

Attachment 1: OPA 680 Proposed Policy Directions

OPA 680 proposes various amendments to Official Plan *Employment Areas* policies in Chapter 2, 3 and 4. These amendments are intended to align the land use permissions within the City's *Employment Areas* with the proposed definition of "area of employment" in the *Planning Act* as amended by Bill 97. The general approach is to only make Official Plan policy amendments to align them with the *Planning Act* to ensure that the City's *Employment Areas* continue to benefit from the current employment protection policies.

Office Uses

Currently the Official Plan permits all types of office uses within *General Employment Areas* and *Core Employment Areas*, which reflects the built form of the City and historic permissions within Employment Areas at the time of the City's amalgamation.

Bill 97 Changes (not in effect, awaiting Proclamation):

The amended *Planning Act* definition of "area of employment" excludes stand alone office uses as a type of use permitted within an "area of employment" unless it is associated with a primary employment use, such as manufacturing, warehousing, or research and development.

OPA 680 Policy Direction to align with Planning Act Definition:

- Amend permissions to limit permitted office uses to those associated with primary employment uses in *General Employment Areas* and *Core Employment Areas*.
- To note, [OPA 668](#) (transition policy that is not in effect) authorizes the continued use of stand-alone offices provided they were lawfully established.

Retail Uses

Currently the Official Plan permits retail uses in *Core Employment Areas* if they are ancillary to and on the same lot as the primary employment use. Other types of retail and service uses such as restaurants, courier services, banks and copy shops are permitted in *Core Employment Areas* if they are ancillary to and intended to service the primary employment uses. These uses have been permitted in Core Employment Areas because they are supportive of the business and economic uses typically operating in these areas, such as manufacturing, warehousing, and other types of industrial uses.

General Employment Areas permit all types of retail, restaurant and service uses. Further, major retail sites are permitted in *General Employment Areas* subject to meeting certain development conditions.

Bill 97 Changes:

The amended Planning Act definition of "area of employment" excludes retail uses as a type of use permitted within an "area of employment" unless it is associated with a primary employment use, such as warehousing, warehousing, or research and development.

OPA 680 Policy Direction to align with Planning Act Definition:

- Amend permissions to limit permitted retail uses to those associated with primary employment uses in *General Employment Areas*.

Institutional Uses

The Official Plan does not currently permit institutional uses within *General Employment Areas* and *Core Employment Areas*.

Bill 97 Changes:

The amended *Planning Act* definition of “area of employment” explicitly excludes institutional uses as a type of use permitted within an “area of employment”.

OPA 680 Policy Direction to align with Planning Act Definition:

- No amendments are required.

Fitness Centres and Ice Arenas

The Official Plan permits fitness centres in *General Employment Areas* and ice arenas are permitted so long as they were legally established before March 26, 2018.

Bill 97 Changes:

The amended *Planning Act* definition of “area of employment” generally excludes commercial uses as a type of use permitted within an “area of employment”.

OPA 680 Policy Direction to align with Planning Act Definition:

- Remove the general permissions for Fitness centres in *General Employment Areas*.
- Move the retroactive permission for ice arenas to a Chapter 7 Site and Area Specific Policy.

Term: “Business and Economic Activities”

The Official Plan uses the term “business and economic activities” as an umbrella term to describe the types of uses that are permitted in the City’s employment areas. To more closely align with the *Planning Act* and the amended definition of “area of employment”, OPA 680 would propose to alter the term “business and economic activities” to “business and economic uses” and make other similar changes.