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Town of Aurora
Memorandum
Corporate Services

Re: Review of Cannabis Retail Stores

To: Cannabis Retail Review Task Force

From: Patricia De Sario, Director of Corporate Services/Town Solicitor

Date: April 16, 2026

Recommendation

1. That the memorandum regarding Review of Cannabis Retail Stores be received; and
2. That the Cannabis Retail Review Task Force comments regarding Review of Cannabis Retail Stores be received and referred to staff for consideration and further action as appropriate.

Background

At the February 19 meeting, the Task Force requested that staff provide further information, such as access to any letters of opposition to specific locations and responses or feedback; clarification on zoning for cannabis retail stores; the scope of engagement with other communities and their best practices; data to be obtained from the York Regional Police; complaint data, and the possibility to gain more recent feedback from the community on its perception and experiences of cannabis retail stores.

Information that was readily available online was sent to members of the Task Force in advance of this meeting to allow sufficient time to review. Most of the information requested is found in previous Council reports or on the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario ("AGCO") website.

This memo will summarize the publicly available information and will also address the remaining information requested, where available.

Analysis

Attachment 1 provides links to some of the information requested, including access to any letters of opposition to specific locations and responses or feedback and clarification on zoning for cannabis retail stores.

On January 19, 2019, Town Council received Report Nos. CS19-001 and CS19-004 and moved to opt-in and permit cannabis retail stores. These reports provide background information relating to retail cannabis stores, including the legal framework, the zoning permissions and the added restrictions that Council requests that the AGCO consider when reviewing retail store authorization applications.

As mentioned in these reports, the Town does not have the authority to license private cannabis retail stores or prohibit them as a land use from any other permitted retail use within the town. However, private cannabis retail stores are still required to comply with zones and standards in the Town's zoning by-law and the Official Plan that apply to all retail stores.

Further, the AGCO is not under any obligation to take Council restrictions or public input under consideration; instead, it is only required to follow the restrictions and requirements set out in the *Cannabis Licence Act, 2018*. This legislation prohibits retail cannabis stores within 150 metres from a school or private school, as defined in the *Education Act*.

In addition, a decision to allow retail stores is final and cannot be reversed (i.e. Council can not opt-out of permitting cannabis retail stores now that it has made the decision to permit them).

On May 16, 2023, Town staff brought Report No. PDS23-062 to Council, which provided an update on the locations of cannabis retail stores within the town. This update included objection letters from the Town to the AGCO on the various retail store authorization applications.

Attachment 2 provides a chart that shows the complaints that Bylaw Services responded to from the date of opt-in (2019) to March 29, 2026 and a chart that shows the outcome of proactive patrols from March 9, 2026 to March 29, 2026.

The review of complaints encompasses all registered retail cannabis businesses within the town as identified by ward only. The complaints that Bylaw Services received

were either directly from the public or from a resident through the Mayor's Office or a Councillor. The types of complaints received are related to parking, signs or dumping (refuse).

Parking Offences

Bylaw Services received various types of parking complaints such as parking within 15 meters of an intersection and parking for more than the posted time limit on any street. By-law Officers have attended and documented their findings in Attachment 2 (Complaints). This chart includes all Penalty Notice(s) issued to vehicles for any parking violation in and around the areas of the complaint property.

Sign Offences

Bylaw Services has received multiple sign complaints, for either feather banner, A-Frame, or Flag signs erected on the properties, or on a sidewalk near the properties. Bylaw Officers have taken necessary enforcement action, as indicated in Attachment 2 (Complaints) and have informed these properties of the Sign Bylaw requirements, including all enforcement actions and permits required for having any sign(s) on their respective properties.

Dumping (refuse) Offences

These offences fall under the Clean Communities By-law. Bylaw Services has received several complaints from area residents regarding the patrons of the cannabis retail stores. Upon exiting the property after a purchase, patrons may consume the product and then discard the waste on the ground or street. Due to moving vehicles and wind conditions, these items may end up on the roadway or on private properties.

There have also been complaints of individuals intentionally discarding their waste (dumping) onto private properties not affiliated with the cannabis retail store. By-law Services have conducted investigations into these matters, gathered the necessary information and have issued order(s), when necessary, as indicated in Attachment 2 (Complaints). No Penalty Notices have been issued for these types of occurrences.

Noise Offences

Bylaw Services has not received any complaints relating to noise at these properties to date. However, Bylaw Officers will continue to investigate any potential noise

complaints received respecting these properties and will take appropriate enforcement action, where necessary.

Enforcement Initiatives

For most of March, By-law Services did proactive enforcement (i.e. officers attended each of the registered businesses on a daily and nightly basis to conduct inspections, during and after operating hours absent a complaint). Attachment 2 (Proactive Patrols) shows the number of inspections that have been conducted. Bylaw Officers did not find any violations.

Attachment 3 provides information relating to the calls for service conducted by YRP during the period of March 31, 2024 to March 31, 2026.

In collecting the data, the incidents that were focused on were theft-related occurrences, robbery (commercial and street-level), assaults, mischief to property, commercial break & enter, extortion, impaired driving investigations in proximity and calls for service trends (if requested).

Attachments

1. Public Information
2. By-law Services Report
3. YRP Report