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Via E-Mail – councilmeeting@toronto.ca

City Council
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Attention: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Council:

Re: Proposed Official Plan Amendment 804 ("OPA 804")

Item – 2025.PH21.1

**Official Plan Amendment to align Provincial Legislative and Policy changes related to
Employment Areas**

No. 60 Birmingham Street, Etobicoke

We represent bcIMC Realty Corporation, the owner of 60 Birmingham Street (the “**Property**”).

On behalf of our client, we have reviewed the City's proposed OPA 804 and monitored the May 8, 2025, Planning and Housing Committee (the “**P+H Committee**”) meeting. Our client had hoped that the P+H Committee would have directed City Planning staff to “**review lands**” beyond the four office parks that it has to date. As it has not directed City Planning Staff to commence this review, we are writing to convey our client's concerns with OPA 804, but equally as importantly, to identify the opportunity for a greater range of complementary non-residential uses that are appropriate for the Property.

We request City Council take the opportunity to redesignate the Property from “**General Employment**” to “**Regeneration Areas**” with the full list of non-residential use permissions it provides. A comprehensive list of employment uses should be permitted in order to provide the opportunity for this Property to contribute to the creation of a complete community in this part of Etobicoke. We emphasize that our client is not asking for residential permission as part of the redesignation request.

Concerns with Proposed OPA 804

Our client's concerns with OPA 804 stem from its failure to look beyond the four office parks for redesignation. As City Planning staff have noted, the Province directed the City to evaluate lands that in fact needed to be protected from conversion, in order to protect manufacturing and warehousing areas. The Property does not require protection and would greatly benefit from an expanded list of employment uses including:

- research and development, not tied directly to manufacturing on site,
- office space,
- self-storage, and
- places for locals and workers to eat,

to name four uses for the Property that would be permitted with a redesignation to “**Regeneration Areas**”.

So far, the City’s response to Provincial direction has been limited to looking at only office parks. This is not what the Province contemplated when it directed the City to truly consider what protection is needed and what lands would benefit from an expanded list of employment uses (and in some cases residential uses). As drafted, OPA 804 will fail to address the City’s true needs in terms of land use evolution into the future.

The Birmingham

Our client’s business complex is a recently constructed series of three buildings with purpose-built employment space designed for “**forward-thinking modern businesses**”. As identified by our client, the complex is “**engrained in the neighbourhoods’ culture, some of the nearest homes are just steps away...and a school was built just across the street ...**”. The buildings feature flexible floor plans that can accommodate a wide variety of uses. The objective of our client was to restore the Property’s economic and cultural importance in the community.



Unfortunately, the dynamics of the economy have shifted and will continue to evolve in the future. Areas of the City that won't be used for manufacturing and warehousing but still wish to provide employment opportunities, need the ability to pivot to meet market needs.

On the other hand, limiting the non-residential uses on this Property would not make sense from an economic or a planning perspective. The Property is a classic "**buffer**" property – suitable for employment and institutional uses that do not negatively impact the abutting residential homes, while also capable of providing a separation between those homes and heavier industrial areas beyond the site.

A "**Regeneration Area**" designation would allow flexibility to address future needs and not negatively impact existing neighbours. The redesignation to "**Regeneration Area**" would permit a full suite of non-residential uses and will provide a broad range of employment and non-residential uses and a range of jobs to enable long-term employment growth.

The clear intent of Provincial legislation, which OPA 804 is reportedly responding to, is to facilitate the development of healthy, complete communities where housing, office, institutional, retail and other non-manufacturing and industrial uses co-exist. In doing so, it alleviates both the housing crisis and creates vibrant new neighbourhoods throughout the City, while protecting specific areas of employment, where manufacturing and industrial uses will be focused. Granting our client additional employment uses through a "**Regeneration Area**" designation would benefit not only our client, but the neighbourhood with local job opportunities.

Lastly, to support the Province's initiatives, our client supports OPA 804's intentions with respect to the repealing of both OPA 668 and OPA 680, both of which our client objected to.

OPA 804 provides a timely opportunity to ensure the City's latest attempt at employment lands review is fair and complete as it relates to this Property. We request on behalf of our client to be notified of any future meetings respecting employment lands and OPA 804, and of the Council's eventual decision respecting the same.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

BENNETT JONES LLP



Andrew L. Jeanrie

c.c.: Client