

Fate of Metro store up in air

BY CHRIS TRABER
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Metro grocery shoppers across York Region — including Stouffville — will have to wait until next year to learn if any of the seven stores in your community will be closed or converted, Metro Ontario Inc. senior marketing director Nancy Modrcin said.

Earlier this month, Metro announced its plan to close some Ontario stores or transform others to its discount format, Food Basics. The reorganization, a tactic to contain costs amid intense competition, will affect 15 Metro locations in Ontario.

The grocery chain, with more than 65,000 employees in Quebec and Ontario and more than 600 food stores under several banners, has not finalized a list of areas or stores that will be affected, Ms Modrcin said.

The organization will make announcements as the changes occur, she said, adding that a majority of the 15 stores that are being referenced will be conversions, not closures.

The changes will be taking place over the next six to nine months.

The conversions are going to take place so that Metro can be more competitive and profitable in select locations and address the needs of Ontario's increasingly value conscious customers, she said.

The number of employees in York Region's six Metro stores and one Food Basics was not readily available.

"There will be buyouts within the collective agreements as we are one of few grocery retailers that are unionized," Ms Modrcin said.

In addition to intense competition, particularly in Ontario from supermarket rivals such as Loblaw's



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Shoppers at Stouffville's Metro store Tuesday.

and Sobeys, Metro's discount banner, Food Basics, is fending off expansion by Walmart and the first wave of openings by United States retailer Target.

Analysts say the Montreal-based supermarket chain is facing increased pressure to expand its reach following recent deals by Loblaw's to purchase Shoppers Drug Mart and Sobeys to buy Safeway Canada, based in western Canada.

Metro has three stores in Newmarket, one each in Aurora, Richmond Hill and Stouffville along with a Food Basics in Markham.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police seek witnesses in Pickering cyclist's death

BY JEREMY GRIMALDI
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Police are looking for clues as to what happened in the moments leading up to a crash that killed a cyclist.

Sunday at about noon, a blue Honda Fit was travelling south on York Durham Line, north of Elgin Mills Road, just south of Stouffville.

The vehicle drifted over toward the shoulder of the roadway, causing the driver to lose control.

It crossed the centre line, striking a cyclist, a 63-year-old man from Pickering, police said. He was pronounced dead on the scene.

The driver of the Honda, a 30-year-old woman from Whitchurch-Stouffville, went to hospital with minor injuries.

Neither the names of the cyclist nor the driver are being released at this time.

If you have information, call

police at 1-866-876-5423, ext. 7704 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

Gormley business entered, local couple charged

Two Whitchurch-Stouffville residents have been charged with break and enter.

Two people entered a fenced yard at a business on Cardico Drive in Gormley Aug. 14 around 4 a.m. and stole electrical supplies, according to York Regional Police. A witness saw two people running through a hole in a fence and called 911.

The suspects, who fled the business, were located by the canine unit.

The accused are a 25-year-old man and 22-year-old woman.

The pair is also charged with possession of property obtained by crime and possession of break and enter instruments.

—Sandra Bolan

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Stouffville

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