



July 16, 2024

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Cathrine Regan

RE: EX16.5 - Ontario Science Centre Update

We appreciate and support the City Manager's report that provides an update on City staff's preliminary work related to the future of the Ontario Science Centre (OSC), further to City Council's June 26, 2024 direction. We note that the report includes an overview of:

- the provincial requirements in the lease with the City and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to operate the Ontario Science Centre at the Don Mills and Eglinton site;
- the feasibility of the City operating the Science Centre at its current location, including an assessment of potential revenues from event rentals; and
- the November 29, 2023, Provincial business case for the Ontario Science Centre relocation, and the December 6, 2023 Office of the Auditor General of Ontario Value-for-Money Audit: Science Centres (2023), which evaluated the November business case.

Further, we understand that Councillor Matlow will introduce a motion that:

“City Council direct the City Manager to request a Working Group be established regarding the Ontario Science Centre (OSC) with the Province of Ontario and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to review:

- a) the lease agreement signed in 1965 between the Province of Ontario, City of Toronto, and the TRCA requiring the building at 770 Don Mills Rd to serve as the OSC;
- b) the Province of Ontario's obligation to keep the OSC in a state of good repair;
- c) the terms of the New Deal requiring the province of Ontario to work in partnership with the City of Toronto on the future of the OSC and
- d) usage of the OSC's Building 'C' as a temporary exhibition space in lieu of an external site.”

As residents of Toronto, as users of the OSC, and as admirers of the work of Japanese-Canadian architect Raymond Moriyama, we are bitterly disappointed with the premature closing of the OSC, and the failure of the Provincial government to provide for necessary funding to ensure a State of Good Repair (SOGR)... It appears that the current Ontario government has no interest or intention to act in the best interests of the Ontario Science Centre, and its many users, and that the Provincial actions at OSC are driven by and merely consequential to their plans for Ontario Place. It is unacceptable that the Ontario government is betraying the Centennial vision of the late 1960's at not just one but BOTH sites.

As predicted by Professor Sandford Borins¹

“The Ford Government is walking away from the Moriyama building and leaving it to the City of Toronto, on whose land it sits, to do something with it. But, as [Mayor Olivia Chow made clear](#), the City doesn't have the money. If the Ford Government's desire is to destroy the Moriyama building, it certainly won't provide financial support for it to operate as a Science Centre. It may provide support for demolition and a housing development to replace the upper building. Without roof repairs and without heat in the building that contains the great hall and auditorium, the complex will deteriorate more over the winter, and demolition will likely begin next spring.”

We strongly recommend that Executive Committee support Councilor Matlow's motion.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Paul Johnson, City Manager
Jean Abou Saab, Deputy Chief of Staff, Intergovernmental and Agency Relations
Patrick Matozzo, Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management
Patrick Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Save Ontario Science Centre
Federation of South Toronto Residents Assns (FoSTRA)

¹ [Abandoning Heritage Architecture, July 15, 2024](https://www.sandfordborins.com/2024/07/15/abandoning-heritage-architecture/?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=SandfordBorins.com&utm_medium=email)
https://www.sandfordborins.com/2024/07/15/abandoning-heritage-architecture/?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=SandfordBorins.com&utm_medium=email

he Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 30 member organizations. Its members, all residents' associations, include at least 250,000 Toronto residents within their boundaries. The residents' associations that make up FoNTRA believe that Ontario and Toronto can and should achieve better development. Its central issue is not *whether* Toronto will grow, but *how*. FoNTRA believes that sustainable urban regions are characterized by environmental balance, fiscal viability, infrastructure investment and social renewal.