



Toronto Wholesale Produce Association

Ontario Food Terminal
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Planning & Housing Committee
Toronto City Council
100 Queen Street West
West Tower, 10th Floor
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
phc@toronto.ca

RE: CONVERSION REQUEST FOR 125 THE QUEENSWAY

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Toronto Wholesale Produce Association, the 21 fruit and vegetable wholesalers operating at the Ontario Food Terminal, I urge the Committee to reject a proposed conversion of 125 The Queensway into a non-employment use. Municipal Conversion Reviews are about balancing the interests of employment lands and other uses, and this conversion request does not strike an appropriate balance because it is adjacent to the entrance to the Ontario Food Terminal, a Provincially-Significant Employment Zone.

As you know, the Ontario Food Terminal and its surrounding lands are major direct and indirect employers in Ontario. On any one day, approximately 5,000 employees work at the Terminal, and the Terminal indirectly employs tens of thousand more throughout the province. Moreover, the lands surrounding the Ontario Food Terminal are just as significant to employment as the lands on which Terminal is located; many employees work for wholesalers or food processors in the agri-food network of businesses in Etobicoke nearby the Terminal. That is why the City has continuously recognized that the Ontario Food Terminal and the surrounding lands play a pivotal role in the provincial agri-food network; for years, the City supported the designation of the Terminal as a Provincially Significant Employment Zone (including most recently in February 2019).

The Ontario Food Terminal is relied on by independent grocers, restaurants and many others – and ultimately regular Torontonians – throughout the City of Toronto. The Terminal plays a large role in permitting smaller businesses to compete against much larger or chain businesses. It allows residents of Toronto to access a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables within walking distance of where they live.

Furthermore, because the Terminal is used by organizations such as the Daily Bread Food Bank and Second Harvest, it plays a fundamentally important food security and equity role.

A major residential development proposed to be adjacent to the entrance of the Terminal – at 125 The Queensway – would adversely impact the operating environment for nearby businesses at the Ontario Food Terminal and the viability of the surrounding Employment Area. Pressures on traffic and anticipated complaints by residential neighbours about the facility, for example, could harm the long-term sustainability of these essential employment lands. In addition, the Ontario Food Terminal relies on the continued existence of employment lands surrounding the Terminal for use by produce wholesalers and other businesses that support the Terminal. The loss of employment lands at 125 The Queensway would serve to put pressure on those other employments lands.

We recognize the need for more housing in Toronto, but we also know that residents of Toronto need to work and eat, too. As a result, I am asking you to reject the proposed conversion of 125 The Queensway.

Sincerely,



Fred Koornneef
President

cc: Jeff Cantos, City Planning Division, jeffrey.cantos@toronto.ca.