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**Deputation to City of Toronto, Planning and Housing Committee – June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

**Re: ITEM PH4.5 – Our Plan Toronto: Recommendations on Forty-Five Employment Area Conversion Requests**  
**From: Scarborough Community Renewal Organization, Brenda Librecz and Manny Sousa, Members of SCRO’s Economic Development Committee**

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Good morning, Councillors. My name is Brenda Librecz, and I am here with Manny Sousa we are representing Scarborough Community Renewal Organization on behalf of our President Larry Whatmore. SCRO is an organization of engaged volunteers that works to connect, promote, and renew Scarborough, so Scarborough can be strong and prosperous.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on City Planning’s recommendations related to the City’s Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of Employment Areas and the 150 requests to convert lands designated Core Employment Areas or General Employment Areas in the OP for non-employment uses. We have been monitoring this process since it started in 2020 and have received key feedback from our residents and business leaders. Our community wants to have strong and complete neighbourhoods with affordable housing and opportunities to work and thrive within our own community. We strongly support retaining employment lands for the jobs they bring to our area.

I started my career in public service in Economic Development for the City of Scarborough and after amalgamation become the first General Manager in Economic Development Department and as such I am keenly aware of the need to protect employment lands for the many benefits they bring our community overall.

Over the years, our City has been through many economic structural changes including COVID, which have impacted where and how we work. Nonetheless, the need for employment lands has not and will not disappear as has been witnessed in our employment areas in Scarborough essentially over the past 3 years. A good example is the significant growth recently experienced in the Tapscott Employment Area in northeast Scarborough. As a country we have learned through COVID that we need to take back control over our ability to supply our own citizens with essential healthcare products/medicines – where will these businesses locate? They will go where there is skilled labour – and that is the advantage of Toronto’s workforce.

**SCRO is generally supportive of the recommendations by the Chief Planner in this second in a series of three reports related to redesignation of employment lands for predominately residential use.**

**We are keen to see the City of Toronto retain areas for employment right across the City, for people of all skills and abilities. We have focused our attention in this report on the six Scarborough conversion requests:**

1. CR 40 - 55 Milne Avenue – Change from Core Employment to General Employment - Support
2. CR 43 and 67 – Golden Mile Area – Change from General Employment to Regeneration Areas – Support with concerns about securing community services and employment related uses.
3. CR 66 – 5080 Sheppard Avenue East – Retention as Employment - Support
4. CR 87 – 4800-4830 Sheppard Avenue East – Retention as Employment – Support
5. CR 89 – 1530-1536 Midland Avenue – Retention as Employment – Support
6. CR93 – 799 Milner Avenue – Retention as Employment – Support

**The assessments of these six conversion requests were comprehensive and reflect the areas well. We strongly agree with their findings related to compatibility of uses and the need to retain our existing businesses and attract more to these areas through the retention of them as employment areas. Providing a stable and productive operating environment for business is critical. We do have concerns with the Golden Mile Area conversion requests 43 and 67 in that we are keen to have mechanisms put in place to ensure community services/facilities are delivered and employment opportunities will be a priority within the Regeneration Area Plan.**

**Lastly protecting and growing our employment areas is about our residents – providing them with job opportunities within their own community.** The City is expected to absorb 700,000 more residents over the next 30 years, which will require 450,000 more jobs. Where will these new residents work if our employment areas are converted to other uses. There is considerable anxiety in Scarborough about the applications already filed by developers to convert employment lands into housing. We need to retain our existing businesses and create the business conditions to enable new ones. As a destination for newcomers, many of our employment areas provide jobs for those trying to get settled in Canada. Not everyone will be working from home and even those working from home are generating demands for products and services produced in our employment areas.

Thank you for your time. Both Manny and I are happy to take any questions.

Brenda Librecz, and Manny Sousa

### **Scarborough Community Renewal Organization Contact**

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