

20 Leslie Street - Official Plan Amendment– Appeal Report

Date: January 8, 2026

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review

Ward: 14 - Toronto-Danforth

Planning Application Number: 25 182239 STE 14 OZ

SUMMARY

On June 27, 2025, an application to amend the Official Plan was submitted to redesignate 20 Leslie Street (the “Site”) from *General Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*.

On October 29, 2025, the applicant appealed the Official Plan Amendment application to the Ontario Land Tribunal (“OLT”) due to Council not making a decision within the timeframe prescribed by the Planning Act. A Case Management Conference has not yet been scheduled.

This Report recommends that the City Solicitor and appropriate City Staff attend the OLT hearing to oppose the Official Plan Amendment application in its current form and to continue discussions with the applicant in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Executive Director, Development Review, recommend that:

1. City Council direct the City Solicitor and appropriate City Staff to attend the Ontario Land Tribunal in opposition to the current application regarding the Official Plan Amendment for the lands at 20 Leslie Street and to continue discussions with the applicant in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor and other appropriate City Staff to take any necessary steps to implement City Council's decision, including requesting any

conditions of approval that would be in the City's interest, in the event the Ontario Land Tribunal allows the appeal, in whole or in part.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City Planning and Development Review confirm that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this Report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

On November 22, 2022, a request to convert the Site from *General Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas* was received during the Municipal Comprehensive Review (“MCR”) process. On December 6, 2022, the City issued a letter to the applicant stating that the window to receive applications during the MCR was closed, and the application could not be reviewed. As a result, the application was not considered through the MCR process.

On October 20, 2024, the Minister of Municipal Affairs issued the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (“PPS 2024”). The PPS 2024 removed the requirement that conversions of employment areas to non-employment uses only be permitted through a Municipal Comprehensive Review.

On May 21, 2025, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 804, to align with the Provincial legislative and policy changes related to Employment Areas, including the PPS 2024 and Bill 97. The decision can be found at the following link: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.PH21.1>.

OPA 804 has been sent to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and approval.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDS

Description

The Site is located in the South of Eastern Area of Employment, at the southwest corner of Leslie Street and Mosley Street. The Site is currently occupied by a mix of retail, office, media studio and commercial uses contained within a 2 and 3 storey building. See Attachment 1 for the Location Map.

Surrounding Uses

North: Mosley Street, Low Rise Residential and Commercial Uses.

South: The adjacent site to the south is 731 Eastern Avenue, currently designated as *General Employment Areas* and subject to a recent OLT decision which would permit a redesignation to *Mixed Use Areas*. The decision is pending, subject to dual ministerial approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Natural Resources.

East: The adjacent site to the east is 17 Leslie Street and designated as *General Employment Areas*. Despite a request to redesignate the lands from *General Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas* through the previous MCR, decisions from City Council and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing retained the lands as *General Employment Areas*.

West: The site adjacent to the west is 731 Eastern Avenue. Beyond that is 629, 633 and 675 Eastern Avenue, containing film studios, office uses and surface level parking. Despite a request to redesignate the lands from *Core Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas* through the previous MCR, decisions from City Council and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing retained the lands as *Core Employment Areas*.

THE APPLICATION

Description

The application proposes to amend the Official Plan to redesignate the lands from *General Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*, with a Site and Area Specific Policy containing conditions related to the Lower Don Special Policy Area. The applicant has included a conceptual building design in the application materials to demonstrate a potential development scenario on the site.

Reasons for Application

The Official Plan Amendment is required to permit residential uses on the lands. Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval Applications will be required if the proposal were to proceed.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

A pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting was held on March 6, 2025. The Planning Application Checklist Package resulting from the PAC meeting is available on the Application Information Centre. The reports and studies submitted in support of this application are available on the Application Information Centre:

www.toronto.ca/20LeslieSt

Agency Circulation Outcomes

The application, together with the applicable reports noted above, has been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City Divisions. Responses received have been used to assist in evaluating the application.

POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and shall conform to provincial plans.

Official Plan

The Official Plan designates the lands as *General Employment Areas*. See Attachment 2 of this Report for the Land Use Map. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making.

Lower Don: Don River Special Policy Area

The lands are within the Lower Don; River Special Policy Area identified on Map 10 of the Official Plan. A link to Map 10 can be found here: https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/9048-cp-official-plan-Map-10_Special-Policy-Areas_AODA.pdf

Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP 542)

SASP 542 Eastern Avenue between Lewis Street and Woodfield Road, applies to the Site. SASP 542 establishes a planned right-of-way width for Eastern Avenue of 23 metres. The SASP requires the entire widening to achieve this right-of-way width to be acquired from lands on the south side of Eastern Avenue

Zoning

The Site is zoned E 5.0, Employment Industrial under Zoning By-law 569-2013. The category permits a range of Employment Uses.

See Attachment 3 of this Report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Consultation

On October 8, 2025, a Community Consultation Meeting took place at the Toronto Fire and EMS Training Centre at 895 Eastern Avenue. A total of 30 members from the public attended. City Staff and the applicant team gave presentations and answered questions from participants. The following comments and questions were raised by participants:

- Concerns related to the sale of future residential units.
- Concerns regarding the proposed height and density of conceptual development designs.
- Concerns about the impact on surrounding schools.
- Concerns relating to the impact on jobs and employment types.
- Questions relating to the applicant type, and future Zoning By-law and Site Plan Amendment Applications and process.
- Questions regarding the status of the August 2024 OLT decision for 731 Eastern Avenue.

COMMENTS

Provincial Planning Statement and Provincial Plans

Staff's review of this application has had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the Planning Act. Staff have reviewed the current proposal for consistency with the PPS (2024).

Official Plan: Land Use

This application has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies including SASP 542 policies, and the Lower Don Special Policy Area. Employment Areas are comprised of two designations in the Official Plan, *Core Employment Areas* and *General Employment Areas*. Employment Areas are areas for clusters of businesses and economic activities, including manufacturing, research and development, warehousing and goods movement, associated retail and office and ancillary facilities.

The Site is centrally located within the South of Eastern Area of Employment. The area contains a significant concentration of Toronto's film and television production facilities, employing 4000 people across 125 businesses. Along with the Port Lands to the south, this area serves as a significant focal point of film and television production in Toronto, as well as the supportive commercial enterprises that make Toronto one of the top five screen-based industries in North America, bringing over \$2 billion in production investment to the City. These industries benefit from convenient access to major goods movement corridors, including the Don Valley Parkway, Lakeshore Boulevard East and the Gardiner Expressway, as well as access to the Port Lands and proximity to Downtown Toronto.

The existing supply of *Core* and *General Employment Areas* is finite and should be reserved for existing and future businesses that cannot locate in other areas. Given the increasing number of applications to allow residential uses on lands designated Employment Areas in the City, there is a risk that approval of these applications will diminish the employment land base, create uncertainty for existing and future businesses, and signal the potential for future applications to allow residential uses on employment lands in the Employment Area.

The availability of land and land use certainty are key factors to investment and Toronto's global competitiveness. The protection of employment lands align with broader, multi-government objectives and strategy to invest in and strengthen Canada's industrial and manufacturing sectors, particularly in response to the shifting policy and trade landscape.

The lands are located within the Lower Don Special Policy Area. Flood mitigation work within the Special Policy Area has not been completed. The Provincial Planning Statement directs that any changes to the Official Plan policies, land use designations or boundaries applying to Special Policy Area lands, must be approved by the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Natural Resources and Forestry. Any land use redesignation on the Site would require approval from both Provincial Ministries.

A Compatibility and Mitigation Study prepared by Gradient Wind Engineering was submitted by the applicant in support of the application. A Peer Review of the study is required to verify the conclusions of the report.

Staff have reviewed the current application and have concerns about the redesignation of the lands from *General Employment Areas* to *Mixed Use Areas*. The introduction of residential uses on the site could negatively impact the overall viability of the *Employment Area*, disrupt a stable operating environment for business operations and economic activities, and limit opportunities to attract businesses to the area.

Further Issues

City Staff may be required to evaluate supplementary or revised plans and supporting materials submitted by the applicant after the date of this report. As a result, Staff may continue to refine or identify further issues or supplement the reasons provided in this report. Where substantive changes to the proposal are made by the applicant, Staff will report back to City Council as necessary.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

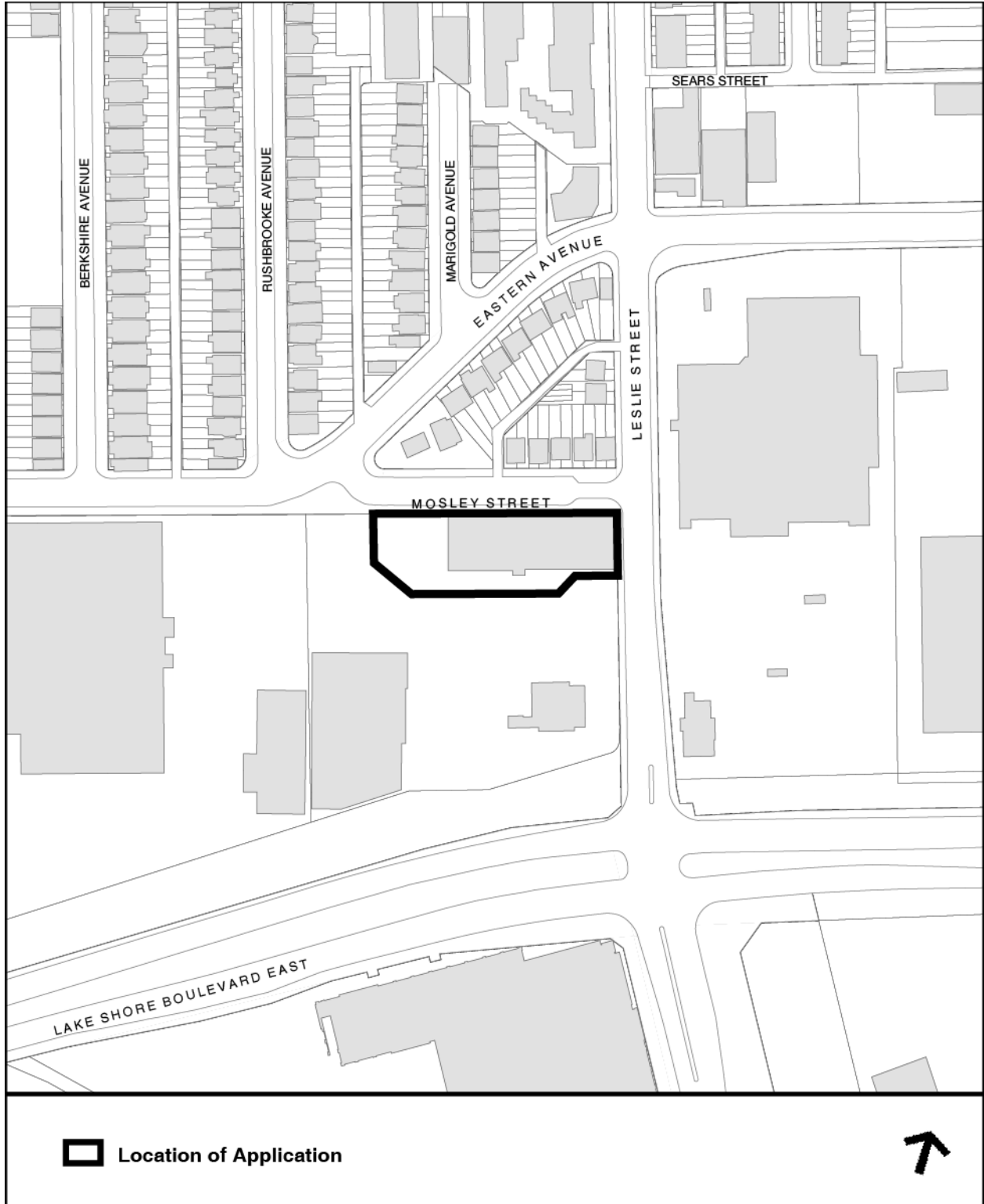
Jason Thorne
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Development Review

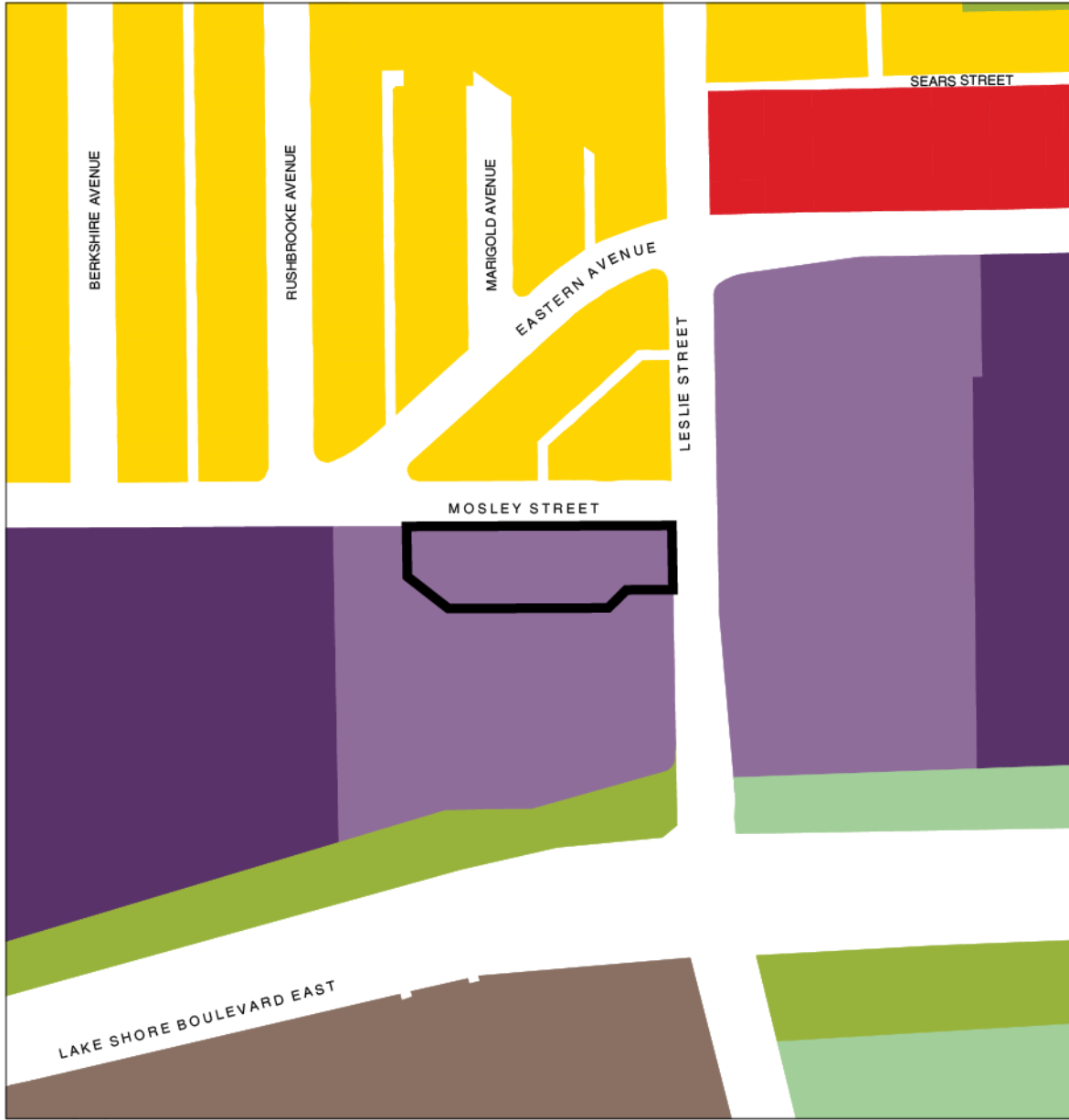
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Location Map
Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map
Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-law Map

Attachment 1: Location Map












Attachment 2: Official Plan Land Use Map



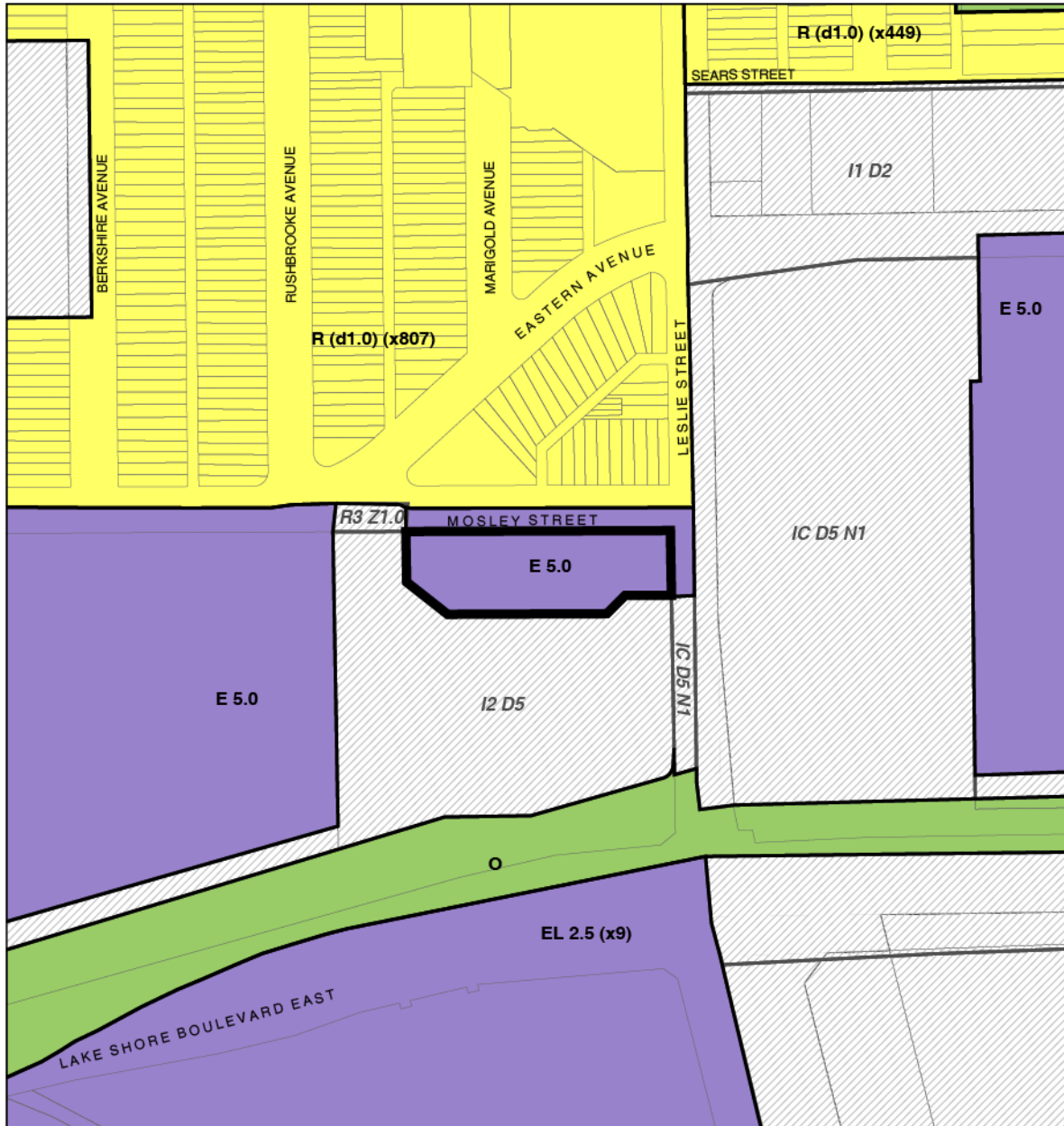
Official Plan Land Use Map #21

20 Leslie Street
File # 25 182239 STE 14 0Z

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|---|--|--|
|  Location of Application |  Parks |  Regeneration Areas |
|  Neighbourhoods |  Other Open Space Areas |  General Employment Areas |
|  Mixed Use Areas | |  Core Employment Areas |


Not to Scale
Extracted: 07/02/2025

Attachment 3: Existing Zoning By-law Map



Zoning By-law 569-2013

20 Leslie Street

File # 25 182239 STE 14 0Z

Location of Application

- R Residential
- CR Commercial Residential
- EL Employment Light Industrial
- E Employment Industrial

O Open Space

See Former City of Toronto By-law No. 438-86
 R3 Residential District
 I3 Industrial District

Not to Scale
 Extracted: 07/02/2025