

For Immediate Release
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ACO Statement regarding Ontario Place Announcement

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario expresses concern regarding the Government's announcement for the redevelopment of Ontario Place.

Today, the Government of Ontario announced that it had selected Therme Group, Écorécrcéo Group and Live Nation as partners in the redevelopment of Ontario Place.

"This announcement poses more questions than answers," said Bill Greaves of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario. "We are told the iconic heritage aspects of the site will be protected, but are given no assurance there will be a thoughtful, comprehensive plan of how to do this. Premier Ford and Minister MacLeod rightly decried the decades of neglect Ontario Place had suffered but gave us no assurance they had a plan to prevent this happening again."

ACO continues to call for the development and public release of a Conservation Management Plan before commencing redevelopment of any parts of Ontario Place. Governments in charge of similar sites around the world have done this, and the Ontario Heritage Act requires it. Under the Act, Provincial heritage properties "must prepare a Strategic Conservation Plan to provide guidance on conserving, maintaining, using and disposing of them."

It is unclear who will be in charge of the entire site going forward. Ontario Place is currently being parceled out to three companies. A Conservation Management Plan could identify a governing body and define its mandate to protect the site.

Ontario Place must remain fully accessible to the public. Again, the Ontario Heritage Act makes this clear. "Where the use of a provincial heritage property is significant or of long standing" -- such as Ontario Place's significant and long standing use as a public park -- the Province must "apply best efforts to continuing that use."

The province announced that consultations will begin this fall. This is welcome news, but overdue. Going forward, wide ranging **public engagement in decision-making, as opposed to after-the-fact consultation, will be essential.**

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