

July 18, 2023

Mayor Chow and members of Council
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Sent via email to: councilmeeting@toronto.ca

RE: PH5.2 - Official Plan Amendment for Bill 97 Transition - Authorizing the Continuation of Institutional and Commercial Uses in Employment Areas - Final Report

Dear Mayor Chow and members of Council,

The Building Industry and Land Development is in receipt of the July 5TH Planning and Housing Committee minutes and we submit the following comments on agenda item *PH5.2 Official Plan Amendment for Bill 97 Transition - Authorizing the Continuation of Institutional and Commercial Uses in Employment Areas - Final Report* in advance of the July 19-21 Toronto City Council meetings.

On June 13, 2023, Bill 97, the *Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023*, received Royal Assent. Among other matters, Bill 97 scoped the definition of “area of employment” to traditional manufacturing, warehousing or related uses, and confirmed that office, retail and institutional uses are not business and economic uses for the purposes of the new definition, unless tied to manufacturing, warehousing or related uses. This change is to support the draft new *Provincial Planning Statement, 2023*, which similarly limits what areas are to be considered areas of employment, and encourages mixed use development, including residential, outside of these areas to support complete communities. The draft *Provincial Planning Statement, 2023* confirms that municipal official plans shall not contain provisions that are more restrictive on the use of such lands. Transition provisions were added to confirm that an area of employment may include existing legally established uses, but that areas of employment may not otherwise permit this broader category of uses.

The City’s staff report recommends official plan amendments coming forth now and broader amendments in the fall which purport to protect all core and general employment lands in the City as areas of employment, despite their current, broader mix of uses, contrary to the provincial direction to genuinely limit areas of employment to heavy industrial uses, particularly close to goods movement corridors, while making more land available for development.

Based on this information, BILD has heard from its members (as they also directly expressed through various correspondences to the Committee meeting) that this report is premature and should be paused for the time being to align this work with the release of the new PPS and the more comprehensive official plan amendment anticipated in the fall. As such, we request that Council defer this decision.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. Please feel free to contact the undersigned with any questions.

Sincerely,



Danielle Binder, RPP MCIP

Director, Policy and Advocacy, BILD