

# New hotels would fill extended-stay vacancy

BY JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Writer

Two six-storey hotels will be built at the northeast corner of Hwy. 407 and Woodbine Avenue if Markham council gives the go-ahead.

Bhulesh Lodhia, a director for developers JM Hospitality Inc. and HDBB Investments Inc., hopes to begin construction of the first hotel, with 101 extended-stay guest rooms, next spring.

"We would like to be open near the end of 2006," Mr. Lodhia said. "The second hotel wouldn't be built for two or three years."

The three-acre site is vacant. The first hotel, fronting on to Bodrington Court, will include a fitness centre, swimming pool and conference rooms on the ground floor.

An extended-stay room is designed to accommodate a guest for a week or two, Mr. Lodhia said. In addition to a sleeping area and work station, the room has a kitchenette with a stove top, microwave oven, refrigerator and dishwasher.

"There is an absolute need for an extended-stay hotel in

Markham," Mr. Lodhia said. "There are only two hotels in Markham offering extended-stay features."

The second hotel, fronting on to Woodbine Avenue, is designed to have 97 guest rooms, a pool and fitness centre.

While Markham has 10 hotels, the municipality can accommodate more, Darren Ciastko, a senior economic development officer with the town, said.

**'The hotel supply is meeting the demand. More hotels is a sign that employment is growing.'**

Darren Ciastko  
senior economic development officer

"The hotels that we have seen to cluster around the Hwy. 404 and Hwy. 407 area," Mr. Ciastko said.

"But there has been no hotel development in Markham since 2001 when the two Marriotts, Residence Inn and The Courtyard Inn, were built (in the Hwy 7

and Leslie Street area of Thornhill.)"

Hotels, like most commodities, fit the principles of supply and demand, Mr. Ciastko said.

"The hotel supply is meeting the demand," he said.

Hotels seem to cluster around areas of employment, he said. "More hotels is a sign that employment is growing," Mr. Ciastko said.

"The proposed development is within an industrial and commercial area and not in a location that would impact residential neighborhoods," Jim Baird, Markham's commissioner of development services, said in a report.

Mr. Lodhia's Markham company built the nearby Comfort Inn on Woodbine Avenue in 1985.

There are concerns linked to the hotel application, including potential soil contamination and traffic. Both will be studied.

Mr. Lodhia's company has applied for rezoning to accommodate the hotels. Before making a decision, council will host a public meeting. The proposal does fit into the town's official plan.

# Wong welcomes innovative challenge

Markham MPP Tony Wong has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the newly created Ministry of Research and Innovation being led by Premier Dalton McGuinty.

The appointment came during the recent cabinet shuffle.

"I am honoured to have been chosen by the premier to fulfill this new exciting role in our government," Mr. Wong said.

"The Ministry of Research and Innovation will be instrumental in creating a significant legacy for Ontario in the 21st century. I look forward to working closely with the premier and fulfilling my

duties in this new ministry."

The new ministry signals the importance the McGuinty government places on the need for Ontario to compete and win in both the national and international marketplace of ideas, Mr. Wong said.

"In the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century, the most valuable commodity is a new idea, one that creates investment and jobs," Mr. Wong said. "The new ministry will focus on the promotion of the ideas and information that are required in creating a better, stronger Ontario."

—Joan Ransberry

Medical

## MARKHAM

Medical

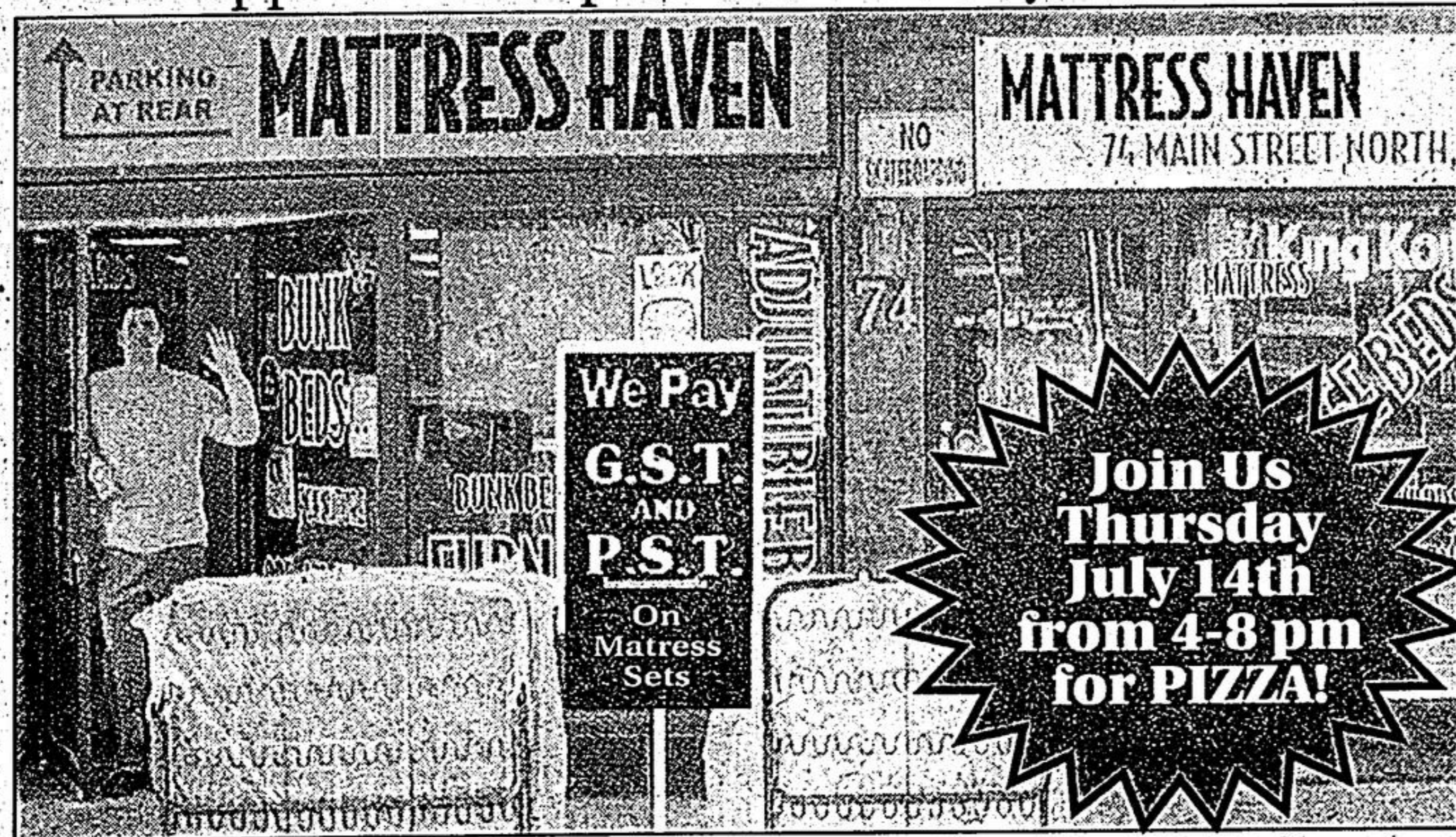
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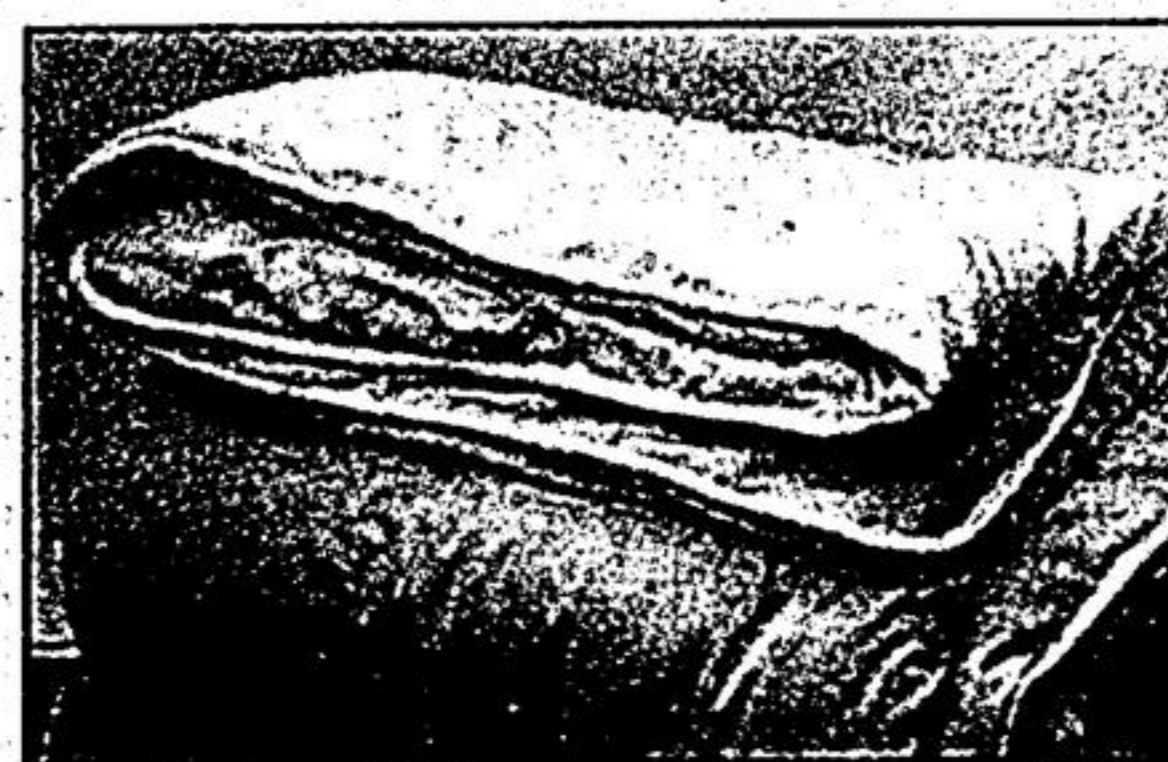
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