



Tuesday, November 2, 2021

Toronto City Council
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attn: Marilyn Toft, Council Secretariat

Delivered via email to: councilmeeting@toronto.ca

Re: PH27.2 – Zoning Conformity for Official Plan Employment Areas – Phase 1 Final Report and Phase 2 Update

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Toronto City Council,

On behalf of Elizabeth Fry Toronto, I wish to express our concern and alarm with respect to the report on Zoning By-Law conformity for employment zones in the Official Plan, specifically the proposed removal of permissions for bingo halls and related uses in the Former City of Etobicoke Zoning By-law (Attachment 9 to the Final Report).

Our charity is one of 66 local charities that rely on Delta Bingo and Gaming St. Clair, to support our organization in the Toronto community. Without this support we will struggle to be able to function.

Elizabeth Fry Toronto is a charitable organization with nearly 70 years of experience as the only Toronto agency focused on meeting the needs of women in conflict with the law. Our programs and services assist women from court and prison, helping to keep families together and increase the chance for marginalized women to break free from or avoid the cycle of incarceration, poverty and homelessness. We provide supportive services, community-based programs, and transitional housing to work with clients and help equip them with the skills, supports, and resources they need to create meaningful change in their lives

Our transitional residential program continues to benefit from the funding received by Delta Bingo and Gaming St. Clair, as the funding we receive each year through our partnership goes towards buying food and personal care items for women in our program. After a term of imprisonment, it can be difficult for women to secure employment and affordable housing, and to find their footing on their own. Being able to provide basic necessities to women in our residential program is a key component to supporting their reintegration back into the community and adopting lifestyle changes that contribute to long-term success. Losing this funding would be at a detriment to our clients who are trying to rebuild their lives, and rely of this type of support to meet their needs. Having one less worry of having to buy personal care items and food can help women instead focus on taking the steps needed to create real change in their lives and set themselves up for their future. This funding from Delta Bingo and Gaming St. Clair helps provide our clients with the basic necessities that many can take for granted, but can mean all the difference to those setting up a foundation for a life outside of institutions.

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The last 18 months have been very challenging for everyone, and our organization is no exception. We have struggled to continue our client support services with very little funding as Delta St. Clair was closed for 420 days over the course of the pandemic. Now, due to a proposed expropriation from the City of Toronto and Metrolinx, the Delta St. Clair location will have to move to another site. The new site (at 360 Evans Avenue) is currently zoned to allow for a Bingo Hall. Under the proposed By-law amendment that permission would be revoked.

As you can appreciate, finding an appropriate venue at a reasonable price in the current real estate environment is a real challenge. We are looking forward to the move to 360 Evans Avenue, and urge you not to remove this permission and allow Delta St. Clair to re-locate as planned with the current permissions.

Based on the concerns identified above, we respectfully request that the Draft By-laws and report, specifically as it applies to the use of employment lands for bingo halls, is removed entirely or in the very least referred back to City Planning staff for dedicated public consultation and review. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request, and we look forward to further discussions on this matter.

Sincerely,



Natalie Carpentier
Development and Communications Manager
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