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Our File No. 175928

VIA EMAIL TO GROWTHPLANNING@ONTARIO.CA

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Attention: Vicki Long
Ontario Growth Secretariat

Dear Ms. Long:

**Re: CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED GROWTH PLAN AMENDMENT #1
OFFICE PARK POLICY CHANGES – UNLOCKING LAND FOR
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

We are the solicitors for the owners of lands municipally known as 280 – 422 Consumers Road, a 9.4 acre parcel located within the Consumers Road office park at the north east quadrant of Highway 401 and Highway 404.

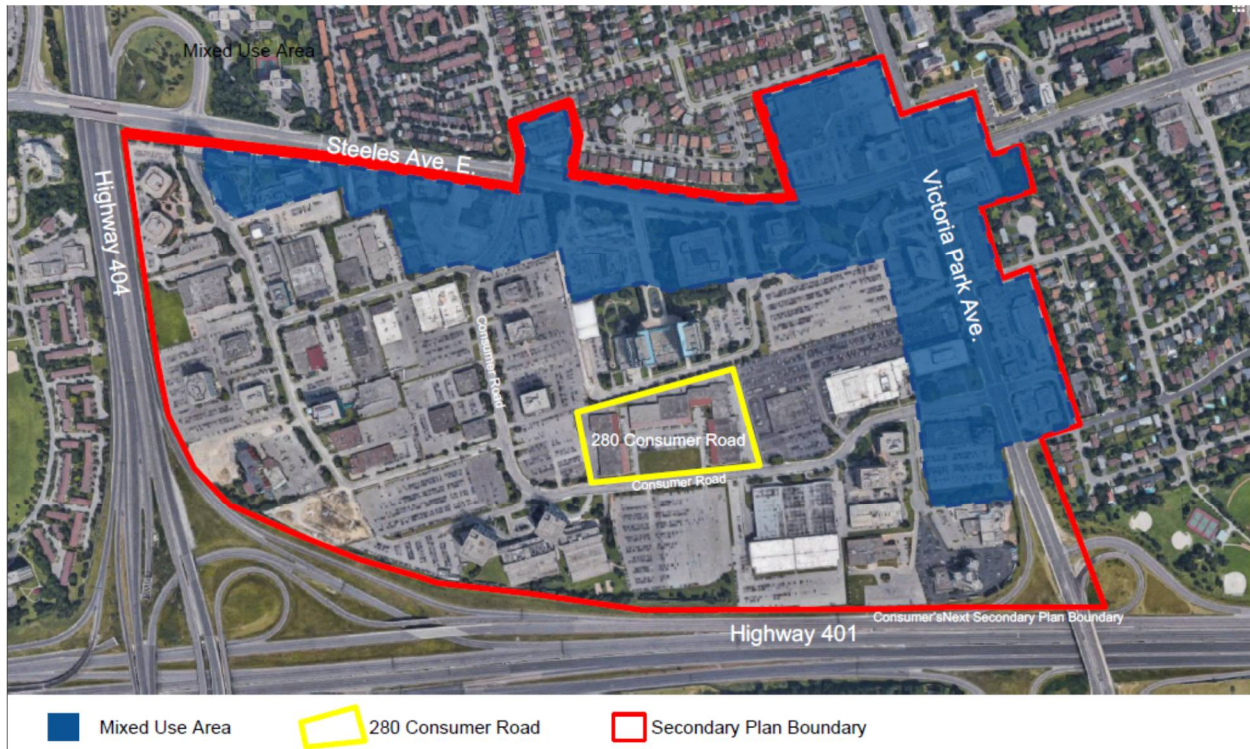
We write on behalf of our client in support of proposed Growth Plan Amendment #1 and in particular, the Province's recognition that office parks provide substantial growth opportunities for new mixed use development. Please also take this submission in opposition to the City of Toronto's submissions to you, including the proposed designation of the Consumers Road office park, or what is left of it, as a provincially significant employment zone.

The aerial figure below identifies our client's site in relation to the Consumers Road office park, within the boundary of the City's recently completed ConsumersNext Secondary Plan and the newly designated mixed use areas.

Through the recently completed secondary plan process, the City has enabled high density mixed use development permissions along the Sheppard Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue frontages of the office park. However, the City has afforded no new development potential to the office park interior district.

Rather, the City's secondary plan proposes to impose new additional land use policy restrictions on uses and densities for those lands within the office park. On top of these new land use

restrictions, the proposed secondary plan imposes new infrastructure obligations on lands within the office park including proposed new road connections directly thru our client's site.



The recognition for the appropriate transformation of post-war office areas to new mixed use areas is provided through the proposed amendment to the definition of “Office Parks”. Office parks, and in particular Consumers Road, have an obvious ability to transform into a true mixed use complete community with parks instead of parking lots.

The City of Toronto has already recognized that a substantial area of lands on the Sheppard Avenue and Victoria Park frontages of the Consumers Road office park are appropriate for mixed use development. There is no reasonable planning rationale as to why residential uses cannot also be contemplated in the interior of the area. Compatibility of uses is already established, and it goes without saying that there is synergy between office and commercial uses and residential development.

We do not agree with rationale or approach taken by the City of Toronto in its submissions to you on this matter. The City’s submission to you appears to be premised on the risk that the introduction of additional residential planning permissions will jeopardize and destabilize the employment base due to land price increases.

We do not think that this submission is supportable. First, there already exists policies and tools in place at both the municipal and provincial level, to require new development to maintain employment opportunity and land uses on candidate sites. Secondly, there is no economic

rationale submitted by the City to support its theory about destabilization. The reality is that there is no shortage of office space in the City of Toronto, nor is there any actual or theoretical supply constraints for offices in the City. The City has not provided any reliable evidence in support of its position especially in relation to areas such as Consumers Road which has not attracted any new office development in recent history. There is no office space crisis in the City of Toronto. The problem is housing supply and affordability.

The debate at Council on these matters was politically charged. There were suggestions that the proposed Growth Plan amendments were somehow motivated or had the effect of enriching developers and speculators. This type of rhetoric is misguided. By inhibiting residential development opportunities in appropriate locations, the City is simply driving up both land and unit prices and rents by stifling opportunity for competition in the market place.

Consumers Road is a perfect opportunity to unlock a substantial supply of new dwelling units and move forward from the outdated office park vision. The office park did not actually ever live up to its true potential. Most of the land area within the interior office park is occupied by vast areas of surface parking which can easily be seen from the aerial image or from a site visit.

Most recently, the only new developments in the area are car dealerships, some institutional uses and a large new above grade parking structure with some commercial at grade. New office building development at Consumers Road is simply not occurring and has not occurred in decades. Development and redevelopment opportunities are very limited. I would point out that our perspective on the lack of new office development opportunities in the business park is not speculative. It is based on our clients actual experience as a landowner since 1971 of a major centrally located parcel.

Residential development can easily be accommodated at Consumers Road at appropriate transit supportive densities without impacting on existing stable residential neighbourhoods. Such development can be accomplished while expanding the office opportunities and creating a far more efficient attractive complete community form of development.

We absolutely recognize the importance of appropriate planning for the protection of industrial, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution areas that are vital to the economy. We recognize that in most instances, the introduction of sensitive uses in these areas can interfere with economic growth and opportunity that is critical to the City and the Province. Consumers Road however is distinctly not one of these areas deserved of protection on the basis of land use conflicts. The perspective offered by the City, being the economic rational to avoid the inflation of land prices, is misguided as it ignores the real crisis in the City which is housing affordability. The only means to address that issue is to encourage supply opportunities.

For these reasons, on behalf of our client we wish to express our full support for the Province's recognition of the need to unlock land for residential development such as at Consumers Road, which has so much potential to create new housing opportunities in a substantially underutilized area of the City, without impacting on existing stable residential neighbourhoods.

Yours truly,

FOGLER, RUBINOFF LLP

Joel D. Farber

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*Services provided through a professional corporation

JDF

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