



January 16, 2026

Chair, City of Toronto Planning and Housing Committee
Mayor and Members of City Council

Reference:

PH27.11 – 125 The Queensway

PH27.12 - 1543-1551 The Queensway and 66+76 Fordhouse Boulevard

PH27.13 - 350, 360 and 364 Evans Avenue and 14-16 Arnold Street

As the owner of The Metropolitan Tea Company Ltd located on Butterick Road in the South Etobicoke Employment Area I would like to voice my opposition to the 3 above referenced Official Plan amendment appeals

1. The Employment Areas outlined in the Official Plan mapping are vibrant and necessary requirements for a city like Toronto. Why would you build condos and the like on land where people get gainful employment?
2. Why would you even consider amending the Official Plan by taking future land and expansion potential away from employers who bring jobs to the city when that land has already been set aside for that purpose.
3. Residential construction are jobs that last for 2 or 3 years and then developers move on as opposed to companies such as The Metropolitan Tea Company (employing 80+ people) offering long-term employment.
4. The plans referenced above, reduce the potential for a company such as Metro Tea to expand and stay in the environs of Etobicoke.
5. The current economic environment vis-à-vis the USA demands that Canada diversify from being simply a distribution point for large American companies to an erstwhile high value manufacturing hub that can serve the world.
6. Manufacturing in a city like Toronto is a huge competitive advantage for us. Banking, labour resources, TTC, excellent road network and the list goes on and on. How are we going to stay in Toronto if these competitive advantages are reduced by having land resources gobbled up by developers who simply move from one project to another with seemingly little long-term vision beyond a huge profit in the near-term.
7. Manufacturing is completely possible in Toronto. A company focuses on high value-added functions and utilizes the advantages that a large urban center offers and from there spreads out globally – it is really quite simple, (but not possible if we were located in, say Owen Sound)
8. With the future industries that will flow from AI (high value-added entities), why would you reduce the possibility that these hi -tech industries could overlook Toronto because there is no land to build. Amending the Official Plan as described will slowly erode Toronto's standing as a global city notwithstanding that other developers will look at similar sites in Toronto and then claim the referenced applications as precedence. Then what?

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9. Our Prime Minister is strongly encouraging companies such as ourselves and others in the Employment Lands plus the rest of the country to become more diversified. How does reducing the Employment Lands and creating the thin wedge of precedence for other developers to follow be a sensible decision at this special time in Canadian history.
10. Look at the old Glaxo Smith Kline site now the Queensway movie complex, This has replaced Employment Land with movie theaters that have become or are quickly becoming a thing of the past with streaming services and other hi-tech innovations. The 3 referenced appeals are not considering the long vision or caring about 20 or 30 years from now – which as a city, Toronto should be considering. (I do understand developers’ motive of a quick profit but if the Council approves the appeals, it is such short-term thinking. It is incumbent on the City administrators to think big, bold and way down the road.
11. I became aware that Lush Cosmetics have taken on more space in the new build that was once the Norampac facility. If the old Norampac site had been turned into condos, would Lush stay in Etobicoke? Likely not as a remote site from the main manufacturing facility creates ‘non-competitive’ conditions.

As a further point:

These are unprecedented times but with the proper support, industry is prepared for the lengthy challenges ahead. We agree with Premier Ford that we need to be ready using every tool in our tool kit. Government action ensuring land-use stability is one of the most important tools for sustaining a strong, long-term investment environment.

At the more local level, we commend Mayor Chow’s Tariff Economic Action Plan and support any efforts to strengthen communication with the business community on issues affecting local competitiveness. Sometimes the simplest measures can have a significant impact.

As an example, we have made past requests for a traffic and/or pedestrian control device at the intersection of Butterick Road and Evans Avenue. This measure would improve the movement of goods (i.e. **our export products**), increase transit ridership, and enhance the safety of a growing local workforce currently required to make a dangerous crossing. We are prepared to contribute funding toward the installation and hope to rely on your support as we look to renew our request.

Your support of the above matters come at a critical time and would send a clear message that jobs and reinvestment are both needed and welcomed here.

In Conclusion:

I strongly urge you to reject the appeal and stand up for manufacturers and other service providers that occupy the Employment Lands of Etobicoke.

Yours Truly

Signed: *Gerry Vandergrift*

The Metropolitan Tea Company Ltd
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Cc: Ward 3 Councillor and Deputy Mayor Amber Morley Councillor_Morley@toronto.ca
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