

WHAT WE HEARD: CANNABIS LEGALIZATION

Online Survey Summary | November - December 2017

INTRODUCTION

To help prepare for cannabis legalization, City of Edmonton staff conducted an online survey from November 14 - December 7, 2017. The survey received over 4,100 responses (1,908 through the Insight Community and 2,213 submitted through the website). This survey provided an opportunity for the public to:

- Answer some key questions about cannabis retail stores
- Indicate how they feel about smoking and vaping cannabis in public
- Identify the main issues they are concerned about or want more information on related to cannabis legalization

Along with the other public engagement activities, the results of this survey will inform the City's approach to cannabis legalization and provide information to City Council as they make decisions related to regulating cannabis in Edmonton.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: 311

Email: cannabislegalization@edmonton.ca

Website: www.edmonton.ca/cannabislegalization

QUESTION 1 - Context

Cannabis refers to products made from the leaves and flowers of the cannabis plant. You may have also heard it called marijuana or pot. Cannabis can be smoked, used with a vaporizer, or added to food or drinks.

The federal government has stated that in July 2018, cannabis will be legal across Canada for personal use. Legalizing cannabis is a complicated process that has multiple impacts. In order to provide the most useful information to the public, the City of Edmonton needs to understand what matters most to you about cannabis legalization.

What aspects of cannabis legalization are you most interested in, or most concerned about?

Insight Survey Results

Impaired driving	79%
Public smoking and vaping of cannabis	64%
Odours from smoking in public	56%
Education for youth and families	50%
Workplace safety	49%
Public health impacts	46%
Dealing with neighbours who grow or smoke cannabis	46%
Public health education	44%
The location of cannabis stores	34%
Cannabis related crime	33%
Odours from cultivation facilities	27%
The operation of cannabis stores	23%
Safety for growing cannabis plants in the home	21%
Cannabis store signage and advertising	18%
Business opportunities related to cannabis	17%
Fire safety in cannabis production facilities	13%
I am not interested/concerned about any of these items	5%

Website Survey Results

Impaired driving	69%
Public smoking and vaping of cannabis	61%
Education for youth and families	51%
Workplace safety	50%
Odours from smoking in public	50%
Dealing with neighbours who grow or smoke cannabis	43%
Public health education	41%
Public health impacts	38%
The location of cannabis stores	36%
Cannabis related crime	31%
The operation of cannabis stores	27%
Odours from cultivation facilities	27%
Safety for growing cannabis plants in the home	26%
Business opportunities related to cannabis	26%
Cannabis store signage and advertising	19%
Fire safety in cannabis production facilities	13%
I am not interested/concerned about any of these items	6%

QUESTION 2 - Context

Adults who are 18 years of age or older will be able to buy cannabis from future stores in Edmonton. Cannabis will be sold in specialty cannabis-only retail stores, which will not be allowed to sell alcohol, tobacco or pharmaceuticals.

The provincial government will establish the minimum separation distance that cannabis stores can be from places that children and youth frequently visit, such as schools, community centres and parks. This separation is to help keep cannabis out of the hands of children. The provincial government will also establish the minimum separation distance that cannabis stores can be from each other. This separation is to prevent the clustering of cannabis stores in one location.

The City can be more restrictive by requiring larger separation distances between cannabis stores and places that children and youth frequently visit. The City can also require larger separation distances between cannabis stores.

How would you respond to the following statement? I am concerned about how close cannabis stores will be to each other.

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	20%
Somewhat agree	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	16%
Don't know	2%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	17%
Somewhat agree	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	29%
Don't know	2%

In your view, how far apart should cannabis stores be from each other?

Insight Survey Results

I do not think there needs to be a separation distance	27%
1 block apart	3%
2 blocks apart	6%
½ a kilometre apart (7-10 min walk)	31%
More than ½ a kilometre apart	17%

Website Survey Results

I do not think there needs to be a separation distance	36%
1 block apart	4%
2 blocks apart	6%
½ a kilometre apart (7-10 min walk)	12%
More than ½ a kilometre apart	29%

**How would you respond to the following statement?
I am concerned about how close cannabis stores will be to places where children and youth gather, such as schools, community centres, parks and playgrounds.**

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	44%
Somewhat agree	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%
Somewhat disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	8%
Don't know	1%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	43%
Somewhat agree	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	10%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	13%
Don't know	1%

In your view, how far should cannabis stores be from schools, community centres, parks and playgrounds.

Insight Survey Results

I do not think there needs to be a minimum separation distance	13%
75 m (about the width of half a block)	2%
100 m (about the width of one block)	8%
200 m (about the width of two blocks)	17%
More than 200 m	61%

Website Survey Results

I do not think there needs to be a minimum separation distance	14%
75 m (about the width of half a block)	3%
100 m (about the width of one block)	9%
200 m (about the width of two blocks)	16%
More than 200 m	58%

QUESTION 3 - Context

When deciding where cannabis stores should be located, it is important to consider a few factors:

- How accessible the store will be. Can it be reached by walking, taking a bus or driving?
- What kinds of businesses or uses would be a good fit near cannabis stores?
- Where would cannabis stores be most appropriate?

In your view, what kinds of locations in Edmonton are the best fit for cannabis stores?

Insight Survey Results

Small scale commercial areas in residential neighbourhoods	30%
Shopping centres, such as Kingsway, Southgate, or Londonderry	32%
In commercial areas along major roadways, such as Stony Plain Road or Gateway Boulevard	56%
In central areas like downtown or near major LRT stations, such as Century Park or Clareview	40%
On main streets with a mix of commercial uses and good access to transit, such as Whyte Avenue or 124 Street	65%
In light industrial and business park areas	31%
I don't know	12%

Website Survey Results

Small scale commercial areas in residential neighbourhoods	35%
Shopping centres, such as Kingsway, Southgate, or Londonderry	33%
In commercial areas along major roadways, such as Stony Plain Road or Gateway Boulevard	55%
In central areas like downtown or near major LRT stations, such as Century Park or Clareview	41%
On main streets with a mix of commercial uses and good access to transit, such as Whyte Avenue or 124 Street	65%
In light industrial and business park areas	37%
I don't know	8%

QUESTION 4 - Context

The provincial government has stated that the smoking and vaping of cannabis in public will be restricted to spaces where tobacco smoking is also allowed. The province may decide, in the final Alberta Cannabis framework, to allow some smoking of cannabis in public or to ban smoking and vaping of cannabis everywhere in public.

The City of Edmonton has laws that prevent smoking tobacco (cigarettes) in public parks, outside schools, and at entrances to buildings. This means that people can smoke tobacco on the sidewalk in public. The City could decide to allow smoking cannabis on sidewalks as well, or to ban it in public altogether.

The City of Edmonton will be responsible for enforcing smoking and vaping of cannabis in public. This would likely be done by issuing warnings and tickets to individuals who are smoking and vaping in public where they are not allowed to.

**How would you respond to the following statement?
Adults should be able to smoke and vape cannabis in the same places you can smoke tobacco.**

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	24%
Somewhat agree	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	27%
Don't know	1%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	34%
Somewhat agree	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	5%
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	33%
Don't know	1%

**How would you respond to the following statement?
Smoking and vaping cannabis should be banned in all public places.**

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	36%
Somewhat agree	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	10%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	22%
Don't now	2%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	38%
Somewhat agree	10%
Neither agree nor disagree	5%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	33%
Don't know	0%

**How would you respond to the following statement?
It is important to me that the City has the resources to enforce smoking cannabis in public, this could mean hiring additional enforcement officers.**

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	40%
Somewhat agree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	11%
Don't know	2%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	39%
Somewhat agree	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	19%
Don't know	1%

QUESTION 5 - Context

The federal government has established the following basic rules about growing and consuming cannabis:

- The minimum age that people can buy, possess and consume cannabis will be 18
- Adults will be allowed to buy and possess 30 grams of legally produced cannabis
- Adults will be able to grow up to four cannabis plants per household

Please note that people who rent a house or apartment and people who live in a condominium may be restricted from growing cannabis plants in their home. These restrictions could be in condominium bylaws or in rental agreements.

When cannabis is legalized, how likely are you to buy cannabis products from a cannabis store?

Insight Survey Results

Regularly	5%
Occasionally	19%
Never	56%
Not Sure	19%

Website Survey Results

Regularly	17%
Occasionally	23%
Never	45%
Not Sure	15%

When cannabis is legalized, do you think you will grow your own cannabis plants at home?

Insight Survey Results

Yes	5%
No	77%
Maybe	12%
Not sure	7%

Website Survey Results

Yes	12%
No	64%
Maybe	16%
Not sure	7%

QUESTION 6 - Context

The federal government has stated that one of the reasons for legalizing and regulating cannabis is to take cannabis out of the illegal, black market.

Legalizing cannabis will likely result in new jobs being created to produce, cultivate, distribute and sell cannabis products in Edmonton.

**How would you respond to the following statement?
Legalizing cannabis and having legitimate businesses related to cannabis will be positive for Edmonton's economy.**

Insight Survey Results

Strongly agree	31%
Somewhat agree	33%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%
Somewhat disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	11%
Don't know	3%

Website Survey Results

Strongly agree	47%
Somewhat agree	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%
Somewhat disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	14%
Don't know	2%

When cannabis is legalized, would you be interested in starting a cannabis related business or pursuing a job related to cannabis?

Insight Survey Results

Yes	5%
No	78%
Maybe	12%
Not sure	5%

Website Survey Results

Yes	14%
No	63%
Maybe	18%
Not sure	6%

Comments

Survey respondents were asked if they had any other comments they wanted to add related to cannabis legalization. Below is a summary of the number of comments related to topic areas or positions. Please note that one person's comments could have touched on more than one topic. The top five topic areas most commented on by survey respondents are highlighted in darker grey.

145	General support for cannabis legalization
259	General concerns or comments against cannabis legalization
22	Concern that cannabis is a gateway drug
33	Concern that cannabis legalization will result in increased crime
111	Desire to see more enforcement related to cannabis
438	Concerns about consuming or smoking cannabis in public
82	Concerns about consuming or smoking cannabis on private property
242	Concerns with cannabis impaired driving
80	Concerns with cannabis related workplace impairment
154	Concerns about children or youth accessing cannabis
47	Desire to see the legal age limit for cannabis increased
120	Importance of public education about cannabis
31	Comments about cannabis and economic development and the application process for stores
137	Comments on cannabis store locations and separation distances
90	Desire not to over-regulate cannabis
54	Interest in having cannabis cafes/lounges and in cannabis edibles being available
110	Comments that cannabis should be treated the same as tobacco
259	Comments that cannabis should be treated the same as alcohol
50	Concerns or questions about growing cannabis at home
173	Concerns with the impact on health of cannabis legalization
63	Concerns with enforcement costs related to cannabis
90	Comments on cannabis taxation and having more money for governments to use
87	Desire to see more support for medical users of cannabis
1670	Total Comments

Comments

Twelve comments pulled randomly are displayed word for word below to provide a sample of some of the opinions of people who completed the survey.

"I believe the cannabis rules should reflect current smoking rules and alcohol rules."

"Strongly against legalizing Cannabis products for personal use in Canada!!!"

"If it was legalized, it would likely be regulated like Alcohol. You can't consume it in public or while driving. The survey isn't quite accurate in the questions. Also, there is no evidence to suggest cannabis results in crime, in fact, compared to alcohol is significantly less dangerous and harmful."

"The city will need to allow cafes or places for people to smoke, or else they will be doing it everywhere."

"Although the odor can be offensive, access to cannabis will greatly impact the mental and physical health of its users in a positive manner. Like any other substance ingested into the body the youth will need to be educated about it and that includes a school program as well as parents having honest discussions with their children. I don't use cannabis currently as I have children and I'm not interested in illegal substances, but I'm really looking forward to the legalization in the hopes that it can help with my depression and anxiety."

"I believe cannabis and the related industries that grow from it will be a major boon for whichever areas embrace it. We've seen in the United States how it's benefited the local economies in the places where it's extensively supported and promoted by the cities then we see people come in and build businesses and industry around it. In terms of Canada we see Alberta's approach to be the most favourable to private enterprise and these tend to benefit far more than places like Ontario where they plan to have everything government controlled. If we're also looking at taking influence away from organized crime, legal routes have to embrace all types."

"Do not take the "Marijuana Assassin of Youth" attitude when drafting laws. Why would more staff be needed to enforce no public smoking? Did that happen when cigarette smoking became illegal in public? The stigma attached to cannabis comes from the fabricated identity it was given early in the 1900's. Alcohol is way worse and is allowed anywhere. There will not be a rash of cannabis related violent acts when it legal. Does it happen now?"

"I feel that Cannabis should be regulated the same as alcohol in distribution. I don't feel negative about large or small business opportunities. I only DO NOT want the Ontario model which is ridiculous."

"I do not agree with or support the Federal Government's legislation to legalize it. I don't appreciate having the Federal Government railroad this legislation through when there are so many concerns about it."

"Strong regulations and heightened rules and punishment those who break it for"

"Please review the impaired laws- the guidelines are unrealistic and unfair."

"Cannabis is less dangerous than alcohol. Use the same guidelines as there are for alcohol"