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**FROM 8¢**

# OSHAWA COUNCIL GREEN LIGHTS PRIVATE CANNABIS SHOPS

Oshawa - with the closing of GM on the near horizon. Oshawa new municipal government this past week was faced with another major decision.

During last Thursday night's meeting at city hall, Oshawa council voted to allow private cannabis retail stores to run in the city.

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ing at city hall, Oshawa council voted to allow private cannabis retail stores to run in the city.

Oshawa council has high expectations for how local cannabis stores could benefit the city after it voted to host pot shops.

This leaving many local merchants fuming. If Oshawa has learned anything about

drug distribution is that there is a stigma and image issue.

This leaving our downtown to becoming a pot head heaven. People from all over will be coming to Oshawa for the wrong reason. Primarily to purchase cannabis.

At a special meeting at city hall Thursday night, council voted 7-4 in favour of allowing private retail cannabis stores

in Oshawa, Ont., instead of the other option on the table — opting out, or prohibiting, this type of business in the city.

Durham-based cannabis consultant Marko Ivancicevic is crossing his fingers that he'll be able to open his own cannabis shop in Oshawa.

He says he has submitted his expression of interest to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, which regulates Ontario's retail cannabis outlets and will be randomly picking the winning applicants Friday.

"I'm very excited," said Ivancicevic. "To finally have the ability to potentially open a store in what I see as my home is a great feeling to have."

This brings to question the motive of council. Was this just an economic decision without real consultation of the public at large since the City is in dire need of cash?

Oshawa's mayor, Dan Carter, was contacted on the council decision, but he was unavailable for an interview.

Many are questioning the new mayor ability to lead as he has done nothing to save Oshawa GM plant. Many are now seeing the choice for mayor as a weak one.

Others for many other issues have attempted to contact the mayors office and Carter does not seem to be available for the general public.

In deciding which option to choose, council considered the results of a recent city survey, in which 62 per cent of people said 'yes' to hosting cannabis stores in the city. Many said the benefits include economic opportunities and job creation, according to a public report.

The nearly 40 per cent of people who shot down the idea of having private cannabis stores in Oshawa cited reasons such as increased

access to cannabis by youth and negative impacts on the city's reputation.

This report is highly criticized as the number of people consulted was very small and not a representation of the population at large.

Some local merchants are screaming foul as they were never contacted for input on the matter. This leaving many wondering who the city contacted and why the rush to expedite open market sale of pot.

One hypothesis is that the cash strapped city is banking on getting money from the Provincial and Federal government to assist in the transition. Basically free money from Trudeau to facilitate the opening of shops and subsequent affects of the trade.

Many are wondering where Oshawa is heading. We appear to have no municipal leadership.



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## Investigators Arrest Suspect for Violent Crimes in the GTA

The Durham Regional Police Robbery Unit, West Division Criminal Investigation Bureau, with the assistance of the Waterloo Regional Police Service, executed a search warrant in Cambridge arresting several parties and seizing a quantity of drugs, ammunition and cash.

The DRPS initiated a criminal investigation dubbed Project Williams after several violent robberies occurred in the fall of 2018. The 17-year-old suspect was wanted for a violent home invasion on Tragunna Lane in Ajax, two armed robberies, one at a convenience store on Massyfield Gate in Markham and the other at a Subway store on Kingston Road in Pickering. On Thursday, January 17, 2019, investigators executed a search warrant at a residence on Duke Street in Cambridge and arrested the suspect and multiple parties. Investigators seized a quantity of cannabis, methamphetamine, ammunition, cash and an imitation handgun. Police seized approximately \$18,000 in cash and the total value of the drugs seized is just over \$20,000.

A 17-year-old male from Ajax faces 43 charges in relation to the violent incidents in Durham Region and the GTA. He was held for a bail hearing.

Dennis RODRIGUEZ, age 24 of Scott Road in Cambridge, Aja MOONEY, age 21 of Duke Street in Cambridge, Brandon BECKER, age 21 of No Fixed Address, Lloyd RENOLDS, age 22 of No Fixed Address, Tyler CRAIG, age 20, of No Fixed Address are all charged with Possess Cannabis for the Purpose of Distribution and Property Obtained by Crime Exceeding \$5,000.



**Here is how to reach us**

**By mail: 136 Simcoe St North, Unit 4**  
**Oshawa, Ontario. L1G 4S7**  
**Tel: (905) 432-2657**

**Administration (General Inquiries)**  
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