

January 16, 2026

Toronto City Council
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

Re: Opposition to Rezoning and Proposed Housing Development at 125 The Queensway – Protection of Employment Lands Adjacent to the Ontario Food Terminal

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Council,

On behalf of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association and our members across Canada's fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain, I am writing to express strong support for maintaining the lands at 125 The Queensway as designated employment lands and to oppose any rezoning that would allow for residential development adjacent to the Ontario Food Terminal (OFT).

Based on extensive, peer-reviewed research and publicly available evidence, it is clear that the OFT is not only a vital component of Toronto's food system—it is critical infrastructure supporting communities across the province and beyond, whose operation would be put at risk by incompatible residential development.

The Ontario Food Terminal is a Critical Piece of Public Infrastructure

Multiple studies, including *The Ontario Food Terminal: Supporting Food Access* (2022) and *Reconsidering the Wholesale Food Market* (2025), underscore the OFT's irreplaceable role in ensuring that Ontarians—particularly those in Toronto—have daily access to affordable, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Key findings from this research include:

- The OFT distributes over 2 billion pounds of produce annually, supplying independent grocers, mid-sized retailers, green grocers, restaurants, mobile produce vendors, and community markets from Toronto to Atlantic Canada.
- It supports 250–300 Ontario farmers directly, many of whom rely on the Terminal as their primary marketplace—an essential safeguard for mid-sized farms that cannot compete in consolidated supermarket supply chains.
- The Terminal is the backbone of neighbourhood food access, enabling culturally diverse, community-based and small-format retailers—especially those serving lower-income communities—to offer fresh, affordable produce.
- Research confirms that produce sourced through the OFT helps keep prices competitive with or lower than major supermarket chains, directly supporting food affordability for residents.

We must also emphasize that the OFT's reach extends across the country. Data from CPMA's membership demonstrates fresh produce sourced from the Terminal is bound for communities in nine provinces. Residential Development Near the OFT Poses Significant Risks

Toronto City Council's own planning and health studies (e.g., Zeuli, Nijhuis & Gerson-Nieder for Toronto Public Health) already highlight operational vulnerabilities at the OFT. Additional residential density directly adjacent to the site would amplify those risks, including:

- Introducing housing beside the Terminal will inevitably create land-use conflict, complaints, and political pressure to restrict or modify operations, as 24-hour truck traffic, heavy logistics operations, and noise are essential characteristics of the OFT.
- The OFT is already experiencing logistical vulnerabilities due to extreme weather, supply chain disruptions, and transportation bottlenecks. Constraining its surrounding industrial ecosystem would exacerbate these risks.
- The research clearly states that condominium and townhouse development in the vicinity of the OFT may pose operational challenges, and that city planning must treat the Terminal as essential food system infrastructure—just as Toronto has done with other major industrial anchors such as Redpath.
- Weakening the Terminal through incompatible land use ultimately threatens food security, particularly for lower-income communities and culturally diverse neighbourhoods across the city.

Protecting Employment Lands at 125 The Queensway Protects Toronto's Food System

The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with Toronto's planning and food policy commitments, including the Toronto Food Charter, Poverty Reduction Strategy, Black Food Sovereignty Plan, and C40 Good Food Cities Declaration, all of which prioritize equitable access to healthy, affordable food.

Maintaining employment land around the OFT:

- Secures the long-term viability of an essential public asset;
- Sustains thousands of jobs across logistics, farming, food retail, and distribution;
- Protects mid-scale regional agriculture and Ontario farmers; and
- Supports circular and territorial food systems—a direction endorsed by global food system experts, the FAO, and the City of Toronto.

The Ontario Food Terminal is not simply a wholesale market—it is one of the most important, publicly governed pieces of food infrastructure in Canada. The City must safeguard its operations by retaining 125 The Queensway as employment land and rejecting any rezoning that would introduce residential development incompatible with the Terminal's essential, 24-hour industrial function.

The Canadian Produce Marketing Association strongly urges Council to protect the integrity of the OFT and the broader food system that millions of Ontarians rely upon. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Lemaire
President
Canadian Produce Marketing Association