

# Ontario Place Begins Final Countdown

Ontario Place, the giant provincial showcase rising out of Lake Ontario to the south of Exhibition Park, is about six months away from Opening Day. The exhibition and entertainment complex is on construction schedule and is to open, as planned, on May 22, 1971.

The Ontario Place project, first announced on March 11, 1969, is beginning to take on its final appearance. Exterior construction of the five-module exhibit pavilion is almost completed, and interior fitting is now underway.

The triodetic dome theatre, Cinesphere, has been topped and is now

revealing its final shape to passing motorists on Toronto's Lakeshore boulevard. On the man-made islands of the complex, landfill and grading operations are almost completed and sodding a tree planting have begun. Final landscape manicuring will be undertaken in a four-week crash program immediately before the official opening in May.

Plans for activities at Ontario Place are also well underway. Exhibit construction for the pavilion is being stepped up. Designers are expected to begin final exhibit assembly inside the pavilion "pods" before the end of the year.

Negotiations are nearing completion for the operation of Ontario Place dining and lounge facilities, and talent is being signed to appear at the Forum, an outdoor amphitheatre with a capacity of 8,000 spectators. And for Cinesphere, four new major films representing different regions of the province are currently in production and due for completion in early spring.

Ontario Place was conceived as a showcase for the province and its people. It is a place designed so that the people of Ontario can re-affirm their identity as Ontarians and Canadians. The Honourable Stanley J. Randall, the Minister of

Trade and Development, describes the complex this way:

"Ontario Place is being built as a focal point to show Ontarians and our visitors who we are, and when we are going."

The Ontario Place complex is based on almost 40 acres of man-made islands situated in a total area of land and water exceeding 90 acres. Nestled in a protected lagoon amid the four new islands, the five-module domed 800-seat triodetic cinema, and a 300-boat marina. Located on the eastern islands are the outdoor amphitheatre, a special children's plan area and a cluster of fine

restaurant and entertainment facilities are located on the western islands along with a large reflecting pool, picnic areas, beaches and countoured parkland. The western islands culminate in a quarter mile long breakwater and promenade which sweeps around to the most southerly point of the complex.

There are two main entry points to Ontario Place - one at each end of the 460 car mainland parking lot south of Lakeshore boulevard. A third access point is the marina, for visitors arriving by water.

Creation of the man made islands at Ontario Place required one of the

largest landfill programs ever undertaken in the province. More than 10 million cubic yards of material were required, with much of the material being hauled from major construction projects in downtown Toronto. In order to meet deadline commitments, landfill was frequently a 24-hour day operation with many as 1,800 truckloads of fill being dumped each day.

A key part of the Ontario Place complex is the award-winning pavilion. Designed by the Ontario firm of Craig, Zeidler, Strong, the pavilion has aroused keen interest in Canada and in the rest of the world. The pavilion consists of five interstitial modules or "pods" suspended above the lake from 105 foot high columns. The modules are 35 feet above the lake, their lowest point and to an upper deck 70 feet above the water from which visitors may enjoy a view of the entire site. The pavilion is linked to the east by a bridge, and to the mainland entrance plaza a 300 foot long two level enclosed walkway. A main walkway continues through the pavilion Cinesphere, the triodetic domed theatre, Cinesphere, designed to be the world's most advanced theatre, accommodates people in a structure 90 feet high and 120 feet diameter. The screen is 70 feet high and 80 feet wide. It is one of the largest in the world.

The Ontario Place Forum, located on the eastern islands adjacent to the pavilion, is an intriguing concept. The contouring of the sloping hills which surround the performance area in this 8,000 sq. ft. outdoor amphitheatre is currently in progress. To be erected is the 76-foot diameter circular stage and protective canopy which will shelter the stage and audience area accommodate 2,000.

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra has already signed for a five week summer concert season at the Forum, and negotiations with other performance groups are currently underway.

A major feature of Ontario Place will be a 300 boat marina. Canoe and dock assembly is slated for the near future. Completed, the Ontario Place marina will be one of the largest on the Great Lakes. In addition to berthing facilities, it will feature a pump-out station, a fully equipped chandler, shower and toilet facilities and a seafood restaurant and sailor's pub.

Food and refreshments will be plentiful and reasonably priced at Ontario Place. Construction is underway on the first of three island clusters, restaurants, snack bars, boutiques. The dining shopping clusters will

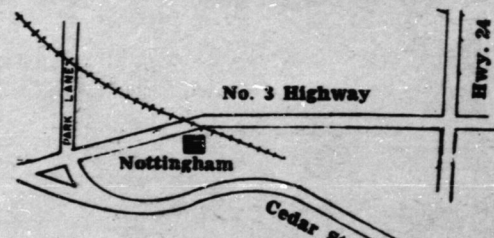


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