



GEORGINA

Media Release

Town of Georgina Communications Division
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For Immediate Release

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Georgina opts out of allowing retail cannabis stores

Georgina, ON – Georgina Council has voted to opt-out of allowing retail cannabis stores in the community, becoming the latest municipality in York Region to opt-out. In a recorded vote, it was 4-3 in favour of opting out.

“Opting out at this point does not mean the Town cannot opt back in down the road,” said Mayor Margaret Quirk. “There are concerns about the current retail model and the Town having limited control over where retail stores can locate. Council recognizes this has generated much discussion in the community and we will continue to monitor how this plays out in other municipalities for potential future consideration.”

Under the Cannabis Licence Act, municipalities have a one-time opportunity to opt-out of allowing retail cannabis stores within their boundaries and must report their decision to opt-in or out to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) no later than Jan. 22, 2019. The opt-out option only applies to storefront retail cannabis sales and does not govern online purchases, possession or consumption by residents.

Georgina does not meet the minimum population threshold of 50,000 residents set out by the AGCO for the first round of cannabis outlets. The Town will be receiving \$24,408 from the Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund to be used for managing the day-to-day costs associated with the legalization of cannabis. Now that the Town has opted out, it will receive a second maximum payment of \$5,000.

The province has declared the same rules that apply to tobacco consumption also apply to recreational cannabis. It is illegal to consume cannabis in enclosed workplaces, restaurants, bars and patios, schools, near playgrounds and publicly owned sports facilities and within any other enclosed public place. Possession and use is restricted to those 19 years of age and older.

The Town conducted a survey which was available online and in hard copy at a number of facilities, and was submitted as part of the staff report.

Council also passed an Interim Control By-law which prohibits the cultivation of cannabis in the Rural Zone (RU) and on any lands having a site-specific RU zoning for a period of one year. This will allow the Town to conduct a land-use planning study regarding the implementation of zoning provisions for cannabis production facilities. It is anticipated that the study will be conducted in-house. Staff will report back to Council in the first quarter of 2019 with respect to the land-use planning study approach and terms of reference. The by-law does not include the provision under the Cannabis Act that allows people to grow up to four cannabis plants for personal use.

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