



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada  
Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada  
Région de l'Ontario  
600-55, rue York  
Toronto (Ontario) M5J 1R7

October 3, 2023

**Sent by email**

**Correspondence to Provincial Directors**

Gavin Downing, Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism  
Kathleen O'Neill, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
Trevor Griffin, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Stephane Baffier, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
Elaine Shin, Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure

Dear colleagues:

**Subject: Designation Request for the Proposed Ontario Place Spa Complex under the *Impact Assessment Act***

On September 18, 2023, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) received a request to designate the proposed Ontario Place Spa Complex (the physical activity / activities referred to as the Project), proposed by Therme Canada (the Proponent) under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA).

**The Proposed Project**

The Project would be located near Toronto, Ontario. The Project involves the construction and operation of a commercial spa complex, including the construction and operation of a 61,000 square meter spa facility on West Island, a 22,000 square meter reception building on the mainland, 12-acre extension of the footprint of West Island through near-shore lake infilling, a multipurpose bridge connecting the island to the mainland, private outdoor space, publicly accessible walking paths, and connection to an underground parking garage, about which you will receive another letter. The Project as proposed is not a designated project as described in the *Physical Activities Regulations*.

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### **Designation Request**

Under subsection 9(1) of the IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from federal decisions, including funding), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation. In accordance with subsection 9(4) of the IAA, it is expected that the Minister will respond, with reasons, to the request by December 27, 2023.

However, as per the limitation of subsection 9(7) of the IAA, the Minister must not make the designation if (a) the carrying out of the physical activity has substantially begun;<sup>1</sup> or (b) a federal authority has exercised a power or performed a duty or function conferred on it under any Act of Parliament, other than the IAA, that could permit the physical activity to be carried out, in whole or in part.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) will review information to determine whether substantial physical works have begun, or if a federal authority has exercised a power or performed a duty or function under an Act of Parliament other than the IAA.

The Agency will review information about the Project; any concerns expressed from the public (that the Agency is aware of) and Indigenous communities; expert advice from federal authorities and input from provincial ministries in order to inform the Minister on whether the Project should be designated.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/guidance-interpreting-substantially-begun-subsection-9-7-and-substantially-begin-subsections-70-1-70-3.html>

If the Project were to be designated, in order to proceed with the Project, Therme Canada would be required to submit an Initial Project Description to the Agency, thereby commencing the planning phase under the IAA. In this case, the planning phase would include the Agency determining whether a federal impact assessment is required.

Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>.

### **Seeking Provincial Input**

The Agency is requesting that you complete and provide the attached form by **October 18, 2023**.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project (Reference 85951) will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site. Please use [designationontario@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:designationontario@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) to provide the Agency with information regarding this file. This email address will also be posted on the Project's Registry page.

**Important Note:** All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process – unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act* – will be considered public and may be released. Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that you believe should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency before submitting the information. Information marked as confidential will not be accepted without prior contact made with the Agency.

If you have any questions regarding the designation process or the response sheet, please do not hesitate to contact Ella Myette, A/ Project Manager at 416-559-3960 or the above-noted email address.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Anjala Puvananathan  
Director

Enclosure: Provincial Advice Record – Designation Request under the IAA

c.c.: Nick Colella, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
Stefan Perera, Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure

**Enclosure: Provincial Advice Record – Designation Request under the IAA**  
**Response requested by October 18, 2023**  
Ontario Place Redevelopment: Spa Complex Project

Ministry	
Lead Contact	
Full Address	
Email	
Telephone	
Alternate Ministry Contact	

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1. In general terms, please confirm and describe your ministry's role (if applicable) in the review of the Project.
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2. Please provide the contact information of the person or persons responsible for managing your ministry's oversight of the Project (if different from lead contact above).
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3. Describe the provincial legislative or regulatory process or approvals administered by your ministry that may assess or manage the potential adverse effects of the Project. For each mechanism or approval, please provide information regarding the following:
    - Name of the process or authorization (e.g. certificate, licence, permit or approval) and the associated legislative framework;
    - Whether (for each) the authorization would set conditions and if yes, what issues would those conditions address;
    - Whether (for each) the authorization would require public and/or Indigenous consultation and if yes, provide information on the approach to be taken; and
    - Whether (for each) your ministry has guidance material that would be helpful to the Proponent or the Agency (please provide these as attachments or hyperlinks in your response).
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4. Confirm whether any authorization listed above would contemplate the following matters and if yes, discuss, in general, the benchmarks or standards to which a project of this nature may be held (be specific in relation to each point below that may be applicable to your ministry's mandate):
- fish and fish habitat, including matters related to surface and groundwater,
  - migratory birds, including matters related to vegetation and habitat,
  - federally listed species at risk,
  - effects on Indigenous people of Canada, including on physical and cultural heritage, the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, or any structure, site or thing that is of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance, or on communities' health, social or economic conditions,
  - adverse changes to the environment that would occur on federal lands, including federal water-lots, and lands outside Ontario or Canada, including transboundary effects of greenhouse gas emissions as well as air emissions.
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5. Have you received public comments/concerns in relation to the Project? If yes, provide an overview of the key issues and the way in which (in general terms) your ministry intends to address (or would normally manage) these matters.
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6. Have you received Indigenous community comments/concerns in relation to the Project? If yes, provide an overview of the key issues and the way in which (in general terms) your ministry intends to address (or would normally manage) these matters.
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7. Do you have any other information about the Project in relation to potential adverse effects or impacts to the public, or Indigenous peoples and their rights as protected under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*?
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Name of responder

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Title of responder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date