

Ajax explains why it ended Durham Distillery lease

The Town of Ajax has clarified that it had entered into a lease agreement with Durham Distillery to support the establishment of a fully operational, end-to-end distillery (see use and operation excerpt from the lease below).

"... [25 Mill Street] shall be used and occupied only for the purpose of distilling and sale of spirits which includes without limitation the distillation, preparation for sale, bottling and labelling, packing and shipping, the sale (import and export) and marketing of spirits, the barrel aging (and otherwise) and storage of spirits..."

The objective was to support a startup and help grow a local business to strengthen the vitality of Pickering Village, it said. This partnership was intended to bring long-term economic activity to the area – not simply retail sales, but a fully functioning production facility contributing to local growth, it added.

Here is Durham Distillery's statement.
Here are some of the town's answers:
What was the term of the initial lease?

The initial lease term was three years, running from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024.

Why did the town move to a month-to-month tenancy in January 2025 rather than renewing for another three years?

The town did not renew the lease due to serious and ongoing non-compliance with the lease agreement.
Specifically:

- The tenant did not meet the core requirement of operating a fully functional distillery as outlined in the lease.
- The facility was primarily used for retail sales, which did not align with the agreed-upon end-to-end distillery operation.
- The tenant's operations were not in compliance with the Ontario Building Code and the Ontario Fire Code.
- The tenant continued to bring in its product from another small batch distillery location outside of Durham Region.
- Rent and tax payments were inconsistent.

As of the end of 2025, \$30,000 in unpaid rent and taxes is owed to the town.

Throughout the initial term and the month-to-month tenancy in 2025, town staff — including Fire and Building officials — worked with the tenant extensively to support the startup of a small batch distillery, including plans for specialized infrastructure and safety requirements necessary to operate the distillery properly. Despite these efforts, the distillery never materialized.

Given these factors, the town acted responsibly and in the public interest by declining to renew a long-term lease.

Why did the town formally provide legal notice to vacate the premises?

The town issued formal legal notice to the tenant on January 5, 2026, providing the tenant with thirty days to vacate the premises and allow the town to regain possession of the property. This step allows the Town to:

- Protect public assets and taxpayer interests.
- Reassess the facility's condition and operational readiness.
- Evaluate future opportunities that align with the Town's economic development objectives.

Did the town confiscate the tenant's possessions?

No. The town advised the tenant that it may still access the property to retrieve all its possessions, including equipment and products, by making mutually agreeable arrangements to do so.

GREEK FREAK STREET EATS

465 BAYLY ST W, AJAX 289-660-4660 | 72 BALDWIN ST, WHITBY 905-620-0188

USE PROMO CODE **FREAKN10** ON YOUR NEXT ORDER!

10% OFF

CATERING & DELIVERY

WWW.GREEKFREAK.CA

Legion BRANCH 43
471 Simcoe Street South Oshawa

YARD SALE
SUNDAY JUNE 14
2026
9 A.M. - 2 P.M.

ALL PROCEEDS GOING TO
100 ANNIVERSARY
ANY STUFF CAN BE DONATED
JUNE 12 AND 13

CONTACT VANESSA (905) 723-9211

MUNICIPAL INTERNET POSTINGS DO NOT WORK

In an age of misinformation and shrinking newsrooms, your support for credible journalism has never mattered more.

According to the 2024 Digital News Reports by the Reuters Institute, 52% of Canadians say they're willing to pay for trusted news - yet only 15% actually do.

This gap threatens... the sustainability of local news organizations like ours who work every day to report with integrity, accountability, and a deep connection to our community.

Other countries are stepping up:
Norway: 40% pay for news
Sweden: 31% pay for news
Australia: 21% pay for news
Finland: 20% pay for news
Even United States out performs Canada's support of journalism, with 22% of readers who pay for news.
Canada shouldn't fall behind
Local journalism keeps communities informed, connected, united and empowered. It shines a light on the issues that matter most - your schools, your streets, your stories.

By subscribing, you're not just getting access to trusted local news - you're helping preserve a vital public service.

**CHOOSE TRUTH
CHOOSE FACTS
CHOOSE LOCAL JOURNALISM**

Municipalities have opted for online posting with catastrophic failure. Every week you are missing out on important local information that affect your daily life.

Municipalities are forcing taxpayers to go on line. Taxpayers are not responding due to a series of realities:
Cost of Internet
Cost of purchasing computer/cell phone.
Lack of knowledge on use of technology.
Complex web pages full of pop-ups.
Lack of time to sit in front of a computer.
Internet is infested with all kinds of algorithms that track you.
Internet is very specific and not broad enough for public.

By supporting your local newspaper you are uniting the community around a trusted local news source. Your support, supports local businesses and creates an atmosphere of community. Your support sends a real message to your municipality that you demand arms length accountability.

Your local newspaper is written and published by journalist that live and work in the community. Community members that you can trust.
Today, even major network news sources have fallen to bias reporting due to political interests.
Your local community newspaper is different. Your local journalist bring you articles that matter to you and your family. Demand that your municipality publish in your local paper.

WITHOUT SUPPORT TRUTH HAS NO PLATFORM
Subscribe Today!!!