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January 21, 2026

Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of City Council  
City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Employment Land Conversion Appeals – Support for City Position

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Toronto City Council,

The Toronto Port Authority is writing to express its support for the City Planning Division's recommendations regarding the Official Plan Amendment applications currently before Council that seek to redesignate employment lands to Mixed Use Areas, including the applications at 20 Leslie Street, 125 The Queensway, 1543–1551 The Queensway / 66–76 Fordhouse Boulevard, and 350–364 Evans Avenue / 14–16 Arnold Street.

As the organization mandated to steward Toronto's port and waterfront infrastructure, the Toronto Port Authority has an imperative to protect employment lands as a core element of Toronto's long-term city-building and economic development objectives. Employment areas that support industrial activity and goods movement provide the physical foundation for a diverse and resilient urban economy. Protecting these lands helps ensure that Toronto continues to function as a complete city - one that can accommodate housing growth while sustaining the employment needs of its residents.

We are concerned that the growing number of site-specific applications to introduce residential uses into designated employment areas, particularly outside of a comprehensive planning framework, poses a risk to the stability, functionality, and long-term competitiveness of Toronto's employment land base. Incremental conversions can introduce land-use conflicts, reduce operational flexibility for existing businesses, and create uncertainty that discourages future investment in employment-generating uses.

The application at 20 Leslie Street is of particular interest given its location within the South of Eastern Employment Area, a district that supports a range of production, logistics, and port-adjacent economic activities and benefits from proximity to the waterfront and Port Lands. Introducing residential permissions in this context risks undermining a stable employment area, inserts conflicts that cannot be mitigated, and may contribute to further pressure for conversion of surrounding lands.

The Toronto Port Authority owns and operates:  
L'Administration portuaire de Toronto possède et exploite :





The Toronto Port Authority supports the City's position that employment lands are a finite and strategic resource and should be protected to support Toronto's long-term economic resilience. We encourage Council to endorse the City Planning Division's recommendations and to continue advocating for a coordinated, city-wide approach to employment land protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. We would be pleased to participate further in discussions related to employment land policy and waterfront economic planning.

Sincerely,

Roelof-Jan (RJ) Steenstra  
President and CEO  
The Toronto Port Authority