

Collinsville slated for medicinal cannabis

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COLLINSVILLE - Collinsville may be home to the second Medical Cannabis Dispensary in Illinois State Police District 11. HealthCentral, LLC of Effingham, Illinois has been awarded a Dispensing Organization Registration Authorization by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. This authorization allows HealthCentral, LLC to register for a Medical Cannabis Dispensary in Collinsville as part of Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program.

"One of the benefits of Collinsville has always been our central location," said Erika Kennett, Collinsville's Director of Economic Development/TIF. "Patients from across Southwestern Illinois will be able to access this healthcare facility to manage their medical issues."

Pilot programs, by their very nature, evolve and few details are available; questions will continue to be answered as the program rolls out. The intended building at 1014 Eastport Plaza Drive will be purchased by HealthCentral, LLC and will still require all local permitting as well as State approval for onsite security measures prior to operation.

"The State of Illinois has outlined stringent protocols regarding security, hours of operations, signage and other operational components," said current City Manager and former Collinsville Chief of Police Scott Williams. Williams foresees sales to begin by the end of 2015, "The dispensary must wait for product to be grown in Illinois, which provides ample time for build out, security installation, and employee training."

One such security measure is a 24-hour live video feed access directly from HealthCentral, LLC to the Illinois State Police District 11 Division whose offices are also located in Eastport Plaza. HealthCentral, LLC is not requesting any incentives from the City of Collinsville and is projecting \$28 million in sales for year one, and \$48 million in sales for year two with up to 30 full time equivalent jobs.

"The City is aware this project will increase traffic to Eastport. It is our job to work with HealthCentral so we can provide safe passage for their clients as well as other guests to Eastport," said Rod Cheatham, Director of Streets. More information regarding Illinois' Medical Cannabis Pilot Program can be found at mccp.illinois.gov.