

Town seeking resident feedback on prospect of allowing legal cannabis stores

Council directed staff to create report on effects of permitting legal cannabis stores last October

By ZACHARY ROMAN

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Town of Caledon would like to know whether residents want to see legal cannabis stores in the municipality.

On February 1, the Town announced it was looking for input from residents on the issue.

When the Federal government legalized recreational cannabis in 2018, it gave municipalities the ability to opt out of having retail cannabis stores set up shop in their boundaries.

In 2019, Caledon decided to opt out. Municipalities that opt out can choose to opt in at any time; however, once they opt in they may not opt out again.

At Caledon Council's October 24, 2023 meeting, Caledon resident Wendel Clarke delegated and shared his opinion that Caledon should allow legal retail cannabis stores.

This led to Ward 3 Councillor Doug Maskell putting forward a motion for Town staff to review the feasibility of permitting cannabis retail stores within the Town of Caledon and report back in the first quarter of 2024.?

The motion was supported unanimously by the rest of Caledon Council.

As part of this process, staff are now collecting feedback on the possibility of allowing legal cannabis stores from Caledon residents. Those interested in providing their thoughts can do so by completing an online survey at the following link: haveyoursaycaledon.ca/embeds/projects/41165/survey-tools/44012

The survey will be open until March 1. It asks residents what ward they live in; if they have ever used or currently use cannabis; where they would be most likely to purchase cannabis; and if they support having legal cannabis retail stores in Caledon.

Residents may also offer their thoughts at an open house being held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on February 21 in the atrium at Caledon Town Hall (6311 Old Church Road).

In his October 2023 delegation, Clarke said there's numerous reasons Caledon should opt in to having legal cannabis stores, one being that allowing legal cannabis stores can bring economic benefits to a community through increases in tax revenue and the creation of jobs.

Clarke said as it stands, cannabis users in Caledon are either leaving Caledon to purchase their product, or are buying it illegally.