

Cannabis Legalization: Ottawa's Journey

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Outline

- Preparing for cannabis
- City Council decision
- Current status
- What's next?



Preparing for Cannabis

- City of Ottawa Integrated Cannabis Legalization Operational Team
- Changes in Provincial approach:
 - Government run to private sector
 - Free market to lottery roll-out
- Vital role of communications



City Council Decision

Opt-out debate

- 65 page staff report
- One of the first decisions of the newly elected Council
- Recommended Council not “opt out”
 - Negative consequence of allowing the illicit cannabis market to flourish
 - Potential economic development opportunities & impacts of having private retail stores
 - Public health benefits related to the quality of legal cannabis product and the education and support that can be provided at the point of sale
 - Public input received in favour of having cannabis retail stores, and for cannabis consumers in particular, in favour of shopping at retail stores



Image source: Ottawa Matters

Current Status

- 3 stores
- Little to no impact on first responder call volume
- Fines/charges
- Other challenges/impacts

Next Steps

- Report back to Council before 2020 budget process on the financial implications of legal cannabis
- More stores on the way
- Edibles

