

# Cannabis Retail Outlet Considerations for Municipalities

Regulating the availability of cannabis is important to reduce the negative impacts of cannabis use in Leeds, Grenville & Lanark communities.<sup>1</sup> Lessons from alcohol and tobacco have shown that increased availability to a substance results in increased consumption, which can lead to significant health and social harms and costs.<sup>2,3</sup>

The newly enacted Cannabis License Act, 2018 sets the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) as the regulator of cannabis retail outlets. For municipalities who have not opted out of having private cannabis retail outlets in their communities by January 22, 2019, the location of outlets will be determined by the AGCO with consideration to comments provided by municipalities. The legislation does not permit municipalities to utilize licensing or land-use by-laws to control the placement or number of cannabis retail outlets.<sup>4</sup>

Organizations such as the Association of Municipalities Ontario continue to advocate that municipalities are given greater opportunity to influence cannabis retail outlet locations and density.<sup>4</sup> Where municipalities are able to influence decisions about cannabis retail outlets, the following information may be helpful.

## ISSUE

High retail outlet density can contribute to increased consumption and harms<sup>5,6,7,8</sup>

Retail outlet proximity to youth-serving facilities can normalize and increase substance use<sup>11,12</sup>

Co-use of cannabis and other substances increases the risk of harm such as impaired driving<sup>1</sup>

Retail outlet proximity to other sensitive areas may negatively influence vulnerable residents<sup>8,9</sup>

Longer retail hours of sale significantly increases consumption and related harms<sup>5,16</sup>

## CONSIDERATIONS

Reduce cannabis retail outlet density through minimum distance requirements between cannabis retail outlets and limits on the overall number of outlets<sup>9</sup>

Example: The [City of Calgary](#) has enacted a 300m separation distance between cannabis stores.<sup>10</sup>

Prevent the role-modeling of cannabis use and reduce youth access through minimum distance requirements from youth-serving facilities such as schools, child care centres and community centres<sup>1,12</sup>

Example: The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health suggests 500 metres between cannabis storefronts and sites such as schools community centres, and other cannabis storefronts.<sup>10</sup>

Discourage the co-use of cannabis and other substances by prohibiting co-location and enacting minimum distance requirements between cannabis and alcohol or tobacco retail outlets<sup>1,9</sup>

Example: KFL&A Public Health recommend a 200m separation distance between cannabis retail outlets and alcohol or tobacco retail outlets<sup>14</sup>

Protect vulnerable residents by limiting cannabis retail outlets in low socioeconomic neighborhoods and enacting minimum distance requirements from other sensitive areas<sup>4,9</sup>

Example: The [City of Vancouver](#) has restricted medical cannabis retail outlets to commercial zones instead of residential ones.<sup>15</sup>

Reduce cannabis consumption and harms by limiting late night and early morning retail hours<sup>4,16</sup>

Example: The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health recommends that cannabis retail hours reflect those established by the LCBO<sup>16</sup>

## INFORMATION

For more information call 1-800-660-5853  
or visit [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)



## RESOURCES

[Association of Municipalities Ontario - Municipal Governments in the Ontario Recreational Cannabis Framework](#)

[Alberta Health Services - Recommendations on Cannabis Regulations for Alberta Municipalities](#)

[Federation of Canadian Municipalities – Municipal Guide to Cannabis Legalization](#)

## References

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