



Save Ontario's Science Centre

The Government's Business Case for Relocating the Ontario Science Centre: Analysis and Critique.

Why It Doesn't Add Up.

December 5, 2023



SaveScienceCentre.com

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Introduction

Save Ontario's Science Centre (Save OSC) is a grassroots group started in July 2023 that is dedicated to keeping the Science Centre open in Flemingdon Park and Thorncliffe Park for all Ontarians to enjoy.

For more information and to sign the letter to Premier Ford, visit [SaveScienceCentre.com](https://www.SaveScienceCentre.com).

We can be contacted by email at info@SaveScienceCentre.com.

Why we are fighting to keep Ontario Science Centre (OSC) at its present location in Flemingdon Park:

The Ontario Science Centre was a gift to the people of Ontario on the occasion of Canada's centennial. Premier John Robarts chose to build the new museum outside the city core in the geographic centre of Toronto.

Architect Ray Moriyama designed a remarkable building that has been embraced by visitors for more than 50 years. Working with Chief Designer Taizo Miyake, Moriyama transcended the bounds of a traditional museum filled with objects to create one of the world's first interactive science centres.

Since the Centre opened in 1969 it has welcomed more than 54 million visitors, sparked the imaginations of more than 9 million students, created world-renowned exhibits, and won numerous international awards.

Today, the Centre - projected to have a 250-year lifespan with regular maintenance - is in critical need of renewal and significant investment. This is to be expected after years of wilful neglect.

Despite these challenges, Save OSC believes renovation of the current building in Flemingdon Park is more environmentally and socially responsible, more financially prudent than proceeding with a smaller replacement facility at Ontario Place, and the best way to fulfill the Centre's mission for the people of Ontario.

This document represents Save OSC's initial analysis and response to the government's business case and decision to close and relocate the Ontario Science Centre.

It is our hope that Ontarians will see through the government's flawed and biased rationale for its plan and contact their MPPs to advocate for revitalizing the OSC - a provincial treasure and one of Canada's finest centennial projects - in Flemingdon Park.

Executive Summary

Save OSC's position is that the Infrastructure Ontario business case for the Ontario Science Centre (OSC), publicly released on November 29, 2023, was not an independent analysis and was designed to advance the following political objectives of the Ontario Government:

1. Sell the public on a for-profit spa by relocating OSC to Ontario Place.
2. Make OSC's Flemingdon property surplus to government needs to benefit developers.

Infrastructure Ontario appears to have rushed the final analysis. Ten key documents intended to inform Infrastructure Ontario's Stay or Relocate decision in the final report, dated March 8, 2023, were only delivered to the agency after January 1, 2023. Five reports were delivered within one week of the March 8 report, including the Ernst & Young report that was delivered the same day. The chronology of the reports, the government's biased approach to its analyses and its fostering of an operational crisis at the OSC all point to a process that Ontario taxpayers cannot trust.

At least \$352.5M in costs to relocate the OSC have not been included in the business case, including a necessary visitors' and school bus parking lot. The stated costs of a relocated OSC are materially understated, and figures provided to the public regarding the cost savings that will be made by relocating the OSC are both inaccurate and misleading.

The government has exaggerated the extent of the OSC's decline. The OSC is not only in general good condition with a "C" plus grade, but the responsibility for the current state of disrepair lies squarely with a government that did not meet normal repair and maintenance requirements for this iconic building. Infrastructure Ontario directed an engineering firm to increase cost estimates for needed maintenance and improvements at the current OSC by 85%, and then later increased those costs by a further 40%, resulting in a **\$195.6M markup** from the engineering firm's original estimate.

There are significant flaws in the government's forecasts for attendance and revenues. The government's case for relocation is based partly on declining attendance at the OSC, which can in large measure be attributed to the government's chronic underfunding of the OSC's maintenance, renewal of exhibitry and ability to host special temporary exhibitions. But that attendance analysis has been skewed at every turn towards the relocate option, with the potential for increased attendance at the existing OSC ignored.

There are numerous missing and redacted documents. Missing sections and documents from the business case could reveal more about the government's motives in deciding the long-term fate of the OSC and could provide better insight into the true costs and risks of a relocated OSC. These redactions undermine confidence in the government's business case.

Cultural significance and environmental concerns are not addressed. The government business case does not disclose whether a cultural heritage evaluation or a natural heritage study of the OSC has been undertaken and completed and if so, the findings of those studies.

Also undisclosed is information regarding a Toronto Region Conservation Authority permit for development of the OSC site and a Heritage Impact Assessment.

The government's plan will produce a diminished Ontario Science Centre. Finally, the business plan reveals a fundamental devaluing of the OSC as a creative organization with global impact and a reputation to match. Projected staff cuts caused by shrinking a relocated OSC to half its current size will severely undermine its ability to research, design and build the innovative and iconic science experiences that have touched the lives of more than 54 million visitors to date.

Financial Summary

The point we can all agree on is that the current Centre is in crisis due to years of deliberate underfunding. But the province has all the powers and money it needs to solve this crisis without moving it.

The released business case provides evidence that the government had a plan to provide the OSC lands in Flemingdon Park to developers - an action consistent with this government's priorities. The chronology of the reports, a biased analysis, and the perpetuation of an operational crisis all point to a process designed to fit a pre-planned narrative to achieve a political goal.

There are significant costs in the government's plan to relocate the OSC that are not accounted for in the business case:

OSC/Therme Parking lot	\$300.0M - \$600.0M
Cinesphere renovation	\$8.6M
Ontario Place Pods renovation	Uncosted
Fabrication facility lease	\$420K - \$690K
OSC+ elements: Immersive Experience	\$5.0M
OSC+ elements: Planetarium	\$38.5M
OSC+ elements: Outdoor Experience	uncosted
Total <u>Minimum</u> Uncounted Cost	\$352.5M - 652.8M

Further financial estimates which have been skewed in favour of the relocate option include:

Two separate markups of 85% and 40% have been applied to repair and maintenance cost estimates for the existing OSC: **\$195.6M**

An additional \$0.50 admission ticket charge applied only to analysis for a relocated OSC: **\$0.42M per year**

Future attendance numbers at the current OSC are assumed to remain flat, while attendance at a relocated OSC is assumed to increase: **Financial impact unknown**

State of Repair - Engineering Reports versus Government Claims

The business case shows the government has exaggerated the extent of the OSC's decline. The OSC is not only in general good condition, a "C" plus grade, but the responsibility for the current state of disrepair lies squarely with a government that did not meet normal repair and maintenance requirements for this iconic building.

The government has based much of its rationale to demolish and move the OSC on its current "state of disrepair". The summary of the "operational crisis" in its Executive Summary is at best disingenuous, offering statistics without context:

- "Building Deterioration and Critical Maintenance Requirements", "Required closures", "Immediate Health and Safety Risks" all flow from the government's failure to maintain the site with the reasonable and consistent investments necessary for any building.
- "an additional investment of \$109 million is required to modernize the exhibits" is cited in the Executive Summary with no reference to the fact that a new location would require a similar or greater investment in the development of new exhibits (although this fact can be found deep in the appendices).¹

This demonstrates a well-recognized tactic to create a "useful crisis"² to justify a politically-desired change. The current government during its more than five years in power has perpetuated a crisis for the OSC which it is using to justify a relocation to Ontario Place.

The details in the appendices provided as part of the business case undermines much of the government's rationale for this relocation:

1. Pinchin Ltd. provided an engineering report that concluded the OSC had a grade "C" state of repair, scoring 17% for current condition and renewal needs of the building) and 18% for deferred maintenance needs on their measure of "Facility Condition Index and Condition Rating"³. There are current needs and deferred maintenance costs but, relative to the Total Replacement Cost of the facility, they are minor. The score provided by the engineering consultant means "The Facility and its components **are functioning as intended; normal deterioration** and minor distress observed; **repairs will be required within the next five years** to maintain functionality". (emphasis added) This is given to any building that scores between 11% to 30%, so it is closer to a B rating than a D rating. The rating of B is given when "no repairs are anticipated in the next five years".⁴
2. The business case clearly shows what the public has known for months: the government has neither invested in the OSC building nor equalized normal maintenance and repair payments over time. Of course, a more costly repair bill must now be managed. Pinchin

¹ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, Executive Summary

² [John Snobelen - Wikipedia](#)

³ A low percentage means the building is in better condition with a lesser degree of deterioration and need of repair. 0 - 5% scores an "A", 6 - 10% scores a "B", and so on.

⁴ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, Pinchin Ltd., April 2022, p. 56.

is critical of the lack of replacement of building systems that have exceeded their expected service life:

“HVAC systems, interior finishes, plumbing systems, and electrical systems, are in large part original and have simply exceeded their expected service lives.

Building systems that have reached or exceeded their useful service life, while often remaining operational, generally require higher levels of maintenance, higher annual repair costs, and carry an elevated risk of sudden failures that could limit or prevent the use of a facility for extended periods. These unexpected failures often result in higher costs for needed work that must be then performed on an emergency basis.”⁵ (emphasis added)

3. Notably, the risk assessment provided by Pinchin is missing from the report (Appendix III), including a letter from an engineering firm regarding the currently closed bridge linking the entrance building with the rest of the complex.⁶ Pinchin notes that repairs to the bridge are required but the public disclosure is missing information regarding the state of the bridge and costs to repair. Appendix II is also missing without explanation.
4. The government’s own consultant does not agree with the government’s position that the OSC is at the “end of life”. In fact, they state that “It is our opinion that the remaining useful life of the property can continue for its intended purpose for **at least an additional 20 years if** the repairs in this report are made.”⁷ (emphasis added).

⁵ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 57.

⁶ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 57.

⁷ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 57.

Understatement of Relocation Costs

The lack of inclusion of the costs for a required parking garage (\$300 to \$600 M⁸), retrofit of the Cinesphere (\$8.6M) and Ontario Place Pods (cost unknown), and the inclusion of OSC+ elements (\$43.5M) mean that the stated costs of a relocated OSC are materially understated by at least \$352.1M, and figures provided to the public regarding the cost savings that will be made by relocating the OSC are both inaccurate and highly misleading.

Details in the business case reveal three important data points that have been neither acknowledged nor discussed in government announcements of plans to relocate the OSC:

1. The option to stay and refurbish “will generate a greater GDP impact over the 50-year period compared to the Relocate option”⁹ (\$46.7M vs \$33.0M). The Ernst & Young report says that a higher GDP return from relocation could be achieved¹⁰, but that would be through higher construction costs to build a new OSC.
2. The relocation option does not provide the same GDP or tax revenue as the option to remain at the current location: “In total, the Remain on Site option provides an additional \$407 million of GDP, 53 FTEs annually during operations, and \$52 million in tax revenue from over the 50-year period from 2023 to 2073”.¹¹
3. There is no accounting in the business case for the following elements of a relocated OSC:
 - a. **A “new multi-storey underground parking on the mainland”¹²** providing 2,000 parking spots in a five-storey underground facility¹³ to support the Ontario Place redevelopment, which includes the adjacent private Therme Spa. Specifically, the costing analysis by A.W. Hooker Associates **excludes those costs**.¹⁴ However, an RFP has been issued for the building of such a structure. Indeed, the ‘new’ Science Centre’s ‘Science Pavillion’ is proposed as the cap of the parking garage. Yet, neither the costs of building this extensive underground parking lot, nor its ongoing operational costs have been factored into the cost analysis of the

⁸ Callan, I. and D’Mello, D., “Ontario Place redevelopment plans shrouded in secrecy. Here’s what we know”, April 25, 2023, Globalnews.ca, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9645277/secrecy-ontario-place-redevelopment-plans/>

⁹ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p.139.

¹⁰ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p.139.

¹¹ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 138

¹² Ontario Science Centre Relocation Project: Request for Proposals for Planning, Design and Conformance Consulting Services, RFP No. 23-066, Respondents meeting - July 6, 2023, p.5, <https://spacing.ca/toronto/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/10/RFP-NO.-23-066-OSC-Relocation-PDC-Respondent-Team-Meeting-Deck-July-6PDF.pdf>

¹³ Ontario Science Centre Relocation Project: Request for Proposals, p.8

¹⁴ Appendix M: Class D Cost Estimate: Relocate Option, Ontario Science Centre (OSC) Relocation Class D Estimate (Rev.1), A.W. Hooker Associates, February 3 2023, p.278.

OSC relocation. This is a \$300 - \$600M¹⁵ understatement in the cost of Relocate option.

- b. **A retrofit of the Cinesphere** which will be part of the OSC relocation project.¹⁶ The assessment provider by A.W. Hooker Associates specifically states “Renovation budget for cinesphere provided by Altus 103810 - OPEW Cinesphere, Class D, Rev 1, November 15, 2021 - \$8,601,119 (before 10% const. contingency) - escalated by 10%” is excluded.¹⁷ That is, there is a \$8.6M renovation/construction cost in the relocation scenario that is missing in the business case. Lifecycle costs have been included.
- c. **The Ontario Place pods** which are a key part of the functional design of the new OSC. These costs were **specifically excluded** from the assessment by A.W. Hooker (although lifecycle costs have been included); see page 255, 256, and the following:

“Shell Renovation:

- i. All PODS to be single level (Level 40), existing mezzanine level (Level 50) to be demolished, existing mechanical space mezzanine level (Level 60) to remain
 1. New cladding (heavy gauge prefinished metal plate panel) to PODs; existing to repair at Cinesphere.
 - ii. New curtain wall system to Bridges, existing to repair to PODs and Cinesphere Entrances
 - iii. New roofing to existing buildings
 - iv. 400 x 1200mm porcelain unilock pavers to remaining
 - v. New guardrail to POD and Bridges roof perimeter
 - vi. Interior demolition of existing buildings (PODs and Bridges)
 - vii. Removal of existing roofing and perimeter guardrail (PODs and Bridges)
 - viii. Removal of existing cladding (PODs and Bridges)
 - ix. Hard and Soft Landscaping (PODs and Bridges)¹⁸
- d. **“OSC + elements”** which include “1) Immersive Experience 2) Outdoor Experience 3) Planetarium”.¹⁹ Costs for these additional elements could be \$5M

¹⁵ Callan, I. and D’Mello, D., “Ontario Place redevelopment plans shrouded in secrecy. Here’s what we know”, April 25, 2023, Globalnews.ca, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9645277/secrecy-ontario-place-redevelopment-plans/>

¹⁶ Ontario Science Centre Relocation Project: Request for Proposals, p.5.

¹⁷ Appendix M: Class D Cost Estimate: Relocate Option, p. 276.

¹⁸ Appendix M: Class D Cost Estimate: Relocate Option, p. 243.

¹⁹ Ontario Science Centre Relocation Project: Request for Proposals, p.8,

for the Immersive experience and \$38.5M for a planetarium.²⁰ In fact, all text from the OSC+ elements section (p. 316 - 317, p. 322- 324, and p. 326-331) have been redacted in whole from the business case leaving the impression that the government does not want the public to know the likelihood that these elements could go forward (and so should have been included in the costing analysis of the Relocate option).

²⁰ Dov Goldstein of Lord Cultural Resources in Callan, I. and D'Mello, D., "Province releases Ontario Science Centre business case. Here's what it says", Global News, November 29, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/10126343/business-case-science-centre-ontario-place/>

Overstatement of Stay Costs & Unfair Comparison of Options

The government's business case shows evidence of crafting a case to fit the outcome they desire: to give over OSC lands to developers.

1. Infrastructure Ontario requested that Pinchin add 85% to all costs of the deferred capital maintenance required at the OSC.²¹ Pinchin states: *"an adjustment factor of 1.85 was applied to all repair and replacement costs and an adjustment factor of 1.30 was applied to all CRVs per Client's request to account for the hidden internal and external fees."* This does not include a 2.5% inflation rate built into each year's costs.²² Infrastructure Ontario added a further "markup of 40% on the inflated Pinchin report estimate" on the costs.²³ Detailed rationale for the 40% increase are offered, such as supply chain pressures and increased construction costs²⁴; however, there is no evidence presented in the business case that this same mark-up has been applied to the construction costs of a new OSC at Ontario Place. It is therefore apparent that figures released to the public on what it would cost to repair the OSC have been materially inflated, skewing the business case in favour of the relocation option by \$195.6M.²⁵
2. Current occupancy costs for the OSC are presented as \$8/sq ft.²⁶ The government's costing analysis of the new OSC is assumed to be exactly the same: \$8/sq ft.²⁷ While a new (and much-smaller) building may indeed offer efficiencies, it strains credulity to imagine that the occupancy costs of an untested structure on the waterfront will be identical to one in Flemingdon Park with decades of operational experience.
3. In preparation of this business case, the services provided by IO and/or its external advisors did not include (i.e., out of scope) an assessment of a rationalized or consolidated OSC at the Flemingdon Park location (either new-build or adaptively repurposed on site)²⁸. No alternative configuration of the OSC at Flemingdon Park was considered beyond current size and layout due to the nature of facility and site-specific constraints identified in Section 3. This absence of a balanced comparison adds to the evidence that the business case was shaped to provide an answer that was politically pre-determined.

²¹ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p.56.

²² Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 65

²³ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions: "Ontario Place Analysis", Infrastructure Ontario, p.107.

²⁴ Memo: Summary of Key Cost Pressure Factors (OSC - 40% BCA Escalation Justification), "Summary of Key Cost Pressure Factors", Infrastructure Ontario Project Controls, March 3, 2023, p. 107

²⁵ Business case cites \$369M as the cost of deferred critical capital maintenance required (Appendix I Financial Model and Assumptions: "Ontario Place Analysis", p.106). Pinchin says \$63.9M + \$163.7M = \$227.6M of deferred and proposed maintenance. IO then adjusted this figure at further 40% = \$318.6M. But the original estimate by Pinchin was \$227.6M / 1.85 adjustment = \$123M. The difference is \$195.6M

²⁶ Appendix O: Interim Report for Revenue Opportunities, Cost Reductions & Benefits of Relocating, p. 304

²⁷ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 107.

²⁸ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p.17.

4. The government cites “ongoing operating losses” in its Fiscal Impact Analysis but there is no evidence for this in the attached appendices. In fact, Lord provides information that shows the OSC operating at a surplus with \$37.8M in revenues and \$36.1M in expenses.²⁹
5. The government’s analysis assumed a “\$0.50 increase in average admission per visitor” for the relocation option.³⁰ But this was not factored into the “stay on site” option. This move immediately advantages the relocate option by \$0.50 per visitor x 885,000 visitors per year, or \$442,500 per year.
6. The business case does not mention that current OSC admission rates are well below the average and the lowest of the five largest Canadian science centres. It does not analyze the possibility of increasing fees as a means to enhance the financial viability of the current OSC.
7. The business case assumes a relocated OSC with “a more substantial children's museum component that will include a toddler's space could allow for admissions to be charged for one- and two-year olds.”³¹ However, this component will require significant space within a smaller centre and there is no analysis on the impact a more targeted focus on toddlers would have on visitation from other demographics. And again, there is no comparative analysis for implementing such a change at the current OSC.
8. The business case assumes a science centre half the size of the current OSC, but assumes all other sources of revenue (donations, sponsorship, sales) will be the same.³² There is no explanation to justify this optimistic assumption and no evidence presented to support it. It is, quite simply, not credible.
9. The business case concludes that for the current OSC the cost of repair and replacement requirements (under replacement reserves) **over 20 years** would be \$228.6M³³, or an average of \$11.4M per year. They state \$16.4M is required immediately, including repairs to the bridge from the entrance building to the Great Hall building.³⁴ The replacement value of the OSC is \$369.3 Million³⁵. Therefore, the cost of immediate repairs is 4.4% of the OSC’s current value. This is akin to a homeowner of a \$500,000 house learning their house requires \$22,000 of immediate repairs after years of deferring maintenance and repairs. Presenting this in support of an argument that the current Science Centre is approaching ‘end of life’, again, strains credulity. Further, the engineer’s report that justifies the bridge closure is not disclosed in the business case.

²⁹ Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan by Lord Cultural Resources Consultants, January 2023, p. 82.

³⁰ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 130.

³¹ Appendix O: Interim Report for Revenue Opportunities, Cost Reductions & Benefits of Relocating, p. 300.

³² Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 113.

³³ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 50.

³⁴ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 51.

³⁵ Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan, p. 56.

The timing of the bridge closure raises suspicion that it has been employed to support the government's narrative of 'an operational crisis'.

10. A.W. Hooker offers an estimated cost to relocate the OSC. However, the analysis has excluded (presumably at Infrastructure Ontario's request) many potentially relevant costs for reasons that are not explained. These include parking infrastructure, School Bus Queuing/ Parking, Bicycle Parking, Guest Parking and Service Parking (automated access, 1,000 car capacity currently); Cinesphere renovation; Ontario Place Pod and bridge renovations to house portions of the OSC; and outdoor exhibitry.³⁶
11. The Business case does not detail which exhibits, if any, will move from the current OSC to the new building. If none move, six decades of innovation and intellectual property is discarded. If some exhibits do move, there are potentially significant costs for redeployment since much of what is inside the current OSC was purpose-built to fit the space. This potential cost is not acknowledged.
12. OSC expenses per square foot of exhibition space (\$269.11) are in line with other major Canadian science museums (Montreal \$371.95; Edmonton \$243.14; Calgary \$240.62; Vancouver \$177.78).³⁷ The current OSC's cost per square foot of building space is second lowest of the top five Canadian science centres (\$66.51 sq ft compared to Montreal at \$172.03; Vancouver \$93.50 and Calgary \$78.63). The OSC currently runs very lean despite the increased operating costs due to a lack of maintenance and an aging infrastructure.
13. The business case acknowledges that a "fabrication facility" where exhibits are developed cannot be included in the Relocate option as there is not enough room at the Ontario Place site. The report states "A total of 9 current listings were identified with leases ranging from \$420,000 to \$690,000 per year. Fit-out and set-up costs would be in addition to this." This additional cost has not been factored into the relocate option even though this appears to be a serious consideration. The financial analysis is inaccurate if it does not include these costs in the Relocate option.
14. The Executive summary reports 35 FTEs will be eliminated in a relocation scenario, with \$7M to be paid out in severance. This number is very likely understated. First, the appendices cite a job loss of 53 FTEs.³⁸ Second, the report telegraphs further job losses are likely.³⁹ Since these cuts will almost certainly include research, design and production staff, the creative viability of the 'new' OSC will be undermined. Analysis of this risk is absent.
15. There is an assumption that a building that is half the size of the existing OSC can accommodate an increased number of visitors. There is no analysis of fire regulations

³⁶ Appendix M: Class D Cost Estimate: Relocate Option, p.239

³⁷ Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan, p. 82.

³⁸ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 138.

³⁹ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p. 31 and 39.

in this assumption, and no analysis of the quality of the visitor experience. At March Break or on a rainy summer day, visitation at the current OSC can reach 10,000 and the space feels very crowded. It would not be possible to accommodate anywhere near this number in half the space.

The government's consultants themselves cite the risks posed by faulty assumptions and oversights. To quote Ernst & Young: "Lastly, EY has relied upon the completeness, accuracy and fair presentation of all information, data, advice, opinions or representations obtained from public sources, IO, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport, and the OSC The findings of this report are conditional upon such completeness, accuracy and fair presentation of the Information as ***EY has not independently verified or audited the information*** provided to us."⁴⁰ (emphasis added) They are right to be concerned.

⁴⁰ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 160.

Forecasting Issues - Projected Attendance Numbers and Revenues

The government's case is based partly on declining attendance at the OSC, which can be, in part, attributed to the government's chronic underfunding of the OSC's maintenance, renewal of exhibitry, and resources for special temporary exhibitions. The analysis of projected attendance is flawed - skewed towards a relocate option without taking into account access challenges for a venue on the downtown waterfront for children on school trips, dramatically decreased exhibit space, fire regulations in a smaller space, and potential for increased attendance at a revitalized OSC that remains in place.

The government's business case includes much information regarding OSC attendance. The analysis is faulty and incomplete. For example, Lord provided an initial projection attendance report in June 2021. This report is not included in the business case released by the government. This leaves questions as to why it has not been included, what were the original projections in the initial report, and why was the report revised?

The business case demonstrates declining attendance at the current OSC⁴¹. Of course, attendance will decline over time if there are no investments in visitor experiences and a consistent failure to fund required maintenance to keep the building looking clean and well-cared for. This government has had years to reverse this trend. They haven't. And so, they have helped create and perpetuate the very crisis they say can only be solved by moving the OSC.

The business case references declining attendance without accuracy or context. The reference to a high of 1,287 million visitors in 2009 occurred when the OSC hosted the *Body Worlds 2* exhibition – an exceptionally successful temporary exhibition. However, the business case inaccurately cites 2009 as the OSC's highest attendance. The initial *Body Worlds* exhibition in 2005-6 helped bring more than 1.5 million visitors to the Centre, demonstrating what an investment in special temporary exhibitions can provide in increased attendance. Science Centres typically have “core” attendance plus “incremental” attendance. The latter typically reflects the success (or failure) of temporary exhibitions. At the OSC in the 2008-2014 time frame, core attendance was about 700,000. The balance of attendance each year was a reflection of the extent to which temporary exhibitions or programs brought new visitors and repeat visitors to the Centre. In recent years, when the OSC received less support from the government, the OSC could no longer afford traveling exhibitions that could drive that “incremental” visitation. As well, traffic chaos around Don Mills and Eglinton caused by the construction of the Eglinton LRT likely discouraged regular visitors and depressed attendance figures. This is not acknowledged in the government's business case.

The OSC has the second largest attendance for any Canadian science museum at 885,000 (Vancouver has about 4% more).⁴² And yet, the business case is strongly skewed to making a case to move to Ontario Place. However, there is little analysis and discussion regarding what it would take to achieve similar visitor attendance results at the current location. A million visitors

⁴¹ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p. 12.

⁴² Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan, p.82.

is highly achievable at the current OSC - it has been done before and can be done again with the right investments. With new exhibits and proper operating support (which allows funds to bring in high quality temporary exhibitions) and the easier access to the OSC now that the LRT will open soon, there is no reason why OSC attendance at the current site will not rebound to a million (or more).

It is noteworthy that the business case does not assume that there will be any increase in OSC attendance at the current site although it includes in its fiscal analysis an equal infusion of funding into new exhibits. A revitalized OSC that has both legacy and new exhibits and with easier access with the opening of the Eglinton LRT is very likely to see an increased attendance. But this has not been factored into the business case.

Lord makes the assumption that all methods of comparison are equal when they calculated the average attendance of 1,078,333. They admitted at least one comparison was rather “weak”⁴³ and yet used this figure anyway in their calculations, thereby inflating the figures. Backing out this figure and recalculating, one gets to 1,021,000. The government’s analysis forecasts a 13.5% increase in visitors at the new site ⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ “and increased revenue as a result of higher visitation assumptions”⁴⁶. This projection is at best unrealistic when visitors must face the congestion of downtown Toronto traffic, walk farther than they currently must from a TTC stop, and enter a building offering half the space of the current OSC. Further, there is no sensitivity analysis used to determine how the individual visitation scenarios respond to changes in visitor assumptions.

The government has argued, without evidence, that a relocated OSC will attract more tourists. But we know most cities of any size now have their own science centres and attracting tourists requires unique offerings. Science North, for example, offers tours of a decommissioned nickel mine and the California Science Centre hosts one of the few remaining space shuttles. The relocated OSC as proposed will have no such offerings.

Approximately 170,000 school children attend the OSC each year (19.2% of all OSC visitors), more than any other science museum in Canada (next largest is Montreal at 137K).⁴⁷ The business case does not factor in the traffic congestion around Ontario Place which will directly impact schools’ ability to attend during the school day (as well as having an impact on other visitor attendance). School buses will have a major challenge getting to an Ontario Place location in the morning. Without an analysis of the impact on school buses and field trips from both inside and outside the Greater Toronto Area, the notion of growing attendance is flawed; in fact, the move to Ontario Place may seriously reduce student attendance and this potential impact on revenue is not contemplated in the business case.

⁴³ Appendix N: Attendance Projections for OSC, Revised Attendance Projections, p.287.

⁴⁴ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 113.

⁴⁵ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 134

⁴⁶ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 130.

⁴⁷ Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan, p. 82.

Lord believes that a relocated OSC will “have a positive impact on attendance by widening the market to include more adults not accompanying children, teens, younger learners (as Toronto does not have a children's museum) and more tourists. Increasing attendance should lead to more visitor-generated income and earned income, especially venue rentals at Ontario Place.”⁴⁸ First, this analysis is incorrect as Toronto does have a de facto children's museum in the 18,000 square feet of *Kidspark* in the current OSC. Second, there is no market analysis in this report to support these sweeping conclusions.

Lord correctly identifies important factors in what may limit visitor attendance but then does not incorporate these factors into their visitor attendance projections [emphasis added]:

1. “Proximity to the Suburban Young Family Resident Market: ***This is the core market for the OSC. Ontario Place is a longer travel distance for more suburban families than the current OSC site. ...This will likely have a somewhat negative impact on attendance*** and especially on repeat visitation and membership levels from among the suburban young family market.”⁴⁹
2. “Proximity to School Group Markets: As with the young family market that resides primarily in suburban locations, ***Ontario Place will require more travel time by school buses for most schools, with associated concerns about traffic delays. This will be a somewhat limiting factor for attendance*** among more distant school groups.”⁵⁰
3. “Access by Automobile: As indicated above with respect to suburban resident and school markets, ***there will be greater concerns regarding downtown traffic and travel time that will limit attendance levels.***
4. Access by Public Transportation: Until implementation of subway or light rail links to Ontario Place ***this will be a limiting factor on potential attendance.***
5. Availability and Cost of Nearby Parking: ***Without dedicated OSC parking*** there is no opportunity to control prices and offer discounted or free parking to members. ***This is another limiting factor on attendance.***
6. “Admission Charges: It is assumed that admission charges will remain as they would at its current location and would have no impact on attendance.” But the financial analysis assumed at \$0.50 per visitor increase - so ***this has not been factored in.***

These are six major constraints on visitor attendance, but Lord and the government have both failed to factor these into projections and subsequent decision making. Furthermore, there has been no consideration of the costs that it would take to mitigate these factors e.g. building a parking garage for OSC visitors, or the need for *reduced* ticket prices to attract visitors.

⁴⁸ Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan, p. 77.

⁴⁹ Appendix N: Attendance Projections for OSC, Revised Attendance Projections, p. 289.

⁵⁰ Appendix N: Attendance Projections for OSC, Revised Attendance Projections, p. 290

The business case states that a relocated OSC will increase visitation from Peel and Vaughan, and that “school visits from the west and northwest part of the GTA would balance any lost school visits from downtown, the east and northeast.”⁵¹ Anyone familiar with traffic around the Ontario Place area will know this is quite unlikely; traffic is increasingly egregious and there is no quick way from Vaughan to Ontario Place unless one uses the 407 and DVP (driving right past the current OSC) or the 427 and Gardiner (a driver’s nightmare).

⁵¹ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p. 36.

Failure to Account for Cultural Significance & Environmental Heritage

The business case does not disclose if either a cultural heritage evaluation or a natural heritage study has been undertaken and completed; and if so, what are the findings of those studies. Also undisclosed is information regarding a TRCA permit and a Heritage Impact Assessment.

The business case acknowledges “The Ontario Science Centre (OSC) is one of Ontario’s most significant cultural attractions where people of all ages can enjoy and learn about science, technology, and innovation”⁵² and has “provincially significant heritage value.”⁵³

Infrastructure Ontario acknowledges the cultural significance of the OSC at its current site, and therefore, the requirement for a Heritage Impact Assessment;⁵⁴ and recognizes the lands as a “potential cultural heritage landscape”⁵⁵ and that a TRCA Permit “will most likely be required prior to any municipal approvals and development taking place on the site.”⁵⁶ The government’s business case also recognizes the 2013 Cultural Heritage Resource Evaluation Report by Unterman McPhail Associates that determined, as part of the work for the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, the OSC lands are of cultural heritage value under the criteria of O.Reg. 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Infrastructure Ontario planner Alison Quigg recommended in her Land Use Planning Memo that “a heritage specialist should be consulted to conduct a cultural heritage evaluation to determine if the property is of provincial significance and to further define the cultural heritage landscape as it relates to the development potential of the site.”⁵⁷ Infrastructure Ontario’s planner recognized “The site is located within the Natural Heritage System, contains Environmentally Significant Areas and much of the property is within the TRCA regulated area.” The planner then stated, “A detailed natural heritage study is recommended, in consultation with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority”.⁵⁸

The government has neither acknowledged nor addressed these recommendations in its business case:

- Heritage Impact Assessment
- TRCA Permit
- Cultural Heritage Evaluation

⁵² Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, Ontario Science Centre Relocation Business Case Economic Impact Assessment, Ernst & Young, p. 127; Environmental Scan by Lord Cultural Resources Consultants (LRC), p. 82, also says “Ontario Science Centre (OSC) is one of Ontario’s most significant cultural attractions”.

⁵³ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p.54.

⁵⁴ Memo from Alison Quigg, Planner at Infrastructure Ontario to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario; January 20, 2023, Appendix C: Land Use Planning Memo, p.25.

⁵⁵ Memo from Alison Quigg, to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario, p.26.

⁵⁶ Memo from Alison Quigg, to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario, p.29.

⁵⁷ Memo from Alison Quigg, to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario, p.30.

⁵⁸ Memo from Alison Quigg, to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario, p.22

- Natural Heritage Evaluation

Conflict of Interest and Implicit Bias by Consultants

Input from Lord Cultural Resources forms a major part of the government's business case. Lord is critical of the OSC as an outdated model of science museums. This critique must be recognized as potentially self-serving: if the OSC is relocated and a revised OSC is developed, Lord would most likely be a competitor for the business of leading that work.⁵⁹

However, Lord's criticism is both inaccurate and misleading. Lord acknowledges that when the OSC opened its doors in 1969, it was a leader of the "second wave" of science museums, taking a pedagogical approach to science through interactivity and hands-on learning aimed at children and youth.⁶⁰ Lord implies the OSC remains a second wave science museum without evidence and states the need for a new OSC to exemplify the "fourth wave" of science centres with a focus on co-creation, clustering, and innovation.

This borders on deliberate disinformation. In 2003-2006, with its Agents of Change initiative, the OSC invented the very concept of fourth wave science museums including the first maker spaces ever offered within a museum. The OSC has reinvented and innovated consistently since, including the exhibitions Inventorium in 2017 and Inventorium 2.0 in 2019, which featured partnerships with start-ups, artists and science researchers and published books driven by the science questions asked by visitors. And Lord is very aware of this: in its Manual of Museum Exhibitions (2014, 2nd edition) OSC CEO Lesley Lewis and Director of Science Communication Kevin von Appen were invited by Lord to write a case study of the Weston Family Innovation Centre which broke away from traditional exhibition spaces: ie. a "fourth wave" science museum. They were asked to update the case study in 2022. Lord clearly understands the OSC was and is on the leading edge of science museum innovation. ***This is a core brand attribute of the OSC among science museums around the world*** - a fact that is not acknowledged in the government's business case.

Further, the financial analysis includes a major investment in new exhibits for a revitalized OSC, equivalent to the spend on the relocated OSC (both hard and soft costs).⁶¹ It can fairly be assumed that new exhibits designed and built by OSC staff would be leading-edge and very much in keeping with "fourth wave" science museum offerings. And yet the business case makes the biased argument that even with this major investment in new exhibits, only a relocated OSC would be in keeping with a "fourth wave" centre.

Related - and flawed - analyses contained in the business case include:

1. A major reason why OSC has more non-exhibit space than many other centres is directly attributable to the fact that OSC conceives, designs and builds exhibits and other experiences for itself and for clients around the world. This is very different from most

⁵⁹ Lord Cultural Resources, <https://www.lord.ca/services/types/visitor-experience>

⁶⁰ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p. 13.

⁶¹ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 107.

science centres, which are educational attractions but do not create their own experiences.

2. The business case cites high operating costs due to inefficiencies caused by the design of the OSC. Undeniably the current building is a challenge for wayfinding. But so is the Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Ontario is not far behind. This simply represents an operational challenge - not a reason to demolish a building. High operating and maintenance costs at the OSC can be more directly linked to lack of ongoing maintenance than building design.
3. The business case cites visibility from Don Mills and Eglinton as a factor that would impact visitation to the current OSC in future.⁶² This is a faulty assumption, as an OSC visit is rarely a whim as the result of driving by. Most visits are pre-planned by schools, families and out of town visitors. While it is reasonable to suggest that traffic chaos can have an impact, the opening of the Eglinton LRT and future Ontario Line will provide much easier access for visitors. And in any event, traffic chaos is an ongoing issue on Toronto's waterfront.
4. The business case cites a requirement to close the current OSC for needed repair in the "remain" option. However, there is no analysis of the option to accomplish this work through staged and partial closings that would keep the centre operating and generating revenue. Cited visitor concerns about the "safety" of the OSC if it is revitalized in place are tenuous at best and misleading at worst. Media and marketing communication could easily and effectively address this potential issue before it ever arose.
5. In terms of the Operating Schedule for the relocated OSC, the business case states: "It is likely that the OSC would extend hours for Cinesphere (presumably for non-mission related content) use beyond the regular hours of the exhibitions at OSC and perhaps introduce evening hours for one night a week during the summer to take advantage of concert goers. These extended hours would have a positive impact on attendance particularly for teenagers and young adults."⁶³

There is no acknowledgement that the OSC already has extended hours at various times of the year and these are included in its operational costs; suggesting that there may be extended hours at the relocated OSC without including these costs undermines the business case. Further, concert goers are not likely to attend evening hours at a relocated OSC; they will be at a concert.

6. Lord states that "today there are nearly 500 science centres registered with the Association of Science Technology Centers around the world." This statement reveals a lack of understanding of the science museum field, which is a specialized subset of

⁶² Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, Executive Summary

⁶³ Appendix N: Attendance Projections for OSC, Revised Attendance Projections, Lord Cultural Resources, December 2022, p. 291.

museums. In fact, there are some 3,000 science centres worldwide. ASTC is just one association – at one point it was the largest, but no longer.

7. The benefits of “clustering” the relocated OSC with other attractions and infrastructure near Ontario Place is touted, but there is no analysis of the benefits of the current OSC clustering with the Aga Khan Museum and Japanese Cultural Centre and the intersection of two major transit lines.
8. The business case states: “the design of the OSC reflected the needs of a museum and science facility of its era (1960s). However, since that time, the function of museums and interactive experience centres has evolved, but the purpose-built design of the OSC has prevented it from adapting to new program needs and revenue generating opportunities.”⁶⁴ As noted elsewhere, this is both erroneous and misleading. The OSC has reinvented and innovated consistently – from building a rainforest to inventing a new kind of visitor engagement through the Agents of Change transformation.
9. There is superficial discussion and recommendations in the business case regarding ticket pricing. Determining the prices of tickets is a complex undertaking. Certainly, there could be different pricing models but this analysis only discusses the relocation option with no equal consideration of potential changes at the current site.
10. Lord states the OSC is inefficient with regards to its ratio of exhibition space to building size at 27% (total exhibition space) compared to 39% for Canadian and U.S. waterfront science centres and 45% for other larger downtown science centres.⁶⁵ But there’s significant risk in comparing the 'apples' of the OSC to the 'oranges' of second-tier US waterfront and downtown museums. Most American science centres, for example, have nowhere near the production/creation facilities and staff of the OSC. And many do not offer pre-booked curriculum-linked programs for schools which require dedicated space.
11. Lord cites “Relocation Opportunities And Benefits” without substantiation. For example, they state “the Ontario Place location should provide greater opportunities for the OSC to increase earned revenue to support its long-term sustainability” without data to support their position.⁶⁶ And again, there is no parallel analysis provided on the “opportunities and benefits” of the OSC staying in place in a revitalized building and neighbourhood.
12. The business case cites a “Lack of Provincial control” which requires permission from the City to modify or upgrade the building elevations/exterior, site grades and parking facilities.⁶⁷ However, this is not part of a current operational crisis. This has been the case since the inception of the OSC in 1969. Further, there is no evidence presented in

⁶⁴ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p.10.

⁶⁵ Appendix F: Ontario Science Centre Relocation: Environmental Scan, p. 72 - 72.

⁶⁶ Appendix O: Interim Report for Revenue Opportunities, Cost Reductions & Benefits of Relocating, p. 307.

⁶⁷ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, Executive Summary.

the business case that the City would be unwilling to give permission for repairs or maintenance. The business case, in this case, is presenting a straw man to bolster a non-existent argument.

13. There is no evidence presented in the business case of consultation with key stakeholders which include:
 - a. Residents of the Flemingdon and Thorncliffe Park neighbourhoods
 - b. Teachers from outside downtown Toronto regarding planning for school field trips to a relocated OSC
 - c. Current or potential sponsors and donors
 - d. Visitors who currently hold OSC memberships

14. Based on its status as one of the world's best science museums, the OSC has successfully sold its products and services around the world for decades. On average, this program has generated \$1.63M of revenue annually for the OSC.⁶⁸ There are many additional strategic benefits to this activity. The business case dismisses the OSC's international sales function for a relocated OSC in one sentence, since there will be no fabrication capacity. This shows a profound lack of understanding or appreciation for this work.
 - It provides a source of net revenue to support OSC's on site experiences and programming
 - It promotes and extends the OSC (and Ontario's) brand as an innovator
 - It allows OSC to maintain a critical mass of creative workers (scientists, designers, prototypers, fabricators and writers) who develop science engagement products for OSC visitors and external clients
 - Content produced for external clients is repurposed and enjoyed by OSC visitors since OSC retains all intellectual property rights e.g. the earliest iterations of KidSpark were developed for a museum in Northern Ireland. OSC then developed the first experience area for children under 8 years old using many of these same concepts.
 - The international sales group secures partnerships that might not otherwise be available. For example the US based Materials Research Society chose OSC to work with in developing a major traveling exhibition on materials science. The initial intent was always to travel the exhibition primarily in the US. The strength of OSC's brand and its experience working with science centres globally led them to form a partnership with OSC. This brought an ongoing revenue stream to the Centre and also provided access to some of the world's top research minds when developing exhibits for the Weston Family Innovation Centre.

⁶⁸ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 111.

- The OSC Science Circus (a major travelling exhibition) was instrumental in the formation of the National Science Museum in Thailand. Visits to other science centres in Asia reveal extensive numbers of exhibits produced by OSC
- International Sales provides training to science centres around the world eg. Sci-Bono in South Africa on visitor engagement, numerous clients in China on curriculum linked programming and open-ended learning experiences for schools.

And finally, the analysis does not take into account the brand and reputation of the Ontario Science Centre. Globally, there are now over 3,000 centres based on the Ontario Science Centre model. Since the Centre opened in 1969 it has:

- Welcomed more than 54 million visitors
- Sparked the imaginations of more than 9 million students
- Created world-renowned exhibits, experiences and traveling shows
- Won international awards and museum clients around the world

And finally...

- Formed a unique bond with the communities of Flemingdon Park and Thorncliffe Park, two neighbourhoods that have been historically underserved in Toronto

Governments often use the term “world class” to describe bold initiatives. How sadly ironic then, that at a time when science literacy has never been more important, the Province seeks to decimate one of the world's best science museums. When one searches the internet for "top ten science museums in the world", the OSC will appear - guaranteed:

- [15 of The Best Science Museums In The World \(interestingengineering.com\)](http://interestingengineering.com)
- [The Best Science Museums in the World | Reader's Digest \(rd.com\)](http://rd.com)
- [The top 10 science museums around the world \(smh.com.au\)](http://smh.com.au)
- [World's Most Visited Science Museums, Science Centers, Science Centres \(museumplanner.org\)](http://museumplanner.org)
- [5 Coolest Science Museums Around the World - Little Passports](#)
- [Top 10 science museums | Stuff.co.nz](http://stuff.co.nz)

Government Acknowledgement of Diminished Science Centre

A relocated OSC will no longer be the iconic, world-renowned institution that it currently is today. The business plan clearly shows how the government plans to dismantle and diminish the OSC exhibitry and programming that has been a world leader for 60 years.

In reading the government's business case, it is painfully apparent that a relocated OSC will be a shell of its current self. The government's attempt to make it sound "wonderful" and "revitalized" is a disingenuous sales pitch:

1. The relocated OSC will have 2 acres and 275,000 sq ft. This is 48% of current space of 568,000 sq ft. The actual exhibit space at Ontario Place will be a total of 88,000 sq ft, a shell of the OSC's current self at 134,000 sq ft.⁶⁹ It is simply fiction that the new OSC will be as good as or better than the current OSC.
2. The life cycle costs are \$5.6M at new site vs. \$7.5M at current site. That is, half the space but 75% of the current life cycle costs. This is not good value for money for taxpayers.
3. More than 54 million visitors have been delighted by the Centre for more than five decades. For sure, a simple box housing a smaller number of exhibits and eliminating in-house creative production capacity would be more 'efficient' – but would it be the world class Centre Toronto has now? Of course not.
4. The relocated OSC will not have a program for international sales and rentals⁷⁰ to other science museums. The business case shows no understanding of the implications of eliminating an International Sales group that is central to the OSC brand.
5. The space designated for "Building support" (10,155 sq ft)⁷¹ speaks to a strategy to buy or rent exhibits - with little or no in-house designing or building.
6. The impact of losing 53 staff on the OSC's ability to create visitor experiences in a new space cannot be understated. This move would mean the effective end of the OSC as a 'made in Ontario' creative enterprise with global impact and that it would become simply a venue for the display of work created elsewhere.⁷²

⁶⁹ Appendix K: Functional Program, OSC Relocation: Final Functional Program, Lord Cultural Resources, January 2023, p.193.

⁷⁰ Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions, p. 113.

⁷¹ Appendix K: Functional Program, p. 166.

⁷² Lord Cultural Resources, <https://www.lord.ca/services/types/visitor-experience>

Political Motivations Embedded in Business Case

Missing sections and documents from the business case could reveal more about the government's motives in deciding the long-term fate of the OSC and could provide better insight into the true costs and risks of a relocated OSC. The redacted sections undermine confidence in the government's business case and decision.

Reading the full business case, it is apparent there has been an agenda from the beginning.

These two statements say it all – why the move was planned:

“Securing a publicly owned cultural anchor such as the OSC, could be an important addition to counter negative perceptions of the commercialization and privatization of this unique waterfront public asset”.⁷³ That is, the OSC is being used to sell the public on a for-profit spa at Ontario Place.

And how the decision was made to move the OSC before the business case was developed:

The Executive Summary notes that “In 2022 Infrastructure Ontario (“IO”) was directed by the Ministry of Infrastructure to seek Stage Two (construction) approval for the relocation of the OSC from its current Don Mills site to Ontario Place. This was to be supported by a comprehensive business case”.⁷⁴ However, the same page in the report notes that the business case was prepared in response to a December 2021 direction to identify order of magnitude costing.⁷⁵

The government fundamentally admits in their own document that the OSC brand is being used as a pawn and fig leaf to conceal the commercialization of the Ontario Place site. It's a particularly cynical move given the fact that the Science Centre's entrance building at Ontario Place is proposed to be the cap of a parking garage for the Therme spa. The RFP for said parking garage includes the Science Centre building. Parking garages generally don't produce the iconic architecture of the Science Centre we have now.

The business case goes into great detail about the value of the land on which the current OSC resides and concludes “Land value estimates to redevelop the land were as high as \$345.1M”.⁷⁶ However, much of the analysis that would help us understand the government's motivations has been hidden from the public; for example, much of *Appendix L: Ontario*

⁷³ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, Executive Summary.

⁷⁴ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, Executive Summary.

⁷⁵ Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case, March 8 2023, p.3.

⁷⁶ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 157. This is for Option 2B which is to have “a range of 30- to 45-storey mixed-use buildings along Don Mills Road, with the highest buildings located adjacent to the proposed transit stations. In addition, this option proposes to restore the original OSC facade by demolishing the existing IMAX portion and adding an 8-storey addition on top of the retained portions of the building (Building A). The existing building may be retrofitted, repurposed, and added to for cultural, institutional or other non-residential uses, with additional non-residential GFA provided through the new addition. Non-residential uses may include commercial, office, retail or employment uses.”

Science Centre Site Land Value Analysis has been redacted under FIPPA (p.220, p. 224, p. 228, p. 229, p. 231, p. 233).

The business case clearly lays out how the relocation of the OSC would enable redevelopment of these lands for Option 2B which is to have “a range of 30- to 45-storey mixed-use buildings along Don Mills Road, with the highest buildings located adjacent to the proposed transit stations. In addition, this option proposes to restore the original OSC facade by demolishing the existing IMAX portion and adding an 8-storey addition on top of the retained portions of the building (Building A). The existing building may be retrofitted, repurposed, and added to for [sic] cultural, institutional or other non-residential uses, with additional non-residential GFA provided through the new addition. Non-residential uses may include commercial, office, retail or employment uses”⁷⁷, a boon to Toronto developers.

Missing in the business case is an equivalent analysis of the Ontario Place land that is undeveloped and waterfront-adjacent, and what would be the value of that land if the OSC does not relocate.

⁷⁷ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 143, 146.

Redacted and Missing Information

There are several key sections redacted from the business case:

1. The entire Appendix D: Ontario Science Centre – Lease Review Memo, p. 39.
2. A significant amount of the Total Economic Impacts chart by Ernst and Young⁷⁸
3. A large paragraph regarding increased tourism⁷⁹
4. A large portion of this page related to labour costs/savings⁸⁰
5. Analysis regarding food services⁸¹
6. A significant amount of text in *Ontario Science Centre Relocation Business Case Economic Impact Assessment, March 8 2023* regarding the GDP from tourism; what is so private about tourism projections that it needs to be redacted under FIPPA?⁸²
7. The analysis of tourism and what visitorship would look like at a relocated OSC.⁸³
8. Much of *Appendix L: Ontario Science Centre Site Land Value Analysis* has been redacted under FIPPA (p.220, p. 224, p. 228, p. 229, p. 231, p. 233).
9. Almost the whole of *Appendix P: OSC+ Components*, p. 312 - 331, with the exception of some photos.
10. Appendix Q, the final pages of the appendices to the business case is a one page document giving one option: relocate. There are no other options. It appears though that this is only part of this report/analysis/ appendix. Where's the rest and why is it hidden from the people of Ontario?⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 127

⁷⁹ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 129.

⁸⁰ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 129.

⁸¹ Appendix O: Interim Report for Revenue Opportunities, Cost Reductions & Benefits of Relocating, p. 302.

⁸² Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 140 and p. 141.

⁸³ Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis, p. 151.

⁸⁴ Appendix Q: Interim Operating Estimates, p.333.

Appendix A: Chronology of Reports to Government

The following table shows the chronology of when the government received the reports included in the appendices of the business case. These reports would have presumably informed the business case and been given considerable weight in the government's decision making. However, **ten key reports/documents** were delivered to Infrastructure Ontario between January, 1 2023 and March 8, 2023 that would inform Infrastructure Ontario's final report dated March 8, 2023. **Five of these reports** were delivered **within one week of the March 8 report** including the Ernst & Young report that was delivered **the same day**. It leaves a strong impression that these reports were not intended to inform Infrastructure Ontario's decision but to support the already predetermined course of action (to Relocate).

Date	Report Name	Author
2016 (?)	Appendix A: Existing Ontario Science Centre Spatial Analysis	CB Richard Ellis
Unknown	Appendix Q: Interim Operating Estimates	Ontario Government
Unknown (Redacted)	Appendix D: Ontario Science Centre – Lease Review Memo	Unknown (Redacted)
Unknown (Redacted)	Appendix P: OSC+ Components	Unknown (Redacted)
July 30, 2021	Appendix G: The Government's Announced Vision for Ontario Place (news release)	Office of the Premier
December 2021	Renovation budget for cinesphere: 103810 - OPEW Cinesphere, Class D, Rev 1	Altus
April 2022	Appendix E: Building Condition Assessment and 20 Year Capital Plan	Pinchin (engineering firm)
June 2022	Appendix B: Planning and Policy Analysis - Redevelopment Feasibility Analysis	Fotenn
June 2022	Appendix L: Ontario Science Centre Site Land Value Analysis	Infrastructure Ontario
December 16, 2022	Final Report Revenue and Cost reduction Opportunities and Benefits of Relocation	Lord Cultural Resources
December 2022	Appendix N: Attendance Projections for OSC, Revised Attendance Projections	Lord Cultural Resources

December 2022	Appendix O: Interim Report for Revenue Opportunities, Cost Reductions & Benefits of Relocating	Lord Cultural Resources
January 2023	Appendix K: Functional Program - OSC Relocation: Final Functional Program	Lord Cultural Resources
January 19, 2023	Ontario Science Centre at Ontario Place Program Test Fit	Quadrangle Architects Limited
January 20 2023	Appendix C: Land Use Planning Memo to John Taglieri, Infrastructure Ontario	Alison Quigg, Planner at Infrastructure Ontario
January 16, 2023	Appendix F: Environmental Scan	Lord Cultural Resources
February 3, 2023	Appendix M: Class D Cost Estimate: Relocate Option: Ontario Science Centre (OSC) Relocation, Class D Estimate (Rev.1)	A.W. Hooker Associates
Accessed February 23, 2023	Appendix H: Eglinton Crosstown LRT Information Sheet	Metrolinx (from website)
March 3, 2023	Memo: Summary of Key Cost Pressure Factors (OSC - 40% BCA Escalation Justification): Summary of Key Cost Pressure Factors As of December 31, 2022	Infrastructure Ontario Project Controls
March 3, 2023	Summary of Key Cost Pressure Factors	Infrastructure Ontario Project Controls
March 6, 2023	Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions: Report to Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport	Infrastructure Ontario
March 6, 2023	Appendix I: Financial Model and Assumptions: "Ontario Place Analysis"	Infrastructure Ontario
March 8, 2023	Appendix J: Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis: Ontario Science Centre Relocation Business Case Economic Impact Assessment	Ernst & Young
March 8, 2023	Ontario Science Centre Modernization Business Case	Infrastructure Ontario

April 18, 2023 the government makes the announcement to relocate OSC.