

From: Kelsy McIntosh [REDACTED]
Sent: January-11-19 2:44 PM
To: Twinney, Jane
Cc: Vegh, Tom; Taylor, John; Woodhouse, Victor; Simon, Grace; Morrison, Trevor; Broome, Kelly; Kwapis, Bob; Bisanz, Christina
Subject: Retail Cannabis in Newmarket

Good Afternoon Councillor Twinney,

I must start by saying how disappointed I was to learn of council's decision on January 7th to opt out of retail cannabis locations in Newmarket. I feel this is a short sighted, stigma inducing, uneducated choice on the part of council.

However, I am so encouraged by your effort to fight the good fight, and your continued advocacy to your fellow Councillors to at least hear out what has been proposed in the Town staff's report. This makes me proud to be a citizen of your ward, and my continued support of you and your policies will continue. Although there is not much hope to be had at this time, after hearing of your dedication to this conversation - I remain ever so slightly optimistic that there is hope to be had.

I am a nurse, who is heavily involved with medical cannabis for our geriatric population. I am well educated in this subject. I am also a vocal advocate for the legalization of cannabis, as reducing stigma in the recreational market assists patients dealing with the struggle that accompanies that piece of their therapy. It is also well documented that alcohol has much greater health and social repercussions than cannabis, yet so many people fail to make that association as it has become socially acceptable.

I am a Mom. And retail access to cannabis scares me far less than what happens in high school parking lots, back alleys, and drug dealer's homes.

Access to safe, lab tested, regulated cannabis in storefronts is the only way to truly help reduce the impact the black market has on our community. It is well understood that cannabis is not the gateway to harder substances - but the social circles one must engage with to obtain it are.

I understand that this is very new territory, that makes many people nervous and unsure. But with proper education, respectful dialogue and normalization - I truly believe we can end the stigma that has been for so long, unfairly associated with cannabis.

I believe that the benefits far, far outweigh the risks here - and based on polls, popular opinion, etc - many residents feel the same way.

Newmarket labels itself as 'progressive', 'modern', and 'forward thinking', among other things - opting out at this amazing time in history is in stark contrast to each of those descriptors.

Thank you, for being a voice for us. Thank you for listening. Thank you for your impassioned work as my councillor.

Best Regards,

Kelsy McIntosh
Columbia Court, Newmarket

