CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pilmer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following Planning Commission members were present: Chairman Pilmer, Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Chambers, Mr. Divine, Mr. Elsbree, Mr. Gonzales, Mrs. Head, Mr. Hull, Mrs. Owusu-Safo and Mr. Reynolds. Mrs. Duncan and Ms. Tidwell called in and excused themselves from the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT

The following staff members were present: Mr. Sieben, Mrs. Vacek, Ms. Lang, Ms. Spencer and Mrs. Jackson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

19-0870 Approval of the Minutes for the Planning Commission meeting on September 18, 2019.

A motion was made by Mr. Chambers, seconded by Mr. Elsbree, that the minutes be approved and filed. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Pilmer said if you are here for an item that does not appear on the agenda and you wish to speak to the Commission, we can give you 3 minutes to do so.

No one came forward.

AGENDA

19-0872 An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to Ordinance Number 3100, being the Aurora Zoning Ordinance to modify certain portions being Section 3.3 Definitions, Section 4.3 Special Uses & Structures and Table One: Use Categories
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes October 2, 2019

See attached Minutes from Grove & Associates Reporting & Video Services.

A motion was made by Mrs. Head, seconded by Mr. Chambers, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee, on the agenda for 10/9/2019. The motion carried.

PEEEDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Sieben said our next meeting is the regular meeting on October 16th at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Head, seconded by Mr. Chambers, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote. Chairman Pilmer adjourned the meeting at 10:23 p.m.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE FOR CURRENT AGENDAS:
https://www.aurora-il.org/AgendaCenter
In the Matter Of:

CITY OF AURORA PLANNING COMMISSION

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RE: TEXT AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE

October 02, 2019

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Grove & Associates Reporting & Video Services
1333 North Main Street
Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 462-0060
www.groveandassoc.com
BEFORE THE CITY OF AURORA PLANNING COMMISSION

HEARING FOR A TEXT AMENDMENT
TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE,

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had

and testimony taken at the hearing of the
above-entitled cause commencing on Wednesday,
October 2, 2019 7:00 P. M. at 44 East Downer
Place, Aurora, Illinois.

As Reported By: Barbara Johnston
Certified Shorthand Reporter
CSR No. 84-002903
PRESENT:

CITY OF AURORA Assistant Corporate Counsel
by MS. DEBORAH LANG and
MS. MARISSA SPENCER
44 East Downer Place
Aurora, Illinois 60507
(630) 256-3060
dlang@aurora-il.org
Appeared on behalf of City of Aurora.

ALSO PRESENT:
MR. ED SIEBEN, Director
MS. TRACEY VACEK, Senior Planner
MR. DON PILMER, Chairman
MS. SHANITA ANDERSON, Commissioner
MR. KEN CAMERON, Commissioner
MR. IVAN CHAMBERS, Commissioner
MR. PAT DIVINE, Commissioner
MR. GREG ELSBREE, Commissioner
MR. PEDRO GONZALES, Commissioner
MS. LYNN HEAD, Commissioner
MR. RAY HULL, Commissioner
MS. YVONNE OWUSU-SAFO, Commissioner
MR. MIKE REYNOLDS, Commissioner
MS. SUE JACKSON, Administrative Secretary

(Exhibits tendered during above-referenced hearing are attached but not specifically referenced during the hearing.)
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Good evening. I would like to call to order the City of Aurora Planning Commission Meeting for Wednesday, October 2nd.

Please call the roll.

MS. JACKSON: Chairman Pilmer.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Anderson.

MS. ANDERSON: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Cameron.

MR. CAMERON: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Chambers.

MR. CHAMBERS: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Divine.

MR. DIVINE: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Duncan.

(No response.)

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Elsbree.

MR. ELSBREE: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Gonzales.

MR. GONZALES: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Head.

MS. HEAD: Here.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Hull.

MR. HULL: Here.
MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Owusu-Safo.
MS. OWUSU-SAFO: Here.
MS. JACKSON: Mr. Reynolds.
MR. REYNOLDS: Here.
MS. JACKSON: Miss Tidwell?
   (No response.)
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Before you are the minutes of our last meeting on Wednesday, September 18th.
   Are there any corrections or additions?
   (No response.)
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Hearing none, I would ask for a motion.
MR. CHAMBERS: Submit for approval.
MR. ELSBREE: Second.
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Motion by Mr. Chambers, seconded by Mr. Elsbree.
   Please call roll.
MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Anderson.
MS. ANDERSON: Yes.
MS. JACKSON: Mr. Cameron.
MR. CAMERON: Yes.
MS. JACKSON: Mr. Chambers.
MR. CHAMBERS: Yes.
MS. JACKSON: Mr. Divine.
MR. DEVINE: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Elsbree.
MR. ELSBREE: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Gonzalez.
MR. GONZALES: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Head.
MS. HEAD: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Hull.
MR. HULL: Pass.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Owusu-Safo.
MS. OWUSU-SAFO: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Reynolds.
MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Motion carries.

Before we begin our agenda tonight, I will let everyone know in the audience that this -- in accordance with the State of Illinois Open Meetings Act. That anyone in the audience can come forward and talk about any item that is not on the agenda.

If anyone would like to come forward and speak about an item that is not on the agenda, you will have three minutes to do so now.
Would anyone like to speak?

Please note for the record that no one has come forward.

Our first item on the agenda is an ordinance approving a text amendment to ordinance number 3100 being the Aurora zoning ordinance to modify certain portions being section 3.3 definitions, section 4.3 special uses and structures, and table 1 use categories, City of Aurora. This is a public hearing. Before we have staff present the case, we'll ask our court reporter to swear in the staff.

(Witnesses sworn.)

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Okay.

MR. SIEBEN: Good evening, plan commission and audience. I would like to make just some introductions of the staff.

My name is Ed Sieben. I'm the City of Aurora zoning and planning director and also the city zoning administrator. Sitting next to me is Tracey Vacek, our senior planner. Sue Jackson is our administrative assistant also taking notes. And then from our law department, we have Deb Lang and Marissa Spencer, so for
background.

Just want to -- for the record, the public notice was published in the Aurora Beacon News on September 17th, 2019. As the chairman stated, the purpose of this meeting is a proposed text amendment modifying certain portions of the Aurora zoning ordinance, specifically regarding cannabis uses in the City of Aurora in response to recent State of Illinois legislation.

A little background information. On June 25th, 2019, the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act was signed into law by the State of Illinois effective January 1st, 2020. The act legalizes the purchase, possession and private use of cannabis by adults over 21 years of age for recreational use. The majority of the law pertains to sales, processing, distribution, taxes and eligible users of cannabis.

That allows local government to have zoning authority to prohibit which would be opt out or limit the location of cannabis business by enacting reasonable zoning regulations as long as they are not in conflict with the act.

These regulations may include
designating the time, place, manner and number of
cannabis operations including minimum distances
between certain locations.

The local government, in this case
the City of Aurora, cannot license cannabis
facilities as licensing authority remains
exclusively under State jurisdiction.

Generally, the act also limits
dispensaries which is one type of a license from
locating within 1,500 feet of another dispensary. And only dispensaries will be open to the public
and the State has limited the amount of the
dispensaries within the eight-county Chicago
region. That would include Cook County, Lake,
McHenry, Kane, DuPage, Will, Kendall and Grundy
to 47 dispensary licenses at least initially
that would be issued in 2020. So obviously
Aurora is just a small portion of that
eight-county area.

A little bit of history. The City
of Aurora along with a number of other
communities in Illinois went through a similar
text amendment process back in 2014. That's when
the State of Illinois first passed the Medical
Cannabis Act. The City of Aurora put into place some regulations in the zoning ordinance for medical cannabis per the State act, specifically for dispensaries and cultivation facilities in 2014.

And a little history. The City of Aurora in 2014 did approve three special use permits for dispensaries within the City of Aurora, one on Route 59 and there are actually two on Lake Street. However, the State of Illinois did not issue a medical dispensary license for any of those three dispensaries.

If you may recall, there were only two that were allowed at that time in Kane County, one in southern Kane County that went to the Village of North Aurora. And then DuPage County did have some medical dispensary licenses issued by the State. The closest one was in the City of Naperville.

The City of Aurora also did approve one special use for a medical cultivation society which was on Diehl Road. That was again approved in 2014 and that facility was issued a license by the State of Illinois and has been operating, I
believe, for the last four years.

So using the already -- so the intent is using the already established zoning ordinance regulations for medical cannabis and to expand it to cover the new cannabis regulations. We've, in general, included the following modifications to the Aurora zoning ordinance regulations.

In general, it's to establish use categories and definitions for cannabis dispensing facilities, cannabis cultivation facilities, processing facilities, infuser facilities and transporting facilities and craft grower facilities.

So originally there were -- originally there were two license types. Those were the dispensarys and the cultivation facilities. And we are adding definitions -- we're modifying the definitions per the State act and then we're adding the other four types of license that the State is also gonna be licensing which would be cannabis processing facility, cannabis infuser facility, cannabis transporting facility and cannabis craft grower facility.
These zoning regulations again would -- the definitions replicate those in the State act. We would establish these facilities as special uses which means any facility that comes in has to get a special use permit in certain zoning categories and that is a public hearing for each side and they would have to meet certain specific regulation standards for each.

We would amend the use category tables to establish these facilities as special uses in certain districts and then there is specific text amendments detailed in the attached draft ordinance.

So, again, there is six proposed licenses. Two we already had in there for medical and then the four additional.

I think a lot of what everyone here today is -- is the dispensary licenses are probably the most visible and it's really the only facility that the public would be allowed in.

So we're proposing, you know, modifying the definition to match the State act. So cannabis dispensing facility, again, would be
a special use just like it was before and it would be allowed as a special use if the underlying zoning district was B2 and B3. Those are -- those are some retail commercial zoning, DC which is downtown core zoning, ORI which is a light industrial district and then M1 and M2 which are manufacturing districts.

And in addition, we have a lot of areas especially in certain areas of town that are zoned PDD which is a planned development district. And within each of those planned developments, there is specific underlying zoning, so it would also be eligible in the business and industrial sections of the PDD zoning ordinance.

Real quickly, some of the other conditions that would have to be met, the facilities which at all times have to comply with all State requirements of the State act.

One of the things that we are adding so that these would be only in high traffic and major commercial shopping areas is that these would only be allowed for a special use if they abut an arterial street as shown on the statistic
comprehensive plan. There is limited arterial streets in the city. I think there are about 14 of them.

The facility -- one of the other restrictions we are proposing is that facilities not be located within 500 feet measured property line to property line of a school. That would include a grade school, middle school, alternative school and high school. So that is -- that is something new. The State act does not have any restrictions with distance of schools, so the City would propose 500 feet.

The other conditions are that no -- no cannabis or paraphernalia can be displayed or kept at the facility so as to be visible from outside the premises including but not limited to depiction on signage.

Another key thing for dispensaries is that on-site use is prohibited. There would be no cannabis smoked, eaten or otherwise consumed or ingested on the premises of these dispensaries. It would strictly be retail per the act.

The State allows dispensaries to be
open as much as 6:00 A. M. to 10:00 P. M. We propose the same as what we had for medical dispensary, that it would be from 8:00 A. M. to 10:00 P. M. So that is more restrictive than the State.

And then the City would be allowed to add additional conditions as part of a special use approval to provide for compatibility with adjacent land uses and mitigate potential impacts from a dispensing operation.

Some of the other items that we get and -- as part of the special use for these -- and this is what happened with the medical. There was a lot of data that's required by the State. They have to have a very detailed plan for disposal of any cannabis or byproducts that are not sold.

They have to have a very, very detailed security plan for the facility including access, control, surveillance systems, on-site security personal and other security measures required by state or local regulations. And again, they also have to have a copy of operating procedures adopted in compliance with State
statues.

Individuals, I believe, working at the facilities, they also have to be at least 21 years of age.

So some -- a lot of that was already in there for the medical dispensaries, but we did add some additional items.

And just real quickly, the other types of -- of licenses, again, cultivation, that is similar to what we had before. Again, special use would be required which would be a public hearing and they would only be allowed -- eligible for special use within the ORI, M1, M2 and the industrial areas of the PDD. So they have to be purely industrial-type areas.

The other four more types of license, the processing facility would be pretty much identical to the cultivation facility. There would be special uses in the exact same type of underlying zoning district. The same would be said for the infuser facilities and the transporting facilities.

The last type of license is the -- what they -- what the State calls a craft grower
facility. This is a very limited cultivation-type facility. This would be eligible for special use within those industrial districts plus the B3 district.

B3 is a more intense commercial district. We don't have a lot of them in the city, but typically a B3 may allow more for like contractor shops and wholesale facilities. But it would not be allowed for special use in a B2 which is what our typical retail or shopping centers are.

That is pretty much a summary of the proposal. Just the last item I wanted to touch on, you may have read the City council just recently passed a cannabis sales tax ordinance. The reason that has already been done is because it was required by the State to be done by October 1st. And that would be in effect if the City were to opt in and adopt these proposed text amendments.

I think that's all I have unless there is any questions of me or staff.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Questions for staff?

Hearing none? Okay.
I would like to instruct all in the audience that this is a public hearing. Anyone who would like to speak will have the opportunity to do so. However, if you wish to speak, you do need to be sworn in. Once sworn in, we'll have you come forward. I will call one row at a time and ask people to come forward. It is important that when you start to speak, you need to speak -- you need to state your name and your address and the city of your residence.

If you have not signed in, it's also important that you sign in, so if the next person in line could sign in here and keep the line moving.

We are all good listeners. And, therefore, if you want to repeat something somebody had said earlier, I would just ask that you would state that fact. We will also take notes up here. And the format here tonight is once the testimony is all heard, we will come back and try to answer the questions that have been presented this evening.

So I will open the public hearing.
commission, if you would please stand and we will swear you in all at once.

(The public was sworn.)

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Why don't we start right in the front here, ma'am. If you would come up and state your name and address for the record.

MS. DECARLO: My name is Erika DeCarlo and my address is 3134 Timber Hill Lane in Aurora. And I'm just here -- I think we should opt in and I think that we should expand the cannabis businesses in Aurora and provide job opportunities here. That's pretty much all I wanted to say.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next person?

MR. VERNON: My name is Roger Vernon, 2625 Ginger Woods Drive. I'm executive chairman for People's Marmion neighborhood. I've got a couple points that I want to make.

First of all, I think the 500-foot limit is too close to schools. It should be at least the distance -- the minimum distance between distribution facilities which is 1500 feet.

It was mentioned about the sales
tax. I understand that the City is proposing a 2 percent sales tax where the state allows up to 3 percent. With the financial woes that the City is under, I think it would be prudent that -- that they use the entire 3 percent sales tax.

It was also mentioned about the 2014 approval for the cultivation centers. At that time, there was several residents that were against the cultivation center. They were saying it was too close to residential areas.

That was brought in front of -- a court case was brought against not the City, but saying that cultivation centers should not have been awarded a license. The court agreed with that. It is currently under appeal. That appeal ruling has not been made and we're waiting on that. But the -- the court did say that the cultivation center was in violation of the state laws.

That's all I have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in the front row.

MR. HODUPP: Hello. My name is Eli Hodupp and I live in the first ward at 941 Northfield
Drive in Aurora. I bought my house in Aurora about six years ago, but I've primarily lived in the Chicago suburbs all my life.

First off, thanks to the City for hosting this. This is really cool to have an opportunity to hear my position on such an important issue.

I would like to fully support Aurora in the sale of recreational marijuana inside the city. Living in Illinois, we're no stranger to raising taxes as it seems like the government always needs more money. For instance, Kane County has until the 8th to come up with a decision on how to close a $1.1 million budget gap, and that solution likely will be raising our taxes once again.

Yet every time we do this, conservatives come out of the woodwork talking about fiscal responsibility and how the state needs new revenue sources. The sale of recreational marijuana is one of those new revenue sources and disregarding that fact is the opposite of fiscal responsibility.

With other local cities turning
their back on this tax revenue, Aurora is in a unique situation to benefit from these foolish decisions. Just because Naperville isn't allowing recreational sales doesn't mean that the ban doesn't exist in Naperville.

Those people can come and spend their money and pay the taxes in Aurora instead. It's not like this behavior is unprecedented. Wheaton has oddly strict liquor laws, but what happens when you're in Wheaton and you want to buy beer after hours? You drive 10 minutes to a city that will sell it to you and spend your money there instead and then get your tax revenue.

The genie is out of the bottle. Recreational marijuana will be fully legal on the 1st of the year whether you like it or not. Holding onto weird, outdated puritanical beliefs from watching Reefer Madness one too many times isn't going to stop anyone from using marijuana.

Believe it or not, people are buying and using marijuana in Aurora right now and the city isn't benefiting from it. So why turn our backs on a new source of tax revenue? People get
incredibly excited when a new bar or brewery
opens in the area. Dispensaries opening really
aren't any different.

I travel a ton for work and have
spent loads of times in areas of the world where
marijuana has been legal for ages. All of these
stories you'll hear from concerned conservatives
on how society will descend into anarchy if the
people of Aurora can buy the devil's lettuce are
completely imaginary and not at all based in
reality. The only threat legalized marijuana
poses in the City of Aurora is longer lines at
Taco Bell.

Again, I urge the City to disregard
misguided and make-believe puritanical fear
mongering and please vote to allow recreational
marijuana dispensaries to open and operate inside
the City of Aurora. And while you're at it,
crank the sales tax up to 3 percent.

Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anyone else in
the first row?

MS. MCDONALD: Hello. My name is Emily
McDonald. I'm actually out of Oswego, 110
Tomahawk, but my business is actually here in Aurora. I'm actually here on behalf of Cultivate Me which is a lifestyle brand out of Las Vegas that educates the public on THC and CBD.

I am personally based out of the Aurora office. Cultivate Me is curators by trade but consumers by choice. Cultivate Me is a community of enthusiastic and discerning early adopters seeking to live the best CBD and THC of lives.

I can say we are at the leading edge of technology and advancements, but that is to say this is a cutting-edge process. However, marijuana is neither new nor unproven. It's medicinal uses have been legal in Illinois since 2013. And the first dispensaries opened to cardholding public in September of 2014.

As early as April 2019, over 62,000 qualified patients have participated in the State's medical cannabis and opioid alternative programs. In a state that needs money for just about everything, we should be taking every chance we can to reap the benefits of the taxation of recreational marijuana.
There will be a very small amount of new users. However, the amount of legal, taxable users will increase exponentially. Pharmacannis North Aurora now Verilife is 3.3 miles away from where I'm standing. Just far enough away that us here in Aurora will not be reaping the benefit of that tax revenue.

Having a dispensary within our borders will not increase high driving as Aurora is surrounded by dispensaries in other towns. In fact, by refusing to allow dispensaries within our borders, we'll be encouraging the already thriving black market.

It is this black market that your grandmother is afraid of. It is this black market that throws a little something extra on top that provides the cartridges that have caused the great vaping crisis of 2019. It was a weird vitamin E thing that caused all of the panic. It wasn't good dispensary quality stuff.

Safe, regulated marijuana should be encouraged within our borders, so I ask you to kindly consider allowing recreational dispensaries within our borders, not just so we
can increase the taxes that would, of course, benefit schools, roads and the other needs of this magnificent city, but because it would benefit the community not just fiscally but socially as the user safety and the decreasing drug trafficking should be a priority.

    Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

    Anyone else in the first row?

    If not, why don't we go to the second row. Sir?

    MR. MACGREGOR: Thank you very much, members of the city planning commission. I was hoping there would be --

    CHAIRMAN PILMER: If I can just have you state your name.

    MR. MACGREGOR: Oh, I'm sorry. Bob MacGregor, 394 Vaughn Circle, Aurora.

    I was hoping there would be more city council members here tonight. I served four terms in the Minneapolis City council and was one of the leaders with the planning commission in Minneapolis and I helped start the Metropolitan Council in the Twin Cities which is the planning
And years ago a mayor of Chicago appointed me commissioner of planning for the City of Chicago, so I've been involved in planning for a long time.

I'm here tonight -- we all know marijuana has been legalized in Illinois. But it's mislabeled and there is really much information and you will hear a lot of it tonight, I suspect.

Today's marijuana is not the old marijuana that you all are familiar with when you grew up. It is six to 20 times stronger. It's a dangerous drug and citizens are clueless about this -- this new drug and how dangerous it is. And it is definitely a gateway drug to heroin and other tough drugs.

Those of us who have lost loved ones to heroin and have worked with medical people and law enforcement people are -- know that it's absolutely a dangerous gateway drug.

And the Mexican drug lords who have corrupted Mexico are among the strongest supporters for legalization because they make
their money on fentanyl and heroin and they know
that it's a gateway drug.

Drug abuse in the United States, as
we know, is very serious. Some 70,000 people die
every year. And marijuana fits in there
somewhere and we ought to be very, very
concerned. We all need to do more to confront
this -- this real problem all over the country.
And it's hitting the suburbs big time, as you
know.

According to the National Institute
of Health, where marijuana is used among
teenagers, it increases 24 percent. Next, mental
illness and psychiatric disorders have
substantially increased where marijuana was used.
This is one of the best books you can get on this
by Alexander Berenson, a former New York Times
reporter. And he has been quoted often on this
and he's met with the top medical people all over
the world to document that what this does to
especially teenage brains, lowers IQ some
8 percent or more.

And next we know that wherever it
has been legalized, traffic accidents have
increased substantially. And the law enforcement officials here in Aurora and elsewhere do not have the proper tools to test suspects.

Now, on taxes, I know all of us involved in the government we need taxes. What they're finding in communities that have legalized it, there is so many other increased costs with traffic costs, crime that goes up, hospital visits and so on that it almost becomes a wash. You don't get all that tax revenue that people keep talking about.

And so I will conclude by saying this is a time for leadership, a time to -- and, by the way, I teach leadership all over the world. And I'm an old guy still trying to stay on the case. So I hope that you will stand up and vote to opt out. And this is a dangerous, dangerous drug.

Thank you very much for listening. And I have a longer statement that I sent to members of the city council and I'll leave my statement with somebody here.

So thank you and onward and upward with confidence. Thank you for your service.
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Okay. We'll proceed again across that second row. Anyone else want to speak?

Please come forward.

MS. LOGMAN: Hi. My name is Margie Logman. I live at 495 North Lake Street.

Is this on? Can you hear me okay?

CHAIRMAN PILMER: I can hear you, but it's not on.

MS. LOGMAN: All right. That's okay. My name is Marjorie Logman. I live at 495 North Lake Street here in Aurora. It looks like from the previous speakers I should qualify myself. I'm a very upbeat grandma, definitely not a Puritan and a loyal democrat.

And what I want to say, things that are happening in Aurora lately have given me great concern. My family -- my father's side were big Kane County republicans and my mother's side all work for the Daleys, so I had quite an upbringing.

How crazy is it that we have these town halls after the city council -- and I know it was a deadline, but they passed the taxes. So
really they've already made up their mind. If they didn't pass the taxes, it would be, you know, up for question. Because some of these town halls, I think, become more, you know, how to appease the populous rather than really listening to us and being an avenue for change and I think that has to change very much. Knowing it will not change minds that have already been made up, I say no to cannabis sales. Smoking is no good for lungs no matter who rolls it. But I know you will go ahead and vote for cash over health.

    Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN PILMER: Okay. Anybody else in the second row?

    Please come forward.

    MS. BARNETTE: Hi. Good evening. I'm Danielle Barnette. I live at 3630 Fairfax Court East in Aurora. I would like to say thanks to the commission for this opportunity to speak and be a part of the public process. I wanted to urge the commission to opt in. And I would like to ask a question.

    Could someone please fill me in on
what the process is going forward after this town
hall? I know there was a bit mentioned on the
Facebook post. But can someone please like spell
it out for me so I know the due process and
what's going to happen going forward? Is it
going to come to a referendum, etcetera?

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Ed will answer that now and
explain the process starting tonight and going
forward.

MR. SIEBEN: So the planning commission, this
body, will make a recommendation. That
recommendation will go on to our building, zoning
and economic development committee which --
which -- which is made up of five alderman. And
that will be next Wednesday at 4:00 P. M., fifth
floor of this building. That's on October 9th.

From there, it will go to the city
council committee, the hall, on Tuesday,
October 15th at 5:00 P. M. And then it will go
on the city council agenda on Tuesday,
October 22nd at 6:00 P. M. in this room.

MS. BARNETTE: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in
row two?
Okay. We'll start over here with row three.

Please come forward.

MR. PEREZ: Hello. Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Alexander Perez, 1544 Soffisberg.

So I am the owner of the Grove operational dispensary. I'm a social equity applicant that is vying for one of the licenses as are other individuals. I want to underline that I'm a social equity applicant because Aurora is one of the very few places outside of the city of Chicago that actually has social equity zones. I'm here to represent those individuals in the City of Aurora that represent those areas, those zones themselves.

If we opt out, we're giving another blow to those communities that have already been affected and further exclude the individuals who should have a seat at the table. I commend the State and the governor for their efforts to address the disparity, but I hope that Aurora will opt in and give those affected a chance to gain and give back to those communities like the
Grove would like to do.

The city has a chance of great opportunity for many minority individuals that have been negatively impacted by the misguided war on drugs. The map put out by the State detailing disadvantaged communities covers a large portion of the city of Aurora.

It would be a misstep to not open the doors for so many individuals that -- to contribute to this community and for individuals that belong in those communities.

Thank you again for your time.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Next in row three, would anyone like to come forward?

Please come forward.

MS. WANG: Hello, everyone. My name is Jing Wang. My address 2974 Savannah Drive in Aurora. So my husband and I have lived in this city for about 11 years and we raise our daughter here. About three years ago, the daughter of our neighbor, a nine-year-old little girl, was killed in a car accident.

The minivan she was in was hit by a
car going about 85 miles an hour in a
35-mile-per-hour zone in the wrong lane. The
high alcohol level and marijuana was detected in
the body of this perpetrator driver. And later
the driver was sentenced 13 years in jail.

Our neighborhood lost a wonderful
sweet and loving little girl. And now our
daughter, who is right here, lost one of her best
friends, too.

In addition to the health-related
problems, there is no doubt that using marijuana
leads to more traffic accidents, especially fatal
accidents. High (inaudible) drug traffic areas
program reported that in Colorado things --
recreational marijuana was legalized,
marijuana-related traffic deaths increased
151 percent.

The officers, if you opt in to allow
selling recreational marijuana, more and more
such tragedies like what happened to this
nine-year-old little girl will happen in Aurora.
How could you look at the eyes of the parents who
lost their kids and tell them, sorry, tax is more
important than people's life and safety, so I
decide to choose tax and revenue over your children's life or your beloved family member's life.

   And furthermore, if we allow selling recreational marijuana, we're sending a very dangerous and misleading message to our kids, that using marijuana is not a maleficence. It's acceptable and is easily accessible.

   Some people may argue that if you don't want your kids to use marijuana, you should teach them at home to make them the right choice. Unfortunately, I'm not that sure about that. I'm not confident. Let's ask ourself a question. We're all parents.

   How many hours per day could we spend with our kids? I would say four to five hours at most if sleeping time is not included. And kids spend way more time at school and also hanging out with their friends.

     We all know what peer pressure is and how people, especially young kids, could be influenced by peer pressure. If all my daughter friends use marijuana and she still refuse, she will be isolated or even bullied. I'm just not
that confident that she could make the right choice under such pressure and the temptation around her.

So, please, opt out. Please keep our city a safe, strong and healthy environment to each family to live. No matter how thirsty we are, we should never drink poisonous water. We don't need drug profit to develop our hometown. May God bless America and God bless Aurora.

Thank you.

So may I suggest if the people in the audience support -- agree with me, let them stand up.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: I would just ask that we keep order here, so if we can just go on to the next speaker.

MS. WANG: Okay.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Please come forward.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good evening, Commissioner. My name is Elon (phonetic). You may also call me Ricky. That beautiful lady gave a very emotional speech is my wife, so probably I don't have to state my address again.

Many people who support recreational
marijuana believe the City may increase revenue via collecting sale taxes. Is that true or a myth? Here are some lessons we can learn from our neighbor Canada where marijuana has been legalized for almost a year.

During the first quarter after legalization, Canada's top marijuana growers lost near $300 million. I'm talking about the currency of Canadian dollar for the rest of my speech. It is also reported that British Columbia marijuana store is still losing money today. Yes, you hear me correct. They're still losing money.

And will state marijuana store is to lose 25 million Canadian dollar in the first full year even though it has the monopoly of sales for the six months and had the permanent control of all land transaction.

Canadian marijuana sale was about 5.9 billion for the first quarter -- excuse my -- for the first quarter of 2018. The black market account for 4.7 out of the 5.9, nearly 80 percent. Even the CEO of Canadian leading legal marijuana company admitted that, quote,
black market business has never been better.

All that to say from very reliable resource. Just Google Canadian legal marijuana losing money. You'll find more news like this.

So people are asking why. The reasons are very simple. The price in legalized store just could not compete with the black market. The price in legal store is more than $10 per rip, while less than 6 in black market.

Legal store need to have physical stores. And black market, they use street. Legal stores have to hire salaried employees. And for the black market, most are self employed and most of them are consumed themselves.

Therefore, it is highly unrealistic that marijuana will bring significant tax revenue to our city. But I know for sure it will pay for the cost of all the negative effects, increased crime rate, increased traffic accident rate, increased cost and decrease working efficiency.

I would like to end my speech with two more stories my parents told me when I was a kid. First, it's stupid to paint a cake to satisfy your hunger. And second, you should
never quench your thirst with poisoned water.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Anybody else in row three?

MS. HU: Good evening. My name is Kui Hu. I'm from Plainfield, but Aurora is actually -- I consider it part of the, you know, community that we live in because I lived in Naperville and I used to bring my kids to Aurora like, you know --

CHAIRMAN PILMER: If we can maybe straighten that mic, I think it may help. And if you could state your street address as well, please.

MS. HU: My address is 11530 Century Circle, Plainfield. I feel like I'm part of the Aurora community and that's why I feel like I should come to the meeting and speak up.

I appreciate the chance to speak to you tonight and urge you to consider to opt out of selling recreational cannabis in the City of Aurora for the benefit of its citizens and especially for the well-being of the younger generations.

Allowing for cannabis retail sale in the city increases the likelihood of more fatal
traffic accidents as mentioned by the gentlemen and the lady from earlier. But I would like to bring some source of facts from Colorado.

As revealed in the report named by Impacts of Marijuana Legalization in Colorado Released By the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice of Research and Statistics on October 26, 2018, the number of fatalities where a driver tested positive for any cannabinoid almost triples from the year 2013 to 2017.

Organized crime cases almost quadrupled from 2012 to 2017. So it is crucial for the City to make consistent decisions that continue to maintain a safe environment for the 200,000-plus residents.

Also as parents, it is our job to do our very best to provide a clean and healthy environment for our children. Studies show that at least 10 percent of those who use marijuana become addicted.

And as mentioned by the gentlemen earlier, that marijuana is known to be the gateway drug to more addictive drugs such as heroin. Marijuana addictions are related to many
growth problems such as brain damage, mental
issues and decreased school performance just to
name a few.

If we don't want marijuana to be
easily accessible to our children, there is no
reason to make it easily accessible to other
people. It is difficult to say no to
temptations.

The presumed tax revenue from
commercial recreational marijuana sales and the
margin of convenience it brings to those who need
it for medical reasons must be weighted with the
definitive foreseeable expense of social cost if
marijuana becomes widely available.

So I'm here to urge the members of
the city council to opt out.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Going across row three -- and just a
reminder that if you haven't signed in, please
make sure you do so to the right here as you come
up.

MR. VINCENT: John Vincent, 1248 Oakleaf
Court here in Aurora. I would -- one thing I
would just ask is what is the benefit to the
city? I can only think of one and that's even
dubious. We know what that is. Tax revenue.

But the unintended consequences are
employers out of Colorado trying to find somebody
that can pass a drug test for construction jobs,
bus drivers, CDL drivers, etcetera, where you
have to pass a drug test is exceedingly hard.
You look at what those employers have to go
through to try to find one candidate that's
qualified yet can pass a drug test.

Aurora police -- I just read this
today from the Illinois police. What viable test
do we have for what really is the highest level
or higher level of THC in the bloodstream that
causes a DUI? Is there really a good measurement
for it?

As far as our young people that was
talked about, we know about the deleterious
effects on their brains. But who knows what's in
the candy. I mean, they have edibles. Who knows
what's in the candy that somebody is going to
give to our kids? Or do they care? Do our kids
know what they're getting?
And this is -- I read this and this is -- I just put down really. In the state of Illinois, here is -- here is the law. You're not supposed to smoke in public places. Really? In cars. Really? School grounds, okay, maybe. In proximity, whatever that means, of anyone under 21. Really?

In proximity of a bus driver. Okay. In proximity of a police officer. That probably would work. In proximity of a firefighter. In proximity of a corrections officer. Really? How is that going to be enforced? And if you do smoke in the proximity of a public place or in your car, what's the penalty for that?

That's what the law is supposed to be.

So going back to -- well, the one benefit, a couple of -- as someone pointed out in Colorado, hospitalizations from marijuana related after legalization increased 148 percent from 2012 to 2016. Marijuana-related ER visits increased 52 percent in the same timeframe.

So please opt out.

MS. VINCENT: Hi. Mary Ann Vincent, 1248
Oakleaf Court. Most of my comments are about the unintended consequences of legalized recreational marijuana.

My first two comments, I'll number them, but are from an ER doctor, Dr. Samuel Wang, W-a-n-g. Today's marijuana, this is kind of redundant, but there is more to it, is 20 percent more potent than the marijuana from the '60s and '70s which was 3.7 percent. Today's is 80 percent. But each person or anyone who buys this cannot be certain because some cannabis concentrates can get close to 100 percent. Who is regulating this?

And children as young as two years old are getting into their caregiver's -- this is from Colorado where they've had legalized marijuana since about 2014. I saw a couple dates. But, anyway, getting into caregiver's cannabis, 27 percent increase in children and teens needing emergency treatment for marijuana toxicity.

Now, the rest of my comments are from Newsweek. I looked online. It's from today's date, Wednesday, October 2nd, 2019.
There is higher marijuana intoxicated driving. There is illegal movement of legally grown cannabis, for instance, from Colorado to other states or Illinois to other states where it's illegal. There are educational problems in middle school and high school.

And back to children, and my husband mentioned this, the edible marijuana. People put it in brownies. You know, kids are gonna eat this. So it's a higher -- higher ER visits with edible consumption by children and pets relating in illness and death.

There is regulatory or potency confusion, number seven. I haven't been listing all my numbers, but these are all un-- -- excuse me -- all unintended consequences. The cost of increased law enforcement because of drug driving accidents, fatal crashes, loss of productivity, increased gang crime. So we have to question the cost of these benefit of any tax dollars.

And in Colorado there is a high teen drug expulsion. Is that really what we want? Next, a homeless population will explode because people are nonfunctioning.
I used to live in Colorado. I went to college there. My dad lived there, visited there frequently, was there in the '60s and '70s. I went back there. We have a daughter there. It looked like a flashback. People just asking us for money. They don't want it for food. They want it to get high.

People aren't going to work. They're just sleeping. So, anyway, it's a major problem. And homelessness exploded in Colorado. Tourist dollars in Colorado went to marijuana, not to visit the beautiful state of Colorado. That's where the tourist dollars went.

And there is also a marginal impact because any increased tax revenue -- the percent, I didn't write it down -- but anyway, it's a higher cost of all these other things needing increased law enforcement and everything.

As of March 2019, Colorado cannabis growers have been left to improvise since their -- no commercial pesticides labeled for legal use on cannabis plants. So there has been misuse of pesticides. So there are improvised concoctions of chemicals including undefinable
mixtures. So what is going on? Who is regulating this?

My last point, forget the notion that prisons filled with minor drug offenders would be relieved. Well, it's blown out of proportion in Colorado.

We should learn from states who have had this legal for over five years. There is much to be learned. This is going to cost way more than we think we're going to gain. And we will need to build more drug rehab. If this does pass, I hope there is going to be some of this so-called profit for the drug rehab that will be needed. As -- as has already been said, it's a gateway drug.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Next in the third row.

MS. WILLIAMS: Victoria Williams, 3491 Willow View Court, City of Aurora. Thank you for holding this.

With the legalization of cannabis in Illinois, I would like to submit a proposal to the City of Aurora offering residents vendor
training, general education and social equity programs to the community.

In this newly regulated market, it is important that we not only adhere to the laws but that people know that there is a safe way for cannabis to be distributed, consumed and disposed.

We believe it also helps dispel the negative connotation around cannabis. Aurora Cannabis Consultants was the first approved responsible vendor in the state of Illinois. The training courses that we provide include a wide range of topics like health and safety, inventory tracking and labeling requirements.

We deliver the training in an interactive classroom setting that breaks down the 610-page HB1438 law in a comprehensive way for everyone to understand using our state-approved name.

Currently the only agents that are required to receive this training are those involved in handling the sale or cannabis — the sale of cannabis or cannabis infused products.

However, we feel training is
necessary for everyone and we provide a customizable training program to serve the masses. In addition to the State required training, we provide additional training courses to the communities affected by social economic injustices surrounding cannabis through our Put Illinois Back to Work program.

This program covers a wide variety of many trainings that are much needed in the workplace. A few examples are customer service skills, problem solving, interview skills, phone and email etiquette, sales techniques and marketing.

As stated previously, this program is customizable to fit any age and/or educational level. Aurora Cannabis Consultants also provide marketing materials for the public outreach campaign. With over five years of educating the public and marketing cannabis, we believe that this partnership will benefit us both a great deal.

The State of Illinois has already released grant applications to apply for funding for community colleges and other educational
institutes to aid in education, training in this market.

I am willing to email that information to the entire committee and -- as long as I get your contact information. I'll get it offline.

Recreational marijuana creates jobs. It brings down unemployment rates. Crime typically happens in communities highly affected by poverty, the disproportionate area that Illinois has talked about giving the social equity status to.

Cannabis development program is an option for the City of Aurora. We create information for the city websites. We can designate a green zone. We're willing to create a city compliant guideline.

And we have also on our own, not from the State, created something called How to Spot Fake Vapes. I believe that every parent here is concerned about the safety of their children. I, too, am a parent who have a special needs child.

So we created a program called How
to Spot Fake Vapes, vape cartridges. That's what they're talking about now that has everyone in fear.

And what the City of Aurora does not know is that there is a brunch of copycats out here and the copycats is easily to be done. They order these things offline and say that they look just like the name brand, but they're not.

Cannabis does not just consist of smoking. Cannabis also involves topicals that are not just THC, but they are THC/CBD that does not get you high. Everyone is not using cannabis to get high.

As I said before, I respect the opinion of every concerned parent here today. I am a concerned parent myself. The State HB1338 bill is extremely thorough as it relates to what product will look like and package safety and the regulations that keep our city safe. If you do not know, packaging has to be done so children cannot open it.

If you do not know, the dispensaries will help keep residents from getting potential laced tainted product which also will cut down on
the opioid addiction. If you do not know, then we're here to help you. Allow us to come in.

Our facility is located already in Aurora, located 853 North Highland Avenue. We were the very first to get approved to actually allow dispensary agent training. It's on the press release issued by the governor.

It's 26 other vendors in the entire state of Illinois that was approved to do this training. We have did something to keep the city safe if you will allow us to keep the city safe.

As far as the safety of vape carts, I would just like to show three poses, these photos on my iPad, that just talks about how to spot vape cartridges. And I know everybody won't see it, but we have created a program already (indicating) so teens and children will have the option and the opportunity to learn about the potential harms of cannabis.

Do not buy it off the street. Allow you guys to opt in and say yes to regulating cannabis will actually keep our children safe. They wouldn't be allowed to buy it on the streets. You know, even though they say 21, it's
still a kid to me. So I'll say the age limit is 21. It's still a child. And if he's able to go into the dispensary, he will be safer using cannabis legally. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Anybody else in row three?

MS. UN: Hello everybody. My name is Ling Un. I'm the landlord of the 3138 Ridgeland Lane in Aurora. I want to encourage you to option out recreation of marijuana sales in Aurora. I feel like marijuana for the people in the town is bad. According to researchers, marijuana is harmful for health, specially for the brain. Mix alcohol and the marijuana together can endanger life, especially for the people who is lack self-control, who always want to but cannot control himself, for that people.

And then the tax, again, from selling marijuana will not be enough to cover a broad source that you can bring to our city. Is it easier for our city to turn bad than to turn good? In conclusion, to keep City of Aurora safe here, I strongly ask commissioner to deny marijuana sales in Aurora.
Thank you for your attention.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in row three?

        Okay. Let's move to row four on this side.

MR. TOVAR: Hello. My name is Juan Tovar, 1230 Solfisburg Avenue, Aurora, Illinois. Thank you for allowing me for this opportunity to talk to you fine people today.

        As an Auroran citizen, this is my hometown, I grew up here since the time I was three years old. And I think -- I know what it's like to be a minority and to be targeted in Aurora for illegal use of drugs. And I've had many friends affected negatively from marijuana possession, even my family for -- and have had many lost job opportunities and had it negatively impact their record.

        And I feel it isn't just since it is not criminalized. I think in my opinion, legalizing will undercut the black market and keep it out of the children of -- hands as it will be harder for them to reach -- to reach them in illegal sources.
And when used by responsible adults, it would be -- it would be a great opportunity as a business owner to bring this to Aurora. Thank you for the opportunity to talk and for legalizing marijuana for recreational use.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Next in row four? MR. GARCIAS: Hey. Ed Garcias, (phonetic) Drive. I was not planning to talk, so if I sound like an idiot, it's because I am.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: If you could just state the city.

MR. GARCIAS: Aurora.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

MR. GARCIAS: First of all, I'm opt out. Especially young people are complacent and stupid enough that we don't need the City to stamp another thing -- to give their stamp approval of another thing to keep us more stupid and more complacent.

And second, I would like to address the argument that the tax revenue will -- is any good. Our problem is not a revenue problem. Our problem is a spending problem. We can't just
keep moving the goalpost and pretending
everything is okay.

That's all.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Row four, going across.

MR. BASTIAN: Good evening, ladies and
gentlemen. I'm probably going to echo a little
bit of what this gentleman here said. And I know
he said he's an old guy. Well, I'm not --

CHAIRMAN PILMER: If you can just state your
name and address for the record, please.

MR. BASTIAN: Kevin Bastian. I live at 891
Laurel Drive in Aurora.

Ladies and gentlemen, I stand today
to oppose the sale of recreational marijuana in
the City of Aurora. The reasons I have are many,
but first and foremost is the fact that
recreational marijuana is harmful to a person's
health.

Now, some may justify and say that
alcohol and cigarettes are harmful, but they're
still legal. While there will always be
individuals that will abuse alcohol and tobacco,
tobacco is not a mind-altering drug. And small amounts of alcohol, especially red wine, has significant health benefits. Recreational marijuana does not. And, in fact, when people mix alcohol and marijuana, which will surely happen, the combination becomes deadly.

Real quick, a little story. When I was 20 years old one night, I had been out drinking beer and smoking pot. On the way home driving up Route 25 just north of Butterfield Road about a block and a half from where I lived in North Aurora, I passed out behind the wheel and woke up just as I was going down an embankment of about a 45-degree angle as my car wedged against a tree.

And luckily the tree prevented my car from overturning. Thankfully the North Aurora police were in the area, had a tow truck pull my car out. And when they saw I lived nearby, escorted me nearby without ticketing or arresting me. But that little incident is beside the point.

There is also a mountain of evidence that concludes that marijuana use leads to
psychosis and mental illness as well as respiratory and lung damage to chronic users. God made our bodies the way he did for a reason. Fish die without water and human beings die without air. The only thing you should be breathing in your lungs is O2. Anything else is harmful.

But, you know, ladies and gentlemen, I suggest this meeting tonight is just a token meeting held to pacify the public that we have some say in this matter. But from the information I have read so far, it seems to me the City has already made up its mind.

The chief financial officers and other city revenue officials are already licking their chops with dollar signs in their eyes discussing at what percentage to levee the tax on revenue from the sale of marijuana.

Now, I suggest we're gonna hear all manner of justification for voting to pass this resolution. It will use all kinds of semantics such as people are going to use it anyway and it's gonna cost us money anyway so why not tax its use.
They will turn a blind eye all in pursuit of the almighty dollar. It's nothing but a big cash cow. But that doesn't make it right. And if you think about it, if the City passes this, they're actually encouraging people to use marijuana. Now, they may say things like we're just making it available to people who will use it anyway. But think about it, ladies and gentlemen, if people don't patronize the facility, that means no revenue for the City. The whole point of opening a successful business is to do everything you can to make sure it succeeds. So the City has to promote the new business. A quote from the Beacon News said officials favor a 2 percent tax as a compromise between getting revenue and attracting high end marijuana stores. No pun intended. One official said we're looking at being competitive. But ladies and gentlemen, if you were to ask our fine mayor and the city council -- I may make you laugh with a few of my comments here.
But if you were to ask the mayor and the city counsel if they smoked marijuana, I don't think I need to tell you what their answer would be. I'm going to leave this comment out about the governor because I don't want to be politically incorrect.

But I get emails all the time from the City of Aurora of all the great things our city has to offer, things such as empowering our youth. Well, how does letting a recreational marijuana facility descend on the City of Aurora help empower our youth?

What kind of message does that send to the youth of our city, even if they are 21, to have a temptation like that at their disposal? There may be some kid who is facing some overwhelming problems in his life when he feels the pressures of life are getting him down might just say some night I think I'll go down to the corner store and buy some pot get high to ease the pain.

Ladies and gentlemen, I mentioned earlier successful business has to be promoted. This poses a little dilemma for the City. Like
all businesses, there certainly should be a
ribbon cutting for the grand opening. Charlie's
Silver Spoon Creamery opened right down the block
on the corner of Stolp and Downer and I believe
the mayor and a few city officials had some ice
cream with the new owners.

So I have a question. Will the
mayor and the city council have a joint with the
owners of the new marijuana facility? If not,
why not? It's the height of hypocrisy.

The message at the ice cream parlor
was come on down and enjoy what this new business
has to offer which in this case is some delicious
ice cream. Well, why not the same at the
marijuana facility? It's laughable.

Maybe we'll start to see ads in the
newspaper and on billboards throughout the city.
Here, I wrote the first one.

Come on down, folks, and patronize
this business and experience what great quality
weed they have to offer, a smooth taste and a
mellow high that you will love will -- with just
the right amount of THC to relax your mind, fry
your brain, forget your troubles, get your
creative juices flowing and give you that
euphoria you crave. But remember to smoke
responsibly and don't smoke and drive.

I ask responsible citizens to stand
with me and urge the mayor and the city council
to oppose this in the City of Aurora.

And I'll end my little tirade with a
quote that was going back in the '70s. Only
dopes smoke dope.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Mr. Bastian, I might
clarify one point. You did say that you think
this is a token meeting. So on behalf of
everyone here, the commission is made up
volunteer Aurora citizens that serve as plan
commission members and we do take our
responsibility serious.

MR. BASTIAN: I understand.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: So we're here as a
sounding -- to listen to public testimony and
make a recommendation to the city council.

Anyone else in row four?

If we can go to row five, start on
this side.

MR. ZHANG: Good evening. My name is Greg
Zhang. I'm the landlord for 3170 East Winchester Court, Aurora. My full-time job is a mechanic engineer in a large manufacturing company. Today I'm going to talk about the impact of marijuana on employment.

Marijuana is a federally illegal drug. And most companies or if not every company strictly prohibit employees from using marijuana. We have a drug screening process during hiring. So if an applicant fail the drug test, the application is automatically rejected. If an employee is caught performing a duty under the influence of marijuana or any other drug, he or she subject to termination.

CDL that one gentlemen mentioned, commercial driver's license holders or sometimes called truck drivers, they are frequently and randomly selected for drug test including marijuana under the federal regulations. So if they fail the test, they are subject to termination of the company policy, as well.

So in summary, to help more people finding jobs or keep them employed, please opt out.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Next in row five?

MR. CHEN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Hungting Chen. I live at 990 Meadowridge Drive, City of Aurora.

Today I'm here to against allowing recreation of marijuana sales at Aurora. And here the reason why I came to that.

First I believe we will jeopardize our community safety at Aurora with just the question about the tax revenues which already people talk about it, so I won't repeat again. But we will increase the criminal rate and also increase the safety concerns.

Second, I have really concern regarding to the -- once we open the business, the marijuana become (inaudible) causing a lot of issues.

Like the gentleman mention before, outcome we also have those drug tests randomly. What if someone action is buying marijuana and bring to the food and sell to the public? Maybe you get -- someone doesn't know and perhaps me or
you and eat that and eat that food and without
knowing that and now we just failed a test and
lost a job.

What if we give this food to the
children? So, therefore, I strongly request
hoping the City of Aurora can opt out to the
sales of recreational marijuana use.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

MS. HUANG: Good evening. My name is Wei
Huang. I live in 990 Meadowridge Drive in
Aurora. And I live in Aurora for more than five
years. I love this city so, therefore, I
encourage you to oppose recreational marijuana
sales in our city.

So earlier this morning -- this
evening when I left home, I was holding this
(indicating) and my kids saw it. And my little
son asked me, Mommy, that's a sign for no poison
ivy? And at that moment I thought it would be
great that it was that easy, no poison ivy. But
it is not.

And that moment hit me that I
remember I first know the word "marijuana" when I
was in college. And since then, this word didn't
appear in my life very often until recently. And
now my little boy may have to know this word when
he is only three -- only five years old. So I
feel sad about that.

So that encourage me to come here to
protect our kids from exposing to marijuana so
early and so often than they should. It's not
just the father or mother's job because we are
talking recreational marijuana. It's not
medical.

Allowing recreational medical sales
sends a signal to the kids that marijuana is
okay, it is not big deal. It is not. It is not
okay. Marijuana especially dangerous for young
people because human brains are not fully
developed until they are age -- when they are age
25 which is about the age of the legal age that
they can project marijuana.

And also researchers in Harvard and
Northwestern found that recreational marijuana
smokers age from -- from 18 to 25 show
abnormalities in the shape, volume and density of
certain areas of the brain. Those fact
consequences tend not to reverse but will increase mental health problems.

Also, marijuana is addictive. And the dependency on drugs will increase with legalization. Among cocaine, alcohol and marijuana, which one is the most difficult to give up? Marijuana.

And I know that maybe you were saying you train your kids and make them aware that it is harmful for you. But think about that. We all have to pass a written test and a driving test to get our driver's license. Can everybody drive safely?

So if brain or health is not enough for you to say no, what about lives? Studies in Colorado show dramatic increase in marijuana-related traffic deaths since recreational marijuana was legalized.

One person was killed every three days in accidents where drivers were tested positive for marijuana. We are talking about losing people's lives due to the use of marijuana. Lives are priceless. Lives are priceless.
I send all my email to show my concern to Mr. Mayor and the aldermen and one replied to me saying that if we opt in -- if we opt out, he's probably about losing the tax revenue.

But I would like to -- in respond to that, if we allow recreational marijuana sales in Aurora, the city will, true, get tax revenues, but the majority of the profit will still go to those sales companies. The City will not get a lot.

And we will need to pay for the bad consequences with people's health, people's lives, city's safety and the city's reputation and much, much more money. And what we will get will never measure up with what we need to pay.

So I strongly urge you to oppose recreational marijuana sales in our city. And this is not in my speech. But when I was looking at their -- at the research about Colorado -- because, you know, every year they have this annual report about Colorado since 2013.

And that reminds me of what, you know? Reminds me of the time when I was working
in the lab. You know, in the lab they have like
testing animals like rats and then they put those
cancer materials into the rats to see how the
tumor grow.

And Colorado now, it looks like this
little rats to me, the little rats in the
experiment -- in the labs. And the recreational
marijuana is just like this material that cause
cancer. And let's not put this in our city, not
let the tumor has any opportunity to grow in our
home in our city.

Thank you for this opportunity.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Next in row five?

MS. WANG: Hello. Good evening, ladies and
gentlemen. My name is Jinfeng Wang. I live at
1104 Stonehaven Circle in Aurora. I have lived
in Aurora for 13 years. One of my two boys was
born in Aurora. They are now 11 and 17 attending
middle and high school. And I love this city and
the neighborhood because it is safe place to live
and raise children.

We are now in a desperation to find
a new revenue source to fix the state's financial
crisis. Illinois passed a law in June to allow recreational marijuana sales and use.

But please keep in mind that federal government still classifies marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug which means it remains illegal. According to the DEA, Schedule 1 drugs, substances or chemicals are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

This classification puts marijuana in the same category as heroin. As this gentleman said, today's marijuana is not the ones in the '60s. The high potency is linked to increases in addiction, psychosis and violence. States that have legalized it like Colorado have seen an increase in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, poison control center calls and the increasing in using every age category including youth.

The frequent (phonetic) use with adolescents can effect attention, memory, decision-making and motivation. And that use -- and those people who are more likely to miss classes, do poorly in school and drop out. And
marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug among minors age 12 to 17 according to 2018 national survey on drug use and health.

        Allowing recreational marijuana sales in Aurora will make it more accessible to our vulnerable children and make it more dangerous than ever. I do not want marijuana addicts and the recreational users driving in and out of your community -- my community regularly to purchase the drugs.

        I do not want easy access of these toxic substances to my children. Let's all take actions to protect the safety of our kids and the health of our community. I urge City of Aurora to opt out of the sales of recreational marijuana.

        Thank you.

        MR. WADDELL: Good evening. My name is Way Waddell. I live in 5104 Stonehaven Circle, Aurora. And I also have rental properties in Aurora.

        I urge the City of Aurora to opt out recreational marijuana sales for the sake of our next young generations. I work in human resource
department of an international law firm. I know
that if a candidate fails the drug test, the
candidate will definitely not get the job offer
no matter how good he is.

Allowing recreational marijuana sale
will make marijuana much easier, accessible to
public including teenagers. If they start to use
marijuana, it will not only have impact on their
health but also has huge impact on their career.
They will fail the drug test and in turn will not
find jobs. They will end up on the street.

I have two teenager boys. As a
father, I am really worried that if they start to
use marijuana, it will not only have bad impact
on their health but also have huge impact on
their career. For the future of our kids, for
the future of our new generations, I urge the
city council to opt out.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in row
five?

MR. GONZALEZ: Hello. My name is Javier
Gonzalez. I live on 720 Kingsway Court in
Aurora. I'm probably the more foremost authority
on this subject here in Aurora.

   Back in the '70s, I would bring
200 pounds in a week into the city. It was four
of us and we all brought it, that amount. I'm
the only one that's left to come and tell you the
ravages of this drug. I'm very passionate about
it.

   You know, and this -- it's as simple
as throwing the seeds off your back porch. Some
of the best stuff was -- was planted by accident.
Okay? You're not gonna make any money. Why --
why buy it when you can grow it for free and
better, okay?

   I did all the drugs, heroin,
cocaine, everything, acid, everything. I was a
drug addict, but my drug of choice was marijuana.
I -- I would tell them, you guys take the coke, I
just want the marijuana. That was my -- and I
had a heck of a time quitting. Really, it was
devastating how much it had a grip on me.

   We used -- and they talk about
marijuana back in the day? Well, back in the
day, yeah, I had to roll up my marijuana and I
had to put the TV on what was I gonna watch
because I didn't want to get all high and not be able to turn off the TV because I didn't want to watch Bozo's Circus.

I know what I'm talking about. This is devastating. I've seen too many of my friends -- a good portion are dead because of this. You're not gonna make any money. You're delusional if you think you are. I'm telling you from facts. I've lived it. I've walked it. And I'm an ordained minister here in Aurora. I'm a small businessman. And I deal with this stuff every day, you know?

But, anyway, I'm talking about -- I've been off the stuff for 40 years. 40 years. But I've watched. I've observed it the whole time because that was my -- my choice and I've never seen one thing good come out of using marijuana. Not one.

But I could name you hundreds, maybe thousands of bad things. Not one. And I challenge anybody -- other than maybe the medical part of it, but people are going to check out of society. They're not gonna want to work.

The only -- the only accident I was
ever in was because I was high on pot. And I could have avoided it but because I was high, I was (indicating) and I didn't -- I didn't take -- I didn't step on the accelerator to get out of her way. It's devastating.

I urge you, you know, don't fool yourselves about this. You know, and you're delusional if you think you're going to make money off of it because you can make it for pennies.

Once you -- once you open the floodgates, hey, just buy a -- a High Times magazine. They will tell you how to grow it for free and better. So I'm -- I'm urging you, please, don't do it. Don't do it. I've been in it too long. I know the answers, you know. And there is a way and the way is Jesus. It's a person. And I'm here to testify for that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Anybody else in row five?

Okay. Let's go to this side on row six.

MR. WU: Dear council members and the committee members and mayor, my name is Rodger
Wu. I live in 1099 Stockton Court, Aurora.

First of all, I would like to thank that gentleman who is very brave man. It's a very touching story. I think he told his own story. And now it's -- now it's your turn to make a wise decision.

And I also appreciate the opinion that the other gentleman talks about how marijuana -- today's marijuana, how strong. And it is different and due to different -- based on a lot of marketing companies and that they sell these things, the stores they sell these things, they can make it very attractive to young people.

And now we really need to think. A lot of people talk about revenues, tax dollars. Several people already bring in the -- a lot of data. Do we really think it will increase our tax? How much cost we have to pay in order to earn these tax dollars? And what about social cost, like accidents or whatever? And a lot of troubles because of that.

And do we really ignore the health issues related to this? Now, we know long, long time ago those big tobacco companies, they say
cigarettes is fine, has no health issue. And how many years and after lawsuits after lawsuits and people died and then eventually people decide, cigarettes can cause cancer. How many times we have to repeat these story in this country?

And last time several -- I guess several probably weeks ago people talk about E-cigarettes. And now we all know many people have died, damage due to the lung and died of these. So when these things happening, people always say, okay, you know, we can't earn dollars, we can't earn tax monies and a lot of interest group be like that.

So another point, I live in Aurora for more than 18 years, so I love the city. It's a beautiful community. And we all know when you own a home, you say location, location and location. Ask each one of us, do we want a store open next to my house? Do we want that?

I guess I really hope every one of us make a wise decision, not driven by the interest group, not by the tax dollar. It's still questionable. But priority, what is our priority of the city? Is the reputation, the
health, the wellness of the citizen or what else? I urge you to opt out.

    Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN PILMER: Next in row six, anybody else?

    MS. HE: My name is Qing He. I live at 1031 Courtland Place, Aurora, Illinois, for 15 years. I have two daughter go to Matea High School. So what happen is we have a large amount of international community in Aurora. The reason why I have a house here because good education school, the system.

    I just talk to a few investor yesterday. They want to bring their kids to Aurora to go to a Calvary church to go for school district. And then we also have a shopping mall on the 59 for Chinese business.

    And I just want to see -- here is we have young people from China come here to do -- to build relationship with young people in Aurora to be able to bridging the -- a directory between those countries. Even with bring the marijuana legally in the city, which could diminish the possibility for the opportunities.
The reason why is you can see a lot of international people here. They don't like marijuana. And I have some tenant smell -- smoke marijuana. I can smell the marijuana all the time. I told him, you know, that's okay. I understand why you smoke marijuana. But you got to understand, not everybody want to smell that marijuana every time you go to the hospital, every time you go to the train station.

This -- I just feel bad. I just simply feel bad when I smell marijuana. So this is -- I want to say is school system is one of the most wonderful things in Aurora. And for the school system -- you know, the city to allow doing this, I mean, how could the parents with their kids live in Naperville especially from the international community.

That's all I want to say today.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Next in row six?

MR. GILWAY: Good evening. My name is Johnny Gilway (phonetic). My address is 1110 Cedar Street, Glendale Heights, Illinois. My background is a -- I'm a medical professional. I
currently decided to go back to school because of this new upcoming recreational cannabis and also medical cannabis as well.

I'm going back to school to hopefully get into some type of research program to provide more research on the uses of marijuana and its benefits. First and foremost, thank you for your time and giving me an opportunity to come up here and speak.

I would like to start off by saying that I do support opting in. One of the benefits of opting in is that this whole phase is for social equity and the main component of that is to provide economic opportunities not only for those affected by petty cannabis offenses but also for the City of Aurora, as well.

In doing so, how it essentially helps social equity applicants or people that have been convicted of at least petty drug crimes is that it allows them an opportunity to essentially learn and get trained from the tax revenue that's brought in by them and as well as gives them an opportunity, as well, to get employment.
Also with that, studies show that the average dispensary does currently bring in right around $500,000 worth of taxes.

And in the state of California, 2018, a news article published that because majority of California, I believe it was two-thirds of the state, decided to ban recreational sales of cannabis, the illicit market doubled what the states sales were in 2018 alone.

So essentially if you do decide to opt out, it does open more opportunities for the illicit market to thrive. The person at the corner that's selling it now has no competition besides somebody in a neighboring town. For those people that don't like to travel, it's a much easier way to access it.

And for health concerns, as well, currently I am aware of a couple of studies that are ongoing where cannabis is actually being used to help wean people who are addicted to, I guess, stronger opioids like heroin, fentanyl or OxyContin to help wean them off as a rehab type of treatment.
And also to add to that, I highly recommend that we opt in and thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: I think that is the end of, I believe, row six.

So row seven -- or go ahead.

MS. SUN: So good evening, councilmen and councilwomen. My name is Lang Sun. I live in 2520 (inaudible) Lane, Naperville, but since we have several rented properties, so we learn more of this Aurora.

And first, thank you so much for giving us opportunity to voice our opinion out and really appreciate all of you just coming here and serve us. I especially respect the gentleman right in front of me. I do trust your sincerity.

I trust everyone here try to do the best for the Aurora people. So also I respect the people who as a leader because in my philosophy, I think true leader is out of love. They want to serve people.

So that's also I respect the older gentlemen, the councilman standing here and sort of say his opinion here. I come from the
Naperville and I also had in Naperville the same meeting.

And there are so many people, they voice their opinion like the doctors, the detectives and the retired policemen, the educators, the parents. So from all of them I heard the same voice, opt out. They're not just speaking their own good, they're speaking their kids and the one that they have.

He has so many students with marijuana who has really bad impact on those people who has come out. Also I really respect the gentleman who was so brave enough using his life experiences here to show what is right what is wrong.

So I think here everyone has already have some kind of knowing what is right what is wrong. I also respect the gentlemen come here to say the research. I agree. However, it is still research. So why we risk -- take the risk now to opt in to let some people seem like the rat of the cancer.

So if it's still research, let's be conservative. Let's be protect the people,
protect the kids. And it is research, it be
another 10 years or 20 years, then make the
decision.

And I want to use -- to end my talk,
I want to use one Bible scripture: I have the
right to do anything you see but not everything
is beneficial. I have the right to do anything
but not everything is constructive. No one
should seek their own good but good of others.

Do we really think to allow this
recreational marijuana is constructive by hearing
so many, also so many testimonies.

So I trust -- I put my trust in all
of you. I think out of love, you're going to
make the right decision. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anyone else in
row six?

MS. BIRKETT: Dear City Council, my name is
Leanne Birkett (phonetic). I live in 485 Village
Green North in Naperville. I'm a real estate
investor, broker and a financial planner who has
lived, worked in the area for the last 10 years.
I keep an office at the Fox Valley Mall executive
office center, and (inaudible) allow the tiniest
real estate investor to the City of Aurora.

Today I'm here to urge you to opt out. I met Mayor Richard at the reception party for the -- for the 70s and it was great of the family of the People's Republic of China and talked about recreational marijuana.

Here in the US they have tremendous freedom, but we must balance that freedom with mental health, area to live and work, and to keep our properties values high.

Yes, I do care about adverse revenue just like everyone here, but not need revenue from recreational marijuana. So the revenue from the City invites in the policy should -- should attract the people to live in Aurora and attract the investor to Aurora.

I see need to invest in Pacifica Square and America Street (phonetic).

I remember the many years ago I went to Olympia (phonetic) Street to look at property. A police officer stopped me. Surprised, I ask the police officer what I did anything wrong? He answered me, there was nothing wrong. He only ask me where I was go. After I told him I'm
going to Olympia Street to see a property and he
told me, be careful. Why? Because of the drugs
and the shooting in that neighborhood.

Those things reduce the value of the
house in Aurora and the stop highly educated
people and the master from must live in there.

So recreation marijuana could do
that also. Recreational marijuana sales in
Aurora may bring some revenue but could increase
enforcement cost too, social stability.

Please opt out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Sir, I think you were next.

Mr. GARRETT: Good evening. My name is John
Garrett Junior. I live at 200 South Emerald
Place in Aurora, Illinois and I've lived there my
whole life.

I just want to say that cannabis
will be purchased today on this block without
your consent and it's going to be purchased by
someone who is selling it from the black market.
People die trying to buy weed. People die trying
to sell cannabis everyday. So if people are
buying it, why not, you know, have a grip on it.

So the black market will suffer a
great loss from people who do not want to rely on illegal transactions which is literally everyone. Nobody wants to meet a drug dealer on a corner. Nobody wants to buy it illegally.

The City can regulate it, authorize it and allow the distribution and sale of it at a higher level that will allow safety among residents in the City of Aurora and ultimately with people that are consuming it on, you know, on a regular basis that are purchasing it from places that are not safe.

I can assure you that the people who are buying cannabis are going to continue buying it whether you authorize the sale of it or not.

I request that you vote to opt in to allow the safe sale of recreational cannabis.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

MS. BUCKLEY: Shannon Buckley, 345 South Evans Lawn, Aurora.

I'm here before you today to voice my support to opt in to the sale and taxation of recreational marijuana. I believe the economic opportunities in the commercial sale within the
City limits would be a great benefit to our City that's been desperately trying to rebuild itself over the last 20 or so years.

I'm a lifelong resident. I've lived here 33 years. I'm, you know -- I've -- growing up in Aurora, I've always known it's had a reputation for being quote-unquote rough, to be nicely. I'm going to NIU, I would tell people I was from Aurora and I got a sense that people felt bad for me. I never felt bad for myself. I love my City. I feel a great sense of pride. I love it because it's diverse.

My husband, when we were looking to buy a house, he wanted to look somewhere like Geneva, St. Charles. He grew up in Geneva and I fought tooth and nail to stay in Aurora because maybe it's the scrappiness in me, I don't know, but I wanted to stay in the City. And I won.

So for as long as I can remember, Aurora has always competed with all the surrounding cities, Naperville, St. Charles, Geneva, Batavia and everyone has looked down on us and I want to see the City thrive. I have seen the efforts of the City council, the efforts
of the recent mayor. I've seen the efforts they put into the City and bringing in private investors and, you know, getting grants and putting that money into the City and building it up and what it has become and there is so much potential there.

And that sales revenue, which I recommend 3 percent, would be so beneficial, not just to building the infrastructure in downtown, but to put into other communities within the City. Put it into, you know, the communities that have been hurt by the drug war. Put it into those communities. Give it to the schools. I mean, there is so many things you could do with that revenue that could benefit the communities that have been hurt by these policies.

So once again, I'm asking for you to opt in to this proposal and to tax and sale the recreational cannabis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next.

MR. HARRISON: My name is Ed Harrison. I reside at 1014 Cyprus Drive in Aurora. I wasn't planning on speaking tonight but sitting here, I realize that I thought maybe I had walked in to a
screening of Reefer Madness which we used to see
back in the '50s and '60s and '40s.

Marijuana is here. I mean, it's
been here. It's always going to be here. It's
finally been legalized and yes, there is some --
probably some cons about it. But I truly believe
that the City would -- it would behoove the City
to make it legal here and to add a tax to it and
make that tax minimum -- or maximum, I'm sorry,
of 3 percent. Those tax revenues could do a lot
of good for the City and I think that's what you
should do. That's it.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

Anyone else in row six? We'll begin
over on your left side on row seven.

MS. SUN: My name is Yan Sun, people call me
Sherry. I live in 255 Danhaven Court, Aurora. I
am a wife, a mom and my family have been living
here for almost 20 years.

People always say Chinese are really
good at math and I just -- make math very simple
because I didn't plan to talk about statistics.
One gentleman from Glendale Heights was working
the medical field mentioned that unlisted market
sales will go up if we don't get this passed.
But actually, the gentlemen earlier that say
using the example of Canada saying the opposite.

The facts says opposite because the
so-called legal stores, the price cannot compete
with the black market. The black market will go
up either way and also get a mass here, the
majority sales money go to the company but the
City of Aurora and taxpayer, we are paying the
cost. We are recovering the damage. Okay.

Today I want to share with you some
personal stories. I am -- been helping my
friends doing counseling and currently in the
past few months I have been counseling a couple
who the husband has job auditions and the husband
started with marijuana, now cocaine. And the
wife, I talked with the wife this afternoon
because I want to get her input what I should say
tonight. She say her husband -- in the
beginning, she tell me some education like
marijuana have two ingredient. You all know CBD
and THC. THC make you high. The ingredients of
THC is increasing right now and regular hook up
with marijuana, you looking for the next level of
excitement. That's why people get stuck with some other harder, stronger drug like heroin, like cocaine.

So studies say 90 percent of the hard drugs like cocaine, heroin starts with marijuana. That's exactly what happened in her situation and I have her approval to share their story tonight.

This addiction really put them for this young couple into financial distress and there have been snowballing financial bills and debts, drug dealer calling them, as well. And they are paying personal debt -- they don't have mortgage -- student debt and they're borrowing money.

And that's not the saddest part. The saddest part is drug addiction make shattered their marriage. And the husband, when he is at work in the daytime when he is not smoking, he told me, he call me, he call my husband, his nerves are on fire. He cannot focus.

When he drive -- his wife told me, Sherry, I don't want to get in his car. I say why? Because I don't want to die. People who is
on drug temptation, she's not even doing drug, if
he behind the wheel, he may kill people. He may
kill himself.

And also, there is distrust, there's
disrespect, there's anger, their broken
relationship happening in this young family. And
when the husband longing for the job, he become
so easy to get irritated and anger and physical
abuse. It's not that far away.

Whenever we talk, I worry, I pray,
keep her safe, keep him safe, because when
they're both emotional, who knows what's going to
happen.

And they are willing to share their
struggle tonight because them and me and many
people here, many people out there, we don't want
this happen to any person, any family, any
friend, anyone in the street.

And my friend, they have a long
battle, they are fighting right now. They are
still in the darkest point in the tunnel because
treating drug takes money, time. It's hard to
coordinate going to rehab, rehab for him real
difficult place to go and he has a job to keep to
pay the bill. And we are committed, maybe we can
spend years for this couple to build them up, to
get them out of the desert.

So their story, she also told me, Sherry, their story is not alone. Their story is
typical. And it takes a lot of social resolves
to heal, to rebuild a person, a family, whoever
involve in drug addiction.

Can somebody here tonight imagine
what if the drug just becomes so readily
available next door, next to school, what's one
more person to one more family, how many years of
our effort will be only for one person and not --
not alone saying the damage will be transformed
to the next generation, to the neighbors. But we
are not giving up for them. Even though there is
threat the voice is on the air, they may be
thinking, we are not giving up on this couple
because of our Christian faith.

That's why we are here tonight. We
are fulfilling a duty of our citizen of Aurora
and we hope you understand. And we all want opt
out.

Whenever I drive by the road here,
Aurora, there is a sign. City of what? Lights.
Light stands for what? Hope.

So let's be wise. Be responsible.
Never lose heart. Never loose hope in our family of Aurora. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in row seven.

MR. HUANG: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jim Huang. I live in 2839 Clarissa lane, Aurora. So I have been resident of Aurora for more than seven years.

Marijuana is not something new. It has been around for a long time and it has always been illegal for people to plant and consume. Why does it now become a focal point of our daily conversation?

When people start using the marijuana for recreational purpose, does that mean over the years of a body already adjusted and immune to the chemical introduced by the drug? What does it mean we already have the technology today to curve the harm it may cost?

The answer unknows.

The main reason as we already heard
tonight is the tax dollar it may collect. I have no opposition to its medical use. However, for the recreational use, I'm not convinced. And I'm sure you already heard so many information from all the speakers how many damage it may cause.

The tax dollar you collect may give the City a short-term financial relief, a few job opportunities, but the cost to contain and fix the damage it may cause is far greater than the benefit it could bring both financial and social-wise without mentioning the psychological effect to people.

Marijuana-related traffic deaths, crime, hospitalization, marijuana relating the body in campers (phonetic), safety concern in community, property value going down, all of these will jeopardize the City reputation, consume more taxpayers' money, damaging the environment for business investment and lower the standards of our value we believe in.

This is not just talking. It's already happening in Colorado which is the first state legalized recreational marijuana.

Therefore, for all these reason, I
will strongly urge you to opt out recreational marijuana in our City of Aurora. It could only benefit the weed industry but hurt our community. Our people is not -- is not ready for this drug currently physically and mentally.

And here we have all the signature from the community we collected. It has more than 100 signature we collected is going to vote to opt out marijuana, recreational marijuana for the City of Aurora.

So thank you four your attention.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. I might state for the record that several of you have brought items up to be submitted to the record and everything we receive tonight will be attached to the record.

(Exhibits referenced.)

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Next in row seven.

MS. MAY: Hi, my name is Mimi May from 1879 Downing Creek Lane, Aurora.

About 20 years ago, my husband and I were very excited about looking for a new home in the US. And we were looking in Naperville. For the longest time we couldn't find a house. So
finally the Realtor said to us, well, if you
don't mind an Aurora address, I'll take you to
Aurora. So I didn't know there was such a stigma
attached to living in Aurora, but we bought a
house in Aurora anyway and we do like our
community.

So I know Aurora currently has hired
a redevelopment company to rejuvenate our City.
We say we have so much potential and someone just
mentioned the mayor having ice cream in a new ice
cream store in downtown area.

So I also look at our neighbor,
Naperville, who hired -- which hired a
redevelopment company about -- a couple decades
ago and we have seen their prosperity in
Naperville. And they have prospered with --
without revenue from legalized drug dollars.

So we definitely want Aurora to
prosper. I am one of its citizens. But we -- we
want -- and we want God to bless Aurora. We have
to do what's right in God's eyes. It will not
come with the suffering and pain of people from
the ravages of marijuana. So the very real
long-term human costs have already been presented
to you.

I urge you to vote with good conscious to opt out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in row seven.

MS. WU: Respectful mayor and commissioners, thank you for giving me the opportunity. I'm May Wu residing in 2666 Yorkshire Lane, Lisle. Why I come all the way from Lisle to here is because Aurora is special to me. My daughter used to dance in the dancing school. Every year Christmastime they perform at the Paramount. Beautiful theater. I love it. It's such a great memory. Now she's in college and still have this beautiful sweet memory for that.

I like Aurora. It's a beautiful place. Historical place.

Now today I want you to really -- you are all decision-makers. Make a decision that responsible. Consider public health. Consider community safety first as a priority.

As previous speaker already said, the first thing I like to mention that is the intensity of THC and the compounding effect of
THC and alcohol. THC is the main ingredient of marijuana. And THC as we all know in 1960s, 2 to 4 percent is typical now it's up to 80, 90 percent on the market. That's 20 to 40-fold increase. And the worst part is when THC is taken with alcohol, it enhances alcohol absorption, that means more alcohol can get into your body faster.

The bring out in fact is obvious -- is already recorded in medical journal. So what's the result? The result of this combination of drug interaction is more traffic accident, fatal accident and community health, safety issue. As recorded in Colorado in past six years, two-third of fatal traffic accident related to marijuana were taken along with alcohol altogether. So this is a very significant fact.

Please know that alcohol impair your motor skills and THC impair your brain function and judgment. Put together, it's tragic.

And a key reality for the THC is the testing matter. Unlike alcohol, there is a quick method, breathalyzer method on the spot that you
can test the level of alcohol.

For THC, there is no on-site quick method developed yet. I'm a scientist by training. The methodology is -- right now is extremely difficult, time-consuming, took few days, body fluid, testing lab and it come back.

That would introduce tremendous difficulty for law enforcement to enforce any regulation policies on-site. Please think about this.

Finally, I would like to mention that CDC announces last week that there are 800 confirmed vaping cases cause lung disease and lung damage. 12 death incurred.

Among these, the vaping two product, E-cigarette and marijuana. And State of Massachusetts also announce a four-month ban on any vaping product, all of them. That include marijuana. Why is it? Think about it.

Once the genie out of a bottle, you can never take it back. Please, decision-makers, Aurora's future safety, health is in your hands.

Please reconsider. Opt out. Thank you.
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Next in row seven. Anybody else in row seven? We'll go to row eight on this side. Please come forward.

MR. LEAF: Fellow citizens, my name is Raymond Leaf. I live at 2769 Yorkshire.

My wife and I retired here 10 years ago. I've lived -- I came tonight because we heard from our alderman, we received a postcard from him. I came to learn. And it's the second postcard we received from him. And as I was listening to the talks tonight, one thing that came up over and over again was about taxes and supposedly gain of taxes. And it brought to mind a previous postcard that we received from our alderman about the moving of the gambling casino, that they're going to move into our neighborhood over here on farm -- Farnsworth Road.

The City has spent seven and a half million dollars to buy the motels over there and now they want to borrow $100 million to move the casino there. And as Judd said in his postcard, casino has $450 million of their own; instead they want to use taxes of Aurora to pay for moving the casinos.
I see a disconnect.

You know, talking about lives of people and terrible devastation and we've heard and it does take place when using marijuana. And money is a big deal, taxes is a big deal. It seems to me somehow that we've got our values are mixed up here. Are we gonna be raising money from marijuana to pay for the moving of a casino? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Next in row eight. Going across row eight.

MS. LOPER: Hello, my name is Maria Loper, Tomahawk Trail, Oswego. I would like to share a story that happened to me a few years ago.

I was about 15 years old and I decided to buy marijuana off the streets of one of my friends in California where I'm from. We smoked it. And it just so happened to be laced with PCP.

Afterwards, we soon realized that it was laced and our experience was very traumatizing and scary for the both of us. She forgot how to breathe at one point. I was imagining things. And the fact that California
legalized recreational marijuana and has
dispensaries just around the corner made it so
much more easy for us to access safe usage of
marijuana.

   I am currently 21 years old and
since I turned 21 and was able to buy marijuana
legally in California, I have not had any bad
experiences with it. In fact, it not only is not
laced with PCP, but it has helped me with my
mental disorders and disabilities, my physical
disabilities. I have PTSD, for example, and it
stops me from having flashbacks from the traumas
I've been through.

   It's something that has helped me
through so many things in life that has even been
able to help me be able to socialize, be able to
help me feel more okay with myself because I'm
not so anxious all the time, I'm not scared. I'm
able to calm down, breathe for a second and if I
even just ingest the oil, the -- maybe even just
rub a little bit on my shoulder where I have
nerve damage and muscle tissue damage, I'm able
to move it so much better and function better as
a human being all on my own.
I can finally go out in public and
be normal instead of being in pain all the time
and having to restrict myself from playing
baseball with my friends, swimming like a
normality teen would like to swim or a normal kid
would like to swim with their friends. I'm a big
water person, I love the water.

And when I was in high school, I
loved to play water polo. And I had hurt my
shoulder back then and I had to stop playing it.
But now I can go back to playing water polo. I
can go back to swimming. I can go back to
baseball and continue to have a normal life just
like everybody else. I no longer have to feel so
much pain just walking around in my daily life.

I say opt in to the dispensaries
here. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next?

MR. FROST: Hello. John Frost from 992 North
Ohio Street. I support Aurora opting in for
recreational marijuana sales.

We've heard kind of a lot of
misinformation here today but also some
information, misinformation, that actually
supports opting in for marijuana sales.

   You know, there is simple things
like the attribution of marijuana -- driving --
or driving deaths and marijuana related causes in
Colorado. However, we know that those tests can
be run with -- with marijuana that's been in
people's systems for up to 30 days from that
time.

So those -- those figures are a
little twisted and I think it's important to
recognize that as -- as some other people have
brought up, we're almost in an island right now.
Naperville has voted to not allow marijuana
sales; Oswego is talking about it; Plainfield is
talking about not allowing it.

What that does is it causes people
to have to drive further if they want to get
marijuana. If you're worried about people
driving high, you know, they will be driving
further and people from Aurora will be going to
those places to get marijuana, you know, beyond
Oswego, Plainfield, Naperville, where they can
get it.

It's been brought up that there
won't be any money made from this. I'm not necessarily in favor of full 3 percent tax. I think the 2 percent is very reasonable and I think it's important to point out that there is over a billion dollars in revenue generated in Colorado since its legalization there. That's one billion, billion with a B.

Things have been brought up about kids and marketing to kids. We know that we'll not be able to market marijuana to kids. We know that, you know, we've come up -- I like the proposal from the City to not allow depictions of people using marijuana or the plants or paraphernalia on images outside of recreational shops. I think kids should not use marijuana and I think by legalizing it, you're actually preventing kids from using it.

I grew up in St. Charles and there, I -- when I was in high school I could not find a single person to get alcohol. I wanted to have a party one time, nobody could get any alcohol. Alcohol was legal and it was sold to 21-year olds in stores.

If I wanted to, I could contact
probably 50 people who could get marijuana. I didn't want to but I could easily do that.

Because of that availability of marijuana, the -- the gateway drug aspect of marijuana is not due to marijuana, it's due to contact with people who are doing illegal sales of illicit substances who have low -- low morals and low standards.

Those -- that contact with someone who is willing to sell marijuana allows you that contact for someone who is willing to sell cocaine or heroin or any of those other things.

And volunteering at Habitat For Humanity and other places, nearly one ubiquitous fact existed between people that I asked, how did you get into using opiates or other things.

There was a few cases of -- of addiction based on pill usage, you know, doctors' prescriptions and things getting out of control. But nearly every other case was based on the fact that because marijuana was illegal, they were in contact with a person who could get them other illegal substances. If we sell it in stores, you know, it's regulated, we understand it, we can
control it, and they don't have that access.

In regards to potency, this is actually a serious problem. The problem is that marijuana is available. Marijuana is -- can be bought on the black market easily and come January 1st, it will be able to be purchased in Illinois.

If you do not know the potency, you do not know what you're getting. If you go to a store, from what I've seen, there is labeling and testing that shows the percentage of marijuana that's contained in different products as well as, you know, allowing you to understand if you have a nonqualified medical need, you can purchase marijuana that fits the specific circumstance that you have like some people mentioned skin cream and things like that that can help them but also different types of marijuana that can help them without getting them high.

And my biggest point in wanting to opt in to recreational marijuana sales goes back to the fact that prohibition in large areas and especially smaller areas surrounded by -- so in
an island of prohibition, what happens is it feeds the black market. It allows people to --
to, you know -- it allows gangs to sell marijuana. It allows interactions with people
who do other drugs, who do other illegal things. It promotes violence between people in an
unregulated sale situation and it generally festers illegal action in itself. The simple existence is there.

So we will not be able to keep marijuana away from our kids from them understanding that it exists, that it is a thing.
We need to educate them. By selling marijuana recreationally, we can fund schools to do that.
We can continue to do that education in schools and we can know what they're being exposed to it, when we need to tell them what it is, and explain that it's dangerous to use it as they're young and maybe even say that it's dangerous to use it when they're adults. But to be able to control that situation and control their exposure from a perspective of putting it in the hands of regulation and the City's ability to derive how kids get exposed to marijuana and its ubiquitous
presence in society.

So please opt in to selling marijuana recreationally in Aurora. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in row eight?

MS. SWANSON: Laura Swanson, 2366 Legacy Drive. The Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act set a distance for cultivation site to be 2500 feet. Having listened to your information about 500 feet, I don't see why that is necessary. Why not do what is recommended by pushing the envelope in going further into -- as close as we can get to a school or a daycare.

That's where I have a problem. I'm not opposed to people choosing to smoke marijuana whether it's for medical instances or for recreation as long as they're adults.

Somebody used the example of a 15-year old. I hope that 15-year olds can't walk into a store here. I don't know if one can walk in in California at 15. I didn't realize that the age was that young there.

And then I live near the Molitor site which is the cultivation site. And back in
2015, they did not get the license and they've been fighting with another site in Zion. It is my understanding that they are currently growing marijuana in there. And they do not have a license to do that and this is according to an article that just came out from the Tribune over the weekend.

And the City of Aurora has been funding for the past two years a lawsuit enjoined with this site and Molitor. I can't remember the name of the company that's running the site. So our tax payer dollars, anybody in here were enjoined in helping with those legal costs for that site currently. So that I have an issue with.

So I don't have confidence in the City of Aurora to make good choices in where to place these dispensaries or a cultivation site. The current one is less than 2500 feet and making your own assessments at 500 feet makes sense? You can put it anywhere you want. We have a high school down the street. We have residential areas, we have apartments, we have homes. And to learn that they're currently growing without a
license, it's still a felony.

   Somebody mentioned the level of a
federal offense that it is and I do believe that
that's -- that's incorrect to be doing that.

   So I want to bring that your
attention. I know you don't make the decisions
but who is making the decisions behind the scenes
without proper authorization to be growing
without a license?

   Thank you.

   CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in
row eight?

   MS. ZHANG: Member of the City council,
I'm -- my name is Libing Zhang. I'm Aurora
resident for 20 years. I live in 3869 Cheryl
Court, Aurora.

   I come here and stand here I just
want to express my point. To build a better
community, we need to say no to the retail
sale of recreational cannabis in Aurora. To keep
our city strong health and safe, we should say no
to drug profit.

   My personally, since moving to
Aurora, I really love this city. So that's why I
living there. I'm an original homeowner and I've been there for 20 years. I love the environment, the education, the good school district and I love the shopping -- the Aurora outlet mall. So that's a lot of good facility and service and the very good community area and the service.

So I know and based through my last 20 years experience, I see City of Aurora make a lot of efforts to try and strive to make Aurora a better place to live.

So I see so many people move their home to Aurora. And since I move in 1999 to this year is exactly 20 years. If count on the number of the residents, there is a 40 percent -- 40 percent of population increase. So we know that Aurora is a better place to live in. And I'm happy about I living here and choose Aurora as my hometown.

But at this point of time, I come here, I want to say we want you say no to marijuana because marijuana is not a -- just a regular thing you can use and without any -- in fact, actually using marijuana, there is a lot of -- cause a lot of negative and long-term
effect and the problem.

Through the research and studying Purdue and New Zealand and other research, they already show the use of marijuana will lower brain power. They affect the brain development, the IQ can decline eight point the score. And even though you stop using the marijuana, you cannot go back.

So -- and also, it inspire (phonetic) the memory. Using the marijuana affect the memory, learn concentration and attention, difficulty with critical thinking and the problems of it. And also, the using marijuana lead to worse education. And based on the studying for the student who is using and consume the marijuana has marked linked to more not finish the high school, more high rate not finish the high school and college.

So -- and also, using marijuana we already -- many people already mention about this, causing the driving dangerous. Experience dangerous effect, the slow reaction, decrease coordination and difficult reaction signal and easy to cause the accident for that. And if a
person or -- with the pregnant and during the pregnant using the marijuana, that's what affect the baby development. They increase of the risk of the baby's brain and the behaviors.

So think about this is actually -- is very, very dangerous to using marijuana. But there is a survey, it's monitor in future survey. The survey shows the more high -- high number of the student, they thought about the last risk. They don't think that taking or using marijuana is a high risk. They don't think risk. The thought is very normal because one of the reason is legalization of the marijuana in so many states. It's caused this.

And if the legal say this is legal and we say no, this is so much wrong, but why do this? And so actions affect is the many young people, they don't think it's risk. But actually is risk. So this is an action makes think it's more urgent, more dangerous. Make our feel like everything is normal. When we open the store people is -- student and anyone is easily to reach marijuana store. Is so easy because that is my neighborhood, in my next street, right?
But at the same time, there is so many horrible and dangerous, the risk we're taking. I feel very touched the gentlemen just talk about, he using his life experience, life testimony, to say thousands of bad things about marijuana. That his life experience. For us, we cannot use it, but we still, we know, we see them, something wrong or something, what is wrong and what is right.

So we come to a situation is the very risk of the marijuana and to make people feel or especially student, they feel no risk. Everything is good. If this isn't right, what do we want a city to be known for? We want a city to be a healthy strong and good education. Not just say to make revenue and to pay the price, take the risk.

And ones we want to change and the things the community, the environment is different. And that is too late.

So come here, I want to say no. No, the retail sale of the recreational marijuana in Aurora.

Please take opt out and thank you
for make decision, make the wise decision. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in row eight there?

We'll move to row nine. Please come forward.

MS. ZHU: Hi. My name is Fengga Zhu, 2302 Hudson, Aurora. I have three kids, three boy. One elementary school, another high school and another one is in college. I strong oppose recreational marijuana for only one reason: Lead our kids not into temptation.

For protect our children, I choose opt out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in row nine? Anybody else? Row nine?

MR. HAN: Hi, everyone. My name is Kai Han. I'm a homeowner of 1855 Tall Oaks Drive unit 3308. I think it make no sense financially to have this business in our city. And someone will make money but not the government, not the city.

Derive more revenue from this, that means more people are consuming, are using marijuana, and more opportunity that children are
involved.

If the marijuana dispensary is legalized in our city, it will give our children the wrong message. Marijuana is okay. It's not such addicting drug. It is a privilege only for adults. It would be so cool to try something adult can only use.

Actually, according to a recent survey data in Colorado, the percentage of -- the percentage of the 12 to 17-year olds using marijuana is higher in every legal marijuana state. There is a national average.

We don't mind other cities to, we just need to regulation, make regulation for the kids for the future.

Once you weigh today, we still have opportunity in the future to opt in if it is really good, but today I think it's too rushed to make the decision today because Illinois only legalize it in June if I remember.

For other states, they legalize this marijuana, recreational marijuana. Usually takes about 16 months. But for us, it is only like three months left. It is too rushed to make a
decision. We need to do more research. Let the data show if it is worth it to have this business to bring this business into our city. Thank you for your attention.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in row nine?

MR. GAO: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Zhaosheng Gao. I live at 4138 Bethlehem Road the City of Aurora.

Tonight I come here just want to vote opt out because I search internet and a lot of information show that marijuana is a drug that does great damage both physically and mentally to the home and body.

So I hear several people mention that family. So although marijuana -- legalizing recreational marijuana can bring some maybe revenue, but the cost is too high to make a profit or to benefit, really benefit our city, our community because it cause trouble. It cause more problem. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

MS. FANG: Good evening. My name is Xiuzhen Fang. I'm Aurora citizen. I live at 2049
Foxtail Drive for seven years now. I have two children. I'm writing to you to encourage you to opt out regarding the retail recreational marijuana sales in Aurora. Please protect reputation of our city and the family that we love.

Medical marijuana is available here in Illinois. If you have a chronic pain that need marijuana, go to doctor, go get from medical THC dispensary. We are discounting recreational marijuana, not medical marijuana.

There is distinct between the two so please do not confuse. Public health, concentration of THC, THC damage your brain. The term marijuana plant or cannabis plant often misuse of THC, the case I call active ingredient.

THC damage you brain, especially in teens and the children who will be the next source to our -- to move our economy to a higher level.

The concentration level of marijuana today has changed from that in 1960, substantially. Back in 1960, 2 to 4 percent marijuana were typical. To date, the level
increase three to four-fold to 8 to 12 percent
due to plant breeding technology, newer
extracting form from 40 to 90 percent active
ingredient. This is not marijuana old folks in
1960 knows anymore. It is highly concentrated.

Public safety. THC may not
immediately curing, but it can make long-term
damage and make alcohol more lethal because add
cycle activities effect. Colorado statistics
show that two third of people with marijuana was
used together with alcohol or other drugs. It is
known that THC can enhance absorption of alcohol.
They made a compounding effect more dangerous.

Impact of adding one more drug to
America is not as addictive additive effect on
public health and safety. It is a multiplying
detrimental effect. Allowing recreational
marijuana use will cause more emergency room
visit, more traffic death due to multiple
substance misuse. As evidenced in Colorado, more
traffic accidents mean more innocent lives to be
taken away. Make our community and surrounding
nice and safe. Opt out, please.

Marijuana is federal law -- federal
illegal drug. Many companies do drug screening during hiring process. If candidate fails drug test, applicant is automatically rejected. If employee caught performing duties under drug influence, they are subject to termination. Since marijuana stays in body for a long time, if more people have easier access to it, more people will have hard time to find a job or keep their jobs.

October 7, 2016, at 9:00 P. M. a precious nine years old girl Katie was on her way back from her rehearsal. She was killed by someone smoke marijuana and drunken driving. She -- he ended up in prison for 13 years. But the innocent little girl with her beautiful little life just about to start and to explore she loss her life.

As a mother of two children, I can imagine the pain, the grief of Katie's family. We have many parents aldermen, alderwomen here. Can you imagine if this happen to you, your family, your loved ones. Potential little precious, precious kid could become a scientist or engineering -- or engineer, a source of our
You thought knowledge serve our society but marijuana ended her life unfairly. At such a young stage can you imagine how many scientists or engineer will be killed in the future if we have easy access to marijuana. Marijuana indeed indirectly decrease or damage our economics, our young generation, our lives. Money can earn and can wait. Our lives cannot. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else from row nine?

MS. PAN: Hi, my name is Dora Pan and I live at 2330 Hudson Circle, Aurora. Folks have brought enough information, data to demonstrate the consequence of using marijuana. It's destroying our life, destroying our health and destroying our family and the community. Here I just want to share a short story. My best friend's daughter didn't finish school and didn't find a job because of marijuana using.

When she was in high school, her friend in the same class brought her marijuana and then they started using that and they became
addicted and loss of control and eventually
didn't finish high school. But the worse thing
is the families fell apart.

More -- a lot of tears, a lot of
disappointment and worries. So these girls
couldn't find the job they dreamed of. I just
don't want to hear more of such stories.

Here I'm urging the City council to
support the opt out. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in
row nine? We'll go to row ten.

MR. GOMMEL: My name is Bill Gommel, 2558 Oak
Trail Drive, fifth ward.

You know, we've heard a lot of
testimony tonight about the emergency room is
going to be impacted, the more marijuana impaired
driving, more costs on the police, the marijuana
is more potent today, the social costs of using
marijuana and the difficulty of finding drug-free
employees. Probably all of these are true.

The real culprit here is the state
who has made it legal to have marijuana. So
opting out will not stop marijuana from being
consumed legally by the residents of our city.
I grew up in a dry county where they didn't sell alcohol because they didn't think it was right for people to drink alcohol. Right down the middle of the community ran the County Line Road. All the churches were on the county side that were dry; all the bars were on the county line side that were not dry.

On Sundays, when church got out, you could see the cars coming from the parking lots of the church driving into the parking lots of the bars. The people went to church, but they still went to the bars.

Marijuana is going to be used by residents of Aurora whether Aurora is in or out. Our police are gonna have to deal with it, whether Aurora is in or out. Our emergency rooms are going to deal with it whether Aurora is in or out. People are gonna use it because it's legal just like people use alcohol. And unfortunately, people abuse alcohol and we've heard some tragic results of that. There will probably be that with marijuana too whether or not Aurora is in or out.

You need to opt in. To get some of
the costs offset. Sure, it may not be a windfall
for the city, but it's gonna be more than if it's
opted out. You need to opt in to get some
controls. If you're out, you have no controls.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next in row
ten?

MR. ENGLE: Hello, my name is Anthony Engle.
I live at 847 West Galena. I'm a native. I was
born and raised here. 41 years old. Lived on
the east side, now I live on the west side.
I have seen Aurora growing up.
Looks beautiful now. When I was younger a little
more businesses. Some gone. The city is looking
pretty.

I believe you should pass it, get
more money in, more stuff will grow. The
naysayers, I -- I believe they need to do more
research.

You guys get the money, put it
towards the education, educate the older and the
young. Because obviously nobody is gonna be
research good enough. Everybody is still Reefer
Madness, drinking and driving. Everybody
knows -- close to my age, anybody in their 40s they know, marijuana stays in your system 30 days. You can smoke it one time it's in there the whole month. The next month it's not there.

So if they're drinking towards the tail end of that month, it's gonna show up in the system. So the drinking and driving and smoking marijuana, the combo, you can't tell if they were still smoking at the same time they did it.

So if you guys pass it, use the money wisely. Keep building the city, make it look beautiful. Thank you.


MR. AOPAKARKLIS: Good evening. My name is Jonathan Aopkarklis. I reside at 407 Parker Avenue in Aurora, Illinois. I have lived here for 10 years.

I have been a long-time cannabis user and advocate for most of my adult life. I am a father and husband, a hard-working man who holds a full-time job working six days a week. Not your typical lazy stoner that movies and video portray. I am excited that in the future months, cannabis will be legal for all adults in
our great State of Illinois to legally purchase, possess, and consume.

There are millions of cannabis users around the world. We live in a world where alcohol and cigarettes are sold almost anywhere within a five-mile radius of our homes yet can cause way more problems in our society. Alcohol is also deeply integrated within our society and accepted drug of choice for millions of people many of which do not see it as a drug.

I can also tell you from experience, cannabis is a safer substance to use recreationally. I believe the true gateway drug is alcohol. It's the one I was exposed to first, taking a sip of my dad's beer at a family barbecue many years ago.

Facts and studies are there. I enjoy using cannabis and yes, I enjoy using cannabis and drinking the occasional beer. It's a person's choice what we put in their bodies.

Why should adults who use cannabis be punished person and looked down upon in our society. The days of fearmongering and Reefer Madness are over. All based on false facts and
racial tendencies.

People tend to fear what they don't know. Cannabis users need to come out and have our voices heard. We shouldn't have to drive four towns over just to purchase a substance that can help many relax, destress and calm the mind. Yes, cannabis can be abused. So can alcohol, cigarettes and other things.

If Aurorians can't purchase cannabis here, they will just travel to the next town and get it there just to bring it back home to enjoy missing out on tax revenues.

Many people can find relief for many ailments with the responsible use of cannabis.

Allowing recreational marijuana businesses to operate in Aurora would bring in extra tax revenue helping our community. The sky is not going to fall over it.

Please do the right thing, opt in and allow recreational marijuana businesses to open up shop here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Next? Anybody else in row ten?

MR. MARCICO: My name is Anthony Marcico.
I'm from Bartlett, Illinois. Chairman and member of the plan commission, I want to thank you for your patience and diligence during this evening.

Also like to point out everyone who has spoken today that this is a hearing -- this is not a hearing on whether to legalize adult use cannabis; that has already happened. This is recommending body about the zoning regulation to oversee how adult use cannabis would be regulated, controlled and overseen in Aurora.

There has been a lot of appeals, a lot of personal opinions that have been displayed today. And as a member of the cannabis community, I'll rebut some of those. First overwhelming one that we heard today is that cannabis is a gateway drug. That is a myth and that has been -- that's been proven over and over again that cannabis is not a gateway drug.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has concluded the overwhelming majority of people who use cannabis do not move on to harder substances. And the US Attorney General Loretta Lynch has stated that marijuana is not a gateway. And to talk about gateway drugs is mostly in
correlation to the opioid crisis in Illinois. I'm talking about heroin where most cases start with prescription drug problem. Then because they need more of that feeling of the prescription drugs, they move on to heroin.

There has also been talk of increased access leading to increased use. Something that hasn't been talked about today is the decrease in opioid prescriptions filled in states that have adult use programs, significant decreases. Illinois has 20 percent higher opioid overdoses than the national average.

Another issue that has not been talked about today is Forbes reported that there has been a 15 percent decline in states with cannabis legislation. So while there may be increased use of cannabis, there is also decrease in more illicit drugs.

Someone said today we should be learning from other states and I heard Colorado come up several times today and I think that may be the worst analogy to use and we should learn from that. Colorado has over a thousand cannabis licenses. Illinois has done an amazing job and a
diligent job on passing legislation with strict testing standards and oversight.

Illinois flower and cannabis products are not allowed to have pesticides or fungicides. They're all tested for those as well as microbials. We're talking about the vaping crisis, most of that has been tied to the substance vitamin E acetate which there was also a memo put out by IDFPR, that -- and Department of Ag that cultivators cannot have these in their vape products.

Many of the cultivators and processors in Illinois have also put out public statements saying that they do not use these substances. That is a product of the black market and that is something that Aurora has an ability to combat. We have an opportunity to control the outcome. Cannabis has been legalized. Adult use has been legalized. And the ladies and gentlemen here can control the outcome.

I want to commend Aurora on making more strict distance requirements than the state. I heard something about not having a stricter
requirement, but for dispensing facilities, there are no distance requirements that the state has put in place. The City of Aurora is proposing 500-foot requirement. Also more strict hours for operation for dispensing than state requirements.

I think some of the obvious benefits of opting in, job creation and tax revenue.

Lastly I think something that has been talked about a couple times but really needs to be emphasized is the undeniable fact that minorities have been disproportionately affected by the war on drugs. This is something that has been coming up very recently in the news and I think Illinois has also done a great job of making this relevant.

In the coming months, there is going to be another rounds of applications for dis -- for social equity applicants. And I heard at the beginning of this meeting that Aurora is thinking about capping the number of licenses that are proposed in the City of Aurora and I would stress that it is very important and it's our responsibility to reserve some of those for the social equity applicants that are coming up in
the following year.

With respect to zoning, I think we have that opportunity and stress that this body here has the opportunity to control the outcome of what happens in Aurora. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. Anybody else in row ten or the back of the room? Is there anyone else that hasn't spoken that would like to speak before the commission.

Sir, were you sworn in earlier?

MR. LIANG: Yeah. My name is Zhigang Liang. I live in 1015 Oakhill Drive, Aurora.

People talking about legalizing marijuana and also talk about education. I think currently our society also put much effort to educate our people and, you know, still educate to the marijuana so how can we do a better job with the legalization of marijuana.

I'm thinking about the danger of the marijuana to a body. I strongly suggest we, all of us, the city opt out of the recreational marijuana. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Anyone else that hasn't spoken that would like to do so?
Seeing none, I'm going to close the public hearing. And I would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide relevant testimony this evening and I want to ask staff to come forward and there is a couple items I think we had some questions and clarifications.

And I tried to write some of these down here but maybe you can -- the 500-foot distance, if you can clarify that?

MR. SIEBEN: The proposal in the text amendment is 500-foot separation from schools to any -- any licensee.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: I think the 2500 was a cultivation center, wasn't it?

MR. SIEBEN: That had had to do with the original medical requirements, the medical marijuana requirements.

Deb, do you want to answer that?

MS. LANG: The 2500 feet was with the medical marijuana legislation passed in 2013. That is not in the new recreational marijuana amendments. So the 500 feet is what we came to as an amount.

Currently in our liquor code, it is 100 feet from school zones in section 6-13D and
that's for 100 feet to a grade school, middle school, alternative school or high school. So this is a further distance than what's currently in our liquor code.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. And then I think there was a discussion about potential lawsuit that maybe just comment that anybody will have to follow the licenses of the state of Illinois.

MR. SIEBEN: Right. The existing medical marijuana cultivation facility on Diehl Road does have a state license, so I believe that was granted several years ago.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Age 21 or older to purchase marijuana.

MR. SIEBEN: Yes. That's a state requirement. No one under -- I don't believe anyone under 21 can even be in the building.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: And then I don't know -- I think the City council will address tax, how tax revenue will be deployed.

MS. LANG: Currently, we just passed the portion on what the tax would be so we can get it into the Illinois Department of Revenue. So that
if we do opt in, we would be able to collect the sales tax because it takes about 90 days to process that paperwork. So if January 1st is the start date and the city decides to opt in, we would be able to collect the taxes in a timely manner.

We're still in discussion on how that money will be disbursed.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Any other questions of staff?

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: I have a question. What is the city proposing in terms of the number of dispensaries that would be allowed to operate in Aurora.

MR. SIEBEN: The second to the last gentlemen said he thought he heard that there was a proposed limitation on the number for dispensary. We're not proposing that. I'm sure it will be -- the state will only issue a certain amount if a special use is granted by the city, but we are not proposing at this time.

MS. LANG: In addition to what I had explained, the limitation is going to be on arterial ways as he described earlier during the
hearing. That is the limitation and the 500 feet from the school.

So that will limit the areas in the city.

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: But there is no distance from a residential area, right?

MR. SIEBEN: I'm sorry?

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: I know if it's an arterial and it's 500 feet with I think with 1500-foot separation between dispensaries; is there any restrictions on proximity to residential.

MR. SIEBEN: No, there is nothing in the state act and the city is not proposing that, just the 500-foot to schools.

There is 1500-foot separation between dispensaries. That's a state act. And then we're limiting it to special use within only certain zoning districts and then they have to abut an arterial highway which is the highest classification on a highway.

MR. HULL: I would like to comment. 500 feet is absolutely too close to any school. Let's just put it down right now. There is no way I could support anything that's gonna be -- and you
won't find a liquor store within 100 feet of a school, you certainly won't find one in district 204.

Now you may find something -- you know, my house, my home, I live in West Marywood area and I counted in my mind over ten liquor stores within a half mile of my home.

And east Aurora school district 131, we don't have a library branch, we don't have a major food grocery store in our district. There is all kinds of other ways -- we have mattress stores, auto parts stores and restaurants, small restaurants. And so 500 feet is absolutely -- I will not support anything. 1500, minimum.

And so I didn't expect to have to say anything and I know I may ramble somewhat because I didn't plan on saying a lot about this. But what I will say is all the talk about revenue, okay, I'll just say this: The tollway was gonna go to the schools; the casino, when the casino first opened, we were reconstructing an asphalt and 26 lane miles per year with the casino revenue. All of those things have gone down.
The State of California -- and I'm saying all this because I am ambivalent about the whole situation. The State of California has also put out a report that since they have gone with the legal marijuana dispensaries, that many of them are going out of business because the recreational users are still going to the black market because it's cheaper; they're not interested. The kids on the east side of Aurora are not going to go to that dispensary because they can't afford that. They can't afford it.

Am I excited that a 15 year old is not gonna have that put on his record and ruin his chance to get into college or to get a job? Absolutely. But I'm not in the business of watching the government get in the business of distributing drugs, selling -- making it legal in this town. You talk about what you love? I love Aurora enough that I've been on the east side of Aurora for the last 33 years and I -- I could have lived any ward I wanted to live but I chose to stay when people were flagging and running and just trying to get out. And I stayed and I fought.
And I don't want to see a dispensary anywhere on the east side of Aurora. Well, we'll put it like this: I'll speak for district 131, and I haven't spoken to the people at district 131 to ask them. I'm speaking as a citizen and a tax payer of district 131. I don't want to see a dispensary over there.

And when I brought up the fact that the government is getting involved in this and talking about the taxes and the revenues, no. My community, so all of you that are not African-American, thanks for the help but I'm going to speak on behalf of that. My community has -- has an economy built on their back locked up in jail because of marijuana sales, nonviolent crimes, and now the government wants to say let's open up dispensaries. I don't think so.

And when I was at West Aurora in the '70s, what did they do when they wanted quality marijuana? They went to St. Charles. They went to Geneva. They went to Oswego. They went to Yorkville. Because that's where they had the good stuff at, so to speak.

And so for -- for those of you, I
appreciate all the data, but you can make data
say anything you like to say. Whether it's about
revenue or whether it's about the effects of it.

I'll tell you what I can tell you
about the effects of marijuana, and I'm not
ashamed to say it. I haven't smoked marijuana in
three or four decades. But what I can tell you
is when I started -- this is the truth -- when I
started, one thing happened to me: When it came
to school, I didn't quite like it as much. I
didn't quite care as much. And I was a good
student. And I still, because God blessed me
with a certain amount of sense, was able to get
through it, get through school, got through
college, got through all of that. But at the
same time, I didn't see it the same way. It was
always, Just do enough, Ray, to get by and that
will be it.

But it -- I came to work everyday.
So all of you saying I'm not going to come to
work, I -- from the time that, you know, I'm
saying when I quit, I still came to work, I
worked, I started working at 16. I was smoking
and I was working, so don't tell me that
everybody that smokes will be lazy. That's not necessarily true. Yes, there are slackers; yes, there are burnouts. And so, you know, there is a lot to this but I'm saying for me, for east Aurora, I don't want to see a dispensary over there.

How about giving us a library branch? How about that? How about doing something that's going to put something else.

If you have one out in 204, great. On 59, if they're dispensing weed out there, I didn't know anything about it. Great. If they want that revenue out there -- and I'm not speaking for all of east Aurora, I'm speaking for Ray Hull and how I feel about anything of that sort opening up in district 131 -- we have enough issues and enough challenges and 500 feet will get a no vote from me.

The City council needs to make that adjustment. I know it's going to happen. It's going to happen. But no matter how I vote or how anybody else votes, there is gonna be some dispensaries here but we really need to consider that. 500 feet within a school? Really?
You know, the next question I would ask is everybody that came up with that solution, how many of you live in Aurora? Just asking because I know city employees don't have to live in Aurora.

Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

MS. HEAD: Just so I understand, when you bring up roads, are you talking like Galena --

MR. SIEBEN: Route 59 --

MS. HEAD: -- 31 --

MR. SIEBEN: Ogden, Galena, New York, Indian Trail.

MS. HEAD: Eola.

MR. SIEBEN: Eola, yes, Lake, Broadway, Orchard.

MS. HEAD: Got it. Thank you.

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: Can I second his on basically the distance, proximity to schools? I can -- I can literally throw a stone 500 feet and to me that just does not cut it.

I will second his opinion on if this is gonna happen, it needs to be further away from schools, especially a lot of the high schools are
on arterial roads, so we don't want our kids
having that easy access to it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Any other questions for
staff?

MR. ELSBREE: I have a quick comment. We
keep talking about kids. This -- this is 21 is
legal, correct? It will be an ID when they go to
the door, it will be -- have a security, I
believe, and I have dispensaries on the west side
of Aurora. They're called the parking lot and
the playgrounds after 7:00 P.M. I see it all the
time.

We literally have dispensaries,
unregulated, all over the city right now. The
fact that they would have to be 21 and prove it
to go in, I think is a huge step from what we
have.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I say something?

CHAIRMAN PILMER: I'm sorry, sir, the public
hearing is closed.

Any other questions from staff?

Hearing none, if the staff would
like to make a recommendation.

MR. SIEBEN: Sure.
Mr. Hull, I have lived in Aurora for just over 30 years, so similar.

MR. HULL: Thank you, Ed. It was just a question.

MR. SIEBEN: Both sides.

MR. HULL: It was just a question.

MR. SIEBEN: Right.

Mr. Chairman, staff would recommend approval of the ordinance approving a tax amendment to ordinance number 3100 being the Aurora zoning ordinance to modify certain portions being section 3.3 definition section, 4.3 special uses in structures, and table one use categories.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: You heard the staff's recommendation. Is there a motion?

MS. HEAD: Move for approval.

MR. CHAMBERS: Second.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Motion made by Miss Head and seconded by Mr. Chambers.

Please call roll.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Anderson.

MS. ANDERSON: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Cameron.
MR. CAMERON: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Chambers.

MR. CHAMBERS: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Divine.

MR. DIVINE: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Elsbree.

MR. ELSBREE: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Gonzales.

MR. GONZALES: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Head.

MS. HEAD: Yes.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Hull.

MR. HULL: No.

MS. JACKSON: Mrs. Owusu-Safo.

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: Yes, with the condition of modifying the proximity to schools.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: That would be a no vote because the motion didn't include that. So you would either -- the motion is for as staff recommended it.

MS. OWUSU-SAFO: No.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: That's just the motion we're voting on.

MS. JACKSON: Mr. Reynolds.
MR. REYNOLDS: No.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: The motion carries.

Ed, could you just restate, again, where this will next be heard?

MR. SIEBEN: As stated earlier, this will next be heard at the BZE committee which is building zoning and economic development committee meeting one week from today October 9th, at 4:00 P. M., fifth floor of this building.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you. That's it for the agenda this evening.

Any other items?

MR. SIEBEN: Our next meeting is -- regular meeting is October 16th at 7:00 P. M.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you.

If we can get a motion to adjourn.

MS. HEAD: Move to adjourn.

MR. CHAMBERS: Second.

CHAIRMAN PILMER: Motion made by Miss Head and seconded by Mr. Chambers.

All those in favor say aye.

(Ayes heard.)

CHAIRMAN PILMER: All those opposed?

(No response.)
CHAIRMAN PILMER: Thank you, everybody.

*   *   *   *
STATE OF ILLINOIS

COUNTY OF DU PAGE

I, Barbara Johnston, CSR No. 84-002903, RMR, do hereby certify that the foregoing deposition, Pages 1 through 151, was recorded stenographically by me and computer-transcribed under my personal direction; and that the said hearing constitutes a true record of the testimony given at the time and place aforesaid.

I further certify that I am not counsel for nor in any way related to any of the parties, nor am I in any way, directly or indirectly, interested in the outcome thereof.

This certification applies only to those transcripts, original and copies, produced under my direction and control; and I assume no responsibility for the accuracy of any copies which are not so produced.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand this October 4, 2019.

Barbara Johnston
Certified Shorthand Reporter
### ATTENDANCE SHEET
CITY OF AURORA
PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Date: 10-2-19

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<tr>
<td>Marjorie Logan</td>
<td>495 N Lake St Apt S07</td>
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<td>Kevin Bastian</td>
<td>891 WACAREL DR AURORA</td>
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<td>Javier Gonzalez</td>
<td>730 Kirkway Ct. 60506</td>
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<td>Steve Froelich</td>
<td>1508 LINCOLNHIRE AVE AURORA 60506</td>
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<td>Roger Vernon</td>
<td>2625 Ginger Woods Dr AURORA 60502</td>
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<td>Eli Hodapp</td>
<td>9Y1 Norfield Dr. Aurora, IL 60505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Zhang</td>
<td>Owner, 3170 E Winchester St, Aurora</td>
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<td>Robert Mccor &amp; Company 394 Vaughan Ave, Aurora 60502</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wei Huang</td>
<td>990 Meadowridge Dr Aurora 60504</td>
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<td>Hangting Chen</td>
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<td>Jianjun Liu</td>
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<td>Kui Hu</td>
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<td>Kiki Wang</td>
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<td>Jinfeng Wang</td>
<td>1104 Stonehaven Cir Aurora 60502</td>
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<td>Wm Gomme</td>
<td>2558 O&amp;K Trails Ct. Aurora, 60506</td>
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<td>Yuan Birkett</td>
<td>75 Executive Dr. Aurora 60502</td>
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<td>Erika DeCarlo</td>
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<td>Libin Zhang</td>
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<td>Laura Swanson</td>
<td>2360 Legacy Dr. 60502</td>
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<td>Qing He</td>
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<td>Kai Han</td>
<td>1855 Tall Oaks Dr. #3308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria Williams</td>
<td>Aurora Cannabis Consultants 853N Highland Ave STE 5A, Aurora IL 60505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhaosheng Gao</td>
<td>4138 Bethlehem Rd, Aurora IL 60501</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexander Perez</td>
<td>1110 (rear) St #23 Glandir Village L- 1535</td>
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<td>Jim Ngy</td>
<td>407 Porter Ave Aurora IL 60505</td>
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<td>Jonathan A. Reinders</td>
<td>345 S Evanslawn Ave Aurora 60505</td>
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<td>Shannon Buckley</td>
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<td>Esmeralda Prelland</td>
<td>492 N Ohio St</td>
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<td>Jon Frost</td>
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<td>Roger Wu</td>
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<td>Fengja Wu</td>
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ILLINOIS DISPENSARY TRAINING MANUAL

Paris Thompkins
Victoria Williams
Recreational Marijuana

From: kevin bastian (kevin_bastian@att.net)
To: kevin_bastian@att.net
Date: Tuesday, October 1, 2019, 08:03 PM CDT

Ladies & gentleman I stand today to oppose the sale of recreational marijuana in the city of Aurora. The reasons I have are many, but first & foremost is the fact that recreational marijuana is harmful to a person's health. Now some may justify & say that alcohol and cigarettes are harmful but they're still legal. While there will always be individuals that will abuse alcohol & tobacco, tobacco is not a mind altering drug. And small amounts of alcohol, especially red wine has significant health benefits, recreational marijuana does not! And in fact, when people mix alcohol & marijuana, which will surely happen, the combination becomes deadly! When I was 20 yrs old, one night I had been out drinking beer and smoking pot. On the way home, driving up Rt.25, just north of Butterfield Rd. about a block & 1/2 from where I lived in No.Aurora, I passed out behind the wheel, & woke up just as I was going down an embankment of about a 45% angle as my car wedged against a tree and luckily the tree prevented my car from overturning. Thankfully The No. Aurora Police were in the area, had a tow truck pull my car out, & when they saw I lived nearby, escorted me home without ticketing or arresting me. But my story's beside the point! There is also a mountain of evidence that concludes that marijuana use leads to psychosis & mental illness as well as respiratory and lung damage to chronic users. God made our bodies the way he did for a reason. Fish die without water & human beings die without air. The only thing you should be breathing in your lungs is O2. Anything else is harmful! I suggest this meeting tonight is just a token meeting held to pacify the public that we have some say in this matter, but from the information I have read so far, it seems to me the city has already made up its mind. The chief financial officers and other city revenue officials are already licking their chops, with $$ signs in their eyes, discussing at what percentage to levy the tax on revenue from the sale of marijuana. Now I suggest we're gonna hear all manner of justification for voting to pass this resolution. They will use all kinds of semantics such as, people are gonna use it anyway, or it's gonna cost us money anyway, so why not tax it's use. They will turn a blind eye all in pursuit of the almighty dollar. It's nothing but a big cash cow. But that doesn't make it right! And if you think about it, if the city passes this, they are actually encouraging people to use marijuana. Now they may say things like we're just making it available to people who will use it anyway. But if people don't patronize the facility, that means no revenue for the city! The whole point of opening a successful business is to do everything you can to make sure it succeeds. So the city has to promote the new business! A quote from the Beecon news said officials favor a 2% tax as a compromise between getting revenue & attracting High-end marijuana stores! No pun intended. One official said we're looking at being competitive! But, ladies & gentleman, if you were to ask our fine Mayor and the city council if they smoke marijuana, I don't think I need to tell you what their answer would be! But I wonder if some people like our governor, smoked too much of it when they were younger & it killed a lot of their brain cells & their ability to reason & think. I get emails all the time from the city of Aurora, of all the great things our city has to offer. Things such as empowering our youth. Well how does letting a recreational marijuana facility descend on the city of Aurora help empower our youth? What kind of message does that send to the youth of our city, even if they are 21, to have a temptation like that at their disposal? That maybe some kid who is facing some overwhelming problems in his life, when he feels the pressure's of life are getting him down, might just say some night, I think I'll go down to the corner store and buy some pot and get high to ease the pain! Ladies and gentlemen, I mentioned earlier, A successful business has to be promoted. This poses a little dilemma for the city. Like all businesses there certainly should be a ribbon cutting for the grand opening. Cherie's Silver Spoon Creamery opened right down the block on the corner of Stolp and Downer & I believe the Mayor and a few city officials had some ice cream with the new owners. So I have a question? Will the mayor and the city council have a joint with the owners of the new marijuana facility. it not, why not? It's the height of hypocrisy! The message at the ice cream parlor was c'mon down and enjoy what this new business has to offer, which in this case is some delicious ice cream! Well, why not the same at the marijuana facility? It's laughable! Maybe we'll start to see ads in the newspaper and on billboards throughout the city. c'mon down folks and patronize this business and experience what great quality weed they have to offer! A smooth taste, and a mellow high that you will love, with just the right amount of THC to relax your mind, fry your brain, forget your troubles, get your creative juices flowing & give you that euphoria you crave! But remember to smoke responsibly and don't smoke & drive! I ask responsible citizens to stand with me and urge the Mayor & the city council to oppose this in the city of Aurora. I'll end my little tirade with a quote that was coined back in the 70's. ONLY DOPES SMOKE DOPE!
OPT-OUT of Recreational Marijuana Stores in Aurora

We the Undersigned want the City Council of Aurora vote Opt Out on allowing the retail sale of recreational marijuana in Aurora

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<tr>
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<td>810 Meadowridge Ave</td>
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<td>808 Greenwood Cir, Wap</td>
<td>60653</td>
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<td>Guanhua Qian</td>
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<td>Greg Zhang</td>
<td>owner, 3170 E. Winchester, Aurora, IL 60504</td>
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<td>Shirley Li</td>
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Public Hearing: 10/2/2019, Aurora City Hall, 44 E. Downer Place.
Dear Mayor and Officers,

We have heard of a lot statistics, maybe I can share with you real stories. I am a wife, mom and also have been helping others as counselor.

Currently, I have been counseling and helping a couple with drug addiction (husband) in past months. The husband started with Marijuana, now cocaine. The wife told me: There are two main ingredients in Marijuana: CBD and THC. Marijuana contains more and more THC. When you keep using it, it opens the doorway to stronger street drugs, as you would seek higher level of excitement. Studies have shown that 90 percent of those currently using hard addictive drugs like heroin started with marijuana.

Drug addiction puts them in great financial distress. Many persons have drug addiction have debt or financial issues as the debts growing as snowball.

Drug addiction shatters their relationship and marriage. There are anger (which husband can't control), bitterness, hurt, distrust, tears......once you start it, it may take years to recover part of the damage. There are broken hearts, broken relationships, broken families.

They are willing to share their struggles with you tonight as they, and me do no want this happen to any person or any family. They have a long battle ahead of them to fight, and they are in darkness of a tunnel.

Their story is not alone, actually very typical. It takes a lot resources to heal, to reestablish a person, a family who is involved with drug addiction. Can anyone here tonight imagine what if the drug becomes more readily available to one more person, one more family?

That is why we are all here tonight. We want to opt out.

Aurora, city of lights. Lights stand for hope. Let us do not lose heart, do not lose hope, be wise and be responsible as in our big family of Aurora.

Thank you very much.

Yan Sun

10/2/2019
Address: 2550 Danhaven Ct, Aurora, 60502
you have an important issue before you. Should you open Aurora to the sale of a very dangerous drug—Marijuana? As a former four-term member of the Minneapolis City Council and at-risk city leader, I know what you are going through—the pressures from all sides.

My concerns:

1. Today's Marijuana
   - 6 to 20 times stronger than used in your generation. It is a dangerous drug—well documented.

2. Gate-way Drug.
   It is well documented that Marijuana is a gateway drug to heroin and Fentanyl. Those of us who have lost loved one to drugs can provide strong evidence. Along with law enforcement and mental illness providers.

3. Mexican Drug lords
   - They are among the strongest supporters of Marijuana legalization.
They make their money from U.S. citizens (more from suburban Americans now). They know legalization adds substantially to their bottom line. Americans are helping in many ways to corrupt and add violence to Mexico. Syria and Mexico are now two most violent in the world.

4. Drug abuse in the U.S. is increasing. Some 70,000 die each year, many suicides. It often starts with marijuana use (well documented).

5. Teen-age usage. Survey last year by the National Institute of Health - Use among students 8th, 10th and 12th grades rose last year 2.4%.

6. Mental illness - and a long list of related to brain damage. School violence, mental & psychosis disorders. I recommend a book by Alex Berenson - a former N.Y. Times reporter and award-winning writer. It is being featured in news reports across America today.
Tell your children it's an eye-opening report, well-researched, revealing the link between marijuana use and mental illness and a hidden epidemic of violence linked to this different marijuana. The first four states to legalize marijuana for recreational use were Colorado and Washington in 2014 and Alaska and Oregon in 2015. Combined, those four states had about 450 murders and 38,000 assaults in 2013. Recently they had almost 620 murders and 383,000 aggravated assaults—an increase of 37% in murders and 25% for assaults—far greater than national increases, even after accounting for differences in pop. growth. Other studies document that marijuana usage is rising the U.S. levels by 8%. Students at Classrooms are causing more disturbances.
7. Traffic Accidents
Few states in each state have gone as in states that legalized this drug. Law enforcement officials keep raising the red flag. They don't have the tools yet to address this increase.

8. Taxes
Cities all need more revenue, but learning from other states the additional cost of legalization - traffic accidents, crime, hospital visits etc. eat up most of the new revenue.

9. Campaign Contributions
As a former Alderman I understand the pressure to raise funds for campaigns but I also stood up and avoided questionable contributions.
10. Leadership

- Now is the time to be a real leader and stand tall and do what is right. (Note: 2 teach responsible leadership to business classes around the world)

In closing - I thank you, if you took time to review my letter.

The marijuana industry is a big business all over the country. In my judgment it is an irresponsible one.

Yes - this is the time for strong leadership to stand up for what is right for Aurora. I believe you are trying to do your best to be responsible in this and many other tough issues.

Thank you for listening to this "Old Army"

Best regards - Bob
With large studies in peer-reviewed journals showing that marijuana increases the risk of psychosis and schizophrenia, the scientific literature and the drug is far more negative than it was 20 years ago. Yet the change in the scientific consensus has gone unnoticed. Americans in general are far more likely to believe the drug is safe, and even radically beneficial.

Many older Americans remember marijuana as a relatively weak drug that they used casually in social settings like concerts. They’re not wrong. In the 1970s and 1980s, marijuana generally contained less than 5 percent THC. Today, the marijuana sold at gal dispensaries often contains 25 percent THC. Many people use extracts that are nearly pure THC, so a comparison, think of the difference between a beer and a martini...

States that allow recreational marijuana have not seen an increase in violent crime. Before recreational legalization began in 2014, advocates promised that it would reduce violent crime. But the first four states to legalize — Alaska, Colorado, Oregon, Washington — have seen sharp increases in murders and aggravated assaults since 2014, according to reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Police reports and news articles show a clear link to cannabis in many cases.

Alex Berenson, The New York Times

Bongs beckon behind pristine glass cases. Dried marijuana flowers with names such as “Tangerine Dream” and “Banana Split” sit on pedestals where visitors can take a whiff. Whether the suburbs will boast posh pot boutiques when Illinois legalizes recreational marijuana on Jan. 1, 2020, is unclear, but local police chiefs are certain of at least two things: Crashes will increase and departments are sorely lacking a breath-test device to detect pot.

“There’s definitely not enough resources,” Des Plaines Police Chief William Kushner said. “We’ll do the best we can for public safety and hope for the best.”

See TRANSIT on PAGE 7
EVEN STATES that have legalized both "medical" and recreational marijuana ranks highest in the nation for 12-17-yr-olds using the drug. Subsequently, the states that have NOT legalized any form of high potency marijuana have the lowest youth rates in the nation.

Don't say marijuana is harmless

A stoned driver killed my daughter

By CORINNE GASPER

When I hear people say marijuana is a 'wonder drug' from the days of hippies

FATAL CRASHES increasingly tied to drugs, report says

MARY WISNIEWSKI | Chicago Tribune

A growing percentage of drivers who in road crashes test positive for drugs, states need to do a better job of educating the general public and law enforcement on the risks of driving while marijuana, opioids and other substan-
October 2, 2019  RE: Consideration of legal cannabis/ Re-zoning

My vote is NO to legalize recreational marijuana in Aurora municipality.

The issue is safe driving. I retired last year and have thought about all the risks to me that could change my life in the negative. It has to be driving! With more marijuana freely used, I assume an increase number of impaired drivers, same as the problem of DUI which took years of groups such as Mothers Against Drunks to stiffen penalties. Without a roadside test for police to nail driving under the influence of cannabis, the question of penalties and deterrence is moot. The problem of safe traffic will only increase due to population, and nearly everyone over 16 now owns a car. The mix of impaired over-21's with inexperienced teen drivers is asking for more serious accidents and fatalities.

Does everyone remember the accident a few years ago near Mooseheart and Highway 31? the driver high on drugs rammed and demolished a home at the T intersection. Having marijuana being legal only loosens the boundaries of what is socially acceptable behavior. Even illegal, that was the sad illustration of what one impaired driver can do. I don't believe the tax revenue would be worth the social cost of the free invitation to use. Being "legal" gives the entirely different connotation to the custom and social sensibilities.

If Aurora Opt-In and re-zones, what ought to be considered is a name-address-ID number, date and destination address record requirement. With some deterrent to re-transport, use and drive, and share with friends might provide enough accountability to make it similar to what buying medical marijuana is now. Regulation is the next-best solution.

Finally, legal marijuana also brings with it more social nuisance problems for the public libraries, move theatres, and even property owners leasing apartments. We all have to interact with people, but those mentioned have the burden of complying with all the non-discrimination laws we have. Legal free use seems to be just too difficult to deal with unintended consequences.

Sincerely, Mary Goetsch
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Mary Goetsch