

Council opposes marijuana retail outlets, opts out of plan

By Mark Pavilons

While the rest of the country is saying 'yes' to marijuana, King council is saying 'no' to future retail outlets in the municipality. Council approved a resolution Monday night, telling the Province that King 'strongly opposes' private retail sale of cannabis in King, and that the municipality is opting out of permitting retail sale in the township. 'I don't want this in King,' said Mayor Steve Pellegrini at the previous council meeting Sept. 10. 'I want the province to know, not in King!'

When recreational cannabis use becomes legal Oct. 17, it will be made available through the Ontario Cannabis Store (OCS). The provincial government is looking at a public retail model for the sale of recreational cannabis, which will be overseen by the Liquor Control Board. Queen's Park recently announced it will introduce new legislation that will allow a regulated private retail model, arriving in April 2019. The OCS will no longer be opening any stores, and will only be conducting online sales and distributing product to provincially licensed private retailers, you're able to find information on the difference between the [Ontario Cannabis Store](#) and online recreational marijuana vendors and how they compare regarding different factors.

The province said municipalities will have a one-time window when they can choose to opt-out of permitting physical cannabis retail stores in their boundaries. But municipalities can always opt back in at a later date.

Staff reported there are still many uncertainties in all of this. They did offer councillors three options on how to deal with zoning issues.

The mayor said the whole issue brings with it huge costs in enforcement. He pointed out that retail stores will become prime locations for illegal drug trafficking, where dealers can simply approach customers and offer a better price.

Resident Judith Tenenbaum supported the mayor's call, noting it's 'totally inappropriate' to have retail outlets in King. 'We don't need it,' she said.