

Submission to Executive Committee on Item EX24.3, Ontario Place Redevelopment Update

Ken Greenberg

Ontario Place for All

(Notes to accompany attached Slide Deck)

Slide 1

- **On behalf of Ontario Place for All**
- Who are we?
- Volunteer group of citizens motivated by our commitment to OP
www.ontarioplaceforall.com
- Formed when it became clear that the future of Ontario Place was in question
- Many thousands have engaged online and in person sharing ideas, memories and aspirations
- **ONE OF OUR CONCERNS: THE EXTRAORDINARY VALUE OF ONTARIO PLACE AS PUBLIC SPACE, EVEN NOW, IS NOT FULLY APPRECIATED**

Slide 2

- Our goals and principles?
- **To Keep Ontario Place For All We Believe:**
- **ONTARIO PLACE MUST BE FOR ALL AND KEPT PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE.**
- Before any changes, there must be a thoughtful, comprehensive public review, with a full and robust public consultation.
- Public interest, not commercial interest must drive the new vision.
- Future plans must:
 - acknowledge the waterfront's Indigenous heritage.
 - **maintain Ontario Place as part of Toronto's waterfront park system.**
 - be integrated with the revitalization of Exhibition Place.
 - celebrate Ontario.
 - preserve Ontario Place as a recognized cultural heritage landscape including the Cinesphere, the Pods and the newly added Trillium Park.

We quote former Premier William G. Davis: "Ontario Place is and was a Crown Corporation so as to serve the public of Ontario – those living in the GTA and visiting from away. It would be a shame and a disservice if commercial gain replaced the public interest on the present site of Ontario Place."

Slide 3

- **A unique legacy as a result of a remarkable collaboration and co-creation**
- Inspired by Expo 67
- **An ecologically inspired landscape setting for dynamic and innovative architecture and public use with a new meeting of land and water – touch the water**
- Inland waterways and islands

Slide 4

- The city has changed dramatically around OP in the past 50 years
- From isolation to central position on the waterfront
- Vast Population growth surrounding
- **250 K to 500K by 2041, 10's of thousands with 10-15 minute walk**
- **New Station at Ex Place – GO, Ont. Line, 509 LRT**
- **Internal loop to OP new means of getting to the site**

Slide 5

- **Active transportation – thousands moving across the waterfront**
- Trails – Martin Goodman
- Open streets on Lakeshore Boulevard

Slide 6

- **In particular the vital role OP plays and how it has been used in this year of Covid**
- The COVID pandemic has underlined the public importance of Ontario Place.
- While numerous facilities have been shuttered around the world, hundreds of thousands of people continue to flock to Ontario Place, to **relax on the lawns, walk or ride a bike, and enjoy everything the park has to offer.**
- **Even in its neglected state over a million visitors in last year**
- It is extremely important for our **physical, spiritual and mental health** to get out as often as allowed, and Ontario Place is a perfect place to do that year round

Slide 7, 8

- **The landscape and architectural conception of Michael Hough/ Eb Zeidler lends itself to this improvised DIY diverse use as a great park of a unique kind**
- Experiencing the lake
 - Islands, inland waterways
 - Extended shoreline
 - Beach

- Touch the water
- Swimming year round
- Fishing
- And the land
 - Picnicking
 - Trails, circumnavigating OP on foot, on bike
 - Boundless horizon
 - playing impromptu sports safely
- **it is a special kind of parkland – with event venues but essentially public**
- **Trillium Park and William G. Davis Trail build on the original concept and show what is possible**
 - Land Plan and West 8
 - **Indigenous inspiration – Mississaugas of the Credit – Moccasin Markers**

Slide 9

- **OP IS ALREADY AN IRREPLACEABLE RESOURCE**
- **GREATEST VALUE AS PUBLIC SPACE**
- HR&A study

“The current efforts to create a private development model for the future of Ontario Place rests on fundamentally ill-conceived and outmoded models of urban economics. It is neither in the best interests of your community, as a civic gesture, as a community gesture, and it’s fundamentally irrational as an economic strategy.”
- Alschuler has a lot of experience in building 21st century parks. HR&A Associates has helped develop some of the most innovative parks in North America, including:
 - The High Line, New York City
 - Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York City – with me
 - Dallas Park System, Dallas Texas
 - Capital Riverfront, Washington
- **And it helps create social cohesion.**

“We are cities that are struggling to try to grow in ways that are more equitable. And increasingly our neighbourhoods are stratified by income, and too often by race, and we become fragmented as a community. And if we are to continue to grow, and attract that talent from around the world, we have to have places that are devoted to breaking down that fragmentation, to breaking down that stratification.”
- What we hope to see

Remain a great freely accessible public space honouring the unique legacy of Ontario Place

The image features a background scene of a waterfront area with a large, modern building on the left and a large, white, geodesic dome structure on the right. A body of water in the foreground reflects the buildings and the sky. Overlaid on the scene is a white logo consisting of a series of interconnected, rounded, triangular shapes that form a stylized, abstract pattern. Below the logo, the text "ontario place for all" is written in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

ontario place for all

<https://ontarioplacforall.com/>

To Keep Ontario Place For All We Believe:

- **Ontario Place must be for ALL and kept publicly accessible.**
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- **Future plans must:**
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A remarkable collaboration produced a unique fusion of architecture and landscape of enduring value engaging the waterfront 50 years ago



Eberhard Zeidler



Michael Hough

In the intervening decades the city around Ontario Place has grown and transformed dramatically with a vastly increased population seeking public space



The Martin Goodman Trail leading to Ontario Place is now used by thousands



Ontario Place has proven to be an invaluable place of respite and relief providing opportunities for all manner of outdoor activities in the time of Covid







**Great cities are known for their great parks and open spaces. Our question:
Why would we ever squander the inherent value of Ontario Place...**



ECONOMIC VALUE OF OPEN SPACE
DECEMBER 2018

HR&A

...when even from a purely financial standpoint an expansive and generous waterfront park network is a powerful economic development strategy for the city and province and providing numerous benefits in terms health and well being