

CITY OF FORT SASKATCHEWAN

Legalization of Cannabis and Cannabis Products Bills C-45 and C-46

Purpose:

To provide Council information on the work that is underway to prepare the City of Fort Saskatchewan for the impending legalization of cannabis and cannabis products.

Background:

In the 2015 Federal Election, the Liberal Party of Canada promised that they, if elected, would work toward the legalization of cannabis and cannabis products. The Canadian Government followed through with this election promise by introducing two Bills, C-45 and C-46, in the House of Commons on April 13, 2017.

The Bills amend the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, the *Criminal Code of Canada* and several other acts to legalize access to cannabis and cannabis products as well as to create additional offenses for violations of the new regulatory framework in Canada.

General provisions of the Bills:

1. Will permit the national use and possession of up to 30 grams of legally produced cannabis for personal recreational use by adults.
2. Adults will be allowed to grow up to 4 cannabis plants per household.
3. Possession will be limited to individuals over 18 years of age, although provinces may elect to further restrict the age limit similar to alcohol.
4. Selling or providing cannabis to minors would be a criminal offence.
5. Products that would appeal to minors are prohibited.
6. Cannabis products will not be permitted to be sold through self-service displays or vending machines.
7. Protection for public health through product safety and quality requirements.
8. It will provide for the legal production of cannabis.
9. Enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with cannabis.

The Federal Government is working with the provinces to establish the framework where cannabis and cannabis products will be distributed and sold. The Bills are expected to become law on July 1, 2018 after receiving Royal Assent.

Provincial Impacts:

As the legislation has not yet been passed, there is uncertainty on how the provinces will be impacted, or how they will act on these changes.

The provinces will be responsible, either partially or completely for the following:

1. impaired driving;
2. product (cultivation and processing);
3. public health;
4. education;
5. taxation;

6. workplace health and safety;
7. distribution and wholesaling;
8. retail model;
9. retail location and rules;
10. regulatory compliance; and
11. public consumption.

The Alberta Government is currently engaging in consultation with the public to gather opinions on how the Provincial Government should proceed.

Impacts to Fort Saskatchewan:

It is difficult to fully assess how Fort Saskatchewan will be impacted by these changes. The legislation has not yet been passed and the direction the Province takes will have significant impact on how the City proceeds. General areas that have been identified as falling to municipalities include:

1. education;
2. taxation;
3. retail location and rules;
4. public consumption;
5. land use/zoning;
6. enforcement; and
7. revising existing municipal bylaw, and documents to align with the new legislation.

The specifics of each section are unknown at this time.

Topic/Outcomes:

In light of the changes coming forward regarding how cannabis products are handled, the City has created a task force consisting of representatives from several departments who are reviewing developments. Some of the areas that each department is monitoring are listed below:

People Services:

Occupational Health & Safety: Drug and Alcohol Policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect the changes.

The Return to Work Process and modified duties are reviewed on a case by case basis.

The City's accommodation practices will be review and updated as necessary.

Planning & Development:

Land Use Bylaw amendments being reviewed:

- Co-location of other items with cannabis sales is being reviewed.
- An assessment of appropriate permit fees will commence once more information is known.
- Appropriate land use approaches in regards to zoning.
- Buffer from sensitive uses.
- Building Inspector training and required changes.

Economic Development:

Given the current information, the Business Licence Fee should not be changed.
Business Licences should not be used as a disincentive, they are a useful tool to gather information.
The Development Permit is where many issues would be more appropriately addressed.

Legislative Services:

The possible development of a Smoking Bylaw as a tool for enforcement.
Agreements and leases that the City is a party to may need revisions representing changes to legislation.
The impact in regards to any landlord/tenant relationships.
The use of cannabis products on City lands.

Protective Services:

Detection of impairment.
Education on the risks associated with the cannabis: School Resource Officer and Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.).
Staffing capacity in regards to training and enforcement (RCMP and Municipal Enforcement).

FCSS:

Education:

- Senior Liaison – appropriate public education.
- Youth Coordinator (Prevent Alcohol & Risk-Related Trauma in Youth – PARTY Program) - framing the education in terms of harm reduction and short and long-term impacts of smoking.

Potential to mental health and staff capacity.
Education on community garden use and their prohibitions (i.e. you cannot use the community gardens to grow cannabis).

Communications:

The development of a unified and cohesive internal and external communications plan that aligns all departments.

Culture:

Preparation and impending change to Canada Day celebrations and other outdoor events.
Permitting of events.
Outdoor sites and how they will be managed.

Next Steps:

Administration will continue to update Council as additional details regarding the legalization of cannabis become available.

File No.:

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Submitted to:	City Council	Date: June 27, 2017
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