

Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario

I am writing on behalf of the Ralph Thornton Community Centre to express our concern with the number of marijuana outlets being planned for the area around Broadview Avenue and Queen Street East.

The Ralph Thornton Community Centre, situated at the corner of Saulter Street and Queen Street East (just east of Broadview), serves the community and is deeply concerned with the vitality and vibrancy of the neighbourhood.

It is our understanding that several marijuana dispensaries have already opened in the neighbourhood and at least 4 more are planned on the north side of Queen East opposite the community centre itself and other community social service organizations.

While we are not concerned about marijuana dispensaries per se, the notion of having this many shops in close proximity to each other will inevitably lead to the failure of some or all of these shops. This will result in loss of revenue for small landlords and empty store fronts along our streets. This kind of concentration, in our view, does not make business sense for the shops or for the community around those shops.

In addition, Ralph Thornton Community Centre continues to work to develop a thriving community with a variety of activities running the gamut from libraries and social services to a wide variety of retail choices. A concentration of one kind of retail simply means that there will well be a lack of other kinds of retail options in the neighbourhood. A lack of variety in retail options will result in fewer pedestrians and less traffic because of the lack of choice available.

We would ask that you consider carefully all of these applications for retail cannabis outlets and approve the very best of them, but not all of them. This would be, in our view, acting in the best interests of both the retailers themselves and the entire Broadview-Queen neighbourhood.

Thank you for your consideration

Alan Lennon
Chair, Board of Management

Ralph Thornton Community Centre