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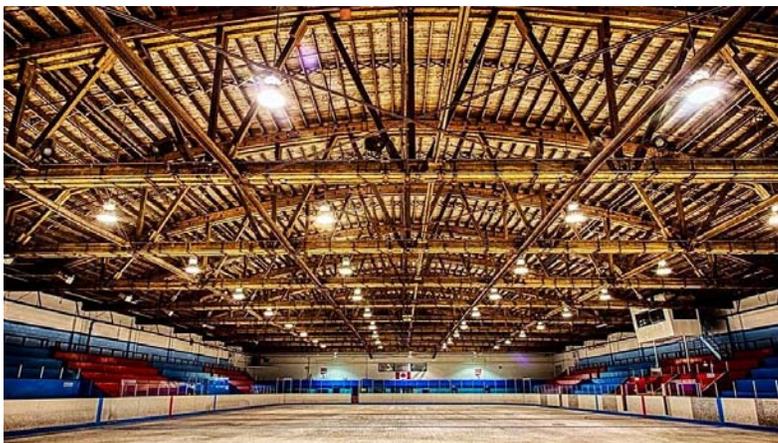
Dear Members of Council,

I am writing to express my unequivocal support for the inclusion and eventual designation of Weston Lions Arena on the heritage register maintained by the City of Toronto, as considered through the recommendations advanced to Council by the Toronto Preservation Board.

I offer this support from two complementary perspectives: as an architect, and as a parent of a Faustina Toro, who has regularly used the facility over the past three hockey seasons. Together, these experiences provide both professional and community-based insight into the arena's cultural, architectural, and civic value.

Suspending my sentimental connection: From an architectural standpoint alone; this building rises unmistakably to the level of preservation.

The arena's clear-span timber bowstring truss system is a rare and remarkable example of early post-war craftsmanship and ingenuity (*using materials donated by Conn Smyth*). Constructed in 1949, at a time



when materials were scarce and builders relied heavily on skill, resourcefulness, and structural intuition, the roof structure stands as a testament to a construction culture that no longer exists.

The sweeping curved top chords and tensioned bottom ties create an expansive, column-free interior achieved entirely in wood: an ambitious structural gesture that reflects both technological confidence and material mastery of its time.

Unlike modern arenas, which achieve similar spans through standardized steel systems driven by cost efficiency, speed of construction, and repeatable procurement models, **Weston's structure is the architecture.**

Contemporary rink design typically follows a highly formulaic approach: pre-engineered steel trusses or joists span a rectangular ice surface, wrapped in insulated panels, with character and identity delegated to cladding, lobbies, or signage.

The result is interiors that are all but indistinguishable from one rink to the next; you could walk into one and be forgiven for thinking it was any other. There is no sense of place, no structural poetry, no unique spatial experience: only functional repetition.



Toronto's Weston Lions Arena stands apart from that formula.

The exposed timber bowstring trusses define the space and give the building its unique identity, expressing a moment when ingenuity, material honesty, and permanence were built directly into the structure rather than hidden behind finishes or standardized systems.



The clarity of the bowstring form and the authenticity of the timber assembly make this interior historically significant. This is not a generic rink : it embodies a construction method and architectural language that are no longer obtainable, and to lose it would be to erase a tangible example of post-war civic craftsmanship and structural artistry.

And sentimentally ...

As someone who has spent countless hours in those stands, I can attest that the

character of the space: its scale, warmth, and structural presence: creates an atmosphere modern facilities cannot replicate.

Weston Lions Arena stands as one of the Toronto's architecturally distinctive civic arenas, and other structurally expressive arenas : such as Phil White Arena, *which also lacks heritage designation*, deserve the same careful consideration. Buildings of this architectural calibre, *where the structure itself defines the character of the space*, are increasingly rare.

Once lost, they cannot be recreated.



Weston Lions, Toronto



Phil White Arena, Toronto



This could be any rink in any city!

For these reasons, I strongly urge Council to support its designation.

Sincerely,

Anthony Provenzano