



The Toronto Industry Network

November 21, 2013

EMAILED

Councillor Peter Milczyn and Members of the
Planning & Growth Management Committee,
10th Floor West, City Hall,
100 Queen Street West,
Toronto, Ontario,
M5H 2N2.

Attention: Ms. Nancy Martins

Dear Councillor Milczyn and Members of
the Planning and Growth Management Committee,

Re: PG28.2 – Official Plan/Municipal Comprehensive Review

The Toronto Industry Network (TIN) is generally in agreement with the recommendations contained in the staff report dated November 5, 2013. TIN compliments staff on creating an Official Plan Amendment that provides a much clearer policy framework and direction regarding the future of employment lands in Toronto.

Sometime ago, we were all told that manufacturing in North America was finished. It was old-fashioned and passé and could be done elsewhere. However, manufacturing, given the right environment, can and will adapt to compete here as is happening elsewhere in North America.

A number of Toronto manufacturers are expanding their facilities to serve existing and new customers. Their operations are more high tech and employ fewer people than before but factory workers are generally more skilled and better paid now. We point out that every manufacturing job generates 2.5 jobs elsewhere in our economy.

This is not to say that manufacturing in our City does not face challenges. There is still competition from low cost municipalities in North America and elsewhere. Electricity pricing in Ontario has become among the most expensive in North America and a major cost factor for industry. Toronto's manufacturers also experience serious pressures regarding the conflict from the intrusion of sensitive, non-industrial land uses, and the increasing difficulties regarding the transport of goods and people to and from employment lands.

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Sensitive Land Uses and Conversions

Industry needs a stable and competitive municipal environment in which to function. We believe the Official Plan is the most essential part of this as it drives many other policies that should be supportive.

Provincial Ministry of Environment D-6 Guidelines regarding sensitive land uses and industrial facilities are affecting the ability of manufacturers to run their businesses. These can constrain companies that wish to expand and negatively affect their operations when they re-apply for provincial permitting. The recently approved MPC 300 Guidelines will impact employment lands and need to be addressed in the policy framework.

We are pleased that the new Official Plan is consistent with the 2055 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and conforms with the 2006 Provincial Growth Plan. Council is in a strong position to take leadership and deny the conversion proposals that would introduce additional conflicts into industrial communities. This would be in step with the PPS and provide a long-term stabilizing influence for manufacturers.

Transportation Infrastructure

There are concerns among our members that the LRT proposals for Finch Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue East will negatively impact access to employment areas served by these roads, affecting the movement of goods and employees into these areas. We sense that the needs of the manufacturing community in this regard have not been factored into the new functions of these roads. TIN asks that your Committee address the issues generated by these LRT projects to ensure that Toronto's transportation policies and infrastructure support and do not undermine our City's manufacturing.

Conclusion

As the staff report states, Toronto has a very finite amount of employment land that should not be squandered bit by bit. Our City hopes to accommodate a much larger population. This is why having a healthy industrial sector and the good jobs it provides is essential to our economic diversity and prosperity.

We thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Scrivener
Director of External Relations,
Toronto Industry Network