



Toronto Wholesale Produce Association

Ontario Food Terminal
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May 9, 2024

Ms Anna MacDonald
Director, Provincial Land Use Plans Branch
Planning & Growth Division
Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing
Government of Ontario
777 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
growthplanning@ontario.ca

Re: Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

Dear Ms MacDonald:

On behalf of the Toronto Wholesale Produce Association (TWPA), I am writing to comment on the updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement released on April 10, 2024, and how it impacts the Ontario Food Terminal. As you may know, on any one day, approximately 5,000 employees work at the Ontario Food Terminal, and the Terminal indirectly employs tens of thousands more throughout the province.

As you know, "A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" (2019) included a policy framework for the protection of employment areas that are critical to the region's economy. It noted: "The Minister may identify provincially significant employment zones and may provide specific direction for planning in those areas to be implemented through appropriate official plan policies and designations and economic development strategies."

On October 8, 2019, the Minister identified the Ontario Food Terminal as a Provincially Significant Employment Zone (PSEZ). As part of the notice of the decision, the Ministry observed:

The Terminal plays an important role as a key economic hub for the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. The identification of the Terminal as Zone 30 in the provincially significant employment zone mapping is a reflection of the importance of the strategic location of the Terminal and the critical role it plays in providing Ontario's farmers with a market to get their produce to Ontario families. Further, there are many jobs that rely on the Terminal's success, including farmers, retailers, supply chain logistic distributors, grocers, restaurants and the general public. As the largest wholesale produce market in Canada and the third largest in North America, the Terminal is an area of high economic output and impact.

Many stakeholders including TWPA applauded the Minister's decision to identify the Ontario Food Terminal as a PSEZ.

A review of the “Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024”, however, appears to indicate that the Ministry has removed all policies related to the PSEZ. Given that the Ontario Food Terminal remains as critical to the province’s economy and food security as it was in 2019 – and not just to farmers and wholesalers, but also small grocery retailers, restaurants and end consumers – TWPA is inquiring as to what protections the Ministry is planning to afford the Ontario Food Terminal and its surrounding area going forward.

We believe that it is imperative that the provincial government continue to use its land use planning tools to protect critical employment areas such as the Ontario Food Terminal. The Terminal is a unique combination of wholesalers and farmers – which has a significant influence on the price of produce sold throughout Ontario – and active measures are necessary to ensure that it is not overwhelmed by development. We all agree that more affordable housing is necessary, but just as important are good-paying jobs in the city.

If the Ministry is not going to continue with the PSEZ policy framework, we strongly encourage you to find an alternative tool that is of equal or greater strength.

I appreciate your time in reading this submission. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Weinstein".

Randy Weinstein
President

cc: Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister