



June 27, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: Ontario Science Centre Closure

Last Friday's sudden closure of the Ontario Science Centre—one of the province's most recognized educational facilities and among Canada's most significant architectural landmarks— is deeply disappointing, especially considering there are other viable options to continue to use the existing facility for its intended use.

Back in 2023, when the Province first made public its intentions to move the Ontario Science Centre (OSC) from its purpose-built home, we issued a letter urging the Premier and his government to reconsider this decision. We noted the OSC's irreplaceable value as part of the province's and country's history, the inextricable relationship between the building and its location within a ravine, and the OSC's important role as a cultural and community resource for the historically underserved Flemingdon Park and Thorncliffe Park neighbourhoods. We continue to stand behind these principles.

Additional information has surfaced after our initial letter, including the significantly reduced size for the Science Centre in its new proposed location, the projected embodied carbon of the new facility, and the lack of any maintenance or adaptive reuse plan for the existing OSC's site. These updates continue to reveal that decisions are being made without considering the full picture of city building or the best interests of Ontarians.

Last week's sudden closure of the OSC has been justified as necessary for public safety, but this is a mis-characterization of what the report prepared by Rimkus Consulting Group actually states. The report only identified a small portion of roof panels as critical or high risk, and proposed safe alternative options that do not require the closure of the Science Centre. This is a recommendation welcomed by many of our colleagues, including the team at Moriyama Teshima Architects, as well as journalists Elsa Lam of Canadian Architect and Alex Bozivokic of the Globe and Mail who have done close readings of the engineers' report. Moriyama Teshima Architects have even gone above and beyond for the public by offering their services pro-bono to avoid full closure of the OSC.

We remain steadfast in our position that the retention, repair and update of the Ontario Science Centre's current building is in the best interest for all Ontarians. We urge the government to reverse the proposed move and take the necessary steps to re-open the OSC.

On behalf of the Toronto Society of Architects Executive,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ana-Francisca de la Mora'.

Ana-Francisca de la Mora, OAA, FRAIC
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbora Vokac Taylor'.

Barbora Vokac Taylor, OAA, MRAIC
Vice Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pamela Bruneau'.

Pamela Bruneau, OAA
Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joël León Danis'.

Joël León Danis, OAA, FRAIC
Executive Director