

Toronto City Hall

Municipal Conversion Review (MCR)

Planning and Housing

Jeff Cantos

jeffrey.cantos@toronto.ca

January 4, 2022

Dear Mr. Cantos,

We are writing to you today to express our concerns with a proposed residential development adjacent to the entrance of the Food Terminal at 125 The Queensway.

Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG) and Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (OFVGA) together represent Ontario's field and greenhouse vegetable farmers. This is a significant economic sector in Ontario. Perhaps more importantly, our farmers grow safe, healthy and local food for consumers across the province and within the GTA. The pandemic has only heightened our collective responsibility to ensure a resilient food supply chain for the success and well-being of our communities. The Food Terminal has been and will remain a critical part of the infrastructure that will continue to feed our communities.

We know that housing in Toronto, indeed across the province, is a critical issue that requires attention, priority and community flexibility. These needs are real and pressing, but, we also know that residents of Toronto need to work and eat, too.

The agriculture and food industry in Ontario is the largest manufacturing sector in the province and the food terminal is a critical part of the industry infrastructure, for farmers, for processors, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. More specifically, the Ontario Food Terminal and its surrounding lands are a major direct and indirect employer in Ontario. Many employees work for wholesalers or food processors in the agri-food network of businesses in Etobicoke surrounding the Terminal. The lands surrounding the Ontario Food Terminal are just as significant to employment as the lands on which Terminal is located.

The Ontario Food Terminal is relied on by independent grocers, restaurants and many others – and ultimately regular Torontonians – throughout the City of Toronto. In addition, the Terminal plays a fundamentally important food security and equity role and is used by organizations such as the Daily Bread Food Bank and Second Harvest

The Terminal was designated a Provincially-Significant Employment Zone by the Ontario Government in October 2019, because, on any one day, approximately 5,000 employees work at the Terminal, and the Terminal indirectly employs tens of thousands more throughout the province.

Further, the City recognizes 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 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, including:

- 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.
- 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 respectfully request that the City of Toronto reject a proposed conversion of 125 The Queensway into a non-employment use.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,



Joseph Sbrocchi

General Manager

Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Grower

About OGVG - The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG) represents approximately 200 farmers responsible for over 3,200 acres of fresh, nutritious, greenhouse tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers across the province. With farmgate sales of \$950 million in 2018, support for over 13,000 jobs, a contribution of \$1.8 billion to the economy and a consistent track record of growth, the sector is a valuable economic driver for the province.