



RELOCATION OF COLLEGE HEAD OFFICE

Authority

Section 2.01 of the College by-laws requires that the head office of the College be in the province of Ontario, at a place that the Council may determine from time to time.

Currently, the Council has determined that the head office shall be 150 John Street, 10th Floor, in Toronto; however, with the pending expiration of the lease, the Council will be asked to amend this determination.

Background

In late 2012, the transitional Council of the College of Naturopaths of Ontario, in conjunction with the Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy – Naturopathy, determined that in the interest of a smooth transition from the BDDT-N to the College, the two organizations would relocate to a location that could accommodate them and the future College.

A 10-year lease was entered into by the transitional Council on behalf of both organizations.

This lease expires at the end of February 2023.

Search for Space

Senior staff of the College began their preliminary work in mid 2021 to determine the College's future space needs. This began with the retention of an experienced commercial real estate broker to assist in determine the needs and best locations.

Needs, Postal Code and Market Assessment

The College conducted both a needs assessment to determine the size of space and access to local resources. It also conducted a postal code analysis of all staff to determine what general area of Ontario would be best to ensure staff retention and access.

A Market Assessment, which was conducted by a commercial real estate brokerage, determined that there would not be a significant cost savings to locate outside of the downtown core.

On the other hand, moving outside of the downtown core to areas such as Vaughan, Markham, Newmarket, Burlington, Hamilton, Mississauga, and Oakville would result in significant commute time increases for staff and likely a high level of staff turnover.

As a result of these assessments, the space search was narrowed to the areas in and around the current location.

Remote Operations

For the most part, the College will continue to operate on a remote basis, however, mail and courier packages need a place to be delivered to, received (signed for), opened and catalogued. The College will have a minimum complement of staff in the new office on a full-time basis and other staff will book a workstation or room when they need to be in the office.

The College was also very cognizant of the fact that as the impact of the pandemic wanes, people's preferences may also change. We anticipate an increasing desire of many staff to spend more than one day a week in the office over the next several months to a year.

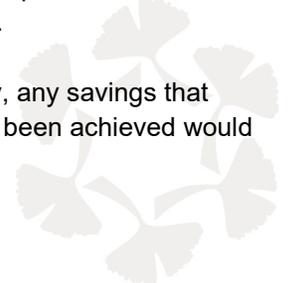
The Need for an Office

There are several key functions that the College performs that require an office location to work from. Examination preparation is one example where records need to be secured and maintained and equipment available to produce exam materials. Similarly, many complaints and investigations require the production of patient records by Registrants which need to be maintained in a secure environment and eventually returned.

Why downtown Toronto?

The idea that space is less expensive outside of the downtown core of Toronto is one that does not hold true. The College worked closely with a commercial real estate brokerage to explore all its options, including in Toronto, in the surrounding areas and some cities further afield, such as Oakville, Burlington and Vaughan. Commercial real estate outside of the downtown area is not significantly less expensive, when the space requirements are considered.

Additionally, any savings that might have been achieved would



OFFICE RELOCATION

likely have been lost to other costs including increased staff compensation and travel benefits to retain staff after a move outside of downtown Toronto.

Union station is a primary public transit hub bringing together GO trains, GO buses, other bus services and the TTC. It is significantly easier to commute into the downtown core than it is to commute elsewhere. Moving the College outside of Toronto would result in many of the College staff having to not only commute but change modes of transportation or vehicles. For example, an office in Etobicoke or Mississauga would mean staff in Newmarket, Markham, eastern GTA locations would commute downtown and then commute back out of the core. These same issues would be faced by Registrants who had to visit the College's offices for any reason.

Joining with other Colleges?

Active consideration was given to joining another College in their current locations; however, the costs of doing so given these spaces were very large was prohibitive. We also approached other Colleges actively looking for space at the same time to explore space sharing possibilities; however, none of these came to fruition as needs or timing simply did not match.

Costs are still high.

Commercial/office space is significantly different than both the retail and home real estate markets. The vacancy rate for office space has been extremely tight leading into the pandemic period and while there were many reports of offices closing or

downsizing, these did not have a significant impact on the commercial/office space market. The College has been at its current location for nearly 10 years. The rental costs for commercial real estate have increased significantly during this period due to low availability and high demand. The increase in rental rates over the past decade has been offset by a significant reduction in space requirements.

Why so much space?

To ensure a full understanding of the situation, the College has reduced its rented space by just under 51% and its annual rental costs by 38%. This is a significant downsizing of the College's space. Nonetheless, the College continued to require a place for staff to work both in terms of workstations but also an office where private meetings and conversations can be held. We continue to need a small meeting space and to be able to accommodate a number of employees at the same time given the scope of our role and wide range of regulatory functions.

More Information

For more information, please email the College at general@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca.

Last Update: December 13, 2022