



Committee of the Whole  
Agenda published December 19, 2025  
Addendum published January 9, 2026

Date: January 12, 2026  
Time: 9:30 am  
Location: Council Chambers, City Hall, second floor

Pages

**13. Statutory Public Meetings**

13.1 City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1:  
Employment Area

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| a. | Staff presentation regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26)  | 1 - 10  |
| b. | Mike Corker, Halton Condo Corp 86/ MTechHub regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26)                   | 11 - 29 |
| c. | Glenn Wellings, Wellings Planning Consultants Inc, regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26)            |         |
| d. | Carl Mandel regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26)   |         |
| e. | Correspondence from T. J. Cieciora, Design Plan Services Inc, regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26) | 30 - 34 |
| f. | Correspondence from Emshih Developments Inc., regarding City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area (DGM-01-26)                 | 35 - 36 |

**Statutory Public Meeting**

# City Initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 and ROPA No.1: Employment Area

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Staff Presentation | DGM-01-26

January 13, 2026



# Introduction: Project Timeline



Two Public Open houses



Five Meet with a Planner meetings



One written submission

What we've heard so far ...



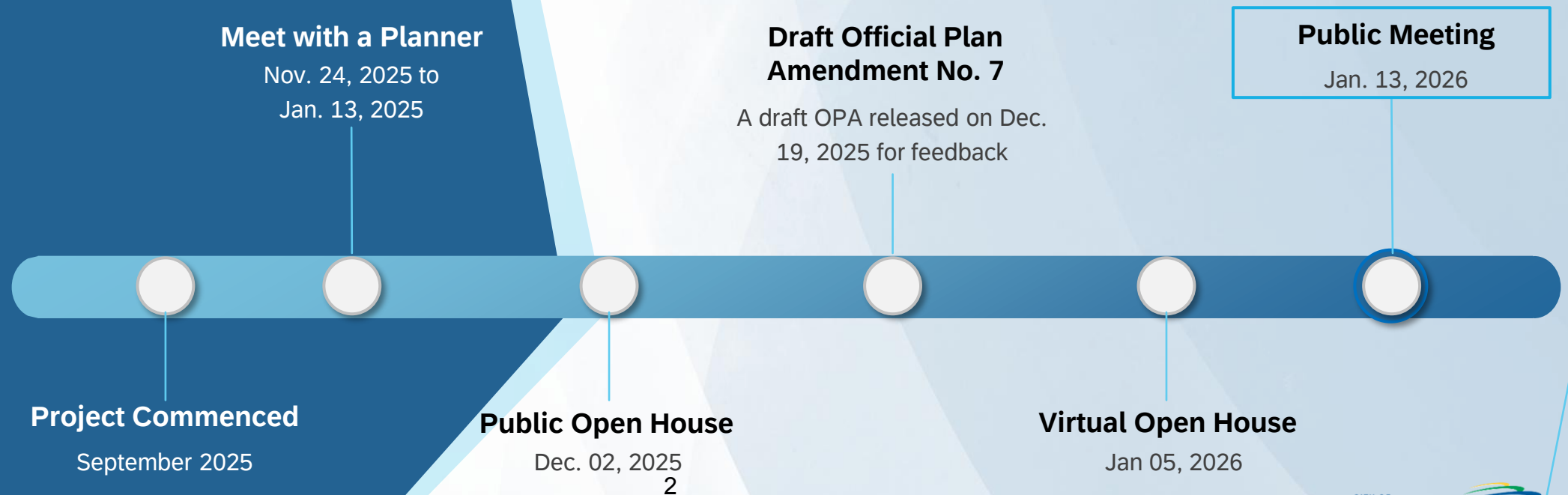
Impacts of Change



Land Use, Infrastructure, and Review Process



Implementation and Transition



# 5,000

active business operating City wide

# 40%

of all businesses are located in the Employment Area

# 45%

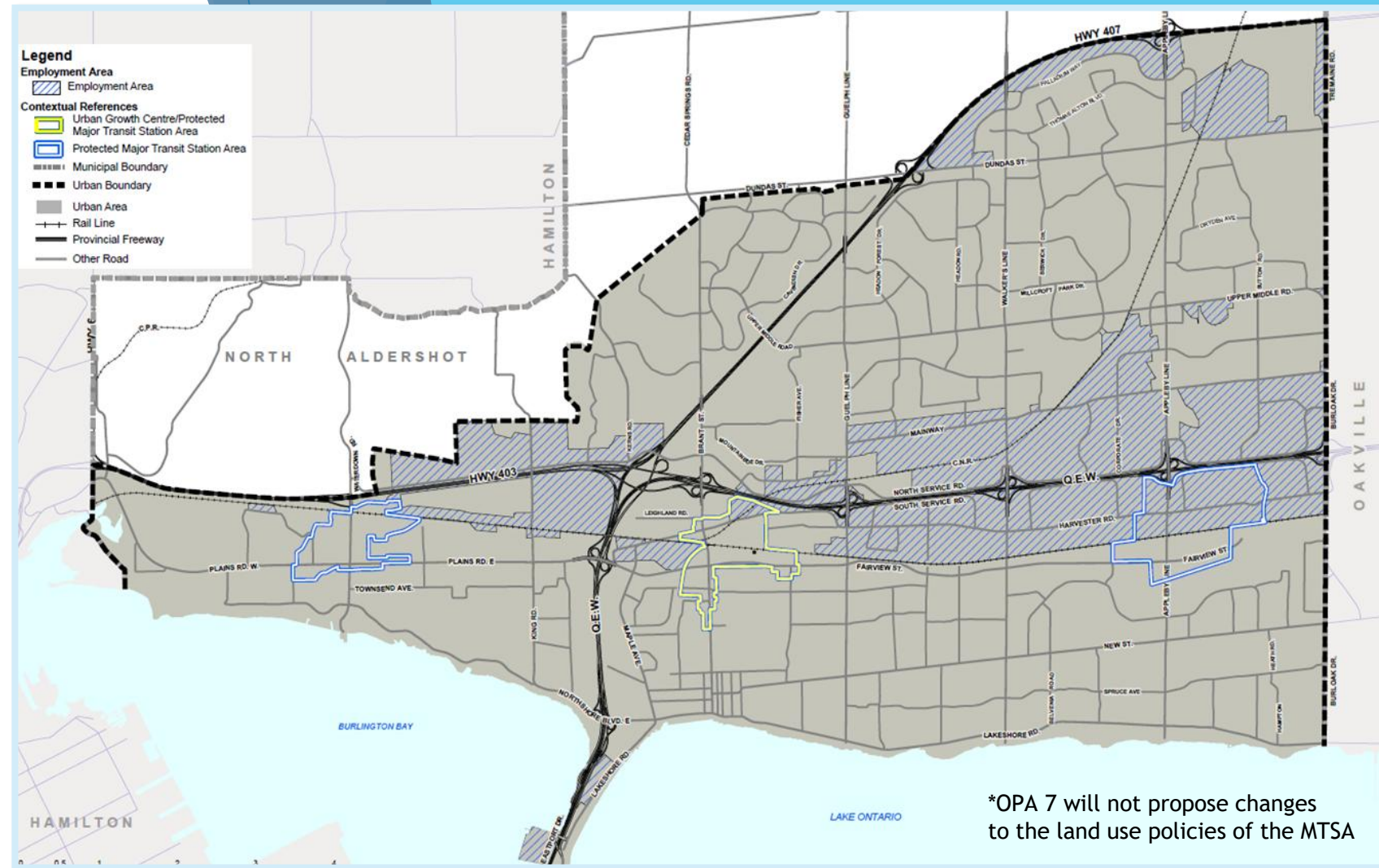
of total employment in Burlington is within the Employment Area

# 22,000

Forecasted job growth between 2024 & 2051 across the City

\*Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study, 2025

## Snapshot of Burlington's Employment Area



\*OPA 7 will not propose changes to the land use policies of the MTSA

# Planning Framework Summary

## Provincial Changes

### Bill 185

Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024



- **Halton Region** as an upper-tier municipality **without planning responsibilities**.

### Bill 97

Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023



- **New “area of employment”** definition
- **Transition policy** – Lawfully established uses before October 20, 2024

### Repeal of Growth Plan, 2019 and replaced by New PPS 2024



Removal criteria:



















- **Sufficient** employment lands
- Identified **need for the removal**;
- Avoid, minimize and mitigate **negative impact**;
- Availability of **infrastructure and public service** facilities.


## Burlington's response to Provincial Changes

- ▶ Population and Employment Growth Analysis Study
- ▶ Burlington Official Plan 2020, Targeted Realignment Exercise



# Changes to: Employment Area Definition

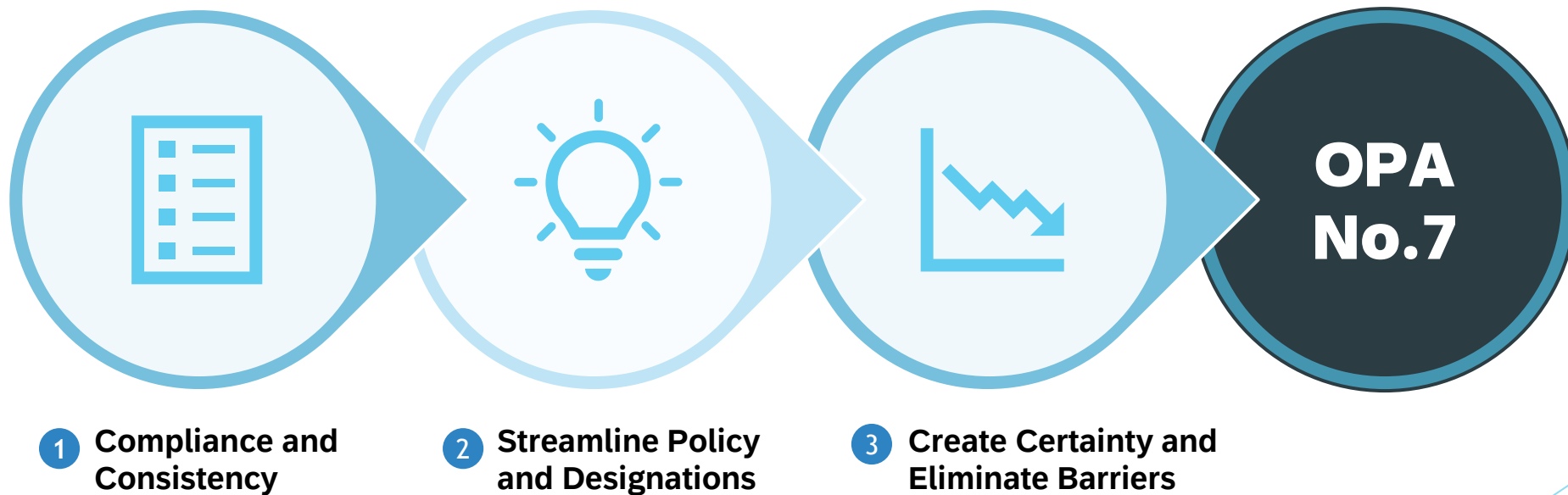
	Old	New
 <b>Manufacturing</b>		
 <b>Warehousing</b>		
 <b>Office</b>		
 <b>Retail/Commercial</b>		
 <b>Institutional</b>		
 <b>Public Service</b>		

 Permitted as a use associated with warehousing or manufacturing

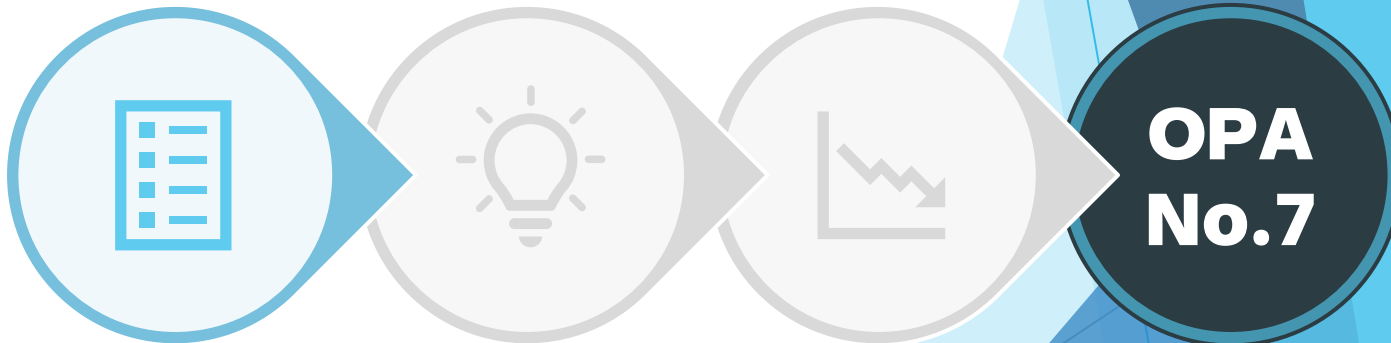
# Proposed Approach to address Changes

- ▶ The City of Burlington is proposing an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 7 to the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 and an Amendment to the Regional Official Plan, 1995 (ROPA).

## OBJECTIVES of the proposed OPA:



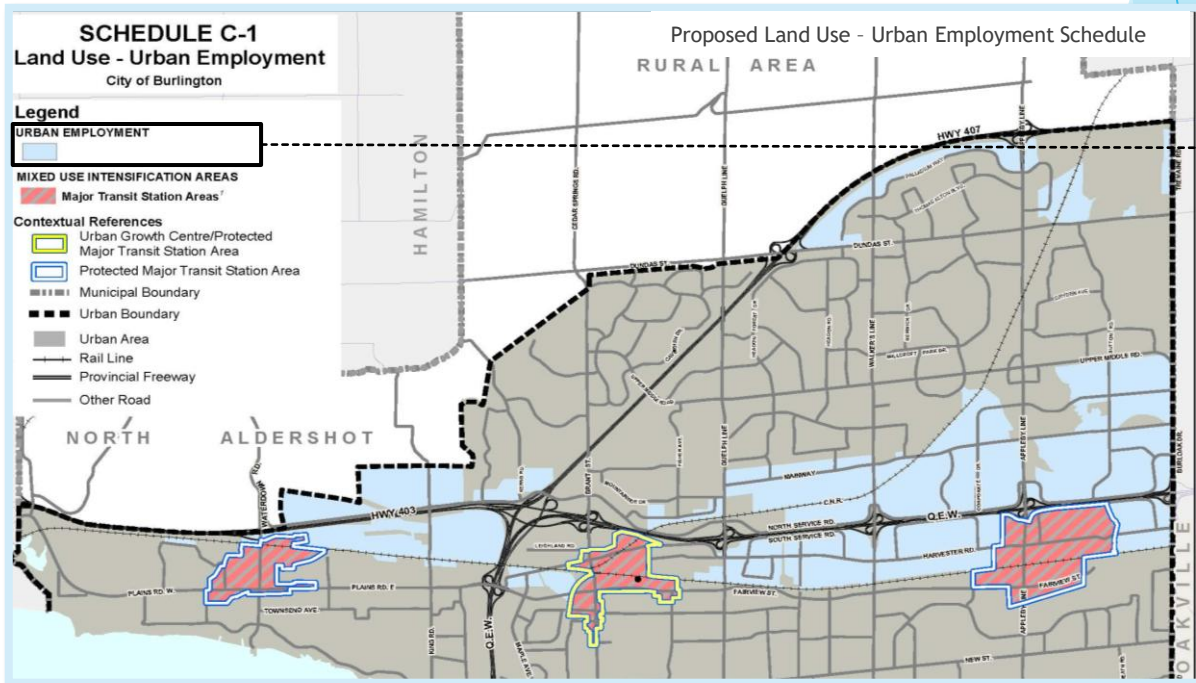
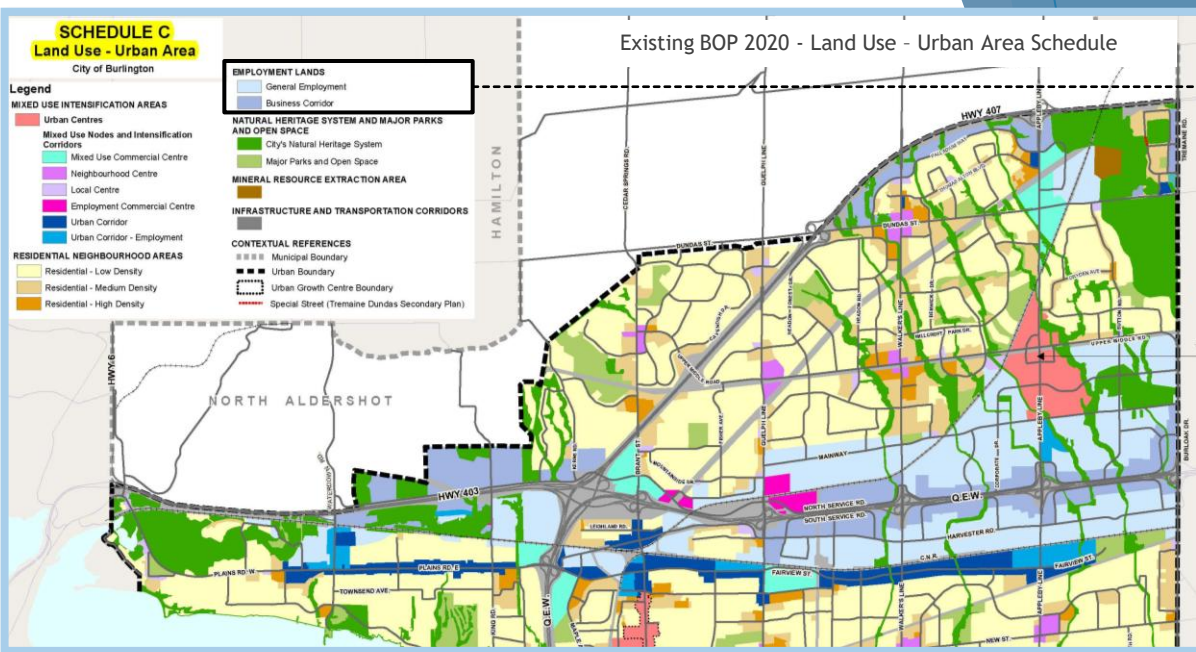
# Proposed OPA Objectives



## 1 Compliance and Consistency

- City's Employment Area definition = “**area of employment**” Planning Act.
- **Land use permissions** to align with new definition
- Non-Employment Area uses are **permitted to continue only if the use was lawfully established on the parcel of land prior to October 20, 2024.**
- Policy protecting the Employment Area remains. **New approach to remove land from the Employment Area to align with PPS.**
- **No employment land removals** are proposed as part of this amendment.



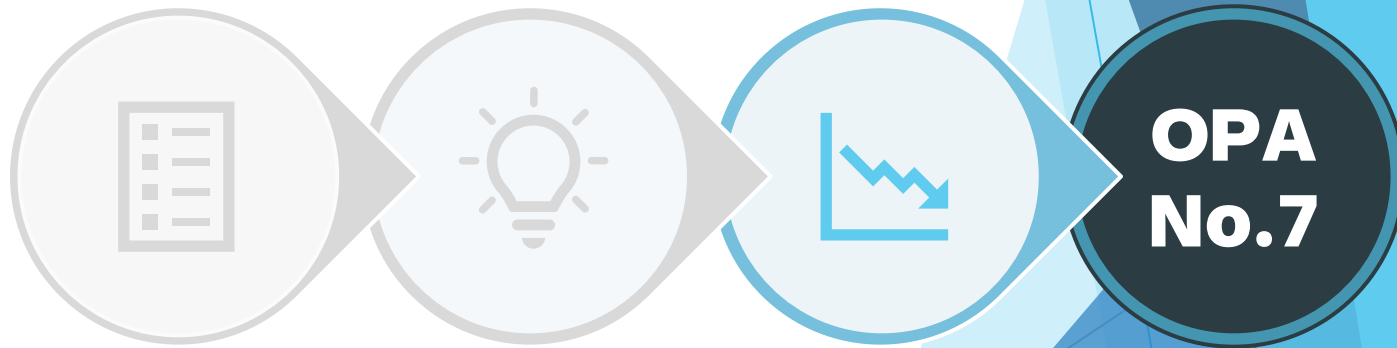


## 2 Streamline Policy and Designations

- Propose to **Remove Policies**:
  - No longer relevant/not aligned with the new definition/policy.
  - Addressed through recent **policy initiatives**.
  - Use the **appropriate tools** to identify strategic directions for future work/studies
- Address design with general **urban design policies and site plan control**, and setbacks/separation through zoning regulations
- Consolidate to **one land use** designation – **Urban Employment**, with the exception of areas within the MTSAs.

General Employment designation  
+  
Business Corridor designation  
= Urban Employment

# Proposed OPA Objectives



## 3 Create Certainty and Eliminate Barriers

- Staff are **exploring a Community Planning Permit System** for Burlington's Employment Area.
- **Builds on** extensive work already completed for the Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs).
- Opportunity to **apply a streamlined approach** to another key area of the City.

### What is a Community Planning Permit System?

- Combines multiple approvals into **one streamlined process**, including:

Zoning By-law  
Amendment

Site Plan  
Control

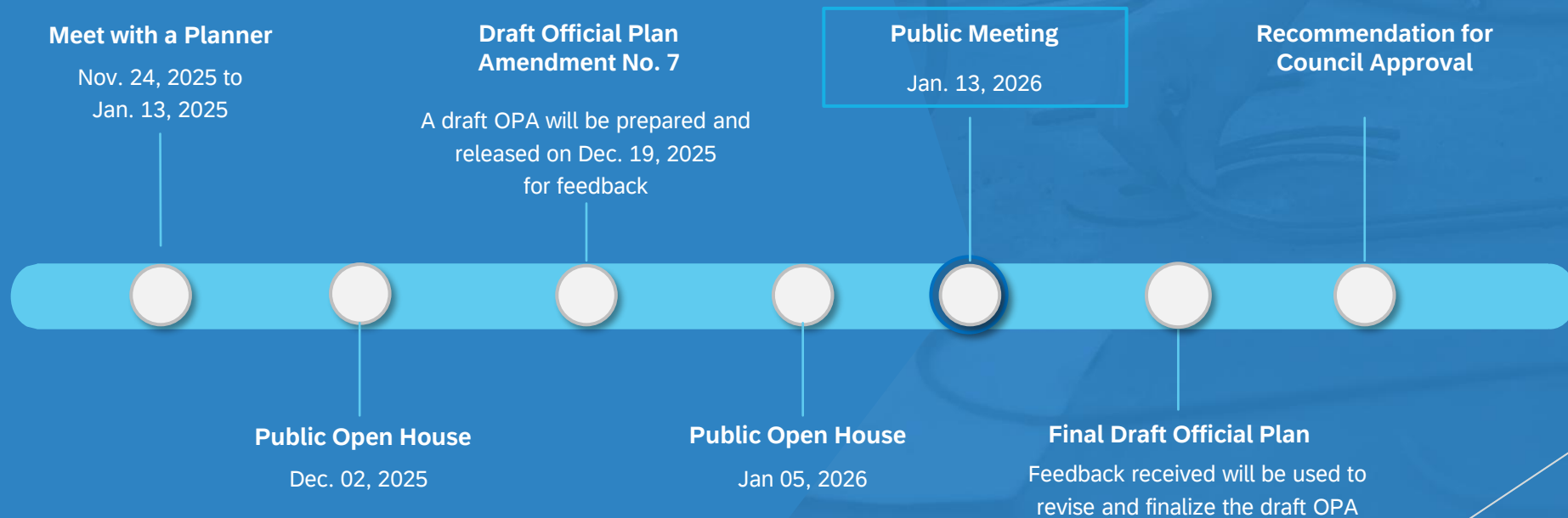
Minor  
Variance

Community Planning Permit System

- Does not replace land division approvals or building permits.

# Next Steps ...

Staff will consider all feedback received and will bring forward to Council a recommendation for approval of the proposed OPA and ROPA.



# January 13<sup>th</sup> 2026 Public Meeting

Official Plan Amendment to Employment Area

Presenter: Mark Corker

# Background - Mark Corker

- Lived in Burlington since 1981
- Tech Entrepreneur – Seradex ERP software is sold globally
- Real Estate Owner in Employment Lands Area
- President of Halton Condo Corp 86 (Walkers Line & Mainway)
- Founder and Executive Director of MTechHub
  - A Cluster for 400 Canadian Manufacturers Adopting Technology
- Board Member of Wood Manufacturing Cluster of Ontario
- Active in the EU Cluster Ecosystem

# Core Objectives for PPS

- ✓ **Support an "Investment-Ready" Economy:** Ensuring a supply of land for manufacturing and logistics to keep Ontario competitive.
- ✓ **Ensuring Long-Term Economic Viability:** Prevent industrial operations from being "pushed out" by housing that might complain about noise, odors, or traffic.
- ✓ **Optimization of Infrastructure:** Align employment growth with transit and existing sewage/water capacity for more compact development.



# Property Uses under PPS

Protected		Exclude
Manufacturing		Standalone retail (malls, plazas)
Warehousing		Standalone office buildings
R&D related to manufacturing		Institutional uses (schools, hospitals)
Ancillary offices serving the site		Commercial recreation

High Employment Density

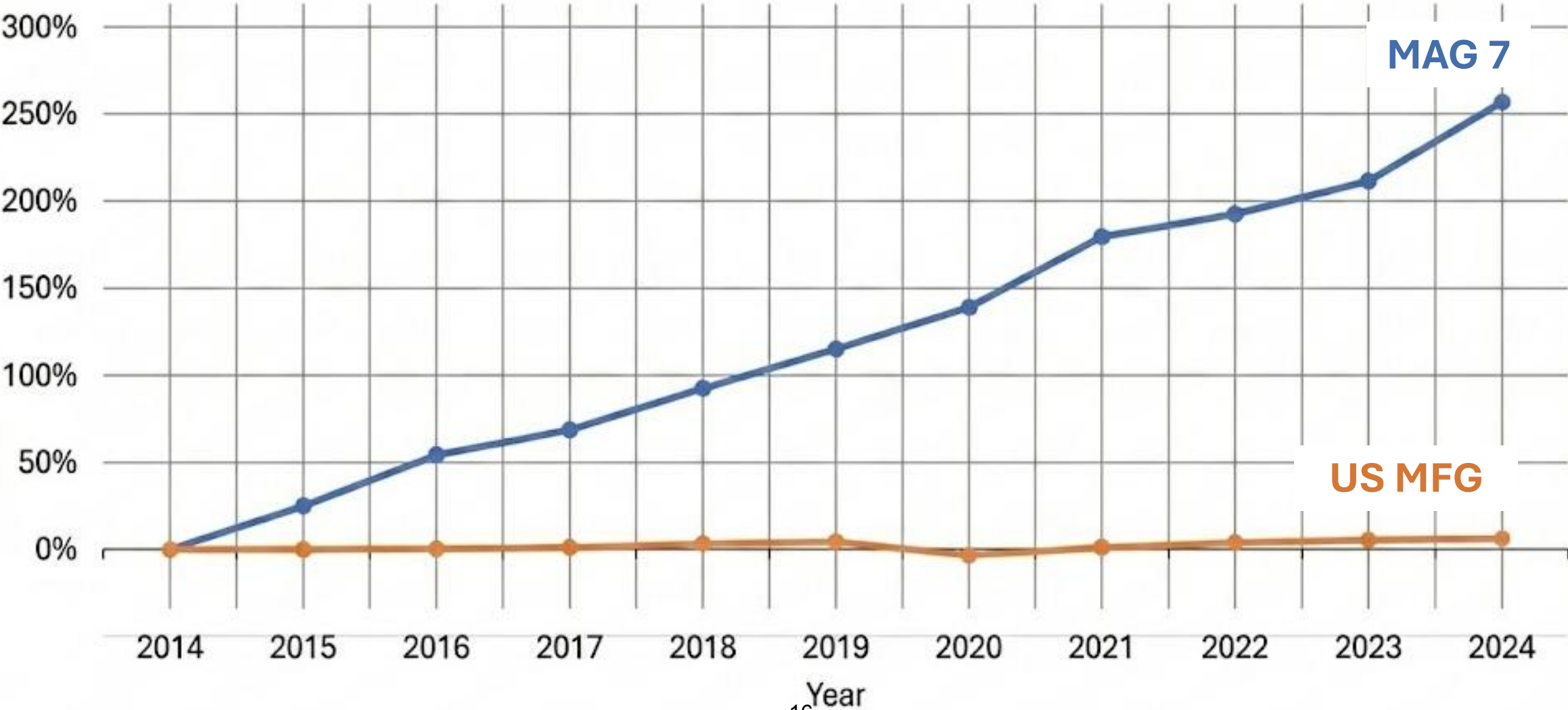


Low Wages

High Wages

Low Employment Density

# Employment Growth – Last Decade





## Hamilton Fulfillment Centre

- 5000 Robots
- Miles on conveyors
- Access to Airport and Highways
- 250 Tractor Trailers per day



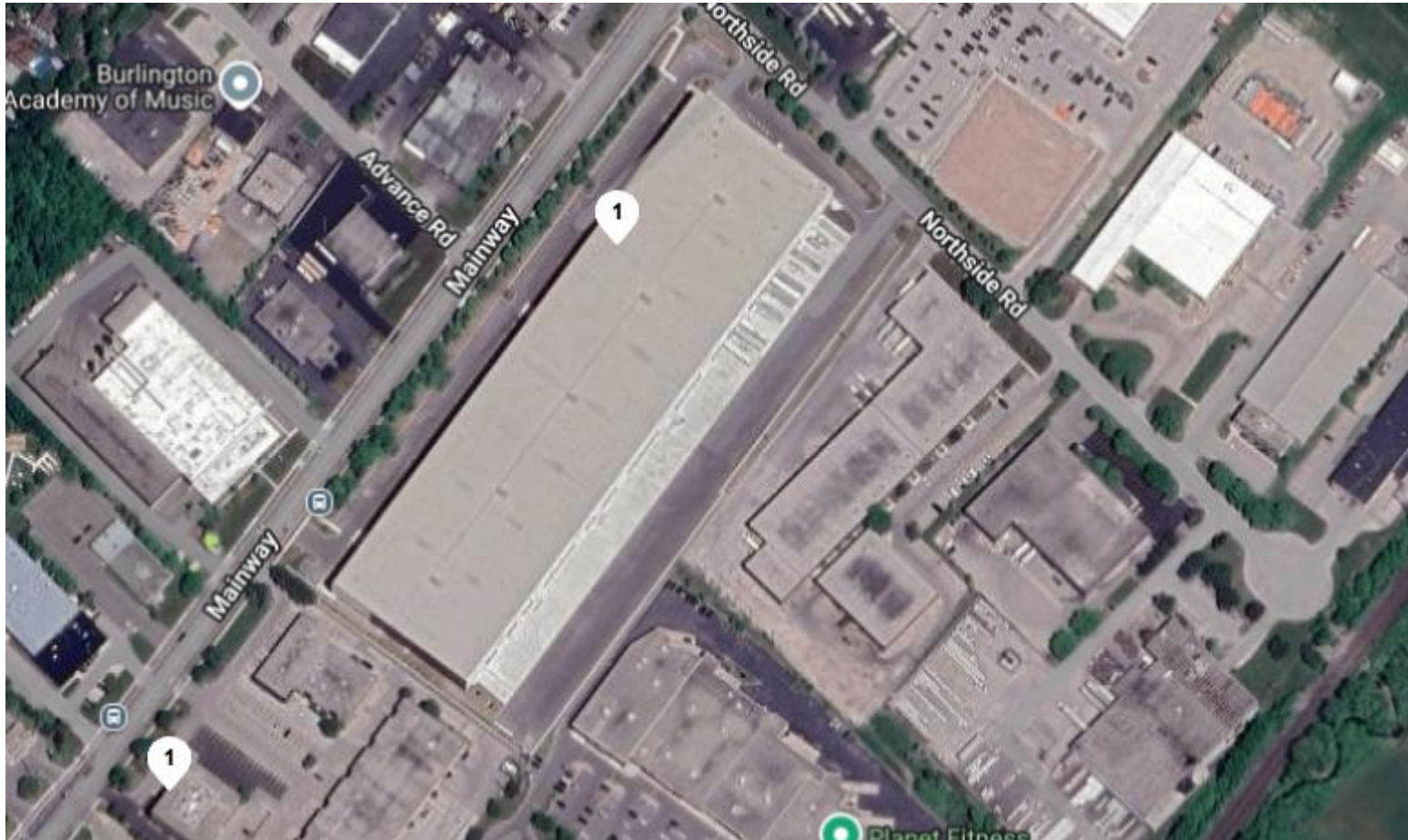
	Amazon Hamilton	Industry Average
New Build Cap Ex	\$340 / sq ft	\$80
Footprint	800K Sq Ft	300K
Storage	4.0M – 5 levels	300K 1 level
Picks per hour per worker	400	60

# DEATH OF THE WAREHOUSE





# Warehouse 3100 Mainway



Listed for 550 Days

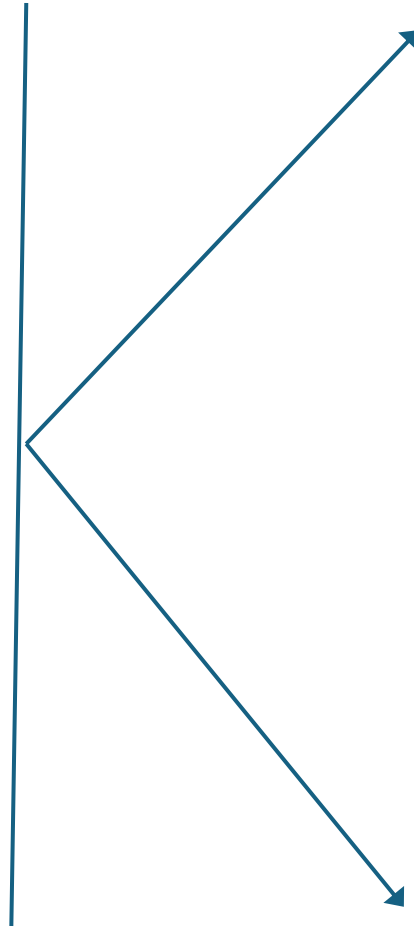


# Warehousing

- Short term leases
- Low switching cost = tenant moves out
- Low pay unskilled shift work jobs
- Low job density per 1000 sq ft / low demand for public transit
- Low land-value as prospects are not economically viable
- Efficiency needs tall clear heights, huge footprints, and advanced infrastructure—none of which fit small-warehouse zoning.
- Logistics is consolidating into fewer, larger, more automated hubs, small warehouses may become niche or underutilized.
- Limited truck staging and yard space: Advanced operators need dozens of docks, trailer parking, and queueing lanes.

# K Shaped Economy

Golden Horseshoe Growth: Digital, Tech, Mfg, AI, Green  
What's booming – data centers, AI, Digital  
Good Wages



This zoning proposal  
drives building use from  
Top Prong to Bottom Prong

Manual labor and low skill white collar  
Reduced or Eliminated by Digital & AI  
Negative Growth  
Low Wages

# Why is zoning protecting these jobs?

## Nights Warehouse Lead Hand

Gordon Food Service  · 3.5 ★

Milton, ON


\$22 an hour - Full-time

## Warehouse Team Member (Weekend Shift)

Princess Auto  · 3.2 ★

Milton, ON

## Warehouse Operations Team Lead (Mandarin speaker)

CTS Global Logistics (Canada) Inc 

2995 Peddie Road, Milton, ON

\$19-\$25 an hour - Full-time

## Pull-away/Pallet Runner

CPU US  · 2.8 ★

Milton, ON

\$20 an hour

# Industrial Policy – EU Research

## Zoning Doesn't Work

- Top Down Zoning: lead to inefficient land use and wasted resources. They fail to account for the organic, complex factors (networks, knowledge spillovers) that create successful clusters
- Fumbles Transitions: Creates "left behind" regions with no support for new growth sectors
- Policy Limitations: Broad public policies have limited impact on industrial growth;
- Clusters need specific interventions to target growth bottlenecks

## What Does Work

- Fostering Networks to share Challenges
- Infrastructure & Logistics Support
- Training Support
- Supply Chain Improvements

# BEDC Website

## OUR KEY INDUSTRIES

- ✓ Advanced Manufacturing
- ✓ Food & Beverage
- ✗ Biomedical & Life Sciences
- ✗ Clean Technologies
- ✗ Information & Communication Technology
- ✗ Professional & Technical Services



Can't locate 4 of 6 key industries in "Employment Lands"

# Industrial Policy Focus Points



# Genesis of Cluster Formation



## Executive MBA in Digital Transformation

Over 14 months, we will provide you with the tools, resources, and knowledge to develop as a leader who will contribute to and grow the evolving digital economy. Course material is delivered online and is structured around four in-person residencies throughout the program, taking place at the Ron Joyce Centre campus in Burlington, Ontario, with one travel residency.



# Fiber & 5G to the Factory


- AI, Industry 4.0, IoT, Logistics, Ecommerce – all depend on high-bandwidth fiber, redundant networks, 5G and Fiber infrastructure

# Fiber & 5G to the Factory

- Burlington is bottom 10% in connectivity
- No 5G
- No Fiber
- 1980's Infrastructure
- Transform to a Digital Leader



# Property Uses to Maximize Employment Lands

Protected		Exclude
Manufacturing		Standalone retail
Standalone office for Technology Providers		Warehousing
R&D related to manufacturing		Institutional uses (schools)
Ancillary offices serving the site		Commercial recreation

Chair and Members of the Committee of the Whole  
City of Burlington  
426 Brant Street  
Burlington, ON  
L7R 3Z6



Friday, January 9, 2026

**RE: STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING – OPA 7 AND ROPA 1 INPUT  
4279 PALLADIUM WAY**

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We are writing on behalf of our client, Kindera Living, the owners of the lands municipally known as 4279 Palladium Way (the Subject Property). We have reviewed the materials released pertaining to the City-initiated Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (OPA 7) and Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 1 (ROPA 1), including the associated Appendices and background studies.

We are submitting this letter to provide input for the Committee’s consideration regarding the proposed policy framework. While we recognize the necessity of updating the City’s Official Plan to conform to the new definition of ‘Area of Employment’ introduced by Bill 91 and the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS), the proposed implementation creates a policy gap for non-industrial employment uses (specifically office, commercial, and institutional uses) that are vital to Burlington’s economic future.

We respectfully submit the following technical comments and a proposed solution for the Committee’s consideration.

### **Subject Property Context**

The Subject Property and the surrounding Palladium Way corridor are characterized by a prevalence of non-employment uses and proximity to sensitive land uses, rather than a cohesive industrial cluster. As illustrated in Attachment 1 (Existing Land Use Context), the lands along Palladium Way, between Walkers Line and Appleby Line, contain a diverse mix of uses including places of worship (e.g., New Apostolic Church, St. George's Anglican Church), existing long-term care facilities, self storage uses,

office uses, retirement residences, public park and commercial plazas.

Furthermore, the Subject Property is physically isolated from broader industrial clusters by major physical barriers, including the Highway 407 corridor to the north, Walkers Line to the west, Sheldon Creek to the east, and the established residential community immediately to the south. Additionally, due to the prevalence of sensitive land uses in the immediate vicinity (such as the residential neighbourhood directly south of Palladium Way and the various institutional uses along the corridor), heavy industrial uses (Class II or III facilities) would likely not be feasible to construct on the Subject Property due to provincial land use compatibility guidelines (D-Series guidelines) and required setbacks.

### **Status of Employment Area**

Based on the context outlined above, the Subject Property does not form part of a "cluster of business and economic activities" as defined by the PPS 2024. Thus, the Subject Property is not an Area of Employment as per the Planning Act.

It is critical to note that the existing, in-force policy framework already recognizes this reality. Both the Region of Halton Official Plan and the Burlington Official Plan (1997) currently permit institutional uses on the Subject Property and the surrounding lands. Specifically, Policy 4.3(c) of the 1997 Official Plan permits institutional uses within all land use designations in the Urban Planning Area (with limited exceptions), and the Regional Plan permits these uses subject to specific criteria. This confirms that these lands have developed under a regime that permits and encourages diverse uses, rather than functioning as a strictly industrial employment area.

Therefore, by designating these lands as "Urban Employment" under the proposed OPA 7 framework, the City would be effectively limiting the permitted uses to warehousing, and research and development. Given the compatibility constraints and the existing mixed-use character of the area, this restriction would severely limit the usability of the land and could have the effect of limiting employment growth on a site that is well-serviced and strategically located.

### **Growth Analysis Review**

The disconnect between the proposed designation and the on-the-ground reality is supported by the City's background study. The Growth Analysis Review prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., dated February 14, 2025, notes that a substantial portion of the City's employment base currently located in the proposed Employment Lands does not fall within the new Provincial Definition of an "Area of Employment."

Consequently, the proposed amendments will relegate a large percentage of active properties and jobs



to a “lawfully established” (legal non-conforming) status. While the transition policies proposed will protect these existing jobs, this may create uncertainty for businesses that are “employment” in nature (e.g., offices or institutional uses) but no longer meet the new definition.

### **Urban Employment Land Use Designation**

The currently approved (though appealed) Burlington Official Plan 2020 included distinct designations (General Employment and Business Corridor) that accommodated a broader range of employment uses, including office and institutional functions. These designations recognized that “employment” is not solely heavy industry, nor are these uses necessarily appropriate for every parcel of land designated employment (such as the Subject Property).

By consolidating these designations into a single, more restrictive “Urban Employment” designation to align with the PPS 2024, OPA 7 removes the permissive policy basis for major sectors of employment growth. Specifically, it is unclear where new institutional (e.g., long-term care centres, trade schools) or major office developments are intended to locate outside of Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA).

While MTSAs are appropriate for high-density mixed use, they are not always suitable or sufficient for all forms of office or institutional development, particularly those requiring larger land parcels or specific campus-style configurations. The removal of these uses from permissions in employment lands leaves these uses without a designated “home” in the City’s land use structure.

Under the in-effect Burlington Official Plan 1997, Employment Lands are identified as the primary locations for both industrial and office activities. The proposed OPA 7 framework secures a place for industrial activities but explicitly displaces office and institutional activities without providing a clear alternative land use designation. As a result, a significant portion of Burlington's projected job growth will not be permitted on lands historically designated to accommodate it, without a specific designation to replace it.

### **Our Recommendation**

We strongly recommend that the City modify OPA 7 to:

1. Remove the Subject Property and the Palladium Way corridor from the "Urban Employment" designation and the "Employment Area" boundary. As detailed above, these lands do not function as an Area of Employment under the PPS 2024 definition, and the introduction of heavy industrial uses is neither feasible nor compatible with the surrounding context.
2. Apply an additional land use designation (e.g. "Transitional Employment" or "Business Park") to these lands to accommodate the uses removed from the "Area of Employment" definition.

This approach is supported by the Growth Analysis Review commissioned by the City. In Appendix F

to the City's Staff report DGM-01-26, the authors recommend that the City:

"Consider developing a transitional land use designation adjacent to Employment Areas... The creation of a new employment land use designation for transitional lands adjacent to Employment Areas would provide greater opportunities to accommodate certain non-retail, non-industrial uses that would not be permitted under the new provincial Employment Area definition but that are also not typically accommodated in mixed-used commercial areas."

The report further lists potential uses for this designation, including places of worship, daycares, funeral homes, recreational facilities, and auto repair. These are uses that OPA 7 currently does not provide for, notwithstanding the transitional policies provided. Implementing this recommendation would ensure that a significant portion of Burlington's job growth has a dedicated place to grow.

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

**DESIGN PLAN SERVICES INC.**



**T.J. Cieciura, MSc MCIP RPP**  
**PRESIDENT**

Encl.

TJC/amp



# Legend

★ Subject Property (4279 Palladium Way)

--- Employment Area

## Existing Use

Employment Area

Non-Employment - Institutional

Non-Employment - Other

Vacant Land

1:10,000







## EMSHIH DEVELOPMENTS INC.

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895 Brant Street, Suite #7  
Burlington, ON  
L7R 2J6

Tel: (905) 639-9006  
Fax: (905) 632-3337

January 9, 2026

E-mail

City of Burlington  
426 Brant Street  
Burlington, ON L7R 3Z6

Attention: Jo-Anne Rudy, City Clerk

**RE: Committee of the Whole – Development & Growth Management**

**Statutory Public Meeting: City-Initiated Proposed Official Plan Amendment for Employment Area (DGM-01-26)**

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this letter as a written submission from Emshih Developments Inc. (Emshih) as it relates to Official Plan Amendment 7 (OPA 7). Properties affected by OPA 7 include 901 Guelph Line and 501 North Service Road.

We understand that the City of Burlington is proposing an Official Plan Amendment to the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 and Regional Official Plan, 1995, regarding updated policies to align with the recently updated Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 related to Employment Areas. Emshih is pleased to have the opportunity to work closely with staff through the public engagement process and have had the opportunity to discuss our concerns with staff.

This letter summarizes Emshih's comments and concerns regarding the implications of the PPS 2024 updated definition for Employment Areas on the City of Burlington's employments areas and related policy framework.

- Concern that proposed updates will limit Burlington's competitiveness with new employment attraction and growth
- Employment lands will be limited to manufacturing and warehousing; according to Statistics Canada, manufacturing accounts for approximately 10% of the employment industry in the region
- Limitation on permitted uses will freeze lands from other office and service-related employment uses which make up a larger portion of the employment industry
- Limitation on permitted uses may also constrain existing "non-confirming" uses from expansion; it is unknown if expansions of existing uses will become prohibited as a result of updates to the policy framework

- There are no large swaths of land to support larger scale manufacturing and warehousing uses; Province removed 2 large parcels of employment lands for employment conversion
- Many lands within the employment area are fragmented or limited by existing sensitive uses (encroach within 300m setback per D6 guidelines etc.) therefore will not be able to support the permitted uses
- Prohibited uses (office, commercial and retail not associated with manufacturing and warehousing) will be directed to mixed-use areas where land is much more expensive; land is fragmented and more difficult to assemble and less financially feasible to development for employment uses

Emshih strongly recommends that Committee and Council consider the implications of the proposed updates to the City of Burlington's employment lands policy framework through proposed OPA 7 and defer approval until more information is available. Staff should work closely with the Burlington Economic Development Corporation and other stakeholders that will be impacted by the proposed changes to the employment areas. The growth and prosperity of Burlington's employment lands will be greatly at stake.

We look forward to continued collaboration amongst the City of Burlington and stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Emshih Developments Inc.