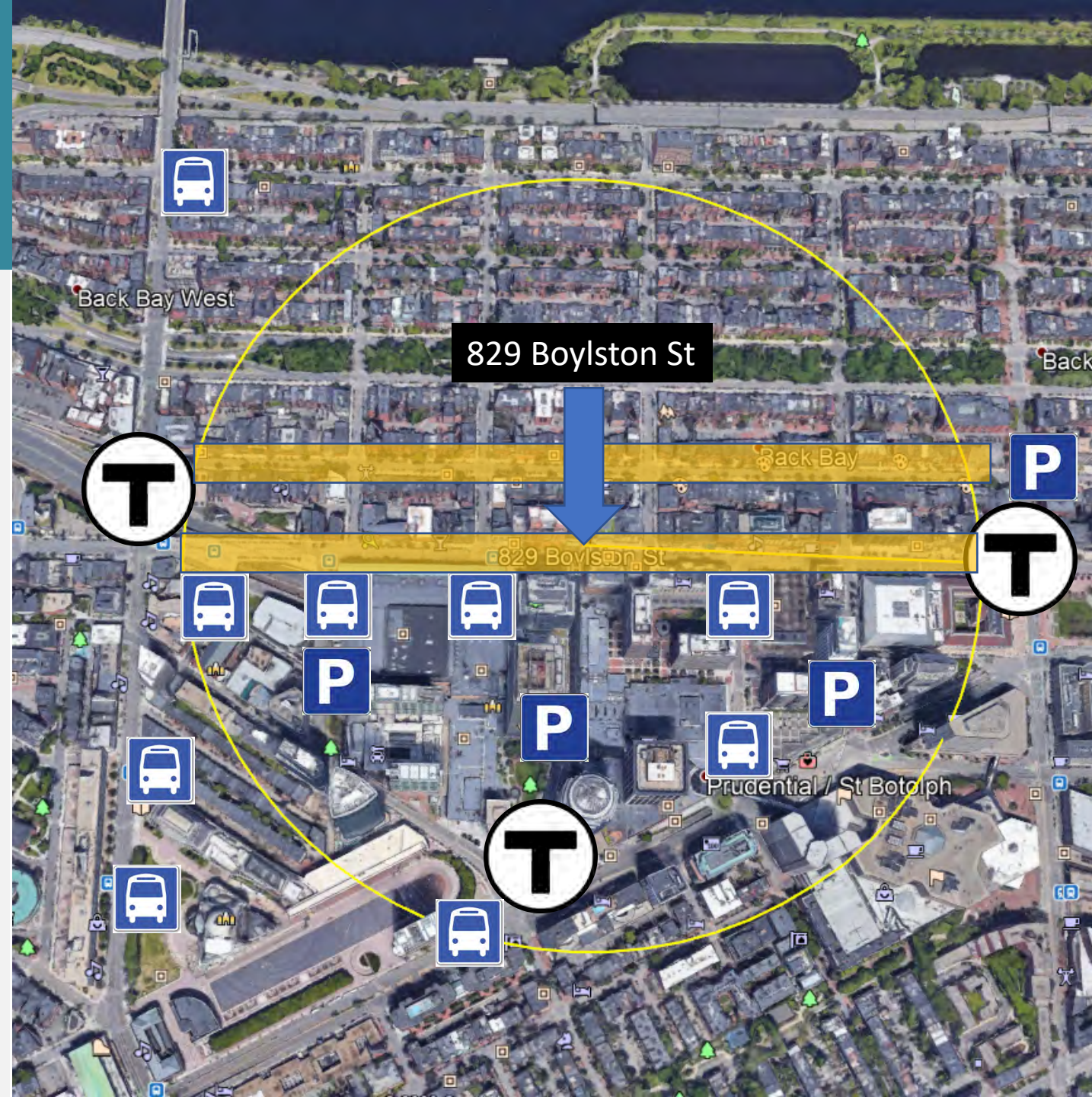
Bus Stop



Parking Facility



Metered Parking



## Safe Delivery of Cannabis Products

- Sira Naturals has zero incidents of diversion
- In-house safe product transportation to and from our cultivation facility in Milford or through contracted services
- All vehicles have GPS tracking and are closely monitored throughout the transport route. All routes and arrival times are randomized and all vehicles have two security personnel in the vehicle. Upon arrival, security remains with the vehicle while delivery is completed.
- Vehicles outfitted with camera monitoring systems and personnel are required to check in every fifteen (15) minutes in order to maintain constant communication throughout transport and report incidents or changes in route.

## Safe & Secure Transportation of Cash Deposits

- Sira Naturals has zero incidents of theft
- Longstanding partnership with International Protective Services (IPS), Inc., for secure cash transportation
  - IPS has 34 years of experience specializing in safe and covert transportation of cash deposits
  - Transportation Officers dressed in plainclothes and drive unmarked vehicles
  - Officers trained to blend in with customers in order to avoid attention that they are transporting cash

# Sira Naturals & Back Bay

## Experience & Excellence

- A safe and secure facility informed by Sira's extensive retail experience
- Purposefully designed to be inconspicuous and non-disruptive
- Broad support from community members

## Industry-Leading Community Investment

- You Can't Be What You Can't See
- There's a Place for You in the Cannabis Industry
- Sira Accelerator
- Sira.Community

## Record of Success & Safety

- CCC Inspectors train at Sira Naturals facilities
- Successful ongoing operations in Somerville, Milford & Needham with no violations
- 24/7 safety monitoring, strict enforcement of product safety and limited facility access

## Local Hiring for Union Jobs

- Local jobs with living wages and competitive benefits with UFCW Local 1445
- Sira's priority is to hire locally and promote job openings via **Boston First** program



# Thank You!

Dwan Packnett

VP Government Relations & Community Investment

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[Learn More about Sira.Community](#)

[www.siranaturals.org/cannabis-social-equity](http://www.siranaturals.org/cannabis-social-equity)

[Contact the Community Team](#)

[community@siranaturals.org](mailto:community@siranaturals.org)

