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March 23, 2026

VIA EMAIL

Mayor Andrea Horwath and Members of City of Hamilton Council
City of Hamilton
71 Main St. W., 1st Floor
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 4Y5

Attention: Lisa Kelsey, Clerk, Planning Committee

Your Worship and Members of Council,

RE: 386 Wilcox Street
March 24, 2026 Planning Committee Meeting Item 9.6 – PED26034: City Initiated
Official Plan Amendments for Phase 1 of the Employment Area Review (City Wide)
****Correspondence on behalf of Slate HWD Inc.****

We are legal counsel for Slate HWD Inc. (“**Slate**”), being the owner of the property municipally known as 386 Wilcox Street in the City of Hamilton (the “**Property**”). Slate is also the owner of the property municipally known as 957 Burlington Street, which is in close proximity to the Property (the “**Burlington Property**”).

We have reviewed Report No. PED26034 dated March 24, 2026 submitted by the Acting Director of Planning and Chief Planner for consideration by the City of Hamilton Planning Committee as Item 9.6 – City Initiated Official Plan Amendments for Phase 1 of the Employment Area Review (the “**Staff Report**”). We are writing to provide Slate’s preliminary concerns with the proposed amendment to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan (the “**Official Plan**”) included as Attachment “A” of the Staff Report (the “**Draft OPA**”).

For the reasons generally set out below, Slate requests that the Draft OPA be modified to maintain the land use policy framework that currently applies to the Property and the Burlington Property.

The Steelpoint Master Plan

The Property was historically used for the full scale Stelco operations in Hamilton that have significantly reduced overtime, and is soon to be confined to its cold rolled steel mill. The Burlington Property was historically used for office purposes associated with the Stelco operations, which uses have since ceased.

Slate has been actively engaged in developing a transformative employment generating redevelopment of the Property for several years through a master plan process. Specifically, the “Steelpoint Master Plan” envisions the redevelopment of approximately 1,000,000 square metres

of new gross floor area over 211 hectares of land with a range of employment generating uses, including commercial, and public amenity uses, new transportation and servicing infrastructure and public realm networks to support the movement of people and goods.

The Steelport Master Plan will generate substantial private investment in modern, state-of-the-art employment uses. Slate has undertaken an extensive process of stakeholder engagement with the public and all levels of government, including the federal and provincial governments. It is anticipated that the Steelport Master Plan will create considerable new employment opportunities in the City of Hamilton, and the City has been a key municipal stakeholder in supporting this monumental project.

Of note, the Steelport Master Plan has been developed to implement key objectives of the Bayfront Industrial Area Strategy, which was prepared by the City to encourage economic growth, investment and to support the transition of the Bayfront Area into “*a modern industrial campus for innovation, clean industry, resilience and progress.*” The Bayfront Industrial Area Strategy sets out objectives to achieve this vision, which specifically promote the development of various employment generating uses, notably office and other commercial uses, as well as amenity uses.

The Steelport Master Plan is also centred on the vision of place-making and adaptive reuse of key industrial artifacts from the former Stelco operations. Based on domestic and international case studies, including the local Cotton Factory example in the City of Hamilton, certain artifacts may potentially be adaptively repurposed for certain commercial and/or community uses, as part of a future private/public collaboration. The vision of place-making would be further enhanced by the development of pedestrian networks leading to recreational and supportive commercial uses, such as restaurants and cafes, to promote a vibrant pedestrian realm along the waterfront.

Implementation of the Steelport Master Plan remains a highly iterative process. Slate has already obtained a number of planning approvals to further the transformation of these underutilized lands. In February 2024, Slate filed an application for draft plan of subdivision approval (25T-202403), with Slate actively responding to comments from the City throughout the review process.

To-date, all of the planning and active marketing for potential employment generating uses within the Steelport Master Plan has been predicated on the in-force land use permissions contained in the Official Plan and the City’s Zoning By-law. The Property is currently within the *Employment Areas* on Schedule E (Urban Structure), it is designated *Industrial Land* on Schedule E-1 (Urban Land Use Designations), and it is zoned ‘General Industrial (M5) with site exception 433’ and a Holding provision. The in-force land use framework permits a range of industrial and other commercial uses on the Property, including retail, office, repair and service uses, restaurants, and production studios.

Concerns with the Draft OPA

Slate has been active in the City’s Employment Area Review. We enclose herewith a copy of the letter dated December 16, 2025 submitted on behalf of Slate by its planning consultant, MHBC, which identified a number of serious concerns with the proposed bifurcated (Phase 1

and Phase 2) approach to implementing provincial changes to the definition of, and permitted uses within, *areas of employment* as defined in the *Planning Act*.

The Draft OPA is proposed by City Staff as an interim (Phase 1) measure, to revise the City's land use permissions for *Employment Areas* based on the restricted land uses permitted in such areas under the *Planning Act* and the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. The proposed revisions are advanced on a general basis, without the benefit of a qualitative assessment of lands within the City's existing *Employment Areas* to determine whether the more restricted land use permissions are appropriate to guide the ongoing use of certain lands. Instead, the bifurcated approach contemplates that the more qualitative assessment of individual lands should occur later, through Phase 2. As it relates specifically to the Property, City Staff appear receptive to the introduction of additional land use permissions through Phase 2 of the City's Employment Area Review.

We have general concerns with the bifurcated approach advanced by the City through the Employment Area Review. As it relates specifically to the Property, we submit that a qualitative assessment is required before any amendments are advanced that would negate current land use permissions. The limited land use permissions proposed under the Draft OPA are in direct conflict with key objectives of the Bayfront Industrial Area Strategy, the Steelport Master Plan and principles of good land use planning.

To the extent that the intent of the Draft OPA is to protect employment lands for job creation and economic activity, it will have the opposite effect on the Property. As proposed, the Draft OPA will undermine the extensive ongoing effort to attract the considerable scale of private investment in new employment generating uses that are required to implement the Steelport Master Plan. The Draft OPA is an abrupt departure from the level of planning and stakeholder engagement undertaken to-date in support of the Steelport Master Plan, and it will negate key place-making objectives envisioned thereunder.

We submit that the Draft OPA does not have regard to matters of provincial interest in Section 2 of the *Planning Act*, and it is not consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. The current, more flexible land-use permissions that apply to the Property under the Official Plan should be maintained.

Slate has similar concerns as it relates to the Burlington Property, given its proximity to the Property and the opportunity for it to contribute to the overall objectives of the Steelport Master Plan in the general area.

Request

Slate requests that the Draft OPA be modified to maintain the land use permissions under the current *Industrial* land use designation and the general policies of the Official Plan for the Property and the Burlington Property.

As the Draft Plan Application and Steelport Master Plan advances to implementation, and following confirmation of specific land uses on the development blocks to be created, Slate is

open to participating in a qualitative review of certain lands within the Property to determine whether it may be appropriate at that time to limit permitted land uses in accordance with the general land use permissions for *Employment Areas* for such lands.

We will be in attendance at the March 24, 2026 Planning Committee Meeting, along with our client's representative, Steven Dejonckheere, to answer any questions that Members of the Committee may have.

We hereby request notice of any decision by City Council and any Committee of Council made in respect of this matter. Our address for notice is provided herein.

Should you have any questions in respect of this request, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned, or in his absence, Natalie Ast (nast@overlandllp.ca).

Yours truly,
Overland LLP



Per: Daniel B. Artenosi

Partner

Encl.

c. S. Dejonckheere/A. Gilks, Slate Asset Management



December 16, 2025

Allison Martin, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner, Sustainable Communities
Planning and Economic Development Department
Planning Division, City of Hamilton

Dear Ms. Martin:

**RE: City of Hamilton Employment Area Review - 386 Wilcox Street Hamilton (Steelport)
OUR FILE 17370B**

On behalf of our client, Slate HWD Inc. ("Slate") we are pleased to submit this letter as it relates to the lands located at 386 Wilcox Street (the "Subject Lands"). This letter is in response to Report PED25182 - City Initiated Official Plan Amendments for Phase 1 of the Employment Area Review and supports ongoing discussions with City staff regarding the process. We have significant concerns with the proposed modifications to the employment areas policy framework and the implications to the successful implementation of the on-going Steelport Master Plan.

Draft Plan of Subdivision and Steelport Master Plan

The Subject Lands have a long history of being used for steelmaking by Stelco, which continues to operate on site in a reduced capacity at its cold rolled steel mill. Over time, the scale of steelmaking operations on site has been decreasing with a majority of the site sitting vacant and underutilized.

Slate acquired the Subject Lands in 2022 with the intent of redeveloping them into a modern, master-planned employment area including municipal roads, public spaces, and flexible development parcels that could accommodate a wide range of employment and supportive uses.

The Subject Lands are subject to an ongoing Draft Plan of Subdivision Application (25T-202403), and Slate and its project team have been developing a conceptual master plan to guide the comprehensive redevelopment of the Subject Lands. The Draft Plan of Subdivision application was submitted in February, 2024 and the third submission of materials was recently filed and is under review by the City. These materials represent the vision that has been developed through the conceptual master planning exercise, including public consultation and detailed technical review.

The Steelport Master Plan is intended to provide approximately 211 hectares of developable site area accommodating upwards of 1,000,000 square metres (11,000,000 square feet) of gross floor area for a range of employment uses. The transportation and infrastructure network has also been developed to contemplate the proposed land uses, with a focus on the public realm and waterfront

access. The Subject Lands are ideally located for employment uses with unparalleled access to goods movement networks in the form of an on-site rail network connected to a CN main line, close proximity to the QEW and Red Hill Valley Parkway via Burlington Street, and direct access to Hamilton Harbour for shipping, with 1.4 km of deep-water access accommodating the largest of lake freighters. The proposed draft plan of subdivision will implement the Steelport Master Plan vision and create blocks for employment uses, open space uses and establish the public road network, including the extension of existing municipal roads, Gage Street and Depew Street northerly into the subject lands.

Policy Framework

The Subject Lands are designated 'Industrial Land' and zoned 'General Industrial (M5) with site exception 433' and a Holding provision which permits a range of industrial and supporting uses including limited retail and office, repair and service uses, restaurants, production studios etc.

The Steelport vision intends to capture these existing land use permissions for a modern employment area with a range of other compatible and supporting uses. The vision supports various City objectives including shifting to more sustainable employment uses, remediation of contaminated lands, encouragement of multi-modal transportation, and opportunities for public access and open space.

The Subject Lands are within the City's Bayfront Industrial Area, which was prepared by the City to encourage economic growth and investment and identify opportunities where public investment is required to support this objective. The vision in the Strategy is to transition the Bayfront Area into "a modern industrial campus for innovation, clean industry, resilience and progress." The Steelport application represents a significant step towards achieving the vision outlined in the Strategy.

Request

We have reviewed the City Staff Report (PED25182) and the associated mapping included as Appendix G and would note that the subject lands are identified as Employment Lands.

We acknowledge that the intent of the phased Official Plan Amendment ("OPA") is to maintain the integrity of City's formal employment areas and that phase 2 will implement the details. However, this results in significant uncertainty with respect to the future land use and investment decisions for the site, including a potentially substantial gap in time until phase 2 is concluded.

The following summarizes our concerns as it relates to the Phase 1 OPA:

- Identifying the subject lands as "Area of Employment" / "Employment Areas" as per the Planning Act / PPS definition, would limit the permitted uses on the subject lands to only:
 - i. Manufacturing uses.
 - ii. Uses related to research and development in connection with manufacturing anything.
 - iii. Warehousing uses, including uses related to the movement of goods.
 - iv. Retail uses and office uses that are associated with uses mentioned in subparagraphs i to iii.
 - v. Facilities that are ancillary to the uses mentioned in subparagraphs i to iv.
 - vi. Any other prescribed business and economic uses.

- While these uses are contemplated on the Subject Lands, this will create challenges for attracting modern employment uses and implementing the unique elements of the project including complementary office and commercial uses, adaptive reuse of cultural heritage features, public realm and public amenities.
- Given the status of the ongoing Draft Plan of Subdivision application, this proposes a substantial policy shift which may jeopardize approval of the subdivision and impact the potential for early implementation of employment growth in this location, particularly through an initial phase 1 development as contemplated for the corner of Depew Street and Industrial Drive. As a result, the Steelport project may be on hold until phase 2 of the employment policy updates is concluded.
- Restricting the types of employment uses that can locate on the Subject Lands may discourage potential tenants/investors who are concerned with the uncertainty regarding future land use permissions or looking for more flexible opportunities.
- The OPA may complicate amendments or minor variances to the zoning by-law which may be required in the short term to implement phase 1 development or register an initial phase of the subdivision.

Given the scale and opportunity of Steelport, and the ongoing Draft Plan of Subdivision application, **we request that the Steelport lands not be included in the City's future "Area of Employment" / "Employment Areas" as per the Planning Act / PPS definition, and that the in effect land use permissions remain as they are today to allow for the continuation of a range of employment uses.**


Our opinion is that removing this site from a formal Employment Area is of minimal risk to the City given that there is little to no chance that any sensitive land uses can be developed on site, given site context, existing land uses, existing conditions and the proposed Steelport application.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with staff on this monumental project and seeing the vision of Steelport come to life. The in-effect land use framework is an essential part of realizing this vision.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours truly,

MHBC



Gerry Tchisler, M.Pl., RPP, MCIP
Partner



Stephanie Mirtitsch, BES, RPP, MCIP
Associate

cc: Steven Dejonckheere, Senior Vice President, Slate Asset Management
Allison Gilks, Vice President, Slate Asset Management