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Delivered Via Email

Planning and Housing Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attention: Nancy Martins (phc@toronto.ca)

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

**Re: Item No. PH14.1 – Employment Land Use Permissions – Decision Report -
Approval
Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 668
Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 680**

We are solicitors for Liberty Urban Properties Inc. in respect of the property known municipally in the City of Toronto as 129 Jefferson Avenue (the “**Lands**”). We are writing to provide our client’s comments regarding the proposed policy direction for Official Plan Amendment No. 680 (“**OPA 680**”). Given the stated intention by City staff that proposed Official Plan Amendment 668 (“**OPA 668**”), which has received Council endorsement, is intended to work in tandem with OPA 680, this letter should also be treated as our client’s written representations to City Council regarding OPA 668.

Bill 97 (the *Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023*) received Royal Assent on June 13, 2023. Bill 97 specifically narrowed the definition of “area of employment” to traditional manufacturing, warehousing and related uses. At the same time, Bill 97 confirmed that office, retail and institutional uses are not business and economic uses, unless directly associated with manufacturing, warehousing or related uses. This new definition is linked to the draft new *Provincial Policy Statement*, which similarly limits the scope of areas of employment.

The intent of Bill 97 and the new *Provincial Policy Statement* is clear. Areas subject to employment conversion policies and statutory provisions are limited to areas with traditional manufacturing, warehousing or related uses. At the same time, mixed use development is to be encouraged outside of these areas to support complete communities. Where institutional and/or commercial uses are permitted, those areas are not longer considered an “area of employment”.

The proposed policy direction for OPA 680 is directly contrary to the legislative intent of Bill 97 June 13, 2023. The policy direction that the City should be implementing would consider which lands within the City truly meet the new definition of area of employment. Instead, through OPA 680, the proposed policy direction is to remove existing land use permissions from all of the City's employment areas without examining whether it is appropriate to do so. This would effectively prevent consideration of expanded development opportunities in accordance with Bill 97 to meet provincial and municipal forecasts while negatively impacting the existing planning function of many of those areas. Further, it essentially removes any distinction between lands designated as *Core Employment Areas* and *General Employment Areas*.

The Lands would be negatively impacted by the removal of existing use permissions. Many of these uses have existed and operated for a significant period of time without impact on surrounding lands. Not only would the City initiative lead to detrimental impacts on existing operations and services of the Lands but also it would discourage future reinvestment given the resulting legal non-conforming status at a policy level.

We understand that the City staff view is that OPA 668 would allow institutional and commercial permissions to continue generally in all existing employment areas despite OPA 680's removal of those permissions. However, we believe this interpretation is incorrect, meaning that our client may also need to appeal OPA 668.

On behalf of our client, we respectfully request that Planning and Housing Committee reject the proposed policy direction for OPA 680. Instead, Planning and Housing Committee should direct City staff to review all existing lands designated as *Employment Areas*, determine which of these areas meet the new definition of area of employment, and consider the resulting appropriate land use permissions. Planning and Housing Committee should also direct City staff to clarify the nature of continuing land use permissions through revisions to OPA 668 that appropriately implement Bill 97.

As presently proposed, OPA 680 does not meet the legislative intent of Bill 97, is inconsistent with Provincial policy, and does not represent good land use planning. This would leave our client with no choice but to appeal OPA 680 and, as noted, potentially OPA 668.

We would appreciate being included on the City notice list for any City Council decision regarding OPA 668 or OPA 680.

Yours truly,

Goodmans LLP



David Bronskill
DJB/

cc. Client

1393-5933-2877