



March 2, 2015

Mr. Andrew McCreight MCIP RPP
Planner
Zoning, Intensification and Neighbourhoods Unit
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Ave West, 4th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Re: City of Ottawa's Local Commercial Study on Micro Businesses

Dear Mr. McCreight:

The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health (OCSH) is a volunteer organization that aims to create a social environment where non-smoking is the norm; to assist in establishing smoke-free environments; to prevent youth from starting to smoke; to encourage smokers to quit; and to advocate for better smoking cessation resources.

The OCSH was alerted by an *Ottawa Citizen* article¹ about the City of Ottawa's plans to create more micro businesses in six downtown wards. Thank you for sending us the information on the *Local Commercial Study*. We have concerns about the proposed initiative, especially the possibility of a proliferation of:

- Tobacco retail outlets (to which the City of Ottawa issues licensing permits);
- The sale of e-cigarettes; and
- The sale of water pipe paraphernalia and tobacco, herbal, or nicotine containing tobacco.

In 2010, the Ontario Ministry of Health commissioned a scientific panel to provide guidance on strategies to reduce the use of tobacco, which is the **number one public health cause of premature death and disability in our community**. Of particular concern is the availability and density of outlets selling tobacco products to youth. The Smoke-Free Ontario Scientific Advisory Committee recommended:

*"Reducing the number of tobacco retailers and locations permitted to sell tobacco products is one mechanism to limit consumption. Tobacco retail outlet density is associated with tobacco-use uptake in nearby schools and neighbourhoods. Retail accessibility is also related to physical and social availability."*²

We urge the City of Ottawa's Planning Department to include **zoning restrictions to prohibit outlets of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and water pipe paraphernalia in the proposed micro businesses**.

For more information on retail establishments and tobacco use, please see: *Reforming the Retail Landscape for Tobacco: Why We Need To Do It & How It Can Be Done* by the Non-Smokers' Rights Association and the Smoking and Health Action Foundation. This document is available at: http://www.nsra-adnf.ca/cms/file/files/Retail_Brochure.pdf.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Carol McDonald
President
Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health
www.smokefreeottawa.com

References

¹ Joanne Chianello, New zoning scheme for neighbourhood businesses fraught with NIMBY worries. *Ottawa Citizen*, January 23, 2015.
<http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/chianello-new-zoning-scheme-for-neighbourhood-businesses-fraught-with-nimby-worries>

² Smoke-Free Ontario Scientific Advisory Committee. *Evidence to Guide Action: Comprehensive Tobacco Control in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, 2010. Page 2.
<http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Evidence%20to%20Guide%20Action%20-%20CTC%20in%20Ontario%20SFO-SAC%202010E.PDF>