



# CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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## NOTICE OF MOTION

From: Councillor Tim Morrison

Introduced: Council Meeting – August 19, 2019

Subject: Proximity of Recreational Cannabis Businesses

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**WHEREAS:** the Township of Esquimalt currently has limited commercial storefront retail space;

**AND WHEREAS:** demand for available commercial retail space is likely to increase as the community continues to grow;

**AND WHEREAS:** a diversity of storefront businesses is preferable and is encouraged within the Township's Strategic Plan to provide a "diverse economic environment" as well as to "strengthen the health, livability and diversity of the community";

**AND WHEREAS:** other leading municipalities, such as the City of Vancouver and the City of Victoria, have implemented restrictions regarding the proximity distances between cannabis retailers;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that the Township of Esquimalt **Zoning Bylaw No. 2050, 1992** be amended to include the following provision:

"No cannabis retail businesses may be located within 200 metres of each other."

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### STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

- We strengthen the health, livability and diversity of the community
- We encourage a resilient and diverse economic environment
- We achieve excellence in public service

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Potential savings in resources for the Township regarding the number of potential rezoning applications for recreational cannabis businesses.

## **BACKGROUND:**

As recreational cannabis businesses are not permitted within 500 metres of a school, the result is that all applications are restricted to the western portion of Esquimalt. To date, the Township of Esquimalt has received three rezoning applications for the sale of recreational cannabis, two of which are within very close proximity to each other. If approved, and if the trend of applications continues, this could likely result in a close clustering of recreational cannabis businesses within certain neighbourhoods of Esquimalt.

As a best practice, the City of Vancouver, a leading municipality in the licensing of recreational cannabis businesses, does not permit cannabis business operations within 300 metres of each other while the City of Victoria, another highly experienced municipality with cannabis business licensing policy, does not permit cannabis businesses within 400 metres of each other. A variety of other jurisdictions have similar restrictions such as Nanaimo with a 300 meter requirement.

By joining other leading municipalities in implementing policy on the proximity of recreational cannabis retailers to each other, Council can provide fairness, consistency and clarity for our community's neighbourhoods as well as for the applicants.

In absence of such policy, applicants have to risk applying in close proximity of each other without knowing how Council will react to such juxtaposition of locations. Meanwhile, considerable expenses and resources are required by both the applicant and the municipality to prepare such rezoning applications for Council consideration. With clear, consistent policy in place, the application process will be less ambiguous and arbitrary while also reducing potential costs and resources for preparing such applications.