



City of Toronto

Mayor Rob Ford

MAYOR'S REPORT

Making Room for Jobs – Protecting an Employment Area in Etobicoke Lakeshore

Date:	November 19, 2012
To:	City Council
From:	Mayor Rob Ford
Wards:	5, 6
Reference Number:	

Summary

The recent public announcement by Mondelez Canada that it intends to close its operations at 2150 Lake Shore Boulevard West in Etobicoke caught most residents, City staff and Members of Council by surprise. This property has long been the home of a Mr. Christie's bakery and is an important parcel of employment land in South Etobicoke employing 550 workers.

This large parcel of land and others in the vicinity play a key role in Toronto's ability to maintain employment within the city and the province. Given the employment situation in Toronto and Ontario generally, and the proximity of this parcel of land to the Ontario Food Terminal, and a major Go Transit corridor, the City should ask the Province of Ontario to consider declaring the employment lands in the vicinity of the Mr. Christie's lands including the Ontario Food Terminal as a provincially significant employment area.

Recommendation

1. City Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Minister of Infrastructure to consider exercising his authority under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to identify the employment lands in the vicinity of the Ontario Food

Terminal, as well as the Ontario Food Terminal site itself, and the lands at 2150 Lake Shore Boulevard West as a provincially significant employment area.

2. City Council direct the City Clerk to forward the letter attached as Attachment "1" to this report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Infrastructure.

Background

The recent decision by Mondelez Canada to close the former Mr. Christie's Bakery at 2150 Lake Shore Blvd W. in late 2013, will result in the loss of 550 jobs. At the same time, Mondelez has requested, under Toronto's Official Plan and Municipal Comprehensive Review, that the site be considered for uses other than those provided under the Employment Area designation. City Planning staff are currently considering this request as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and expect to report to Council in the new year.

The Mr. Christie's site is a 27 acre property currently designated for employment and zoned for industrial use. The previous owners of this site expressed concern about the impact on employment uses on the lands when neighbouring properties were converted to residential uses within the past decade. Both the City and the owners of 2150 Lake Shore Blvd. W. attended at an Ontario Municipal Board hearing in opposition, but the Board ultimately approved the change in use of these lands.

Retaining employment land and stimulating investment is important to the City's future economic prosperity, competitiveness and long-term fiscal sustainability. In addition, protecting employment lands within the City helps to improve environmental quality by limiting urban sprawl. Toronto's Employment Districts currently accommodate about 30% of citywide employment. The entire supply of land in the City's Employment Districts will be required to achieve the growth forecast target in Toronto's Official Plan.

The Mr. Christie's plant is located adjacent to both the Ontario Food Terminal, the largest wholesale fruit and produce distribution centre in Canada, and a major Go Transit Line operated by the provincial agency Metrolinx in a major transportation corridor in which the Province has indicated plans to increase service in the near future.

The Ontario Food Terminal is the main venue for food distribution in the Greater Toronto Area, receiving fruits and vegetables from farms throughout Ontario and beyond. Over a million vehicles use the Ontario Food Terminal each year, with daily activity starting as early as 2 a.m. It is an employment activity whose operation could be affected by the encroachment of nearby residential uses. The Ontario Food Terminal is owned by the Province of Ontario and managed by the Ontario Food Terminal Board. The conversion of employment lands to residential uses near the Ontario Food Terminal could touch upon several areas of provincial interest including the adequate provision of employment opportunities, the protection of the Agricultural resources of the Province and the appropriate location of growth and development.



City of Toronto

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Attachment "1"

Mayor Rob Ford
City of Toronto,
100 Queen Street West, 2nd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

November 20, 2012

The Honourable Bob Chiarelli
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing,
Minister of Infrastructure,
Government of Ontario,
3rd Floor Ferguson Block
77 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1Z8

Dear Minister Chiarelli:

The City of Toronto is currently undertaking the review of its Official Plan required under Section 26 of the Planning Act, including the mandatory review of the Official Plan policies and designations dealing with areas of employment and policies dealing with the removal of lands from areas of employment. The City of Toronto has to date received two requests for the conversion of a significant amount of land in proximity to the Ontario Food Terminal, at 23 and 134 Park Lawn Road. The former is a request, but not yet an application, by Mondelez Canada Inc, to consider 27 residential towers on the lands currently occupied by Christie's bakery which employs 550 workers. City staff are reviewing these conversion requests as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review process.

The Ontario Food Terminal is the main venue for food distribution in the Greater Toronto Area, receiving fruits and vegetables from farms throughout Ontario and beyond. Over a million vehicles use the Ontario Food Terminal each year, with daily activity starting as early as 2 a.m. It is an employment activity whose operation could be affected by the encroachment of nearby sensitive residential uses. The Ontario Food Terminal is owned by the Province of Ontario and managed by the arms length Ontario Food Terminal Board, with members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on recommendation from the Minister of Agriculture. The conversion of employment lands to sensitive residential uses near the Ontario Food Terminal could touch upon several areas of Provincial interest cited in Section 2 of the Planning Act, including the

adequate provision of employment opportunities, the protection of the Agricultural resources of the Province and the appropriate location of growth and development.

The City of Toronto is therefore requesting that, as Minister of Infrastructure, you consider utilizing Section 2.2.6.8 of the Provincial Growth Plan to consult with other Ministers of the Crown and stakeholders to identify the employment lands in the vicinity of the Ontario Food Terminal, as well as the Ontario Food Terminal site itself, as a provincially significant employment area

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

Yours truly,

Rob Ford
Mayor, City of Toronto