

COMMUNITY PROPOSAL: **Locate Station Building in Osgoode Plaza *NOT* Osgoode garden**

SYNOPSIS

Metrolinx plans to locate the Osgoode Station Building in the Osgoode Hall garden. This location will cause acknowledged, irreversible, negative impacts to the heritage property and to the adjacent public realm at the landmark intersection.

The community proposes expanding and enhancing the pedestrian realm at University & Queen to create an Osgoode Plaza and a Performing Arts Plaza, and relocating the Station Building in the Osgoode Plaza, outside the Osgoode fence.

The community urges the City of Toronto and Metrolinx to pursue this potential solution for turning a permanent loss to the public realm into a long-term gain.

The construction of the Ontario Line at Osgoode Station is an opportunity for the City to reimagine the University & Queen intersection. For Metrolinx, relocating the Station Building in a new Osgoode Plaza would demonstrate that it is committed to the wider public good.

PERMANENT LOSS TO THE PUBLIC REALM

Metrolinx's plan

Currently, Metrolinx is planning to construct a Station Building in the southwest corner of the Osgoode Hall Garden, behind the iron fence, plus extensive below-ground infrastructure located under and beyond the footprint of the Station Building.

The Station Building will occupy an estimated 278 square metres of the garden; the below-ground infrastructure will occupy an additional 601 square metres beyond the Station Building; the estimated total impact is 879 square metres (see Figure 2). Construction of both these elements will require the removal of mature trees and excavation. It is likely that no replanted trees will be able to grow to full maturity in the location of the below-ground infrastructure. (See Figure 3 for impact to trees.)

Impacts to Osgoode Hall property and University Avenue Streetscape

The Ogoode Hall property is a National Historic Site of Canada, listed on the Canadian Register, designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and a Provincial Heritage Property of Provincial Significance. Osgoode Hall's contextual heritage attributes are identified in the Final Environmental Conditions Report (OLS-113). In addition to the cultural value of the Osgoode Hall property itself, the property is an important component of the University Avenue Streetscape (OLW-136) of which the landmark University and Queen intersection is a part.

Metrolinx acknowledges that the Ontario Line will result in a "new physical element or alteration that changes the character or diminishes the integrity of the property's formal setting, including the grassed lawn with Y-shaped walkways and traditional plantings, decorative cast-iron fence, and gates" (Environmental Impact Assessment Report, OLS-113, p lxi).

Metrolinx's plans will cause specific impacts to the property's contextual heritage attributes:

- Permanent removal of several metres of the historic cast-iron 1867 fence;
- Permanent removal of 9 mature trees (see Figure 3);
- Viewscapes of the building from the street will be blocked by the Station Building; and
- Significant reduction in the extent of open land around the building, which (among other attributes) establishes its landmark status within the urban environment and contributes to the natural environment and climate resilience.

... OR BENEFIT FOR GENERATIONS?

Relocate Osgoode Station infrastructure within a new "Osgoode Plaza"

There is a solution to prevent the permanent losses to the Osgoode Hall property and this landmark intersection: Create two new plazas (see Figure 1), adapted from Evergreen's earlier University Park idea for the intersection (<https://universitypark.evergreen.ca/>), and locate the infrastructure in the Osgoode Plaza.

SPECIFICALLY: Reduce and realign the number of car lanes (6 to 4) on University Avenue. Redesign an expanded pedestrian area called Osgoode Plaza on the east side of University Avenue, outside the retained Osgoode fence, to accommodate the new Station Building and below-ground infrastructure. Create a Performing Arts Plaza to the south to accommodate outdoor cultural activities.

Perfect time to reconfigure this landmark intersection

During construction of the Ontario Line, car lanes will be reduced, habituating motorists to fewer lanes at the intersection. Monuments and landscape features will be temporarily removed from University Avenue so that the area can be used as a staging area for construction. After completion of Ontario Line work, the car lanes, monuments, and landscape features can be re-instated within a new design for Osgoode Plaza and the Performing Arts Plaza – a design that would respect the almost two-centuries-old Osgoode Hall property and add to the public amenity at the landmark intersection. Planning of the Ontario Line at Osgoode Station is the *opportune time to make improvements to University Avenue for future generations*.

Benefits for the public realm

- Keeps integrity of the historic Osgoode Hall garden and setting, including the open land, mature trees, 1867 fence, and viewscapes of Osgoode Hall and garden from the street.
- Station Building appropriately located within the hard-scaped pedestrian route (not within the garden).
- Expands and enhances the pedestrian realm at the landmark intersection by creating an Osgoode Plaza and a Performing Arts Plaza for outdoor cultural activities.
- The two hard-scaped Plazas would be visual counterpoints to each other, adding to the landmark status of the intersection.
- The two Plazas would make the intersection more intimate and people-friendly and would make a closer connection between the important legal and cultural institutions at the three corners. The development at 250 University is planned to have 47 stories; the building's new residents will benefit directly from the expanded public realm outside their door.
- The road width between the Campbell House and Osgoode properties would be reduced, reinforcing their shared design, historical association, and contextual value.
- Reduces vehicular traffic on University Avenue and improves climate resiliency.

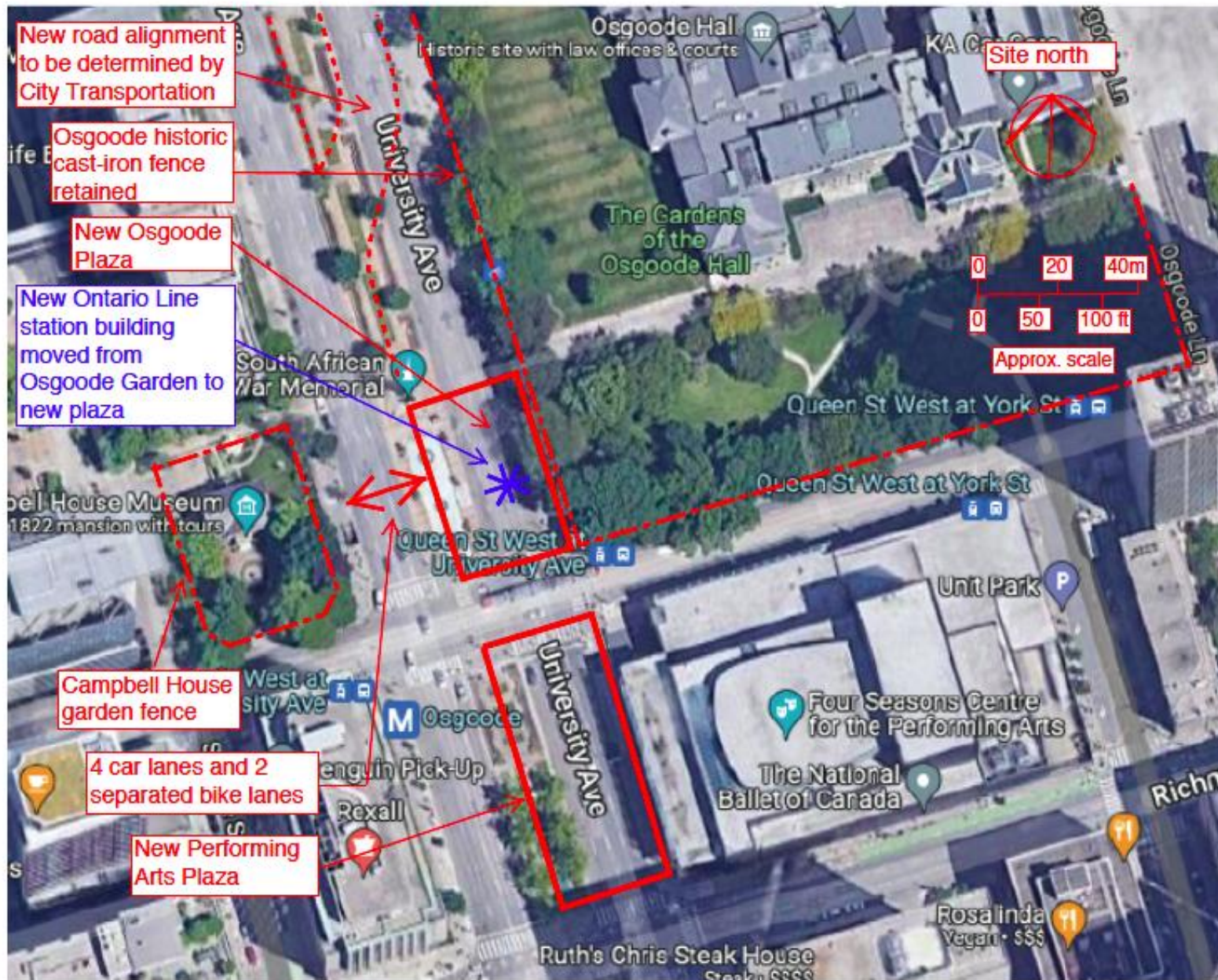
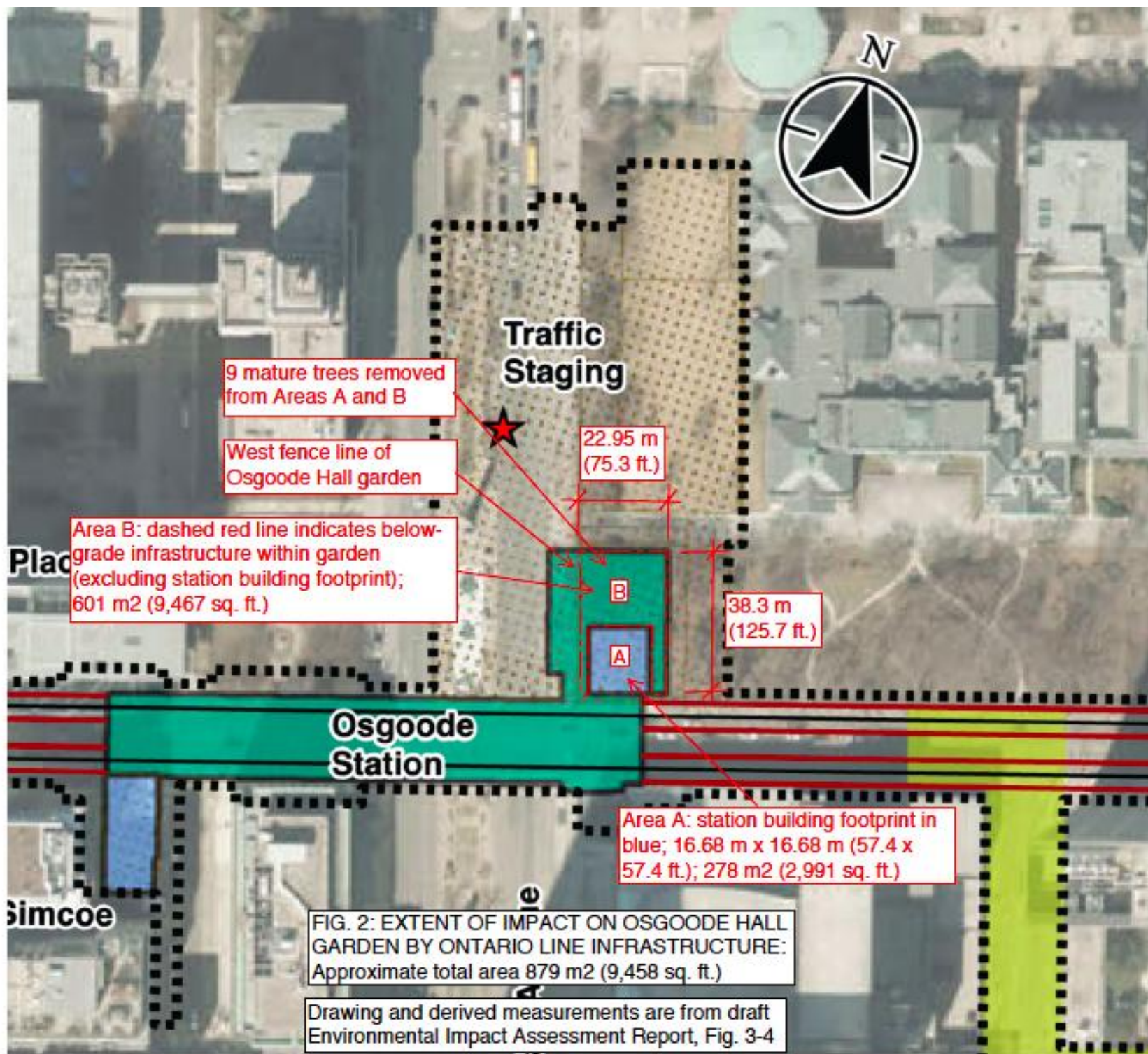


FIG. 1: ENLARGED AND ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN REALM AT LANDMARK INTERSECTION (UNIVERSITY & QUEEN)



**FIGURE 3: TREES TO BE REMOVED FROM OSGOODE HALL GARDEN
BY METROLINX FOR ONTARIO LINE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Photographs taken March 17, 2022



All trees in the above views, south and southwest from the stone laneway, would be removed for the Station Building and below-ground infrastructure.



All trees in these views, north from Queen to the stone laneway, would be removed.
The view through the fence (right) is from the streetcar shelter.



This **tree border** along University Avenue **would be lost.**



View of the full border of trees along University
Half of the tree border would be lost.



CREATE OSGOODE PLAZA outside
Osgoode Hall garden, in area of 3 car lanes
+ sidewalk

The enlarged and enhanced pedestrian
area would accommodate the Station
Building and realigned central boulevard.

Locate 4 car lanes to west side of
University Avenue.

See Figure 1.