

Information for Councils – Developing a Municipal Cannabis Policy Statement

Members of Council

During Council transition, AMO sent to senior municipal staff a document that covers off all the information that would be helpful in preparing reports to councils on whether to opt-out or allow retail cannabis sales. Now, with councils sworn in, we want to share it directly with you.

The document includes a [Draft Municipal Cannabis Policy Statement Template](#). The Template helps municipal governments that may wish to allow recreational cannabis retail sales in their communities to identify sensitive areas and better guide retail outlet locations. The template is based upon the ‘public interest’ definition in the Ontario recreational cannabis regulations. Where stores are allowed, it can also help staff to provide comments to the [Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario \(AGCO\)](#) on proposed locations within the 15-day statutory consultation window.

Under Ontario’s recreational cannabis policy, private cannabis retail stores will be approved to sell as of April 1, 2019 where municipal governments allow them. Municipal governments that do not wish to allow cannabis retail stores can do so by informing the AGCO in writing by January 22, 2019 of council’s decision. Members should note that the decision not to allow retail stores or the decision is to opt out and opt back in after Jan. 22 will affect access to the municipal portion of the Province’s share of the federal share of its cannabis excise tax. No matter the municipal decision, consumers will continue to have access to cannabis through on-line sales, personal growing and through retail in other communities.

As a priority, please read the documents linked to this communication so that you have the most comprehensive information given the decision you will need to make by January 22, 2019. In addition, Heads of Councils and municipal treasurers received individual letters from the Minister of Finance. These letters set out each municipal government’s cannabis implementation funding allocation. Members can find other information on cannabis legalization on [AMO’s resource page](#).

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