



## Future of Employment Sector-Specific Meetings

### Engagement Overview

The City of Toronto hosted a series of interactive sector-specific stakeholder meetings as part of the Employment Study to inform Our Plan Toronto, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and Growth Plan 2020 conformity exercise for the City of Toronto.

This targeted sector engagement involved a series of nine (9) sector-specific dialogues which took place between February 1 and 17, 2022. The meetings were led by City Planning staff in collaboration with Economic Development and Culture staff. Stakeholder representatives were identified by the City's economic development officers and sector specialists. Meetings included a short presentation from City Planning's Official Plan team, followed by a facilitated Q&A discussion on the future of employment in Toronto for each respective sector.

### List of Sector-Specific Meetings

Below are the sector-specific meetings that were held, listed in chronological order.

- **Institutional / Education** – Tuesday, February 1, 2022: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- **Fashion and Apparel** – Friday, February 4, 2022: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- **E-Commerce / Logistics / Warehousing** – Friday, February 4, 2022: 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- **Film and Entertainment** – Monday, February 7, 2022: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- **Industrial / Manufacturing** – Tuesday, February 8, 2022: 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
- **Industrial BIAs** – Wednesday, February 9, 2022: 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- **Information Technology** – Wednesday, February 9, 2022: 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- **Life Sciences / Biotechnology** – Thursday, February 10, 2022: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- **Food and Beverage** – Thursday, February 17, 2022: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### Meeting Summaries

The following pages contain meeting summaries from each of the sector-specific meetings, summarizing the key issues raised by attendees. The summary of key items raised is intended to reflect key discussion points, and is not a verbatim transcript.



## Meeting Summary: Institutional / Education Sector

### Date & Time:

February 1, 2022 – 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Caroline Bucksbaum (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Candice Valente, Matthew Premru, Jagdish Yadav (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Institutions in Attendance:

- **Centennial College** – Andrew Petrou, Rahim Karim
- **George Brown** – Adrienne Galway
- **OCAD University** – Satoshi Uyede
- **York University** – Chris Wong, Shawna Teper

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **Large cluster for work is downtown**
  - The high cost of real estate means institutions have a hard time getting students downtown, near where many employment opportunities are.
- **Public transit to commute to campus and employment opportunities**
  - Availability of public transit options is critical for campuses with large commuter populations. Public transit in Scarborough is being planned.
  - The college sector offers a significant amount of employment opportunities with built-in industry experience; however, if students have to commute far, it becomes difficult to work.
  - Public transit is not just about dealing with climate change, but also about equity and access, and a day-to-day necessity.
- **Partnerships with the private sector for research and employment opportunities; interest in sector-focused discussions around land needs/expansion**
  - Partnerships with businesses and industry is important.
  - There is interest in opportunities to pursue partnerships to create spaces on or near university and campus lands for offices, research, and innovation.
  - Flexibility in the approval process for academic building development is critical to the university sector. Capital funding for academic institutions often comes from other forms of government with tight timelines that are under pressure through



the municipal approval process. From a sector perspective, there is a need for ongoing conversations with multiple other sectors as well as municipal approvals.

- City policies that support the education sector specifically can improve expansion assistance.
- **Benefit from a concentration of knowledge, skills, and expertise**
  - It is important to have academic programs tailored to deliver a talent pipeline with nearby employment opportunities.
- **What locational criteria is important to attract university and college students**
  - Having good daycare close to where working or attending class is important.
  - On Indigenous presence and Indigenous learning in the city, there is ongoing dialogue on land claim, land back, and meeting space. Some communities may not feel they have the level of support they are used to.
  - Students who are based in Toronto may have access to a family network and larger geographic area, whereas international students tend to be located within a smaller geographic area. Access to international resources, recreation, and other services is important.
  - Access to, and availability of, student residences and good housing is needed, especially in the downtown core. Universities and colleges should be able to pursue private partnerships to meet residential accommodation needs.
  - There is need for vibrancy and daily necessities nearby, for example, parkland, the arts, cultural hubs, supermarkets, and banks.
  - To attract local interest, consider nodes of incubation tax-free zones.
  - Current zoning and land use permissions can be restrictive in terms of campuses, particularly those focused on the skilled trades, being able to capitalize on their location in terms of developing creative skill-building spaces.
- **Key sectors for student success, and whether proximity to these linkages is important**
  - There is allure to build on tech, artificial intelligence (AI), and the film industry. If Toronto can increasingly be known for specific sectors, this can help bring international students and provides for job growth.
  - Partnerships between the university sector and other sectors, such as the film industry are important. Toronto is hub for film production, which creates employment opportunities for students.
  - Students can be paired with various makerspaces, for example, a recent initiative in Regent Park.
  - Institutions have been partnering in aerospace and leveraging that knowledge sector. There could be an opportunity for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to leverage aerospace, which leads into electronics, etc.
- **Issues with campuses being near factories and industrial facilities**
  - Campuses nearby industrial facilities can result in some conflicts and the industrial land may or may not provide jobs to students at that campus.
    - Proximity to foods processing means there is particulate matter, odours, and wasps. Deliveries and goods movements are disruptive.
    - Proximity to oil/tank farm facilities mean large volumes of trucks in and out to fill up and distribute gas to stations in the area generate environmental concerns around air quality from diesel exhaust from tanker trucks.



Environmental studies are needed if academic and residential uses will be developed.

- **How operations have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic**
  - Initially there was some hesitancy to switch to remote teaching. Now there is some hesitancy to come back to the classroom.
  - Downtown Toronto has been a massive magnet for office employment and the consulting sector. Employees may still want to travel to work by transit but with a shorter commute.
  - Although the suburban office market has not been as strong as the downtown office market, the switch to remote or hybrid work may make suburban offices more attractive. This could lend itself to development opportunities for suburban campuses to create office nodes that encourage industry-institutional collaboration.
- **Other ideas discussed**
  - Public Wi-Fi in locations that make sense will support students and partially address the issue of digital inequality. The City now has some public Wi-Fi hotspots, such as around Yonge and Dundas.
  - Suggestion to reshape land conversations around equity, for example, access to education and access to good jobs afterwards.



## Meeting Summary: Fashion / Apparel Sector

### Date & Time:

February 4, 2022 – 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Christina Heydorn, Rafael Mejia-Ortiz (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Candice Valente, Leslie Fink, Laurie Belzak (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **CBRE** – Lisa Fulford-Roy
- **CRW Design and Sewing** – Sherri Carlson
- **Dorothea Knitting Mills (Parkhurst)** – Steven Borsook
- **Fashionnet & Boloten Sales** – Mark Boloten
- **First Capital REIT (FCR)** – Eric Sherman
- **Redwood Classics Apparel; WS & Company** – Kathy Cheng
- **Starfield Lion** – Loren Lori
- **Uniform Group** – Joe Vaccari
- **Velocolour** – Suzanne Carlsen

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **Location**
  - Downtown is not attractive to some companies due to traffic, parking and high rents.
  - Fashion sales are clustered around Wingold and Dufferin. Increasing interior design and home furnishing product sales.
  - Textile industry is located throughout 5 nodes in the city, Downtown, Downtown East (Carlaw), York and North York & Scarborough.
  - Production jobs are available providing opportunities for newcomers.
  - Skilled labour is needed to meet demand. Jobs are changing, e-commerce.
  - Renewed interest in local production in response to supply chain challenges and consumer interest in sustainability.
- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Historical relationship with the city, manufacturing is a part of the country.
  - From a real estate perspective, Toronto has a unique competitive advantage that is high concentration of people with high income.



- Population density and household income rare to find it in high density areas. You are finding that in Toronto the two metrics are found.
- The manufacturing workforce is predominantly located in Toronto.
- Companies need to evolve to survive, with multiple lines of business. Many manufacture, wholesale and retail. City is attractive for our industry – customers come to us and we go to them.
- **What locational criteria is important for business' operations**
  - Proximity to transportation networks highway and public transit routes are key for the industry.
  - Determining location for a business is based where the workforce is located.
  - Bus routes are an important factor for choosing where to locate your business.
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Little to no support from Provincial Government or the Federal Government.
  - Industry feels there is no support even after manufacturing sector stepped up during the pandemic and shifted to produce PPE's at a loss.
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - Labour is an issue, there are several positions that sit vacant which limits growth potential.
  - Telecommunications infrastructure is not in place to support expansion in some areas.
  - Lack of interaction with people looking for work, impacts pool of applicants
  - Too much competition of uses within employment lands including places of worship
  - Lack of support from government to promote manufacturing based immigration policies/programs.
  - Energy supply is an issue and in certain areas results in frequent blackouts.
- **Other ideas discussed**
  - Cost of operating in Toronto is a challenge.
  - There is a growing demand for Canadian made fashion and apparel.
  - Tax break would help business.
  - Challenges getting trucks in and out efficiently.
  - Fashion schools are graduating more design students but the industry needs production workers and sewing machine operators.
  - City of Toronto needs to invest in highly skilled labour including the apparel industry. Manufacturers power the business of fashion. Investment is needed from the City in economic empowerment of new immigrants – development of programs with the City to help set up training.  
Retail footprint is shrinking for the sector, and so flexibility of space may be important for future investment/expansion possibilities.



## Meeting Summary: E-Commerce / Logistics / Warehousing Sector

### Date & Time:

February 4, 2022 – 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Christina Heydorn, Gerry Rogalski, Rafael Mejia-Ortiz (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Candice Valente (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **Amazon** – Brooks Barnett
- **CPR** – Chad Gibson
- **Cushman & Wakefield** – Diana McKennon
- **Global Medic** – Rahul Singh
- **Oxford Properties** – Shane Miyama
- **Purolator** – Marcus Rees
- **Prologis** – Bill Bolender
- **Sobeys** – Phil Busby

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Access to high population density centres (customers)
  - The city's multiculturalism and diversity benefits grocery e-commerce
  - The growing need for charitable community support services and essential services
  - Toronto has a very good transit network benefitting our workers.
- **What location criteria is important for business operations**
  - Locating near highway infrastructure is key.
  - Trying to find locations that are centralized to multiple high density areas
  - Finding locations to accommodate large warehouses (+100,000sq.ft.)
  - Proximity to high density areas with boundaries to residential is beneficial
  - Ability to meet 1 to 2 day delivery service
  - Opportunities for micro-mobility, improved capacity to service below the last mile
  - Proximity to workforce to improve the labour pool
  - Locating within public transportation network to facilitate mobility for workers
  - Locating in cluster surrounded by similar industrial uses



- **Key other sectors for e-commerce, logistics and warehousing sector's success, and whether proximity to these linkages is important**
  - Locating in Core Employment Areas, surrounded by similar industrial uses or uses that do not impede transportation networks such as retail for example.
  - Housing and housing affordability negatively impacting ability to attract high skilled labour to technical roles from surrounding areas.
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Shortage of labour and workers ability to commute to the sites.
  - Public transportation network and efficiency of servicing.
  - Land values - cost of buying land and price escalations to building materials.
  - Land supply issue, limited opportunities to acquire sites with room for growing.
  - Leasing distribution space in downtown to support micro mobility to service the last mile delivery is extremely costly.
  - Support from politicians to mitigate operational issues or risks to building new facilities as a result of residents' complaints.
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - Cumbersome development approvals process and expansion hurdles, Sites that are investment ready taking +2 years to become approved.
  - Growing congestion and worsening traffic conditions leads to operational challenges and increased expenses.
  - Housing affordability negatively impacting ability to attract high skilled labour from outer municipalities.
  - Charitable sector that relies on warehousing not able to compete with the rising cost to rent driven as a result of for profit sector increased demand.





## Meeting Summary: Film and Entertainment Sector

### Date & Time:

February 7, 2022 – 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

**City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Janani Mahendran, Caroline Bucksbaum (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Candice Valente (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services); Magali Simard, Marguerite Pigott (Economic Development & Culture, Film & Entertainment Industries)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **ACTRA Toronto** – Gail Hauptert
- **Director's Guild of Canada Ontario (DGC Ontario)** – Victoria Harding
- **Film Ontario** – Cynthia Lynch
- **IATSE Canada** – Monty Montgomerie
- **NABET 700-M UNIFOR** – Jayson Mosek
- **Pinewood Toronto Studios** – Geoff Grant
- **Spin VFX** – Neishaw Ali
- **William F. White International Inc. (WFW)** – David Hardy

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **How does availability of land contribute to the film industry's success**
  - Both clustering and access to employment lands are crucial for success.
  - The South of Eastern Employment Area and Port Lands are critical to the sector.
  - There is a need for good parcel sizes. Some lands on their own may be too small, but if available near an existing film cluster, they can allow for industry growth. The usual minimum for entry of sound stages or facilities is around 10 acres.
  - Available land and studio infrastructure in Toronto and Mississauga is important. If land becomes unavailable, the industry in Toronto will suffer.
- **Toronto grew the film industry in Ontario and is in demand as a film hub**
  - Toronto has infinite potential and could be one of the largest production centres in the world. If the city builds to support film, the sector will continue to thrive. Bigger and bigger shows are coming. Every part of the film industry has grown during the pandemic. Toronto's talent base is extraordinary. If the infrastructure and studio space keeps up, Toronto will get more shows and continue to be a



world class destination. If studio facilities leave Toronto and are not replaced on that same site, Toronto will not maintain its status as a film friendly location.

- **Does the film industry struggle to gain access to employment lands**
  - The film industry has been located on employment lands for years, but struggles to keep access to employment lands. *Employment Areas* lands have been kept alive by the film industry and vice versa.
  - Perspectives on the need for employment lands, versus any available land:
    - Film studios need to be located in dedicated employment lands because of late night activity, parking, special effects, etc.
    - As long as there is land that permits film industrial activity and film-related facilities, employment lands may be less of a concern considering that employment lands are shrinking beyond the industry's control. That is, employment lands have been encroached upon despite best efforts to protect them so there may not be the luxury to find studio space only in *Employment Areas*.
    - Protecting employment lands is crucial for the film industry's success.
- **What locational criteria are important for the film industry**
  - Access to public transportation is important and should be available at all hours.
  - People in film and television need to be able to get to different work locations or shoot sites.
  - Parking availability is very important for the film business.
  - Proximity to the downtown core is important. The film workforce is centralized downtown. Without centralization and clustering, the film industry becomes fragmented, and Toronto loses to other municipalities and regions where living and working is in one place.
    - Demand exceeds supply and studios are being built in Mississauga and other municipalities outside of Toronto. The potential to build studios outside of the core may support a newer or younger labour force living outside of downtown or even outside of Toronto.
- **Other types of ancillary businesses that the sector relies on, beyond studios, production/post-production/VFX/animation offices and equipment providers**
  - Where there is a film hub, it is important to have catering, restaurants, car rental agencies, and gas stations nearby.
  - Retail clustering and food options nearby is appreciated.
  - Access to daycare is ideal, though film studios may not do well beside daycare.
  - The sector needs easy access to either a warehouse facility or storage, for the ability to easily get things from one place to another.
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - To stay and grow in Toronto, the sector needs access to new studio spaces, in terms of availability, permitted uses, and affordability. Access to space is especially important for physical production which accounts for about 50% of the sector. High costs are a barrier for producers, particularly Canadian content producers.
  - Having talent located in Toronto will grow film investment here.
  - Ensuring that policies are not too prescriptive will allow for exploring different ideas and working with potential investors that are looking to build spaces.



- In past consultations, there were discussions on how development near film lands can occur in a way that mitigates impact on and by the film industry. For example, new development could be required to provide a portal for access to grid power, or otherwise occur in a way that removes the need for external power sources to tie into the grid.
- For healthy industry growth, space is needed for all kinds of production, including for Toronto production companies that create their own intellectual property.
- **How is the film workforce growing, and what is projected in the next 5-10 years**
  - Reports project continued strong growth in the film industry around the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). *[Study published in March 2021, commissioned by the City of Toronto's Film, Television and Digital Media Office.]*
  - The labour force and membership in film-related labour organizations is strong and growing.
  - A high level of investment is required to be an infrastructure owner and operator in the film industry. With current growth and market potential, Toronto cannot afford to leave productions, given the lack of available space.
  - There are multinational companies and investment banking companies making serious investments in the industry. Four or five years ago, investment was seen as risky.
- **How operations have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic**
  - COVID has slowed growth. Post-Production, VFX, and Animation studios have adopted a hybrid work model, however, physical production infrastructure is still critical and where the majority of film employees work. When a show shoots on-site and does post-production in Toronto, it employs everyone from top to bottom in the sector. Without physical studio space, producers take their shows to other cities or countries to get them on air.
  - For remote work, the film sector relies on connectivity. High-speed bandwidth and cloud storage are critical, especially for post-production, VFX, and Animation.
  - Remote work on any major scale is not possible for film and television.
- **Other ideas discussed**
  - Storage needs: Big film centres have large re-use warehouses where materials, such as sets and props, can be stored for re-use by another production. Southern Ontario seems to be a hub for storage facilities. When land near film clusters is held for future development, the film industry could benefit from being able to use the land or buildings for storage and re-use. There are a few companies that do film storage, but they cannot cater to the whole industry.



## Meeting Summary: Industrial / Manufacturing Sector

### Date & Time:

February 8, 2022 – 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Christina Heydorn, Pauline Beaupre, Caroline Bucksbaum, Rafael Mejia Ortiz (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Rebecca Condon (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **Automatic Coating Ltd** – Jocelyn Bamford
- **Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters** – Vincent Caron
- **Concrete Ontario & Toronto Industrial Network (TIN)** – Bart Kanter
- **Fibos** – Nicholas Burgwin
- **Redpath Sugar Ltd.** – Cyril Ryan
- **Sanofi** – Melanee Short
- **Shell Canada** – Jerome Gaspari
- **Siltech Corporation** – Dag Enhorning
- **SpaceWork** – Adam Laufer
- **Toronto Industry Network (TIN)** – Paul Scrivener, Christian Chan (Consulting Planner)
- **XYZ Storage** – Leslie Kellen

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Toronto has a good workforce of skilled labour and pretty good transportation.
  - Toronto has many advantages: access to supply chains, being at the centre of the region, and proximity to the U.S. market. The downside of being central is the competitive investment. It is difficult to compete with U.S. jurisdictions that attract employers with property tax abatements and large capital programs.
  - Industrial lands need to be geographically located around a major centre.
- **What locational criteria is important for business' operations**
  - Manufacturing requires industrial settings given heavy commercial truck traffic.
  - Better access to public transit for shift workers is important. There is a need for non-traditional transit schedules with late night and early morning hours.



- Proximity to the labour force is critical. A top concern remains the availability of skilled workers.
- Small manufacturers need large enough buildings with enough parking.
- There is a need for regulatory protection; appropriate industrial zoning and land use permissions; all modes of heavy transportation including rail, ship, and truck; diverse employment options; and keeping goods production close to where people live.
- Ready-mix concrete and other similar industries need to be where growth is taking place, and where there is a good road network and infrastructure that is conducive to delivering product.
- Industries that deliver perishable products need to be close to the populations and industries they serve.
- Manufacturing relies heavily on deep water ports. Toronto's Port Lands are important, for product storage and the existing infrastructure there.
- **Key other sectors, and whether proximity to these linkages is important**
  - There is a reliance on cement and aggregate companies and nearby aggregate pits. It is not practical to truck massive amounts of sand and stone from afar.
  - Different types of manufacturers rely on proximity to affiliated industries and customers in order to operate efficiently and sustainably.
- **Land use uncertainty and the shrinking of employment lands prevents growth / manufacturing in *Employment Areas* is suffering from attrition**
  - It is important to keep employment lands boundaries where they are. When conversions happen, they go deeper and deeper into *Employment Areas*, causing industrial users to leave. Conversions of sites on the periphery of *Employment Areas* can significantly impact business decisions on investment and growth.
  - The loss of employment lands and the introduction of sensitive uses impacts industrial operations. If the operating environment is not stable, it becomes difficult to justify re-investing and expanding.
  - A third of Toronto's employment lands not being identified as Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs).
  - Long-term planning is a top priority. Land uncertainty makes it challenging to stay and invest. When businesses leave, a vacancy may look like a redevelopment opportunity, despite these properties being best suited for manufacturing.
- **Other factors preventing further investment and growth**
  - Allowing offices in *Employment Areas* has created operational challenges.
    - Offices have an entirely different need and impact, and do not like to be near industrial uses.
  - High land value prevents investment and growth. Landowners hold onto land and do not release it for use, making it look underutilized. Properties are speculated up by developers hoping for residential or retail, pricing out industrial users.
  - Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) could impact industrial businesses that are in proximity to transit stations.
  - When a traffic study is done it often does not contemplate a large enough area to accommodate truck traffic. The traffic impact from new transit lines and watermain work contributes to uncertainty in operations and logistics.
  - Development impacts operations. The details of Compatibility/Mitigation Studies



become important, particularly around noise and air emissions. One issue with these studies is recognizing the constraint on utilities (water, power, sanitary discharge). Facility operators use the same utilities as area residents. To protect future operations, there needs to be a strong implementation strategy on how utilities will be delivered reliably and sustainably.

- **Incubator space for small manufacturers and entrepreneurs**
  - One of the biggest impediments for small manufacturers, incubators, and entrepreneurs to get off the ground is the cost of housing. Modern building tools could help, such as better concrete and sound isolation.
  - A residential/commercial zone could allow small manufacturers and distributors to make use of smaller parcels across the city.
  - There is a need for makerspaces and incubator spaces. Entrepreneurs and small manufacturers start the businesses that we will all rely on.
- **Coordination between different levels of government on a manufacturing strategy**
  - No level of government has a manufacturing strategic plan.
  - The Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) requirements are ever-changing and always more difficult. If the Province and the City are serious about keeping manufacturing, they need to work together on a reasonable ECA plan. When residential comes in, ECA requirements are difficult to maintain.
- **Success of manufacturing in Toronto**
  - A broad range of products are manufactured in Toronto. A database shows that over 2400 products are made here, from over 480 individual companies.
  - Toronto has a buy-local food policy in procurement.
  - Food manufacturing thrives in Ontario and provides many jobs in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).
- **How operations have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic**
  - COVID has been a growth period. People were ready to re-start or try something new. There was an uptick in young females venturing into the industrial small business space.
  - Manufacturers in Ontario have largely stayed open during COVID.
  - COVID has presented some opportunities, for example the appetite for local staple goods and the Ontario Together Fund.
  - There has been a move to electronic ticketing, QR codes, tablets, and other technologies to minimize person-to-person contact.
- **Other ideas discussed**
  - Sustainability: There is a huge discussion in the sector around the climate crisis and a low carbon future. It is important to protect the Port Lands for shipping, which is critical to many industries.
    - In the Port Lands, there are concrete plants and cement terminals. The removal of the rail line negatively impacted sustainability, and how large amounts of bulk materials can be transported. Removing modes of transportation that are alternatives to automobile vehicles is a huge issue.
  - Equity and diversity: This is a challenge. The concrete industry has less than 4% women. The industry is looking at immigration policies to help with the lack of drivers. There are good jobs in the manufacturing industry.
  - Churches are coming into industrial areas.



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# Toronto Industry Network

March 8, 2022

Mr. Jeff Cantos,  
Manager - Official Plan,  
Planning Division, City of Toronto,  
22- Metro Hall,  
55 John Street,  
Toronto, Ontario,  
M5V 3C6.

Dear Jeff:

**RE: Employment Study and Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR): City of Toronto manufacturing/industrial sector dialogue on Tuesday, February 8, 2022**

We sincerely thank City Economic Development and Culture (“EDC”) and City Planning Staff for including us in the manufacturing/industrial sector dialogue held in February, and to hear our thoughts and comments.

As you may be aware, The Toronto Industry Network (“TIN”) is an incorporated organization made up of mostly large manufacturers with facilities in Toronto, or manufacturing/business associations with members engaged in manufacturing.

In following up with our in-person comments, we provide in this letter additional comments for your review and consideration in informing future Economic Development practices and other aspects of the Official Plan Review. In our view, there are two components to this exercise: a) to inform EDC of ways to improve or add objectives for heavy industry in their new Divisional Strategy (the 2018-2022 Divisional Strategy is over this year); and b) to inform any updates to the City’s Official Plan policies related to economic development and protection of existing industrial/employment operations and land uses.

Regarding the Key Issues List provided prior to the Consultation Meeting, TIN responds to each of the Key Issues below:

**1. *What makes Toronto an attractive city for your business?***

- The Greater Toronto Area is Canada’s largest economic area.
- Access to all modes of heavy transportation (rail, ship, truck) for materials to and from our operations.
- Access to a functioning Port but with limited facilities.
- A large labour force that is seeking stable employment and career paths.
- Competitive business environment, although unit costs are increasing.



- Clustering of business that our operations rely on and those that rely on our operations
- Employment Areas in the City of Toronto are places for businesses and economic activity. In 2020, they accommodated over 400,000 jobs, representing about 25% of all jobs in Toronto and about 87% of all manufacturing jobs in the City, which include food processing, paper, electronics, construction materials and vehicle parts.

**2. *What locational criteria are important for your business' operations?***

- In terms of land use, regulatory protection and certainty;
- Appropriate *Industrial-Employment Zoning* and land use permissions; land use permissions in proximity to our operations;
- Official Plan *Core and General Employment Areas* Designations; and permissions that allow for intensification of office development;
- *Provincially Significant Employment Zone* land use protection under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- Access to all modes of heavy transportation (rail, ship, truck) for materials to and from our operations;
- Access to the Port of Toronto;
- Land uses within the influence areas and potential influence areas of our member operations; and
- Suitable locations for diverse employment options keep the production of goods close to where people live thus reducing supply chain issues.

**3. *What other types of businesses do your operations rely on? Or that rely on your operations? Is proximity to these linkages important?***

*Businesses that our Operations Rely On (including but not limited to):*

- Shipping, Rail and Freight transportation providers;
- Businesses that provide raw materials, both nationally and internationally;
- Storage and Warehousing, service providers, security firms; and
- Secondary Manufacturing and Industry.





*Businesses that rely on our operations (including but not limited to):*

- Real Estate Development and Construction;
- Municipal Services;
- Paving;
- Food Industries;
- Hospitality Industry;
- Film Industry;
- Storage and Warehousing;
- Transportation and Logistics; and
- Healthcare and Hospitals, Pandemic Response and Vaccination.

**4. *What factors play a role in deciding to make investments and expansions to your current operations in Toronto?***

- Development and Re-development costs for expansion of current business;
- Property Tax and Water Rates;
- Regulatory restrictions such as surrounding zoning and permissions for sensitive land uses and Official Plan land use designations;
- Investment, development, and employment growth in the City of Toronto;
- Inclusion of all of Toronto's designated *Employment Areas as Provincially Significant Employment Zones*; and
- Nearby sensitive land uses and their redevelopment to more intensified sensitive land uses.

**5. *What factors are preventing further investment and growth in your industry within Toronto?***

- There is continual land use uncertainty provided by several factors cumulatively working against TIN members to consider expanding their operations in the City: not including all employment areas and TIN Member operations in PSEZ's; MTSA's superseding PSEZ protections; the encroachment of sensitive land uses towards and within *Employment Areas*; and *Employment*



*Area* land use conversions. This is contrary to all of the Policies contained in Chapter 2.2.4 of the Official Plan.

- Approving any *Employment Area* conversions will reduce the industrial land available, driving up the cost of existing and available industrial lands suitable for development or redevelopment with industrial and manufacturing uses.
- The viability of existing and expanded industrial operations within *Employment Areas* are also under pressure from sensitive land uses that will be developed in the *Protected Major Transit Station Areas*, to be delineated by the City of Toronto this year.
- The *Protected Major Transit Station Area* policies, according to the Growth Plan, supersede the *Provincially Significant Employment Zone* protections where they exist in the City of Toronto.
- As seen on the EDC's Signature Sites, there are only 20 industrial-only properties available for lease or sale in the City, with 17 industrial-only properties with existing buildings, and three vacant industrial-only properties available for sale or lease City-wide. This is not a healthy quantity of available industrial-only land and building supply for sale or lease.
- Existing industrial operations, such as those operated by TIN members, need to have land use certainty of either continuing or expanding their operations without risk of litigation and complaints from the encroachment of sensitive land uses to their lands and operations, and within their industrial influence areas.
- Focus of the City of Toronto and others to redevelop *Employment Areas* for the film industry and other potentially incompatible employment land uses (such as office parks) as preferred to supporting existing industries.
- Promoting incompatible uses, such as parks, with direct adjacencies to existing heavy industrial operations.
- Not supporting or providing any planning for the improvement of the Port of Toronto, shipping channel and dock wall.
- Our members have had to play "catch-up" when a development application is realized to be within their area of influence, where notice was required to be given to our Members by the Official Plan policies and not done so by the Applicants or City Staff.
- EDC does not have an Industrial/Heavy Industry Business Unit, and no heavy manufacturing/industrial operation representation on the Leaders Panel for the Economic Development & Culture Divisional Strategy 2018-2022. Industry and manufacturing is a critical sector of Toronto's employment activities and economic development. The proposed lenses for an EDC Strategy, as outlined in the Conversation Guide, do not include, or discuss support for existing or traditional heavy industries.



- Suitable industrial space is becoming unaffordable, and in some areas, industrial space is simply not available for industries and industrial start-up companies. This is forcing industrial businesses to either redevelop their lands at a higher cost of development, require more environmental compliance approvals when sensitive land uses encroach upon them, placing limits on industrial expansion, growth or to move out of the City.
  - There is a limited amount of land in Toronto that is suitable for industrial uses, which is why designated *Employment Areas* need to be protected. A proposed zoning framework to bring the City's zoning by-laws into conformity with Official Plan Amendment 231 (OPA 231) was endorsed by the Planning and Housing Committee on December 10, 2019, and still has not been finalized. This sends a negative message to manufacturers.
- 6. *How have your operations changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? Will any of these changes become permanent, post-pandemic?***
- **Electronic Ticketing** – While electronic ticketing systems existed for the delivery of ready mixed concrete prior to COVID 19, significant efforts were made by the industry to move to electronic ticketing for the 1.4 million individual concrete deliveries our members make in Ontario. These systems include electronic records being sent to contractors and consultants via email and the use of QR Codes being applied to every concrete truck that allows anyone with a smartphone to scan the code and pull up the electronic delivery ticket on their smartphone.
  - **Reduced Lost Time Accidents** – The Concrete Association certifies 270 concrete plants across the province and every year issues a “Safety Award” to every concrete plant that has no “lost time accidents” for the full calendar year. In 2020, the number of plants without a single hour of lost time accidents increased by 25% from the previous year, and we had the highest number of concrete plants in the association’s 61-year history that qualified for this award (151 plants). Employer and employee efforts to “**break the mould**” when it comes to looking at changes to address worker safety were identified as a major contributing factor since everyone was willing to implement more significant changes to address the challenges of COVID 19.

## General

Regarding the MCR related to Official Plan Policies, TIN provides the following comments:

- The Official Plan recognizes in Chapter 2 that “*Given the diminishing supply of vacant land in Employment Areas, new development in Employment Areas needs to take place in a more intensive physical form.*” and “*The introduction of sensitive land uses into Employment Areas can force industry to alter their operations, particularly when the environmental certificates that*



*industries operate under are affected, or complaints are lodged about adverse effects from industrial operations*". While Policy 2.2.4 seeks to protect existing industries and manufacturers. In reality, and as experienced by TIN Members, this is not what is happening as: PSEZ's are not being expanded; MTSA policies supersede PSEZ's protection. where they exist; MCR conversion requests being considered for sensitive land uses in designated Employment Areas; parks being proposed next to noisy and dusty industrial operations; and major facilities not receiving notification of Planning Act applications within their influence areas.

- Chapter 3.5 (Economic Health) should include reference to industry and manufacturing. The focus of the preamble now reads as office development in employment areas. The preamble currently states, *"At the same time, existing office space in these transit-rich areas needs to be sustained, not demolished to make way for new residential buildings."* The existing industrial operations in transit-rich areas also need to be afforded the same level of recognition in the Official Plan.
- Policy 3.5.1.2 contains no reference to protection of existing traditional heavy industries or their stimulation of transit-oriented oriented industrial growth. Many of our workers take transit and the lack of public transit at night or on statutory holidays is difficult for shift workers. The policy currently speaks to simulating *transit-oriented office growth in Employment Areas, opportunities for new retail and service establishments, expansion of health and educational institutions, and promoting the cultural sector.*
- Policy 3.5.2c) speaks to protecting Employment Areas as stable places as business, however for TIN members, as discussed above, includes a number of factors that contribute to the prevention of further investment and growth of our industries in Toronto, contrary to Policy 3.5.1.2c).
- Policies 3.5.1.6 and 3.5.1.7 promote *new office development and office buildings within 500m of an existing or approved and funded subway, light rapid transit or GO station in an Employment Area. No such promotion exists for lands zoned for heavy industrial uses and manufacturing.* It appears as if the OP focusses on new office development for any intensification or redevelopment of the *Employment Areas* and does not recognize any adjacencies to industrial operations that may exist within the same zoning classification or land use designation.
- Policy 3.5.1 focuses on office development and Policy 3.5.3 contain policies for the "Future of Retailing": what about policies for the *"Future of Industry"* in the City of Toronto?
- Where intensified office and retail development will occur in General and Core Employment areas, it could compromise existing and future industrial operations by limiting their ability to expand or develop. Chapter 4.6 Policies need to include that the permitted office and retail development in *Employment Areas (Core and General)* will not affect the operations and future expansion and development on lands zoned for and containing heavy industrial uses.



We thank City Staff for including TIN in the discussion and look forward to the continued inclusion of TIN in future consultations, and request that the City provide TIN notice of any future meeting, reports, decisions or consultations regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Craig McLuckie', is positioned below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Craig McLuckie, President

Toronto Industry Network (TIN)



## Meeting Summary: Industrial BIAs (Business Improvement Areas)

### Date & Time:

February 9, 2022 – 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Kyle Fearon, Caroline Bucksbaum (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Matthew Premru (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **Duke Heights BIA** – Laura Ispas, Rashed Mahmud, Lia Martelluzzi, Atul Oka, Joe Pantalone
- **Emery Village BIA** – Al Ruggero, Sandra Farina
- **Lawrence Ingram Keele BIA** – Attilio Iori, Patricia Tucci
- **Ontario Food Terminal** – Ian Nicholas
- **Parallel / Geary Avenue BIA** – Alon Ozery
- **Scarborough Business Association** – Andrea Hazell, Sherri Somerville
- **South Etobicoke Industrial Employers Association** – Al Brezina
- **Summerhill Markets / Ontario Food Terminal** – Christy McMullen

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Unique neighbourhoods and streets each with their own vibe
  - A long standing tradition of running a business in Toronto
  - Direct access to the Food Terminal, which is centrally located and connects small grocers, restaurants and food retailer to over 40+ suppliers. Not found in other cities
- **What location criteria is important for business operations**
  - Locating near a network of highways, ability to get around the city
  - Proximity to the U.S border, freight travel and movement of goods is key for industry
  - Direct access to public transit routes in order to facilitate access for workers
  - Locating near workers
  - Locating in clusters to support innovation
  - Available parking infrastructure in place
  - Proximity to local populations, which allows you to draw from their expertise



- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Land values, access to ownership, availability to purchase land to expand
  - Property taxes and rents are high creating barriers to establishing a business
  - Consumer shopping behavior switch to online shopping
  - Policy challenges like minimum parking requirements that negatively impact operations due to reduced parking
  - Long term certainty around land use and occupancy is a key pre-condition for investment.
  - The increase in condos encroaching into employment lands and gentrification of our neighbourhoods
  - City wide policies that do not consider the different stages of development nor operating challenges between employment districts in Scarborough versus Downtown
  - Availability and cost of connecting to broadband and fibre optics infrastructure
  - Building designs including podium levels within new mixed used developments restrict ability to provide for a wide range of business uses/types.
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - Lack of informed policies to support goods movement
  - Manufacturing has changed and reduced emissions, a strategy for the industry is needed including addressing irritants based on specific geographies not an overarching city wide policies.
  - Restrict places of worship and other incompatible non-contributing uses locating in employment lands
  - Flexibility in policies to address emerging trends like the increase in delivery services
  - Overly restrictive operating environment, operating policies need to be considered based on the size of business
  - Enforcement perceived as anti-business needs improvements
- **Other Ideas discussed**
  - Need for ongoing dialogue between the city and the sector including opportunities to engage online
  - Ownership allows a business to be creative and take risks, because they do not need to worry about being displaced
  - Businesses are being negatively impacted when large scale e-commerce starts operating in proximity
  - Each employment district is at a different stage of development, citywide policies needs to be localized to address unique operating environments



## Meeting Summary: Information Technology Sector

### Date & Time:

February 9, 2022 – 12:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Christina Heydorn, Caroline Bucksbaum, Rafael Mejia-Ortiz (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Matthew Premru, Candice Valente, Leslie Fink, John Preece (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **Beanfield** – Todd Hofley
- **Cushman & Wakefield** – Randy Borron
- **Disruptor Ltd** – Laura Williams
- **Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)** – Nora Bieberstein

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Strong demand for data centres in Toronto
  - Access to Public Transportation
  - Toronto is one of largest economy in North America attractive to telecommunications companies (funded by local and international investors)
- **What locational criteria is important for business' operations**
  - Data centres need to be located away from residential areas to avoid complaints
  - Data centres operate as light industrial, it is not a noxious explosive type of use
  - Data centres often need to be in standalone buildings since they are too big and industrial in nature to be places in office buildings
  - Data centres need to be in proximity to the end users. Distance depends on the type of data centre.
  - Primary and Secondary data centres need to be as close to end user as possible. Other data centres can be established in Vaughan or Mississauga and still be able to service Toronto
  - Government regulations require customer data to be stored in Canada





- **Key other sectors for Information Technology's success, and whether proximity to these linkages is important**
  - Data centres require proximity to end user, heavily reliant on electric grid systems, since they require vast amounts of energy to operate and operate 24/7
  - Locating high-bandwidth infrastructure in areas outside the core (North-Etobicoke, Scarborough) is key to supporting companies who are dependent and rely on high-speed networks to operate.
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Support from municipalities and recognition of the service data centres and fiber optics infrastructure provide to communities and businesses.
  - For telecommunication infrastructure the cost of hydro factors into determining whether or not to invest in servicing a building, were as the number of subscriptions is factored against the cost of hydro.
  - Putting up a data centre is risk if the proponent does not know what the future uses around will be. Amount of investment going into data centre land is the least cost.
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - Virtually no available lands in industrial lands
  - A need to create a city wide fibre optics connection plan to align with public works program such as road infrastructure enhancements.
  - Lack of knowledge, most municipalities do not understand how and what a data centre does and how it serves the community.
- **How operations have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic**
  - Pandemic accelerated digital transformation by 10 years
  - Drive to onshore manufacturing, increasing demand for skillset to address demand for manufacturing and innovation.
  - The logistics business the demand has gone wild and unlikely to stop.



## Meeting Summary: Life Sciences / Biotechnology Sector

### Date & Time:

February 10, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Jeffrey Cantos, Kyle Fearon, Jason Tsang, Caroline Bucksbaum (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Candice Valente, John Preece (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **CBRE** – Phil Ainlay, Daniel Lacey
- **Duke Heights BIA** – Joe Pantalone
- **Lennard Commercial Realty** – Jim Wilson
- **ProteinQure** – Ruby Lin, Lucas Siow
- **Ryerson University** – Linda Maxwell
- **Toronto Global** – Graeme Cooke
- **University of Toronto** – Evelyn Casquenette, Jon French, Paul Santerre

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success**
  - Toronto has strong student and researcher talent, and excels in A.I., life sciences, and health sciences, making it attractive to employers, investors, etc.
  - Toronto has high quality research institutions, hospitals, scientists, and clinicians. There is the advantage that doing a high quality study in Canada is a fraction of the cost compared to other countries.
  - The hospital system provides a platform to create and sustain engagement with clinicians, such as for trials.
  - Computational professionals are found in Toronto.
  - Universities with resources and heavy equipment is an asset found in Toronto.
  - In the Canadian market, Toronto has the highest life sciences employment. There is potential for more employment with direct and indirect jobs in the sector.
- **How does availability of land contribute the sector's success**
  - Facilitating clustering and being flexible to accommodate this is crucial.
  - Available lab space is crucial. To build an ecosystem that thrives, there needs to be more lab space to both keep local existing and small burgeoning companies, and also create opportunities to attract high growth ventures from elsewhere.



- Toronto has to be attractive to the world to operate on a world stage.
- **What locational criteria is important for operations**
  - Development that is conducive to the life sciences is needed around existing clusters, such as universities, the Discovery District, the Downsview area, etc.
  - There is a need for large clusters for partnerships, innovation, and collaboration.
  - Space in downtown Toronto is needed for start-ups to be competitive. It becomes a challenge to recruit software engineers and machine learning scientists if they have to commute in from municipalities outside of Toronto.
- **Key other sectors for success, and whether proximity to these linkages is important**
  - Institutional educational spaces have unique needs which constantly change to address a complete campus. Partnerships with other institutions and the private sector are critical.
  - At campus edges, proximity to other sectors is especially important. Synergies between institutional, private, retail, and hospital uses support learning, training, collaboration, and growth. This attracts talent and enables talent and resource sharing.
  - Direct linkages to the hospital system are critical for accelerating growth.
  - For life sciences companies, being close to universities provides the opportunity to attend seminars and interact with quasi-independent organizations such as the Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence.
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Tech start-ups look for spaces with heavy equipment and resources, for example, at Toronto's universities that are close to clinical partners to run trials.
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - The sector is held back by lack of available space, particularly space with flexible lease terms to accommodate dynamic growth.
  - The Greater Toronto Area is losing Toronto entrepreneurs and technology because there is little to no space to support start-ups, including health tech companies, at the critical phase of growth at around 10-100 employees.
  - There is not enough wet lab space. Start-ups, ventures, and accelerators need different scales of wet lab space, from a single bench to scale-out space.
  - There is over 3 million square feet of demand for lab space in the Toronto region. What prevents expansion is the lack of third party owned and operated lab space.
    - MaRS is the only purpose-built facility to house wet lab space available for external tenants. Wet lab space requires larger floorplates and taller ceilings. MaRS is in high demand and has been at capacity for years. Other spaces are owner-occupied or design built for single tenants, which is not very accommodating for tenants that come and go, are of various sizes, and have different types of practices.
  - More shared or collaborative space is critical.
  - The cost of living makes Toronto prohibitive for most companies to stay local.
  - It can be cheaper to pay for new space in other cities than to retrofit spaces in Toronto.
- **Aversion to risk is preventing expansion**
  - Over the past decade plus, there has been more available space in and around the Discovery District than before. Toronto has space that could be converted into



lab space. Zoning is flexible in permitting labs. There is an opportunity to create life sciences spaces by retrofitting existing office buildings in downtown Toronto. It is cost prohibitive to convert spaces to be lab-ready, and there is perceived risk of the tenant who needs flexible lease terms because of rapid growth.

- There needs to be incentives to mitigate risk for potential investors. This falls beyond the scope of the municipal government, to higher levels of government.
- A short-term solution is needed if Toronto is to be a part of the exciting next couple of decades in this field. Once companies leave, they establish elsewhere. This can be a missed opportunity, with companies leaving or not starting here.
- **What the City could recommend to request from higher levels of government**
  - The discussion needs to be about shared risk mitigation, not about asking for money. These discussions should include start-ups and supply chain companies, as well as municipalities and governments.
  - Grants help too, but what is critical is facilitating the development and infrastructure that supports growth. For example, this could be changing the program to a long-term interest free loan to either the operating company or the real estate developer or pension fund who owns the asset.
    - Provincial and federal governments have contributed money to the sector. While this extends the timeline for start-ups and incubators to try to grow within the space confines, it does not facilitate more lab inventory.
  - Ontario research funding can leverage the impact of grants in addition to interest free loans or development partners.
- **How operations have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic**
  - Since COVID, funding has increased for the industry in Canada, yet growth is held back by the inability to grow and hire locally.
  - During COVID companies that thought they have to be in the Discovery District have realized that opportunities exist in the 905, which has weakened Toronto as the GTA life sciences hub. Toronto is still a hub, but no longer a singular hub. Competition is no longer exclusively focused on the Discovery District.
    - There is a missed opportunity by not developing lab spaces outside of downtown. Rents tend to be cheaper though buildings may need retrofits. There could be efforts to make these areas attractive for the life sciences.



## Meeting Summary: Food and Beverage Sector

### Date & Time:

February 17, 2022 – 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Location:** Webex Virtual Event

### Project Team Attendees:

- **City of Toronto** – Christina Heydorn, Gerry Rogalski, Rafael Mejia-Ortiz, (City Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, Official Plan); Michael Wolfson, Leslie Fink, Matthew Premru (Economic Development & Culture, Business Growth Services)

### Businesses/Organizations in Attendance:

- **Baker Street Bakery Inc** – Robert Kelly
- **Clubcoffee** – Chris McKillop
- **Colliers** – Stewart Metcalfe
- **Eataly** – Raizelle Paz
- **Execulink** – John Den Boer
- **Gusto54** – Juanita Dickson
- **Imago Restaurants** – Cindy Simpson
- **Koornneef Produce Ltd** – Fred Koornneef
- **Meat & Poultry Ontario** – Franco Naccarato
- **Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA)** – Tony Elenis
- **Rubicon Strategy** – Tim Smitheman
- **Surati Sweet Mart Ltd** – Shalini Sheth

## Key Items Raised

The key items raised during the discussion focused on:

- **What makes Toronto attractive for your sector's success?**
  - A history of operating in Toronto
  - Diversity, vibrancy of people and local neighbourhoods
  - High population density areas (living and working) are good for business
  - 60% of meat processing plants in Ontario are located in Toronto
  - Toronto is a hub for food processing, the third largest in North America
  - Close proximity to U.S. market
  - Toronto has a diverse labour force, capable of supporting development and growth
  - Established relationships with colleges and training programs teaching food and beverage to future industry workers



- **What locational criteria is important for business' operations**
  - Proximity to major roadways that connect to the US markets benefit supply chain management
  - Food distribution facilities need to be located near major highways and in proximity to restaurants
  - Locating within established transit networks and ability for public transit to offer fast and efficient service to workers 24 hours a day 7 days a week
  - Locating in clusters increases efficiencies in operations, marketability and opportunities for building strategic partnerships both for the business and individual employees seeking to professionally advance their career in the industry
  - Proximity to commercial retail opportunities to support workers (grocery stores, pharmacies and coffee shops)
- **Factors that play a role in deciding to invest and grow operations in Toronto**
  - Increased land values and rents leads to the relocation of labour force as a result of workers moving to live and work in affordable areas outside the city
  - Increased congestion and traffic impacting movement of goods to and from market
  - Residential neighbourhoods locating in proximity to employment lands leads to businesses consistently being harassed which limits opportunities for growth
  - Increasing number of complaints even when the business is situated in an industrial area means having to relocate outside the city or to US markets that are actively promoting and offering supports to relocate
  - Proximity to commercial retail opportunities to support workers (grocery stores, pharmacies and coffee shops)
- **Factors preventing further investment and growth in the sector**
  - Construction, traffic and implementation of bike lanes leads to congestion which makes it difficult to operate. Subsidies need to be provided for business to succeed
  - Risks to operating as a result to complaints by new residents and their unwillingness to coexist with industry leads to constant stress
  - The Province and Municipality are not always aligned in policies that regulate the sector, which leads to operational complexities
  - Timelines to getting approvals by municipality through multiple different departments to open a business leads to increasing costs and lengthy delays
  - Poor access to public transit leads to youth and millennials unable to access jobs
  - Businesses relocating back to Toronto are hampered by shortage of labour force
- **Other ideas discussed**
  - Need for municipality to establish a single department/program (concierge) to facilitate opening a business. Current process is cumbersome, it involves 14 to 15 different departments and delays can take up to 4 years.