



Friday, March 4, 2022

Re: Notice of Motion Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Plan/Canada Malting Silos

Dear Mayor Tory and City Councillors:

On behalf of OCAD University, I am pleased to submit this letter to accompany the Member Motion from Councillor Cressy and Mayor Tory that requests City of Toronto staff to work with us to explore an exciting opportunity at the Canada Malting Silos in the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood.

The Canada Malting Silos building on the Toronto waterfront offers an ideal location for OCAD University (OCAD U) to launch its Global Centre for Climate Resilience through Art and Design (Global Centre). The Global Centre envisions working with key City of Toronto and international partners to facilitate critical dialogues and presentations on climate resilience, from the lens of art and design, and through public arts programming and partnership collaboration, community knowledge mobilization and discussion and cross-sector innovation. OCAD U's Global Centre aims to animate the north silo with interior exhibitions and exterior access for public art programming and projections, and to create public engagement on Toronto's waterfront.

GLOBAL CENTRE FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH ART AND DESIGN

The [Climate Heritage Network](#) recently released a manifesto to the 2021 United Nations Climate Conference that highlights: while “culture and the arts reflect and influence consumption patterns, mediating our awareness of nature and the planet and our relationship to the environment,” the arts and design talents have been underrepresented in international conversations as actors and strategists that serve to mobilize climate awareness and perspectives.

OCAD U aims to lead and position Toronto, globally, towards leveraging its art and design knowledge creation assets and broad partnership-base capacity, to bring about innovations in climate resilience. The university believes that more lasting and consequential benefits will come from engaging the public in thinking about sustainability and climate resilience through the lens of art and design.

The Canada Malting Silos in the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood offers a critical gateway for OCAD U's Global Centre for Climate Resilience through Art and Design to intersect with waterfront, creative city and urban planning initiatives, Great Lakes' ecological and biodiversity matters, bird migration, wind and tidal power, transportation routes (boats, airport, transit and cycling) and a growing neighbourhood population. By positioning OCAD U's Global Centre among these activities—and through the lens of art and design—where better to think about climate resiliency, locally and globally, than on the Toronto waterfront.

OCAD U prioritizes nurturing relationships with Indigenous communities, elders, students and faculty, and is committed to collaborative actions on local, regional and

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global sustainability imperatives that develop more reciprocal relationships with people and land.

OCAD U's Global Centre intends to program exhibitions, installations and symposiums, alongside local, national and international partners. Currently in discussion with partner Trans Europe Halle—an international, social incubator based in Sweden preserving abandoned buildings around the globe—OCAD U aims to leverage this new partnership alongside its existing partnerships and connections to facilitate curatorial programming and public engagement. The proximity to Lake Ontario and the Great Lakes could facilitate additional international collaborations with arts institutions and organizations in American Great Lake cities like Buffalo, New York; Cleveland, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

OCAD U pictures an off-campus cultural and innovation hub for the university to introduce art and design thinking and dialogue that build on climate resiliency; the Global Centre will engage with Toronto's major cultural programmers and present the university's art and design innovations and visions into a larger public domain. Leading and establishing curatorial themes and program visions for further realization by programming partners, OCAD U's Global Centre for Climate Resilience through Art and Design will anchor these critical dialogues via exhibition, discussion and public participation.

The Global Centre's interior and plaza programming partners may include Luminato Festival, Nuit Blanche, Toronto Biennale for the Arts, The Bentway, Waterfront Toronto, Harbourfront Centre, Art Works for Change and others. OCAD U has worked in partnership, alongside all proposed partners and will leverage other partnership relationships depending on curatorial and programming visions.

On the building's exterior, OCAD U envisions a year-round climate resiliency, audio-visual projection festival with potential partners such as Planet in Focus, imagineNATIVE Film Festival, HotDocs, TIFF and others. The university has an established relationship with AVA Animation in Motion, who have realized and received national and international accolades for their large-scale projection mapping presentations. Again, the university has pre-existing relationships with these partners and depending on curatorial vision may include other partners to ensure relevant and high engagement.

Exhibitions will be accessible to the public year-round. During the winter season, when fewer people spend time outdoors, the university may use this time differently to support research-creation or artist residencies and incubation. The plaza grounds may be used seasonally for further public programming. This may include conferences, festivals, symposia and book clubs where larger groups congregate outside. OCAD U aims to situate modular buildings in the plaza to support year-round programming. The operating hours of the Global Centre are still to be determined but the university anticipates year-round programming between the modular buildings in the plaza and the silos.

ABOUT OCAD UNIVERSITY

OCAD U is Canada's premier—and Ontario's only—art, design, and media university; the institution's focus is on training the next generation of critical, creative, and design-driven professionals. OCAD U's 4700+ students are enrolled across 18 undergraduate and 7 graduate programs that focus on art, design, digital media, and applications of these skills into wider domains; this includes fields reliant on workers creatively engaging with myriad challenges in a digital-first world. Students with international and community connections explore real-life design issues across their education. OCAD U's 500+ faculty and staff, and 25,000+ alumni, are among Canada's leading thinkers, artists and designers, inspiring our imagination and our futures.

OCAD U is both a post-secondary education entity and major culture sector player. OCAD U's gallery system presents works by students, faculty and internationally distinguished artists, designers, and researchers. Since Onsite Gallery opened in 2017, it has presented eight major exhibitions and many public engagement programs. The gallery hosted 17,000 visitors in 2019 and is one of Toronto's most innovative spaces, where communities gather to discover current ideas and practices from respected artists, designers, and curators. In late 2021, the gallery presented *Survival Architecture and the Art of Resilience*, a touring exhibition curated by Art Works for Change. The exhibition explored, in a global context, adaptable and sustainable housing in the age of climate change through the presentation of 25+ designers and architects; the exhibition was complemented by a speaker series featuring Toronto artists and researchers.

OCAD U is also a producer of major events. Its marquee event, the annual Graduate Exhibition (GradEx), is now in its 107th year. As Toronto's largest free public art event, GradEx showcases the final thesis work of over 800 graduates and welcomes over 45,000 guests from local, provincial and global communities. OCAD U also annually collaborates with the City of Toronto on Nuit Blanche. OCAD U has hosted approximately 15,000 Nuit Blanche guests, to date. OCAD U recently partnered with the City of Toronto to deliver BigArtTO: a city-wide public art celebration, during COVID-19, featuring free access to over 200 hours of temporary public artworks projected onto local buildings and landmarks. OCAD U led the creative and production aspects on behalf of the City of Toronto, and many OCAD U students and alumni exhibited their work.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this exciting initiative. OCAD U looks forward to further discussions with the City of Toronto.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ana Serrano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ana Serrano
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