

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM19.25	ACTION			Ward: 12
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An Update on Work to Protect the Science Centre and Support Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Jon Burnside

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Jon Burnside, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager, in consultation with appropriate City Divisions and Agencies, to report to the July 16, 2024, meeting of the Executive Committee with an update regarding their work on the future of the Ontario Science Centre, including:

- a. provincial requirements, if any, in the lease with the City to operate the Ontario Science Centre, or other public-facing attraction at the Don Mills and Eglinton site;
- b. the feasibility of the City operating the Science Centre at its current location, including an assessment of potential revenues from event rentals; and
- c. an analysis of the November 29, 2023 Provincial business case of the Ontario Science Centre relocation and the December 6, 2023, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario Value-for-Money Audit: Science Centres (2023), which evaluated the November business case.

Summary

Last year, the Provincial Government announced their intention to move the Ontario Science Centre to a much smaller location at Ontario Place. This announcement was done without consultation with residents of Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park who rely on the Centre for employment and education opportunities. The Science Centre is also part of a burgeoning cultural district that includes the Aga Khan Museum.

The cultural attraction is an important economic driver for the local community as it brings visitors from across the city and around the world to Don Mills and Eglinton. It would be a real blow to this community to lose the Science Centre just as the opening of the Eglinton Crosstown's "Science Centre" station is about to make the attraction more accessible to the entire city. So far, over 21,500 letters regarding the importance of the Science Centre have been sent to Premier Ford through the Save Ontario Science Centre campaign.

The City of Toronto has an obligation to explore all possible means to keep the Science Centre at its current location. In July 2023, MM8.4 requested City Staff to explore avenues to have the Province continue operating the site Don Mills and Eglinton and the feasibility of the City operating the Science Centre as it does the Toronto Zoo. The financial impact statement attached to MM8.4 indicated that this work would take 9 to 12 months to complete. In the time since the motion, the Provincial government spent 1 million dollars on a business case regarding the science centre relocation, and the Auditor General of Ontario has released a value-for-money audit of the business case, concluding it was based on "preliminary and incomplete costs". This motion requests a status update on the initial work as well as supplemental analysis of the business case and value-for-money audit.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM19.25