

To: Toronto and East York City Council

Re: Item 2023.TE4.36 – Ontario Place – Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment - Status Report (Ward 10)

Dear Councillors,

My name is Robert and I am the CEO of Therme Group, the organization chosen through a public tendering process to play a lead role in revitalizing and rebuilding Ontario Place's West Island. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share our vision for an Ontario Place for everyone and our plan to create a place by the lake for all.

The growth of large cities has produced incredible quality of life benefits for people, yet for all the technological connections of our modern ways of living and working, we are feeling more disconnected from each other than ever, and our wellbeing is suffering as a result. Therme exists to create an oasis of togetherness and wellness in urban environments, where it can be challenging to provide these opportunities for our citizens. Toronto is a global marvel of multiculturalism and an ideal home for such a gathering place.

Toronto has the great fortune of being a waterfront city, a city by the lake. People have a primal connection with water, and strong feelings about how the West Island could or should be revitalized are understandable. We share your vision of a cleaner and greener waterfront that is accessible to everyone and believe that our proposal will deliver just that and so much more. We also understand the special relationship many have with Ontario Place and commit ourselves to ensuring it remains the beacon of inclusivity it was intended to be. Our enthusiasm for the great future we can build together at Ontario Place is boundless, and we so look forward to the beginning of many conversations and exchanges.

When we started work on the proposal one thing became very clear to us; when Torontonians and people across the province think about Ontario Place, they fondly remember spending the day on a waterslide, playing in the amusement park, or simply marvelling at the waterfront. There is no doubt that Ontario Place's West Island holds a very special place in people's Ontarians' hearts. What's also clear is that memories of what Ontario Place once was have overshadowed the reality of what it has become. Too much of the area is paved; old fast-food franchises sit empty; the paths and beach that are on the West Island are not maintained or open year-round. The island is eroding into the lake due to years of damage. Since it was built in the 1970s with landfill comprised of construction debris and waste, the soil at Ontario Place is contaminated.

Therme's plans represent an opportunity to revitalize the West Island of Ontario Place so that it can once again be a welcoming and beautiful place where everyone can gather, enjoy, play, and relax.

To make this vision a reality, we are proposing on the West Island to:

- **Create nearly 12 acres of additional urban public parkland – nearly double the size of Trillium Park.** This public park would include more beach, more gathering spaces and open up more shoreline to allow everyone to swim and enjoy the water year-round. It will offer public change

rooms, cafes, keep bathrooms clean and open year-round, all while adding 3,000 trees site wide. Unlike the Ontario Place of old, accessing this public park will be *entirely free*. This will be an investment by Therme and the maintenance of this public park by the Province will be funded by us for the life of our lease.

- **Improve access to the waterfront** by creating connections to public pathways and new trails. Our plans also add new cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to support the choices people will make regarding how to get to the site.
- **Extend and strengthen connections to the William G. Davis Trail via a new bridge to the West Island.** By providing a new link to the mainland from the West Island, people will be invited to share public parkland of nearly 20 acres and enjoy more of Ontario Place outdoors year-round.
- **Generate 2,000 construction jobs, 800 permanent jobs and an additional 800 indirect jobs.** Further, a Conference Board of Canada study noted the construction alone would boost Canada's GDP by over \$350+ million CAD.

Importantly the West Island of Ontario Place will have a guaranteed future, with high-quality, free, public spaces that will be sustained through Therme funding.

The enclosed plans are for illustrative purposes and we are committed to continuing to engage with people across the city and province—as well as with key stakeholders including the City of Toronto, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, environmental advocates, and arts and culture groups—to incorporate their feedback.

As we embark in earnest on this next exciting phase of consultation with residents and civic leaders, the needs of the surrounding communities and the city will be our guide. Let's work together to build an Ontario Place for everyone.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert C. Hanea

Founder, Chairman and CEO of Therme Group