

Township of Southgate
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Staff Report PL2022-047

Title of Report: PL2022-047-Retail Cannabis Report
Department: Planning Services
Council Date: July 6, 2022

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Council receive Staff Report PL2022-032 for information; and

Option #1

That Council provide direction to staff to amend the zoning by-law prior to Council reconsidering permitting retail cannabis stores to open.

or

Option #2

That Council continue with the status quo and continue to prohibit retail cannabis stores withing Southgate.

Background

Since Cannabis was made legal in October 17, 2018 the Township has chosen to opt out of entertaining retail cannabis stores within the municipality.

Recently, in May of this year, the Owners of Cannabis stop have approached Council to ask Council to reconsider the Township's decision to opt out of retail Cannabis retail stores within the Township.

A letter was sent to the Township dated May 25, 2022 which outlines the request and is included as attachment 1 to this report.

Staff Comments:

The role out and opening of retail cannabis stores has not been even across the province. Some municipalities and communities boast multiple stores while others have none. Owen Sound for example has at least 4 stores operating to purchase Cannabis and Cannabis retailed merchandise.

The letter presented to the Township by Cannabis Stop Inc. states that municipalities receive a benefit from the sale of Cannabis through tax incentives. I am not aware of any direct benefit that the Township would receive in this regard. The only benefit that staff are aware of is the regular taxes that the municipality would collect as a result of any retail commercial use. To my knowledge there is not a separate tax for retail cannabis stores for the Township. The letter also fails to make a case for how much and the quality of the employment that would be generated by the opening of a store. The owners have indicated that they are currently meeting market demand in Southgate via home delivery service from their stores in Markdale and Shelburne.

Staff do not have any data to suggest that opening a Cannabis store will increase or decrease crime in the area although it is acknowledged that there is a perceived impact on policing with increased calls and therefore cost to the municipality.

When the Township decided to opt out of retail store a survey was conducted which indicated a number of concerns such as odour, increases in crime, proximity to sensitive uses such as schools and parks and impacts on public health as a whole.

All of these concerns still exist and are not regulated by the Township Zoning by-law at the present time. The Province does have a minimum of 150m that a store must be located away from schools.

Staff believe that if Cannabis is to remain part of public life like Alcohol its availability and usage should be regulated. To alleviate some of the continued concerns the Township should amend its zoning bylaw to provide specific zones and criteria for the location of Cannabis stores within the township. For example if a store was permitted within the new MZO lands would this then prohibit the construction of the new school that is desperately needed in the Community. Provisions should be added to zoning by-law to prevent the possibility a conflict down the road.

It is staffs, recommendation to delay opting in to Cannabis retail stores until a zoning amendment can be brought forth to better regulate the use within a specific zone. By lifting the restrictions early the Township risks having several stores opening up that could set up conflicting uses later down the road.

Conclusions

Based on the above staff recommend delaying the opting in for retail cannabis stores until such time as updated zoning provisions can be brought fourth to regulate the location of the use.

Respectfully Submitted,

Municipal Planner: *Original Signed By*
Clinton Stredwick, BES, MCIP, RPP



CAO Approval: *Original Signed By*
Dave Milliner, CAO

Attachments:

1. Letter from Cannabis Stop Inc.