



Public Open House Being Held October 11 on Proposed Community Standards Bylaw and Public Consumption of Cannabis

(September 26, 2018 – Ponoka, Alberta) – Ponoka citizens are invited to attend a Public Open House on Thursday, October 11 to offer their thoughts and comments on a new proposed Community Standards Bylaw for the Town of Ponoka.

The proposed new Bylaw combines key components of three existing Bylaws (Noise, Unsightly Premises and Curfew) into one new Bylaw that addresses issues such as:

- Public behaviour, including bullying, littering, fighting and graffiti
- Property maintenance, including sidewalks, boulevards and unoccupied buildings
- Noise control

Town Council has approved first reading of the new Bylaw and would like to hear public input on the proposed Bylaw before considering second and third reading.

Citizen Input on Public Consumption of Cannabis Also Invited

With the legalization of recreational cannabis expected across Canada next month, citizens who attend the Oct. 11 Open House will also be invited to share their thoughts on what they feel is appropriate for the Town to allow with regard to public consumption of cannabis once it's legalized.

The Community Standards Bylaw is a tool that municipalities can use to regulate nuisance issues related to the public consumption of cannabis, which is why public input on the issue is being invited at the Oct. 11 Open House.

“Should public consumption of cannabis be banned in Ponoka, or should the Town follow the minimum standards set by the provincial government which permits public consumption of cannabis in some public places where smoking tobacco is allowed? Or is there some other level of regulation we should consider? That’s what we want to ask our citizens at this Public Open House,” says Ponoka Deputy Mayor Teri Underhill. She notes that municipalities have the authority to implement stricter regulations on public consumption of cannabis than those already set by the Alberta Government if they choose.

Interim Bylaw Would Prohibit Public Smoking and Vaping of Cannabis in Ponoka

At its regular meeting this week, Town Council gave second reading to an interim Bylaw that would prohibit smoking and vaping of recreational cannabis in public places within Town boundaries upon legalization. “If it receives third reading at our next Council meeting on Oct. 9, this Bylaw would ban smoking and vaping of recreational cannabis in public places on an interim basis in Ponoka until we’ve completed our public consultation on the Community Standards Bylaw. Once that process is completed, Council would then make a



final decision – after considering public input – on how it will regulate public consumption of cannabis over the long term in Ponoka,” explains Deputy Mayor Underhill.

The October 11 Public Open House will feature a drop-in format with:

- Information displays about the proposed Community Standards Bylaw
- Information about provincial legislation already in place to regulate public consumption of cannabis
<https://www.alberta.ca/cannabis-framework.aspx#p6241s4>
- Comment forms inviting public input on the proposed Bylaw and on public consumption of cannabis
- One-on-one discussions with members of Town Council and Administration

The Open House will be held at the Kinsmen Community Centre in Ponoka (5009-46 Ave.). Citizens are invited to drop in anytime from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Proposed Bylaw and Comment Form on Town Website

If you can't attend the Open House, you can view the proposed Community Standards Bylaw and fill out a comment form with your thoughts on the Bylaw and on public consumption of cannabis in Ponoka by visiting the Town Office (C, 4900-54 St.) from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, or on the Town website at www.ponoka.ca until October 31.

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