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Prince George, B. C.
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Redacted

Mayor Hall and Members of Council:

I am writing to express my OPPOSITION to Cannabis Licence Application No. CN000017 and temporary use Permit TU000066 at 2591 Vance Road. My main concerns are the impacts on traffic, the proximity to another cannabis retail location, and the continued lack of commitment by city hall.

The Staff Report To Council states that this application is not expected to have any negative impact on the community. I disagree with that assessment.

I am a 30 year resident of the neighbourhood and a daily user of the intersections of Vance Road and Highway 16, Vance Road and Blakley Road, Petersen Road and Hollandia Drive, and Vance Road and Hollandia Drive. Vance Road is an arterial roadway. Petersen Road, Hollandia Drive, and Blakley Roads are not.

The Staff Report To Council states, "The RCMP raised concerns relating to traffic generation from the proposed use and the proximity to an existing cannabis retail use."

Prince George zoning policy states that cannabis stores should be located in areas that are on arterial roadways and a minimum separation of 1.6 km between cannabis retail locations. While this location seems to fit many of these qualifications on paper, the reality of this situation is very different.

ROADWAYS:

Currently, to access the intersection of Vance Road and Highway 16, I have to head up to Blakley Road to access Vance Road because of traffic issues at Vance Road and Hollandia Drive. The city knows of these issues because it has put up signs requesting that vehicles not block this intersection. The intersection of Vance Road and Highway 16 is one of the 10 most dangerous intersections in northern British Columbia. These intersections are unable to handle the traffic through them at this time.

While the address of the proposed cannabis store is on Vance Road, one of the accesses to the parking lot is on Hollandia Drive. After the rezoning of the property at Hollandia Drive and Petersen Road to the PG Return It Centre, there has been a significant increase in traffic on Petersen Road and Hollandia Drive. I expect this trend to continue if this proposed rezoning is approved.

Added traffic on these roads and through these intersections will have a negative impact on the local community.

1.6 KM SEPARATION:

On November 9, 2020 City Council approved a cannabis retail store at 2626 Vance Road. The current rezoning request for a cannabis retail store is across the street from this location. Just because the store at 2626 Vance has not been built yet does not nullify the existing zoning. The temporary use permit is for a period of up to 3 years with the option to extend it for another 3 years. I expect the store at 2626

Vance Road to be fully operational within the next 6 years.

The Staff Report to Council states “The Temporary Use Permit will allow the use to occur on a temporary basis so this impacts can be assessed prior to a Rezoning Application that would permit the use to occur on a permanent basis.” This implies to me that City Council is willing to ignore its own guidelines on placement of cannabis retail stores and try to slip this one by us on a technicality. This would place 2 cannabis retail locations at the same intersection for a 6 year trial period before becoming permanent.

LACK OF COMMITMENT BY CITY COUNCIL:

This area has had many conditional rezonings, mandatory development permits, and variance conditions placed on developments. Most of these have never been enforced.

When the Official Community Plan was modified to create the highway commercial zones along this corridor, many conditions were placed on it before it was passed. Improvements to the intersections at Vance Road and Highway 16, and Vance Road and Hollandia Drive were included. Sidewalk construction and improved safety measures for pedestrians were conditions. The intersections are basically unchanged and the pedestrian improvements are non-existent.

The PG return It Centre had a number of conditions placed on it. One of these was a mandatory development permit. The structure built on the property does in no way resemble the design that was shown to council to win their support. A second condition was to actively discourage and prevent traffic from using Petersen Road or the alleyway. Also, not enforced. Another condition was to change the address from Petersen Road to Hollandia Drive. Also, not done.

When University Mazda (Now Harley Davidson) was granted an extension of its property to the West, amalgamation of the properties, construction of a retaining wall, and a mandatory development permit for the expansion were all conditions of the rezoning put in place to protect the neighbourhood. . The longest of these conditions lasted less than 6 months before city hall negated it stating hardship to the car dealership and ignoring protection of the neighbourhood.

Based on its past history, I have a hard time believing that the city will act in the best interests of the neighbourhood. I also do not believe that the necessary improvements to infrastructure to keep the neighbourhood safe and accessible will be forthcoming.

In closing, I would once again like to state my OPPOSITION to Cannabis Licence Application No. CN000017 and Temporary Use Permit TU000066 at 2591 Vance Road. I believe the traffic issues, proximity issues, and lack of commitment by city hall will have a negative impact on the local community.

I will be able to be contacted on monday evening after 6:30 at Redacted if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns
Mary H. Reyers