

July 24, 2024

Project No. 17117

Attention: John D. Elvidge, City Clerk

Dear Members of Council,

Re: PH14.1 – Employment Area Land Use Permissions – Decision Report – Approval

On April 6, 2023, the Province introduced Bill 97, Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023, which proposes to replace the Planning Act definition for an “area of employment” to exclude institutional and commercial uses, including retail and office uses that are not associated with manufacturing, research and development, warehousing and goods movements. The City of Toronto is proposing a City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA 680) in response to Bill 97, to revise the uses permitted in Official Plan Employment designations.

We are concerned with the impact that OPA 680 would have on the Subject Properties municipally known as **4711-4751 Steeles Avenue East** (hereafter referred to as “the Site”) and have previously registered concerns with OPA 668.

The Site consists of a 0.97-hectare parcel of land fronting Steeles Avenue, west of Silver Star Boulevard, and 0.31-hectare parcel on the east side. The Site is currently improved by existing one- and two-storey commercial buildings, built around 2003, occupied by financial institutions, restaurants, a medical office and related uses. The recently constructed Steeles Avenue East rail underpass makes the bulk of the Site less desirable for retail uses, and the Site’s immediate proximity to existing and planned residential uses make it inappropriate for industrial uses. Additionally, the Site is part of an emerging mixed-use node spanning both the Toronto and Markham sides of Steeles Avenue and is the only quadrant surrounding the Milliken GO station not designated for a mix of uses supportive of the current and future transit infrastructure.

On September 6, 2023 City Council enacted By-law 822-2023 which changed the designation of the site from *General Employment* to *Regeneration Areas* through the most recent Municipal Comprehensive Reivew.

As the results of a Regeneration Area study or similar assessment via application have not been determined we are concerned that should an Employment designation be applied to the Site or any portion of it, or the immediately adjacent lands, the restriction to only "industrial" uses will stifle efforts to deliver housing on this site immediately at Milliken GO station. Furthermore, the combined effect of OPA 668 and 680 may force landowners to once again undertake a costly and time-consuming conversion process whereas the stated intent of the Province in making the Bill 97 changes is to facilitate housing development.

We respectfully request clarity that the above noted lands will not be subject to OPA 680 and 668.

Thank you.

Yours very truly,
URBAN STRATEGIES INC.



Emily Reisman, RPP, MCIP
Partner



Tim Smith, RPP, MCIP
Principal