
City of Orillia opens its doors to cannabis retail stores

For immediate release (Jan. 22, 2019) – Orillia Council voted in favour of allowing cannabis retail stores in Orillia at its meeting on Monday, Jan. 21, 2019.

“By opting in to the retail sale of cannabis in Orillia we are supporting all levels of government in their efforts to get illegal drugs off the street,” said Mayor Steve Clarke. “Although it is unknown when a cannabis retail store could potentially locate in Orillia, Council is saying yes to the positive economic impact and to a safe, regulated supply of cannabis.”

Opting in to the provincial legislation permits retail stores to be located in Orillia after April 1, 2019 provided the stores obtain licence/authorization from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). However, the province has stated, at this time, it is only allowing 25 retail stores to open throughout the province in municipalities with a population of more than 50,000. Although no retail location will be located in Orillia at this time, cannabis can still be lawfully purchased online from the Ontario Cannabis Store.

“The majority of Ontario municipalities have decided to allow cannabis retail stores in their community. When the time comes for Orillia to welcome its first cannabis store, we will be requesting the AGCO not permit a location within 150 metres of sensitive areas such as child care centres and public libraries,” said Shawn Crawford, Manager of Legislative Services.

In order to help with the implementation costs of recreational cannabis legalization, the province has indicated that it will provide municipal governments with at least \$40 million in funding over two years. In January, 2019, the first payment of \$15 million will be made to all municipalities on a per household basis. The City of Orillia has been advised by the Ministry of Finance that it will receive \$36,300 in relation to the first payment. A second payment to municipalities who have opted in is expected at a later date.

Council also considered a by-law to ban smoking/vaping of tobacco and cannabis on all property owned or leased by the City, but voted to postpone the final decision until further consultation could be had with municipal tenants on the matter.

The City of Orillia is a city of 31,000 people in the heart of Ontario’s Lake Country on the shores of Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe. Visit our website at orillia.ca.

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Shawn Crawford
Manager of Legislative Services
705-329-7234
scrawford@orillia.ca

Jennifer Ruff
Manager of Communications
705-325-8929
705-238-9209 (cell)
jruff@orillia.ca