

City Staff Report

Original signed by: City Manager Johnson

Report Date: February 1, 2018
Meeting Date: February 20, 2018

To: City Manager
From: Director of Development Services
Subject: Cannabis Policy Development

Purpose

To amend the City's current zoning policy on Marihuana Production to update the language and terminology to Cannabis and separate production and distribution activities from retailing activities.

Summary

- Policy development is required in the following areas to regulate the upcoming new cannabis retail industry: Zoning and Business Licensing.
- Council has directed the Public Safety and Policing Committee (PSP) to work through this policy development, as well as, several other areas requiring policy consideration such as smoking regulations, nuisance bylaw, and building regulations.
- In the interim it is recommended that cannabis production and retail distribution be prohibited in the community until such time as policy has been developed for its regulation.
- New definitions have been proposed and corresponding prohibitions in all zones.
- PSP will be actively be working on a full development of policy regarding cannabis in the community concurrently.

Recommendation

THAT Council provide first reading to City of Quesnel Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1845 of 2018;

AND THAT Council set the public hearing date for City of Quesnel Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1845 of 2018 to 7:00pm Tuesday March 6th, 2018.

Statutory Requirements

Cannabis Act

Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations (ACMPR)

City Policy

City of Quesnel Zoning Bylaw No. 1662

Background

- The legalization of recreational cannabis prior to July 1, 2018 requires the City to plan for the impacts of recreational use and sales.
- Current zoning policy, developed in response to the legalization of medical marihuana and anticipated applications for the development of medical marihuana production facilities, requires amendment.
- Municipalities across the province are all struggling to be ready for the upcoming legalization of recreational cannabis without knowing the complete set of regulations that will be established by the province.



- Based on this lack of regulation and the short time frame for legalization the common advice being published and communicated by municipal law experts is to prohibit retailing of cannabis. This will permit communities to develop appropriate policy with community consultation.
- The City has faced challenges in managing illegal storefront cannabis suppliers, commonly known as “dispensaries” like many communities across the country.
- These dispensaries are prohibited by federal law.
- The City’s current bylaw Licences have not been issued for any dispensaries.
- Dispensaries within city boundaries are operating in violation of the City’s Business Licence and Regulation Bylaw.
- None of the cannabis products supplied by these dispensaries come from a legal source. They are unregulated, and there is no reliable method of ensuring that they are safe for consumption.
- In order to effectively manage dispensaries both prior to and after their operations have been decriminalized, staff recommend the bylaw amendments discussed below. The intent of these amendments is to ensure that Council retains the ability to control where non-medical cannabis sales occur, similar to that which govern private retail alcohol sales.

Attachments

City of Quesnel Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1845 of 2018