

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
CITY OF TORONTO

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September 11, 2013

**Corporation of the City of Toronto**  
**Metro Hall**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**55 John Street**  
**Toronto, Ontario**  
**M5V 3C6**

**COPY**

**Attention: Mr. Paul Bain**  
**Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Policy and Analysis**

**Re: Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review of the City of Toronto Official Plan**  
**279 Rexdale Boulevard, Former City of Etobicoke**  
**Our File: PN 5151**

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Dear Mr. Bain:

We have been retained by Zane Properties, 1226567 Ontario Inc., to assist in the review and consideration of the policy directions now emerging from the Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan as it applies to the area in the vicinity of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road. Our Client is the owner of those lands generally described as forming part of Lots 27 and 28 of Concession One, Fronting the Humber, in the former City of Etobicoke, now in the City of Toronto, municipal address of 279 Rexdale Boulevard.

On behalf of our Client, we are requesting that the property located at 279 Rexdale Boulevard, together with the adjacent lands presently developed for retail and service commercial purposes, be designated within the General Employment land use classification as outlined in the draft policy paper to be considered by the Planning and Growth Management Committee during the course of the meeting scheduled for September 12, 2013. To assist you in the review and consideration of this request, we offer the following comments in relation to the existing use of the lands, the contextual setting of the property, the current land use planning framework which governs the use and development of lands in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road, and, the future directions now being proposed through the Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review.

### **1. Site Characteristics**

The subject lands encompass approximately 2.38 hectares (i.e. 5.88 acres) with a frontage of approximately 200 metres (i.e. 660 feet) adjacent the southerly limit of Rexdale Boulevard and 17.3 metres on Martin Grove Road (i.e. 57 feet). The property is presently developed for the purposes of an office - warehouse type structure having a gross floor area of approximately 8817 square metres (i.e. 94,914 square feet). The building, which was erected for the purposes of a convention centre and furniture manufacturing establishment circa 1960, is currently under lease to Value Village Stores Inc.

Value Village Stores Inc. is a privately held for profit thrift store chain offering second hand merchandise for sale to the general public. The facility located at 279 Rexdale Road is presently used for the purposes of offices and as a distribution centre supplying various retail locations throughout Ontario and Eastern Canada.

The office portion of the structure, being the former convention centre which represents approximately 20 percent of the gross floor area, is situated in the more north-westerly portion of the building. The shipping, receiving and processing facilities, which are accessible from both Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road, occupy the more southerly and easterly portions of the building.

Today the structure located at 279 Rexdale Boulevard is no longer well suited to large scale industrial uses by reason of both size and location. As a result, a need exists to provide for the effective re-use and renewal of the building through the designation of the lands in a manner which provides for a mixture of both retail and service commercial functions in association with various light manufacturing, processing and fabricating uses.

## **2. Contextual Setting**

To assist you in the review and consideration of our Client's request, an aerial view illustrating the pattern of land use and development adjacent the north and south limits of Rexdale Boulevard, from the westerly limits of Martin Grove Road to Brydon Drive on the south, and adjacent the east and west limits of Martin Grove Road, from the northerly limits of Rexdale Boulevard to Bethridge Road on the south, is attached hereto as Appendix "A1". Reference should also be made to Appendix "A2" wherein a description of the existing use of each of the non-residential properties in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard is provided for your review and information. The information provided by way of this submission is based upon field observations undertaken by the writer during August of 2013.

The lands under the ownership of our Client are situated immediately to the south-west of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road. The land uses present in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road and our Client's property are distinctly different in scale and form from the areas to the south and north, to the east and west of Martin Grove Road. Typically, the properties adjacent this section of Rexdale Boulevard are smaller in area and are developed for a mixture of retail and service commercial functions and institutional land uses. The uses present in this area include restaurants, financial establishments, places of worship, storage facilities, and automotive sales, service and rental establishments, that is uses which serve the general public.

To the west of our Client's lands, is the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road. The lands adjacent this intersection are presently developed for a range of retail and service commercial functions which include a bank, various motor vehicle related uses and other service commercial uses inclusive of eating establishments which are not exclusively devoted to the businesses within the Employment Area but which also cater to the needs of the general public

Directly opposite 279 Rexdale Boulevard, adjacent the more northerly limits of Rexdale Boulevard, the uses present include an automotive dealership, a place of worship, a large self serve storage facility and the site of Plastipak Industries. To the south-east of 279 Rexdale Boulevard the retail and service commercial uses include the sites of a Swiss Chalet and Harvey's restaurant, a Midas Muffler automotive service establishment and an Ali Baba's Middle Eastern Cuisine restaurant.

To the immediate south of our Client's lands, adjacent the easterly limits of Martin Grove Road, is the building previously occupied by Howell Stamping (1271 Martin Grove Road). The structure, having an approximate area of 5865 square metres (i.e. 63,135 square feet), is vacant and listed for sale or lease.

### **3. Approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto**

Under the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto, the area in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road is designated within the Employment land use classification. A copy of an extract of Map 13, the Land Use Plan attached to and forming part of the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto, whereon the general location of the subject lands is identified, is attached as Appendix "B" to this submission.

As stated in Section 4.6, the introduction to the Employment Area policies, of the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto..." *a broad and inclusive approach to employment uses in Employment Areas is needed for the City's economic future. Uses that support the prime economic function of Employment Areas, such as parks, small scale retail stores and services to meet the daily needs of business and employees, workplace daycare and restaurants, must also be readily accessible within Employment Areas. Uses that detract from the economic function of these lands will not be permitted to locate in Employment Areas*". By way of reference to Section 4.6.1 of the Official Plan, it is further noted that Employment Areas are generally defined as places of business and economic activity, and, that the permitted uses include offices, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, research and development facilities, utilities, media facilities, parks, hotels, ancillary retail outlets, and, restaurants and small scale stores and services that serve area businesses and workers.

The effect of the foregoing policies has been to recognize and/or to allow for the introduction of a variety of non-industrial forms of land use in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard. The result has been the gradual adoption of this area by retail and service commercial uses, offices and other non-industrial, non-employment sensitive land uses and activities. Today, such uses co-exist in reasonably close proximity to warehouse and transportation related facilities and other light manufacturing and fabrication uses consistent with the intent of the approved Official Plan for the City of Toronto now in effect.

### **4. Proposed Official Plan Policy Framework**

Based upon our review of the policy framework now being advance for Employment Lands as part of the Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review, we understand that the City is proposing to designate our Client's lands, and the adjacent commercial properties in the immediate vicinity thereof, within the Core Employment Area classification. Under the proposed policy framework, certain of the land uses which now exist in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard will not be recognized as permitted uses and activities. It is further submitted that the effect of the proposed policy framework will be to limit the range of uses permitted within the structure situated on our Client's lands, through reference to the zoning by-law, to the degree that the opportunity for the sequential use of the existing building will not be representative of a viable economic opportunity.

It follows that, given the limitations upon the opportunity for re-use and renewal of older, underutilized buildings in this area, the designation of the lands within the Core Employment land use classification will result in buildings remaining vacant and possibly falling into a state of disrepair. Under such a scenario, the effect would be to create pressure for the re-designation of the lands to facilitate redevelopment of the properties for uses and activities which may not be compatible with the employment area function and which will further undermine the integrity of the balance of the Core Employment lands in this area.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Our Client is requesting that 279 Rexdale Boulevard, and the adjoining lands presently utilized for retail and service related commercial purposes in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road, be designated in the General Employment land use classification. Designation of our Client's lands and the adjoining properties, which front upon Rexdale Boulevard and which are now utilized for commercial and service related purposes, within the General Employment classification will recognize the differing priorities for the use of lands in this area relative to the designation of the adjacent lands within the Core Employment Area classification. Recognition of this established node or cluster of smaller retail and service commercial functions in association is appropriate from the perspective that today such uses not only serve businesses and employees throughout the Core Employment lands but also the general public.

Through the designation of 279 Rexdale Boulevard and the adjacent properties within the General Employment classification, the necessary degree of flexibility will exist to provide for the sequential use of the subject property as part of a comprehensive renewal plan. Such an approach will ensure that the economic function of both this site and the adjoining properties is maintained and reinforced by providing for a range of retail and service commercial uses in harmony with light manufacturing, research, warehouse, wholesale distribution and transportation uses. It is further submitted that the designation of the area in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road within the General Employment land use classification will not undermine the overall function of this relatively large employment area which extends from the Macdonald Cartier Freeway in the south to the area north of Rexdale Boulevard and the tributary streams of the Humber River watershed to Highway No. 427 on the west.

As is apparent from the analysis of the land uses in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard, pressure exists to provide for the introduction of uses not contemplated under the Core Employment classification and which do not contribute to the sense of a healthy and vibrant employment area. There is evidence to suggest that underutilized/vacant structures, no longer well suited to manufacturing concerns by reason of their age and/or size of the building, have been adopted by either non-employment uses or uses which may be described as lower order land uses. In the absence of a change in the policy directions applicable to our Client's lands and the adjacent properties now utilized for a variety of different land uses, the economic challenges now faced by this area will simply increase over time and be effective to further erode the economic viability of the area north and south of Rexdale Boulevard in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard.

From a land use planning and economic perspective, the effect of recognizing this area as a distinct node or cluster in which a somewhat broader range of employment land uses are permitted is clearly preferable to the current policy directions which have been effective to allow for the intermixing of various forms of land use in a somewhat indiscriminate and ad hoc manner. Designation of this area within the General Employment classification will foster a positive environment for re-investment in underutilized buildings and structures which are no longer well suited to the scale required for today's larger industrial operations while providing for maintenance of the overall employment function of the area.

At the same time, designation of our Client's lands within the General Employment Area classification will serve as an incentive to future private sector initiatives directed towards the renovation and renewal of existing structures and facades. In turn, continued private sector investment will promote an enhanced streetscape and an attractive and distinct node within this Employment Area. It follows that through a pro-

active approach, which is founded in sound planning principles and which recognizes the economic difficulties now affecting the future disposition of the lands and buildings in this area, it will be possible to set the stage for the renewal and revitalization of this section of Rexdale Boulevard in a manner which contributes to the overall economic viability of the area while maintaining the rudimentary function of the employment district as a whole.

In contrast, the alternative now being proposed is to designate the lands within the Core Employment Area classification which is effective to largely restrict the use of this site and the adjoining properties to industrial uses. Given current market forces and the age and nature of the structures in this area, the effect of restricting the use of this and other structures in the vicinity of 279 Rexdale Boulevard to industrial activities will be to undermine the economic viability of the area. Ultimately, the effect of not recognizing current market forces influencing the future disposition of lands along this section of Rexdale Boulevard will be manifested in vacant and/or underutilized buildings and pressure for urban renewal. In turn, this will fuel speculation and uncertainty resulting in pressure for the introduction of non-employment forms of land use.

In conclusion, an opportunity now exists through the Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review to provide for the revitalization and rejuvenation of those properties in the vicinity of the intersection of Rexdale Boulevard and Martin Grove Road, inclusive of our Client's lands, by designating the lands within the General Employment classification. The effective integration of both General Employment and Core Employment areas, as part of a well defined and rationale planning framework, will serve to maintain and reinforce the function and locational advantages of this relatively large Employment District consistent with the rudimentary planning principles contained in both the Provincial Growth Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement.

We trust that our Client's concerns and the matters outlined herein will be given due consideration during the review of the Five Year - Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan for the City of Toronto. Should you consider it appropriate, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your Staff to discuss this matter and to ensure that the issues facing our Client and the adjacent property owners are addressed in an appropriate manner.

Sincerely yours,  
McDermott & Associates Limited



John McDermott, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Principal Planner

copy to: The Chair and Members,   
Planning and Growth Management Committee, City of Toronto

Mr. Al Wakeel  
Dundas Real Estate Investments

Mr. David White, Q.C.  
Devry Smith Frank LLP



MODERMOTT & ASSOCIATES LIMITED  
 LAND USE & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 PH 5151



279 REXDALE BLVD.  
 TORONTO, ON

Drawing  
 BASE MAP  
 Date of Last Revision  
 08.03.13

## Appendix "A2"

### Land Use Index

#### Northerly Limits of Rexdale Boulevard

West of Martin Grove Road

1. 288 Rexdale Boulevard  
Petro Canada Fuel Station

East of Martin Grove Road To Brydon Drive

2. 276 Rexdale Boulevard  
Cash Money ( formerly Mr. Sub)
3. 270 Rexdale Boulevard  
Etobicoke Self Storage
4. 268 Rexdale Boulevard  
Vacant Offices - Plastipak Industries
5. 260 Rexdale Boulevard  
Plastipak Industries Inc.  
Offices and Plant for fabrication of lids and containers for various food and dairy products
6. 248 Rexdale Boulevard  
Hyundai Automotive Dealership
7. 240 Rexdale Boulevard  
U Haul Self Storage
8. 230 Rexdale Boulevard  
Mountain of Fire Miracle Ministries - Place of Worship
9. 210 Rexdale Boulevard  
Wolseley Mechanical Group
10. 200 Rexdale Boulevard  
LynxTrucking and Transportation / Auto Recycling Facility
11. 178 Rexdale Boulevard  
CSA Group Offices and Research Facility

## Appendix "A2"

### Land Use Index

#### Southerly Limits of Rexdale Boulevard

##### West of Martin Grove Road

12. 305 Rexdale Boulevard  
Esso Canada Fuel Station & Toronto Auto Wash
13. 301 Rexdale Boulevard  
City Automotive  
Enterprise Car Rentals  
AMC Collision Services
14. 291 Rexdale Boulevard  
CIBC Banking Centre

##### East of Martin Grove Road

15. 285 Rexdale Boulevard  
Tim Horton's  
Subway Restaurant  
Pita Land
16. 279 Rexdale Boulevard (subject lands)  
( For Tenant Details refer to Appendix "A3")
17. 269 Rexdale Boulevard  
Swiss Chalet  
Harvey's
18. 249 Rexdale Boulevard  
Midas Auto Service
19. 229 Rexdale Boulevard  
Ali Babas Middle Eastern Cuisine
20. 225 Rexdale Boulevard  
Intercontinental Warehouse Inc. / Grocery Gateway Warehouse  
Shipping/Receiving Terminal
21. 195 Rexdale Boulevard  
Midland Food Products  
Warehouse and Shipping/Receiving Depot



## Appendix "A2"

### Land Use Index

#### Westerly Limits of Martin Grove Road - South of Rexdale Boulevard

22. 1350 Martin Grove Road  
Offices of Security Link Ameritech  
Wholesale Distribution of Security Alarm Systems and Monitoring Devices
23. 1344 Martin Grove Road  
West End Worship Centre
24. 1355 Martin Grove Road  
Paramount Pallet Inc. - Offices and Manufacturing Facility
25. 1296 Martin Grove Road  
Dominion Warehousing and Distribution Centre
26. 1290 Martin Grove Road  
Mega Furniture Importers & Sales

#### Easterly Limits of Martin Grove Road - South of Rexdale Boulevard To Bethridge Drive

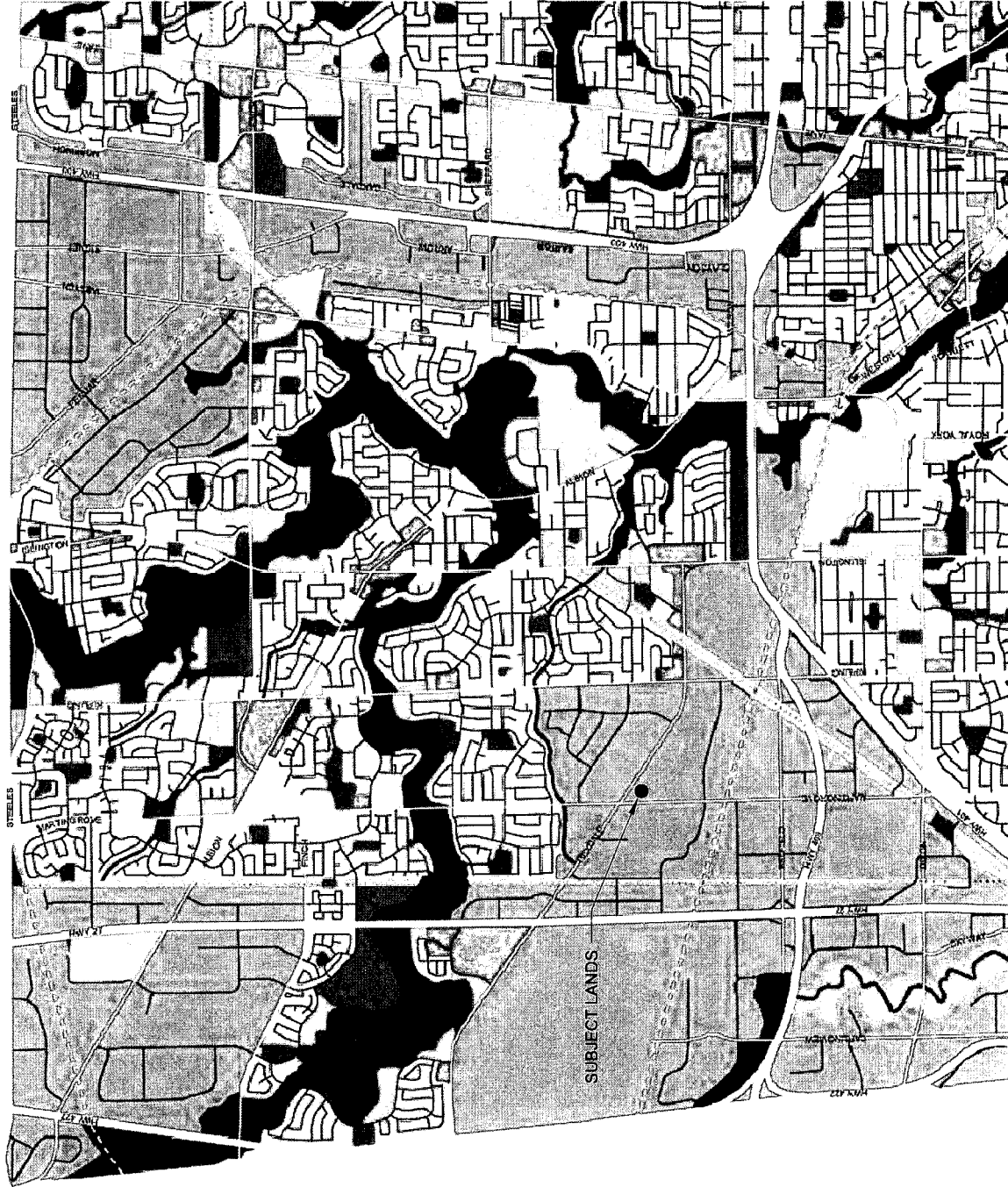
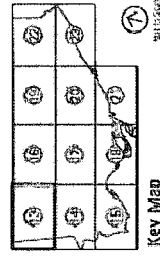
27. 1271 Martin Grove Road  
Vacant Industrial Structure - former site of Howell Stamping (metal manufacturing and machining)
28. 1245 Martin Grove Road  
CW Henderson Distribution Centre  
Evangel Assembly of God Church  
CTSI - Logistics and Shipping Facility
29. 1231 Martin Grove Road  
Co-Pak Packaging
30. 70 - 100 Bethridge Drive  
Pet Value Warehouse & Distribution Centre  
Westmark Warehousing Services

Land Use Designations

- Neighbourhoods
- Apartment Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use Areas
- Parks and Open Space Areas
- Natural Areas
- Parks
- Other Open Space Areas (including Golf Courses, Cemeteries, Public Utilities)
- Institutional Areas
- Recreation Areas
- Employment Areas
- Utility Corridors

Major Streets and Highways

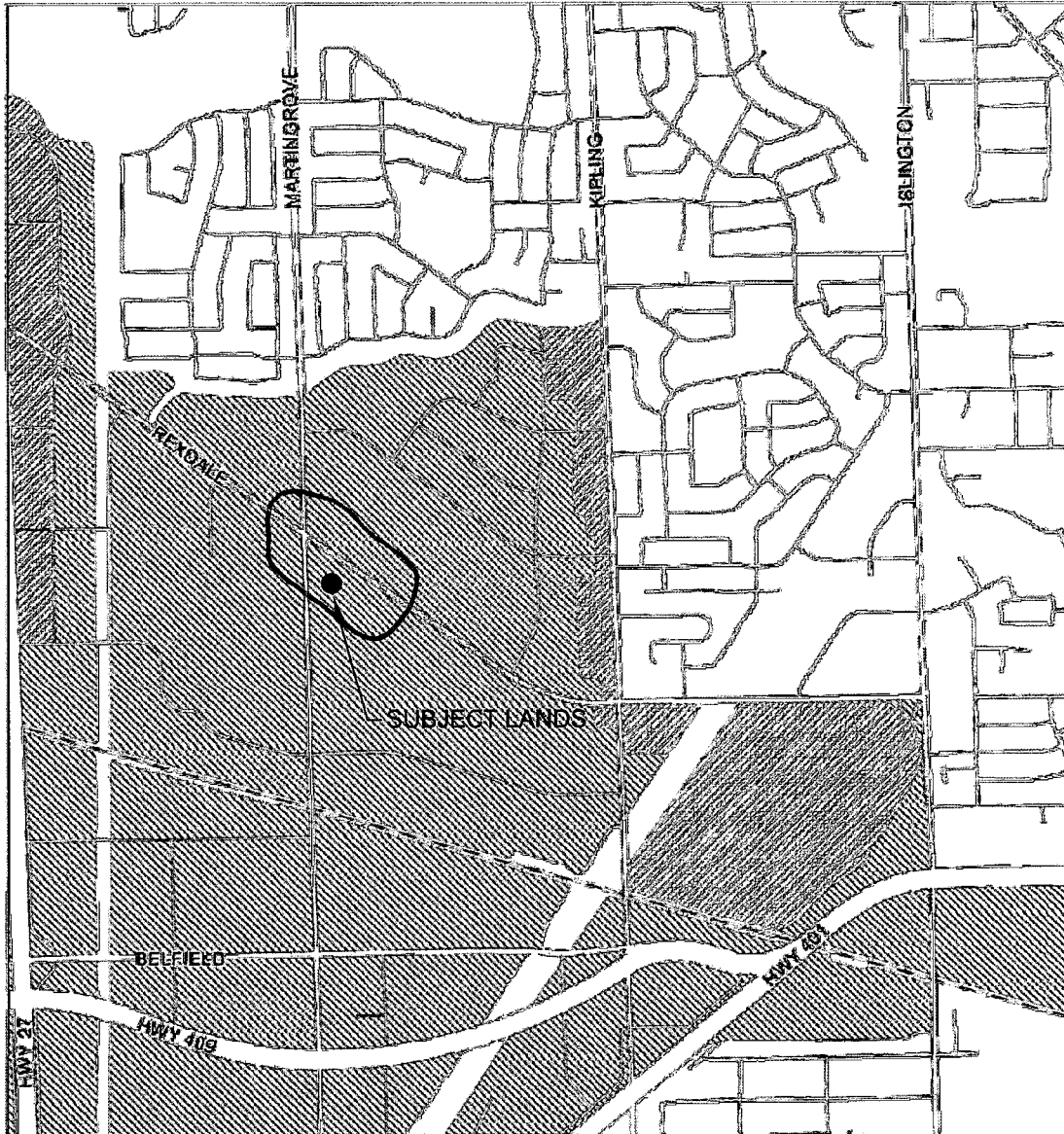
- Local Streets
- Railway Lines
- Hydro Corridors



# APPENDIX "C"

EXTRACT FROM STAFF REPORT DATED AUGUST 20, 2013  
 RELEASED SEPTEMBER 6, 2013

27.



**Toronto** City Planning

## Redesignate from 'Employment Areas' to Official Plan Designations Shown on Maps 1 to 48 inclusive

Map 11

