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For Immediate Release

## Castlegar, BC (16 May 2018) – **City Wants Feedback on Local Regulations Related to the Legalization of Cannabis**

Cannabis in Canada will be legal for recreational use as early as late summer 2018. Residents of Castlegar are being asked their input on future zoning and regulations related to legalization of cannabis within City limits. These regulations, along with Provincial and Federal laws, will control the future of retail outlets, public consumption and personal cultivation of cannabis. *“The City is seeking a general understanding of residents views prior to developing municipal cannabis regulations this summer”*, says Phil Markin, Director of Development Services at the City of Castlegar. A survey will be held online for two weeks from May 23<sup>rd</sup>-June 7<sup>th</sup>.

In addition to the online survey, City staff will host a meeting for businesses in Castlegar on May 23<sup>rd</sup> to hear their specific concerns. As well, the City will host a public meeting on the evening of May 24<sup>th</sup> for residents to come out and learn more, ask questions, and share concerns.

### **What can the City control?**

With respect to the legalization of cannabis, the role of local government includes:

**Retail sales:** zoning and business licensing to determine where cannabis stores may be located.

**Public consumption:** identifying where consuming cannabis will be legally allowed in Castlegar.

**Personal cultivation at home:** providing rules to ensure public safety and limited nuisances (such as odours and visibility).

At the municipal and regional level, local governments are responsible for regulation of some aspects of the cannabis legalization including land use, zoning, and business licensing.

- Local government support is a mandatory prerequisite to issuance of a Provincial license to any applicant, including for public retail stores. Local government will indicate their support by means of a Council resolution sent to LCLB after mandatory consultation with residents in the vicinity of a proposed store about community impacts.
- Local governments will be able to regulate the location of retail stores, including their distance from schools and other stores through zoning;
- Local governments will be able to regulate the number of retail stores within their boundaries, including prohibiting them altogether; and

- Local governments will be able to set additional restrictions on where smoking and vaping are permitted, as they do now for tobacco use.

The Provincial and Federal governments will make many of the decisions surrounding cannabis legalization.

The Province of British Columbia has determined that the minimum age to possess, purchase and consume non-medical cannabis will be set at 19, and cannabis will be sold in both publicly- and privately-owned retail locations. British Columbians of legal age will be able to purchase non-medical cannabis through privately run retail stores or government-operated retail stores and online sales.

B.C. will generally allow adults to use non-medical cannabis in public spaces where tobacco smoking and vaping are permitted. However, to minimize child and youth exposure, smoking and vaping of non-medical cannabis will be banned in areas frequented by children, including community beaches, parks and playgrounds. Use of cannabis, in any form will also be banned for all occupants in vehicles.

B.C. will align with the proposed federal legislation and allow adults to grow up to four cannabis plants per household, but the plants must not be visible from public spaces off the property. Home cultivation of non-medical cannabis will be banned in dwellings used as daycares. In addition, landlords and strata councils will be able restrict or prohibit home cultivation.

### **Challenges for the City**

The challenge for the City of Castlegar is to develop timely zoning and other regulations that are acceptable to our community and that meet the requirements of federal and provincial legislation and objectives. This includes the number and most suitable locations for retail cannabis stores, where consumption can and cannot take place as well as where it can be grown. A further challenge is that the municipality's role is not 100% clear as the provincial government could broaden or restrict the scope of what can be regulated locally. Their policies are still in development.

“While we are seeking many answers from the Province & federal government, we want to take this opportunity to understand what is on the minds of our residents to help prepare the City for the eventuality of marijuana legalization.”, says Lawrence Chernoff, Mayor of Castlegar.

Come to the public meeting May 24<sup>th</sup>, 6-7pm, Community Forum 445 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue Castlegar (Council Chambers)

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