

appendix 4 -  
heritage conservation district plan





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## 1 . 0 P L A N S U M M A R Y

In recognition of their special character and cultural heritage value, more than 70 areas in Ontario have been designated as Heritage Conservation Districts under the Ontario Heritage Act. In maintaining their uniqueness and sense of place, 12 of these districts contribute to the rich history and dynamic landscape of the City of Toronto.

Undertaken as part of the Union Station District Plan initiated under the direction and funding of the City of Toronto Planning Division, this Heritage Conservation District Plan proposes that Union Station and its surrounding district represents a significant municipal asset for its cultural history and architectural character. This Plan has been prepared for the consideration of City Council, and proposes the formal recognition of the Union Station District as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The objectives of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan are:

- To complete a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the historical and architectural character of the Union Station District in order to identify the heritage character of the area;
- To propose a method by which the City of Toronto can effectively protect and enhance the heritage attributes of the area;

- To develop design guidelines which will assist the property owners and decision makers to assess appropriate changes and development proposals within the district;
- To encourage and facilitate the participation and input of local stakeholders and the city in pursuing and promoting the awareness of the preservation and enhancement of neighbourhood character.

Prepared according to provincial and municipal standards, this plan describes the district according to an analysis of its historical development, evaluation of its architectural integrity and an understanding of Union Station's historical function within the urban landscape. From this examination, the creation of a Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act is recommended. This Plan forwards comprehensive design guidelines as a tool to aid the city and property owners in strengthening and protecting the significant character of the Union Station District.



## 2 . 0   M E T H O D O L O G Y

Union Station has held a prominent role in the landscape of the City of Toronto since its opening in 1927. Union Station and its function as the city's primary transportation hub has defined and continues to define the character of the area that surrounds it. The grand civic architecture of Union Station and its Front Street neighbours anchors a district that represents many periods of Toronto development and acts to connect divergent districts of the city.

As its function continues to evolve and expand, the City of Toronto has undertaken a number of initiatives over the past few decades which seek to recognize and revitalize Union Station as a significant resource to the City of Toronto. In November 2004, City Council adopted the Master Plan for Union Station. Among the initiatives of this plan was work identified under the Union Station District Study issued for tender by the City of Toronto in May of 2005.

As part of a consultant team, led by architectsAlliance, E.R.A. Architects Inc. was retained by the City of Toronto in July of 2005 to conduct the Heritage Conservation District Study as part of the Union Station District Study. As originally defined by City Staff, the study was to include an area bounded by Wellington Street to the north, John and Rees streets to the west, Lake Shore Boulevard and Harbour Street to the south and Church Street to the east. Commencing July 2005, Phase 1 of this study comprised a review of background materials

on Union Station and its surrounding area, investigation of the cultural planning policy, archival research on the development of the area, and an inventory of existing heritage resources. In collaboration with the consultant team and the public, a heritage analysis of this study area supported a consolidated district boundary that would act as the Heritage Conservation District boundary and best incorporate the initiatives of the greater Union Station District Plan.

Phase 2 of the study consisted of a detailed analysis of the district's heritage resources identified in Phase 1. Internationally recognized conventions and provincial criteria were used to evaluate the cultural merits of the existing built form. Statements were drafted in recognition of the contributing or non-contributing character of these elements. Based on these statements, preliminary heritage principles were proposed to initiate the development of comprehensive design guidelines that would define appropriate change within the district.

Phase 3 of the study entailed the consolidation and synthesis of the heritage, urban design, and transportation portions of the study in order to finalize a comprehensive District Plan. Included in the District Plan is this Heritage Conservation District Plan which proposes heritage design guidelines with respect to the heritage character of the district, accommodates future growth and change, and enhances the function of this district.

An open public process was undertaken throughout the study period from July 2005 to March 2006. The consultant team held regular meetings with the city's steering committee. The city notified all property owners within the proposed boundaries of the study by mail. Stakeholder consultations were conducted with key property owners, invested public organizations and the Union Station Revitalization Public Advisory Group at each phase of work. Additionally, three public forums were held on October 25, 2005, December 13, 2005, and February 21, 2006 as well as meeting with individual property owner.

## 3.0 POLICY PROVISIONS

The processes and procedures of the Heritage Conservation District Study as part of the Union Station District Study were sanctioned under the terms laid out by Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act 1990 as amended and provisions of the City of Toronto Official Plan, as well as provincial and national standards in the conservation of historic places.

### The Ontario Heritage Act

The Ontario Heritage Act represents the primary piece of provincial legislation that regulates the protection of heritage resources within Ontario. A property that has been formally recognized under provisions contained in the act is referred to as a “designated” property. According to the Act, as amended on April 28th 2005, the municipality may by by-law designate any area a Heritage Conservation District. Based on these provisions, municipalities shall adopt a District Plan that identifies, among other things, the cultural value of the district and provides principles for protecting that value<sup>1</sup>.

### The Provincial Policy Statement 2005

The purpose of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the Planning Act, is to provide municipalities in Ontario with policy direction on matters related to land use

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Ministry of Culture, Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18, (Toronto, 2005).

planning and development. As it relates to the Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan, Section 2.6 of the PPS states:

- Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.
- Development and site alteration may be permitted in adjacent lands to protected heritage property where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.<sup>2</sup>

### The City of Toronto Official Plan

The Official Plan outlines Toronto's vision for the future character of the city. As statutory policy, the Official Plan guides the city in its decisions on how best to achieve balanced change, growth, and development. In this case, the Official Plan addresses how the City of Toronto will implement and address municipal requirements set forth in the Planning Act and Ontario Heritage Act. With reference to the identification and protection of heritage resources the Official Plan<sup>3</sup> states:

- It is the policy of Council to designate property to be of architectural or historical value or interest and take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation and conservation of all buildings, structures, and sites, including all areas in the public domain, within such districts.
- It is the policy of Council to designate Heritage Conservation Districts within the City on the basis of appropriate studies and to take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation and conservation of heritage buildings, structures, sites, including all areas in the public domain, within such districts.

Passed by City Council in November 2002, the new Official Plan is currently awaiting approval at the provincial level. Among other things, this new policy recognizes the importance of protecting stable neighbourhoods and heritage resources for their contributing qualities to the character of the city. The Official Plan states:

- Development will respect and reinforce the physical pattern and character of established neighbourhoods, with particular regard to...conservation of heritage buildings, structures and landscapes.
- Our heritage buildings, districts and landscapes create a unique sense of place and a rooted sense of local identity and continuity for Torontonians... Heritage conservation not only makes our neighbourhoods even more attractive, it also increases their desirability and value.

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, Section 2 (Toronto, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> City of Toronto Planning and Development, City of Toronto Official Plan, Section 5 (Toronto, 1996).

- Significant heritage resources will be conserved by... designating areas with a concentration of heritage resources as Heritage Conservation Districts and adopting conservation and design guidelines to maintain and improve their character.<sup>4</sup>

## Other Provisions

In recognizing the significant qualities of Union Station and its surrounding area, the City of Toronto has instituted an extensive policy framework for the district over the last 15 years. Among the many planning provisions and objectives that were reviewed and integrated into this study, the following documents were of particular interest in identifying the cultural heritage value of the Union Station District and developing a comprehensive Heritage Conservation District Plan:

- 1989 Heritage Character Statement, Union Station, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.
- 2000 Union Station Easement Agreement, between Toronto Terminals Railway Co. Ltd. and the City of Toronto, June 30, 2000.
- 2001 Union Station Heritage Guidelines, E.R.A. Architects Inc., July 11, 2001.
- 2002 Statement of Commemorative Integrity—Toronto Union Station National Historic Site, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Parks Canada.
- 2002 Railway Lands East Secondary Plan, Toronto Official Plan, City of Toronto Urban Development Services, November 2002.
- 2002 Railway Lands Central Secondary Plan, Toronto Official Plan, City of Toronto Urban Development Services, November 2002.
- 2004 Union Station Master Plan, Office for Urbanism, December 2004.
- 2005 Historic Structures Report, Fournier Gersovitz Moss Architects & Associates, April 2005.
- 2005 St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area: Urban Design Guidelines, City of Toronto Planning Division, July 2005.
- 2005 City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services.
- Zoning By-law 438-86 as Amended
- Zoning By-law Railway Lands 612-85
- Zoning By-law Railway Lands East 168-93
- Zoning By-law Harbourfront 289-93

## National Standards in Heritage Preservation

The objectives and guidelines laid out in this Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan have been developed in accordance with Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and are to be interpreted under these standards<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> City of Toronto Urban Development Services, City of Toronto Official Plan, (Toronto, 2002): 46-47, 71-72.

<sup>5</sup> Parks Canada, Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2003).

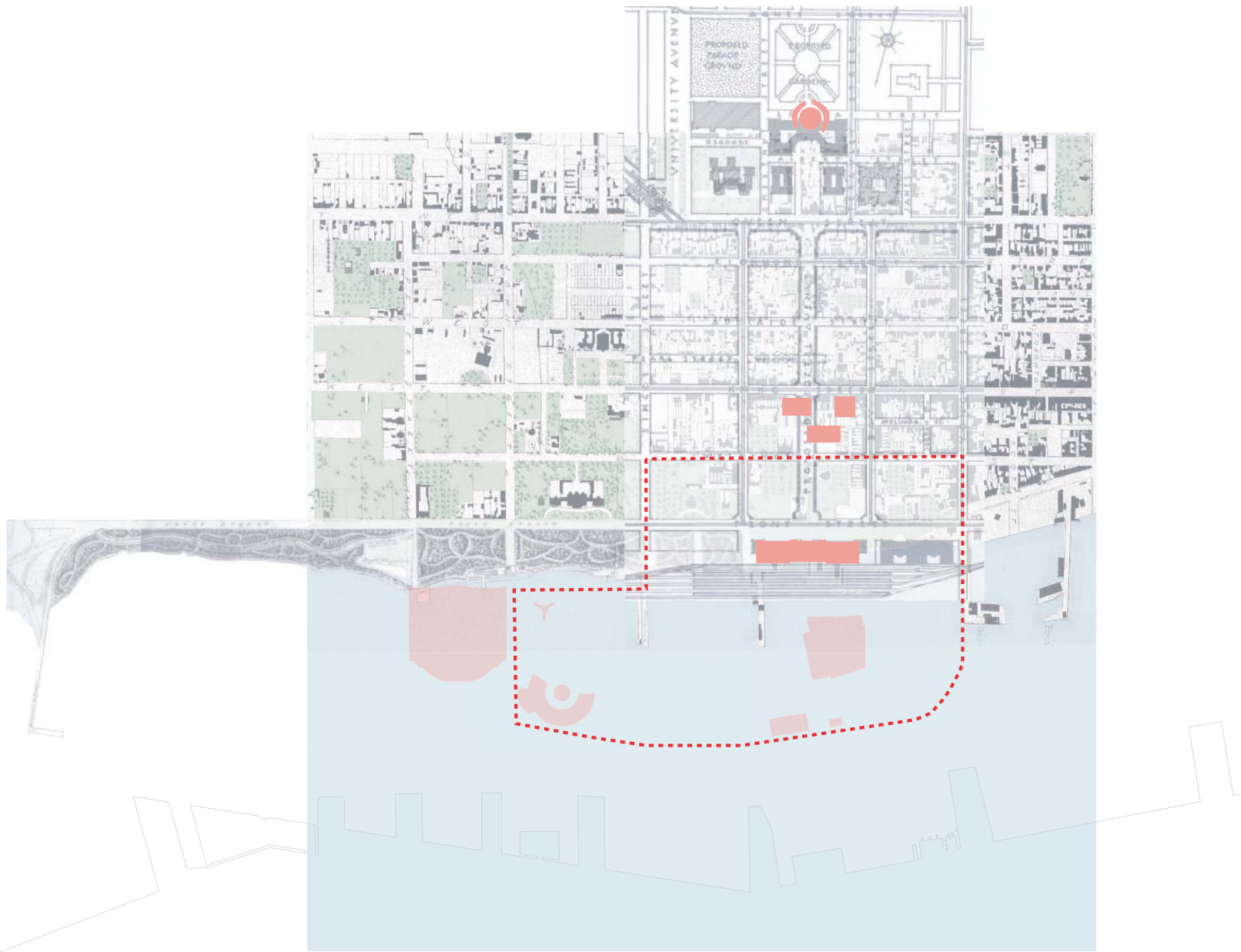


Figure 2. E.R.A. Architects Inc. 2005

## 4 . 0   D I S T R I C T   O B J E C T I V E S

Union Station occupies a central position in Toronto’s urban landscape. Located between Toronto’s Financial District, Entertainment District, historic St. Lawrence Neighbourhood and the post-industrial waterfront, Union Station is sited as a civic landmark, a transportation gateway and a link between divergent urban initiatives.

As part of the larger Union Station District Study, it is the objective of this Heritage Conservation District Plan to define the cultural heritage value of the area surrounding Union Station and establish a historical framework to guide the enhancement of the Union Station District as a place of cultural significance in the city.

It is the goal of this Plan to recognize the cultural value of this district by balancing the preservation of its architectural integrity with new and innovative design ideas. In interpreting historical precedents for the area, this Plan provides an opportunity to understand new development as part of the historical evolution of the area and encourages a cohesive and complementary relationship among defining features.





## 5.0 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The heritage character of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan is an assembly of buildings, streets and open spaces whose collective history and interdependence represent an important asset to the downtown core of Toronto. The overlapping development and planning of Toronto's railway lands, waterfront and central business district; historic and monumental architecture; as well as physical patterns of interrelated function, describe key heritage attributes that define Union Station and its surroundings as of significant cultural heritage value.

### John Lyle and Beaux-Arts Toronto

Union Station was conceived as part of a large redesign of central Toronto in a plan drafted by the architect John Lyle in 1911. The plan called for the creation of a new north/south street called 'Federal Avenue', which was to run from Queen to Front streets, between Bay and York. The plan envisioned large limestone buildings in the Beaux-Arts style to line Federal Avenue and Front Street. Union Station itself was to mark the end of the Federal Avenue axis – a grand horizontal terminus to the predominantly linear nature of the city.

The plan was significant in that it sought to unify city functions through architecture and considered the area from Queen to Front Street as a whole. The plan envisioned the alignment of transportation (Union Station), administration (public buildings north of

Queen), and commerce (the financial area on King east of Bay) through Federal Avenue. These were previously unconnected, relegated to separate parts of downtown. The majority of the plan was not implemented and Federal Avenue was never realized; yet its objectives helped shape subsequent development. The Royal York hotel, the Dominion Public Building and Union Station itself were built according to the John Lyle plan and remain its legacy.

### Rail Lands and the Waterfront

The area to the south of Union Station is rich in industrial history. The activities of the railroads and harbour, including expansive investments in rail infrastructure and harbour infill, represent a key force in determining the direction of Toronto's development from the late 19th century to the mid 20th century. Once the industrial edge of the city, today these lands lie between the city center and its post-industrial waterfront. Buildings like John Street Roundhouse and Union Station, both National Historic Sites, the Harbour Commission Building, Postal Delivery Building and the CN Tower remain as reminders of the area's past use.

Currently these lands are undergoing a major transition. New cultural, commercial, and residential projects are underway and a distinctive, unifying identity is in the process of being created. New development on these lands provides a great opportunity to relate the land's rail history to the modern city in establishing a strong physical and visual relationship to Union Station, and in doing so establish Union Station as the chief gateway to and from Toronto's downtown core.

### Modern Toronto

The completion of the University subway in 1963 was catalytic to a boom in office development west of Bay Street. The form of the Financial District followed the subway loop, bounded by Queen Street to the north, and Union Station to the south. Unified in function, monumentality, and connectivity, the 'subway corridor' defines the traditional east and west borders of the Financial District. The area's built form consists predominantly of large-scale post-war office properties. These were developed by assembling and razing many smaller properties, creating 'block' sized developments. Beginning with the Richmond-Adelaide Centre in the early 60's, the by-law for the Metro Centre allowed for large-scale development to take advantage of proximity to the subway and GO Transit systems. In 1967 Union Station became the main connection between these transit systems with the opening of GO Transit.

### Gateway Areas

The influence of Union Station's connective quality can be further understood through the nature of its surrounding streetscape. Changing patterns in the built form at grade relate strongly to the station's nodal character. This quality is strongly understood at the corner of Yonge and Front streets, where the A.E. LePage building and the Hummingbird Centre act as a gateway to the adjacent St. Lawrence Neighbourhood to the east of Union Station.

These projects mark a clear change in the character of the built form suggesting an eastern boundary to Union Station's immediate area of influence.

Other areas, such as the block of Front Street between University Avenue and Simcoe Street mark zones of transition containing developments that function as part of the Financial District, and others that serve to link Union Station with the neighbouring Entertainment District. Connections northward to the Financial District are strong, marked by distinct changes in built form while movement southward is less defined. Improvements to the teamways at Bay and York, as well as enhanced connections through Union Station hold potential to create a clear link between the area's history and evolving future.

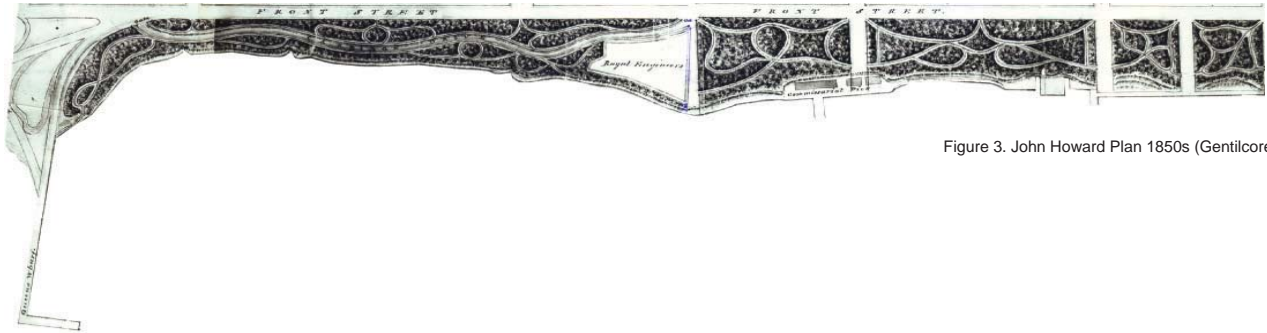


Figure 3. John Howard Plan 1850s (Gentilcore)

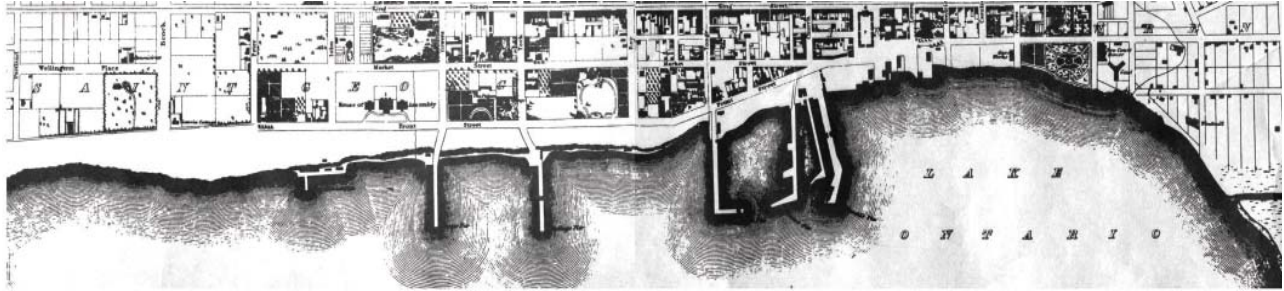


Figure 4. Toronto's 1850 shoreline (Gentilcore)

## 6.0 DISTRICT STUDY

### 6.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The area contained in the Union Station District has served a variety of functions since Toronto's inception. Throughout the last century it has received extremely large Capital investments that have resulted in cultural assets and examples of some of the grandest civic architecture in the country. Adjacent to the financial, entertainment and administrative centres, the Union Station District plays an important role in moving people in, out and around the downtown core.

#### Beginning of the Rail Age – 1850s Toronto

In 1851, construction began on Toronto's first railway. The sod was turned by Lady Elgin, wife of Canada's Governor General, at a location on Front Street between Simcoe and John streets, in front of what was then the Parliament of Upper Canada<sup>6</sup>. At the beginning of Toronto's rail age, Union Station was situated in a peripheral location west of what was the commercial centre of Toronto at Jarvis and King streets, and east of the city's institutional heart at Front and John. This administrative centre at Front and John streets contained the Parliament, Government House and Upper Canada College, all built in the 1830's. The stately architecture of these uses established a residential character to the area, and the

<sup>6</sup> Angus MacMurchy, *Our Royal Town of York: Historical and Romantic Associations of Downtown Toronto and the Site of the Royal York Hotel, 1860-1931*. (Toronto: 1930), 18.

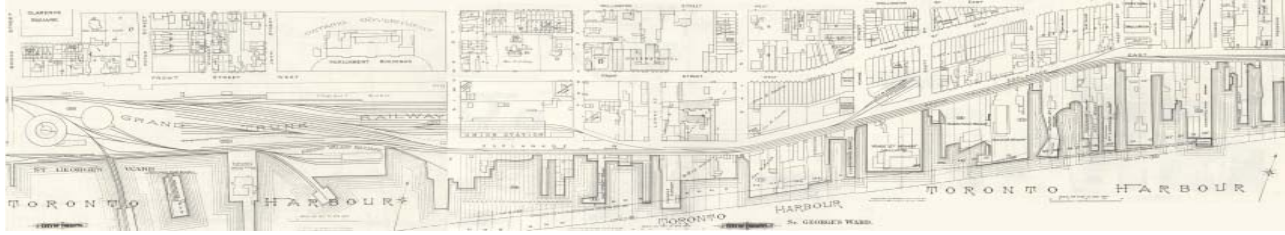


Figure 6. Goad's Atlas 1884

city's gentry erected many substantial mansions.

The area along Front Street (originally Princess Street) was a mix of these wealthy residences and commercial activity such as small warehousing operations close to the early commercial centre. The shore of Toronto was directly south of what is today Front Street, and played host to port functions. A system of land in public trust known as the 'Walks and Gardens' or 'Prince of Wales Walk' was established where the city's prominent citizens could 'take the air in the evenings'<sup>7</sup>. It stretched from Fort York to the Don River and was envisioned as a future park system. In anticipation of this, an extensive landscaping plan was drafted in the 1850's by Architect John Howard. However, the plan was never implemented and the area functioned like a wide, muddy street. At the time of the first railway, the proposed parkland was appropriated to support the growing industrial potential of the city.

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7 W.S. Wallace, *Toronto: A Tour Through its Highways and Byways*. (Toronto: Canadian Gravure Company, 1930), 11.

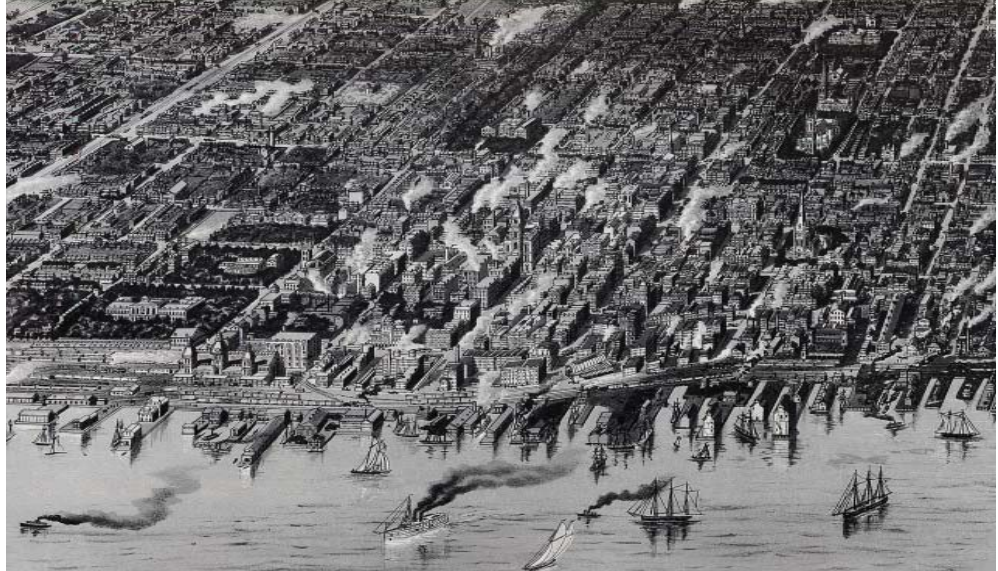


Figure 5. 1886 Toronto (Denby)

### The First Union Station and Early Harbour

The completion of the railroad in 1853 catalyzed many significant changes to the area. Industrial and port activity dramatically increased, particularly in the area close to the Don River. The railway was known as the Ontario, Huron, and Simcoe Railway. Its first station was a small wooden platform south of Front at the corner of Bay Street, close to the location of the current Union Station. The first 'Union Station' was built by the Grand Trunk Railway at the foot of York Street in 1858. A second Union Station, a far more grand structure, was built on the same site in 1873.

By the 1870's an increase in rail travel brought the hospitality functions associated with rail travel to the west of the city. The Queens Hotel, located on the current site of the Royal York Hotel, established itself as one of the most prominent establishments, playing host to such prominent guests as Sir John A. MacDonal and members of British Royalty. Taverns, shops and light industry established themselves in the area, but it still contained much undeveloped space and the property adjacent to the hotel was briefly home to Toronto's first zoological gardens<sup>8</sup>.

8 W.S. Wallace, *Toronto: A Tour Through its Highways and Byways*. (Toronto: Canadian Gravure Company, 1930), 27.



Figure 7. Dominion Block (Wallace), South-West Corner of Yonge & Front Street, circa 1916

The presence of the railway caused a dramatic change to the physical state of the shoreline. This began in 1856 with the creation of the Esplanade; a new 30m wide embankment into the harbour. The railway was removed from Front Street and placed upon the Esplanade, allowing Front Street to return to its function as a city street. Shoreline infilling continued in an effort to support the rapidly increasing rail and industrial activity. By 1888, the shoreline had moved 650 feet into Lake Ontario, adding many hundreds of acres of usable industrial land to the waterfront.

### Turn of Century Reorganization of Downtown Toronto

By the turn of the century, many of the administrative functions and residences centred on Front and John streets moved to the city's rapidly expanding northern fringe. Parliament moved to the new Queens Park complex, completed in 1892. The area these buildings formerly occupied prior to this move was largely replaced by rail yards and warehousing functions. This shift in land use was synonymous with a gradual western migration of the commercial district, concentrated in the areas of King and Toronto streets. Concurrent with this change in location was the introduction of a new building type, the office building.

The need to provide office space for a growing number of white-collar jobs, coupled with investment by large financial institutions in a speculative real estate market resulted in a



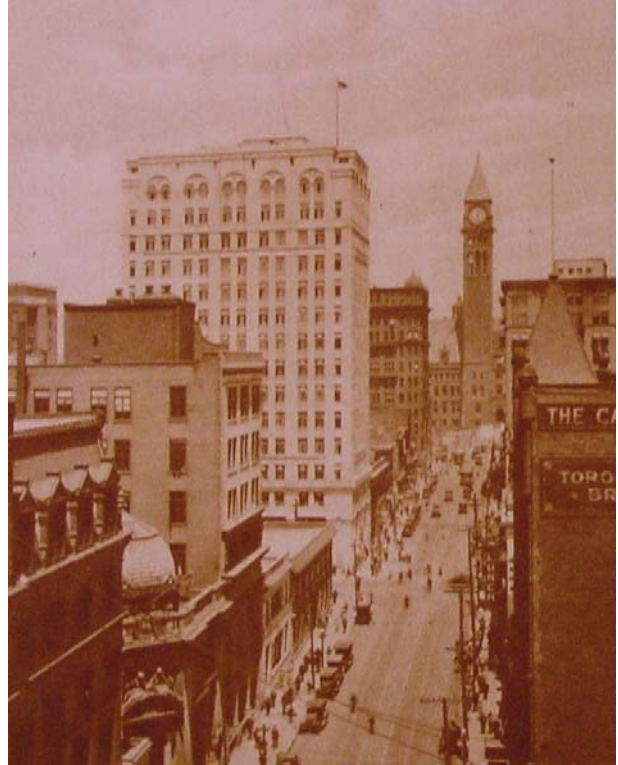


Figure 8. Turn-of-the-century Bay Street (Wallace)

boom in office construction<sup>9</sup>. These buildings were the first structures to rise over the city's church spires and added a significant vertical monumentality to the streetscape. The construction of Toronto's 3rd City Hall at the top of Bay Street in 1899 was representative of another spatial shift in the city's geography as more core city functions moved north. This change altered the predominant east/west structure of the city along King and Front streets, to a north/south structure, focused on Yonge and Bay streets. This westerly migration of the commercial and municipal functions resulted in the gradual decline of the King and Jarvis area, and culminated in the creation of a new business district made up of state of the art buildings.

### The Development of Union Station and Beaux-Arts Toronto

The increase in rail activity at the turn of the century created the need for a new train station. Planning for the new station coincided with Toronto's great fire of 1904. The fire destroyed nearly all of the structures along Front Street between the Queens Hotel at York, and the Bank of Montreal at Yonge Street.

The city used the opportunity of the fire to commence a grand revisioning of Toronto's downtown. Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific railways, eager to commence the building of

<sup>9</sup> Gunter Gad, "Building for City, Region, and Nation: Office Development in Toronto, 1834 – 1984", Forging a Consensus: historical essays on Toronto, Ed: Victor Loring. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 293.



Figure 9. Union Station 1930 (Wallace)

a new station, offered a focus for the area's rebuilding. Through negotiations, a large parcel of city-owned land damaged by the fire, located at the south side of Front Street between York and Bay streets, was leased to the railways to realize the project. The new Union Station was to be the new grand entranceway to the city, and the focus of a new master plan for the surrounding area.

In 1911 Toronto Architect, John Lyle, was commissioned to create the area's master plan. The project was undertaken through the auspices of the City Improvement Committee that had been established in 1909. The plan was heavily influenced by the City Beautiful movement and Ecole des Beaux-Arts. As the plan's focal point, Union Station was to be the most monumental structure in the city. It was to be placed on an axis with a new Federal Avenue, which was to run from Front to Queen streets, between York and Bay. This new street would provide access to a new public and administrative area north of Queen Street, between Osgoode Hall and the new City Hall.

The goal of this plan was two-fold. First, it would create a new north/south axis, strengthening the consolidation of the administrative, commercial and transportation functions of the city. Second, it would shorten the length of the blocks, which were viewed as prohibitively large for development projects<sup>10</sup>. The plan formalized the consolidation of city functions to the area along Federal Avenue, with Union Station as the main anchor. It

<sup>10</sup> Jacob Spelt. *The Changing Face of Toronto*. (Department of Mines and Resources, 1965).



Figure 10. Royal York Hotel c1930 (Cotter)

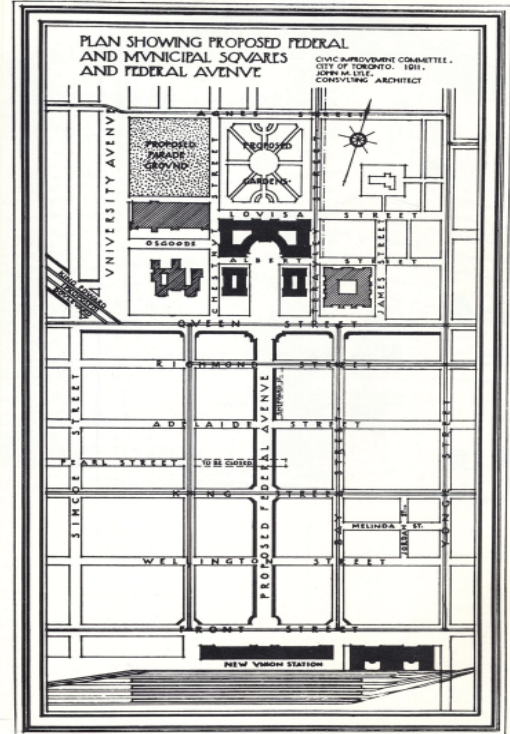


Figure 11. John Lyle Plan 1911 (Denby)

defined a series of blocks, which would be filled in with grand projects, framing the new axis. The intention was to create a new monumental city.

Union Station was a joint venture between the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway (now the Canadian National Railway) to consolidate their services into one facility. It was designed by a team of architects comprised of John Lyle, the Montreal firm of G.A. Ross and R.H. McDonald, as well as Hugh Jones of the CPR. Though construction began in 1914, its opening was delayed to 1927 as a result of disagreements between the partners and the city. A full history of the development of the station itself is available in the Union Station Historic Structure Report+.

Several other grand projects were planned in conjunction with Union Station, and followed the guidelines of the John Lyle master plan. These included the Royal York Hotel (1929) and the Dominion Public Building (1935), which were well underway by the time of the station's opening. Both associated with rail activity, one was the flagship hotel of the Canadian Pacific Railway's hospitality developments, and the other a federal customs house and administrative building. Union Station and the Royal York Hotel were the first buildings in Toronto to be linked by a public underground passage.

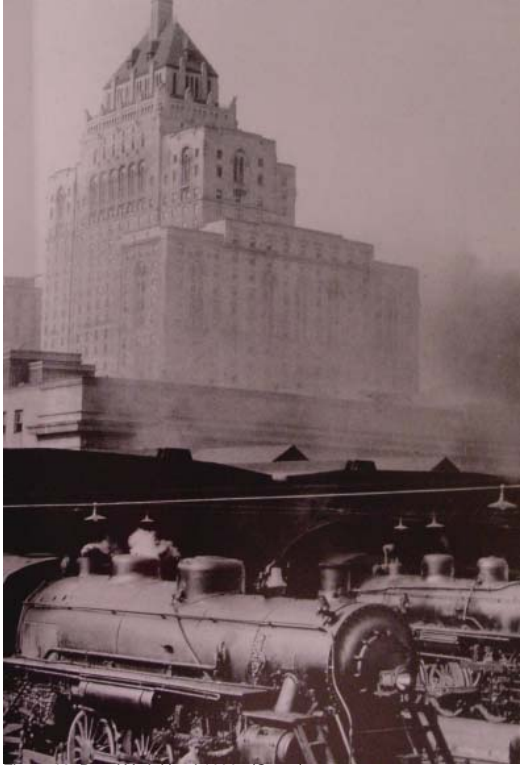


Figure 12. Royal York Hotel 1930s (Cotter)

## Rail Yard and Harbour Development

The development of Union Station was concurrent with a massive modernization in rail facilities. The land south of the station came to be dominated by rail and industrial activity in response to the rapidly expanding economy and a continual increase in passenger activity. These lands were significantly monopolized by the expanding rail yards of both the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk Railway. Facilities such as the John Street Roundhouse (1929), one of the most advanced roundhouses of its day, were constructed in anticipation of the station's opening.

Rail modernization also included the creation of the Toronto Viaduct, a stretch of track nearly ten kilometres long elevated over five metres high. The creation of the elevated viaduct was encouraged by the city as a means of separating rail activity from pedestrian traffic to the harbour at the south. Disagreements between the city and railways regarding the financing and functioning of the viaduct resulted in nearly a decade long stalemate in which the finished structure of Union Station sat empty and without tracks. Through the disagreement, the Canadian Pacific railways threatened to move its operations to North Toronto Station, however a consensus was eventually reached and the viaduct was finally completed with the support of the newly established Toronto Harbour Commission in 1927.

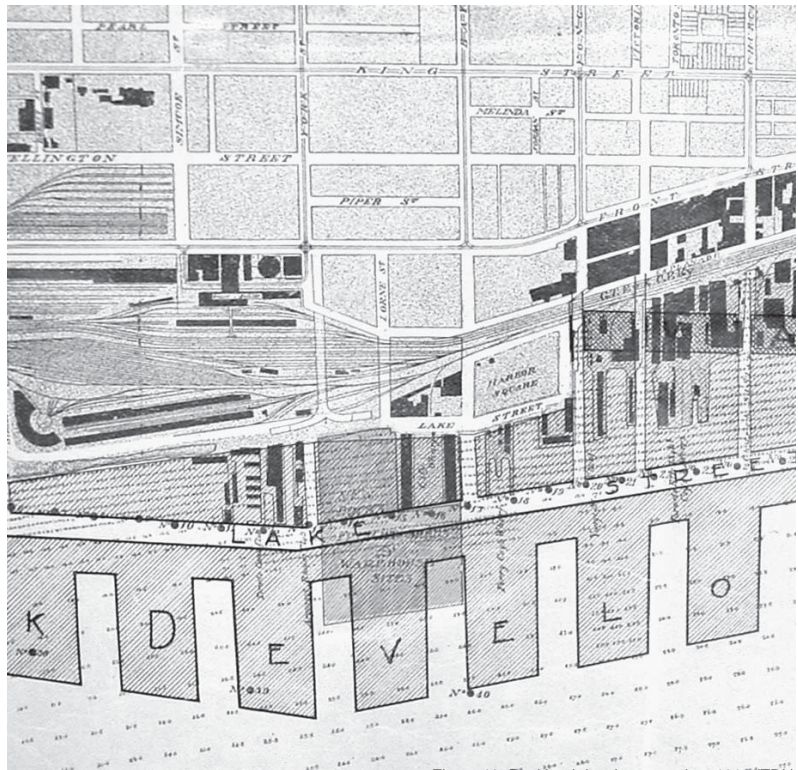


Figure 13. Dockland development plan 1912 (TRL)

The viaduct facilitated the separation of rail, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic functions, allowing unobstructed traffic flow into the city. It resulted in the current condition where rail is carried on bridges within the downtown core, under which pedestrians and cars traverse in order to travel north or south of the tracks. The creation of teamways running parallel to roadways under the rail viaduct facilitated safe and separate access for pedestrians, and complemented the separation of activity provided by the moat system of Union Station.

Modernization of rail activity paralleled massive developments to the industrial harbour. In 1912, in response to the opening of the Welland Canal, the Royal Toronto Commission was established to oversee improvements to the industrial port and waterfront<sup>11</sup>. The outbreak of the First World War placed much of the commission's efforts on hold, but by 1930 the commission had successfully created one of the most modern industrial harbours on the continent. This was accommodated by the addition of over 500 acres of new harbour infill, projecting the shoreline nearly half a kilometre further south into Lake Ontario, nearly to its current position today.

11 W.S. Wallace, Toronto "A Tour Through its Highways and Byways". (Toronto: Canadian Gravure Company, 1930), 26.

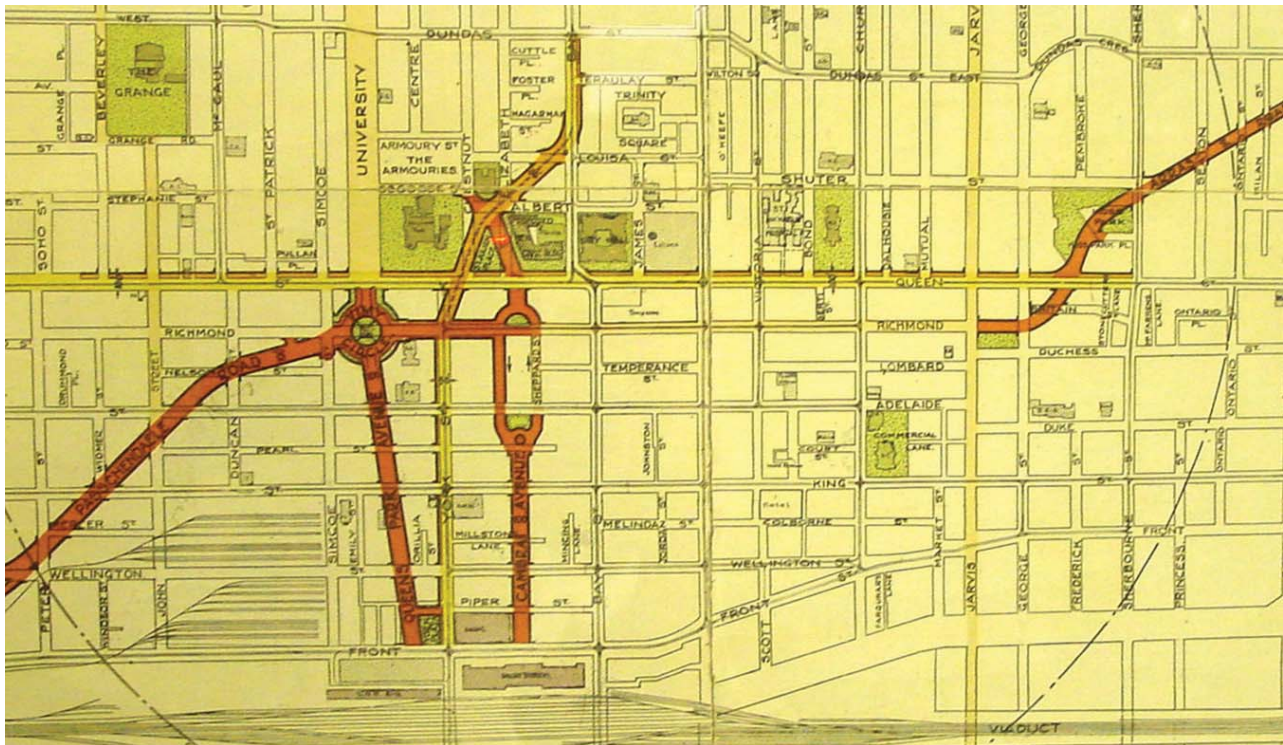


Figure 14. Cambrai Avenue + Vimy Circle 1929 (City Commission)

## University Avenue – Connecting Union Station to the Growing North

In 1929 the city's planning committee reinterpreted the Lyle Plan. Federal Avenue was renamed Cambrai Avenue, and a southern extension of University Avenue to Front Street, then called Queen's Park Avenue, was added to the plan. The University extension was seen as an opportunity to create a grand Beaux-Arts boulevard from the new Union Station to the new parliament at Queens Park. This was viewed as a priority project, and the new street opened in 1931<sup>12</sup>. A review committee was established to ensure the highest level of design along the new street for future developments. However, the onset of the Depression and Second World War brought economic hardships and halted downtown investment. Other projects associated with the Beaux-Arts plan, including Federal / Cambrai Avenue were never realized.

The development of the harbour and the urban investment and beautification centred on Union Station area were strongly linked to one another. They were massive projects conceived on a grand scale. They mark one of the largest civic investments in Toronto's history and their legacy has shaped much of the city's character to this day.

12 William Denby, *Lost Toronto*. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978), 191.



Figure 15. TD Centre 1967 (Filey)

### The Post War Era – The Consolidation of the Office District and PATH Development

Much of the planning of the late 1920's and early 1930's was not realized until the end of the Second World War. Examples include the 1949 Bank of Nova Scotia building at King and Bay streets whose solid masonry and classical detailing were highly influenced by John Lyle's pre-war designs. Yet planning and architectural ideals quickly turned to those of international modernism.

Many of the formal aspects of the John Lyle plan for Toronto were abandoned, however its intent remained influential. As an example, the placement of the New City Hall, begun in 1959, matched the intent of the 1911 plan.

The creation of the subway in 1954 significantly intensified downtown development and marked the beginning of a new era in Union Station's transportation function. The opening of the University line in 1963 bounded the area between Yonge and University via Union Station. This catalyzed massive developments concentrated between the subway lines. This subway loop formalized the blocks directly north of Union Station as the most valuable commercial area in the city.



Figure 16. Buckminster's Metro Centre (Fuller)

New legislative initiatives eased land acquisition allowing for mega developments to emerge. Beginning with the Richmond-Adelaide Centre in the early 1960's, Toronto's office core moved further west. Modern office complexes replaced the old warehouses and commercial buildings. The famous TD Centre set the stage for a massive full block development, which has characterized much of the Financial District since. Between the late 1950's and mid 1970's, a strong economy and speculative office construction resulted in the addition of dozens of office towers, many briefly carrying the title of 'tallest in the Commonwealth' until the next one reached completion. This period of massive investment transformed the city into the nation's economic centre.

The formal connectivity envisioned by the creation of Federal Avenue was never realized. Still, city planners wished to connect the New City Hall to adjacent office and hotel properties. This was first conceived as a series of elevated bridges (or +15 system), evident in the connections between the Sheraton Centre and City Hall. This was soon abandoned for sub-grade connections between adjacent underground shopping centers below office towers and evolved into what is today known as the PATH system.



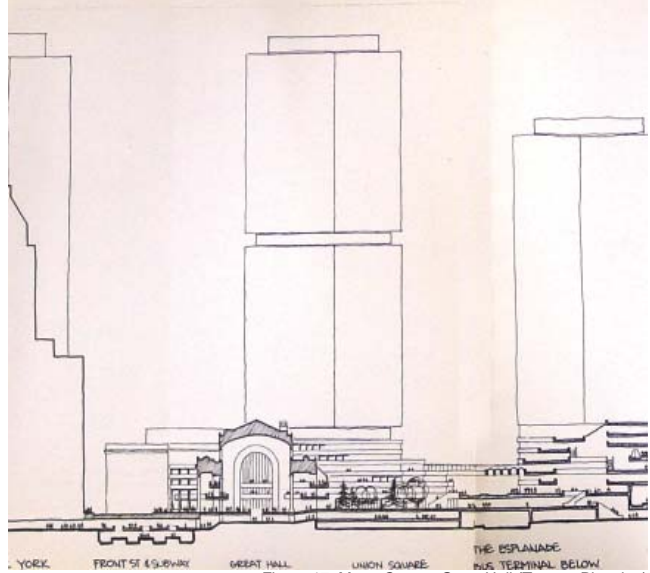


Figure 17. Metro Centre, Great Hall (Toronto Planning)

This system grew incrementally starting with the Richmond Adelaide Centre, eventually stretching from City Hall to Union Station. This has resulted in ever-expanding sub-grade connectivity throughout the Financial District. The PATH system separates pedestrian flow from vehicular traffic, and gives rise to the many shopping concourses located beneath office developments. This system allows for the private development of public connections. Today, it continues to grow incrementally in accordance with the intensification of downtown and is currently the largest system of its type in the world.

This period formalized the current location of the Toronto's Financial District, bounded by Union Station to its south. It also marks a shift in the function of the station from a gateway to the city for out of town travelers to a hub for commuters that worked in the expansive business district. This phenomenon intensified with the creation of GO Transit in 1967. This redefinition of the 'core' of the city from Front to Queen streets focused much of its energies on the role of Union Station and followed the ideals of the John Lyle plan, although it took on a radically different form.



Figure 18. Metro Centre 1970 (Toronto Planning)

### Deindustrialization of the Railway Lands and Central Waterfront

As a result of the changing economy following the war, industrial functions were leaving the centre of the city and moving to new employment zones in the periphery. As a result, many industrial zones and rail yards within the Union Station District became obsolete. In the 1950's the process of the gradual repurposing of these sites began a phenomena which continues to this day

The rail yards north of Front Street were among the first industrial sites to be decommissioned. In the 1960's they were converted into parking lots to service the expanding Financial District. However, in the subsequent decades, several large public, institutional, cultural and commercial projects were planned and implemented on these lands. By the 1990's much of these lands, which were formerly home to the Parliament, the Government House and Upper Canada College, were put back into public use. Significant projects include: Roy Thompson Hall (1982), the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (1984), the CBC Centre (1989), Metro Hall (1992), and the Simcoe Place office building (1995), with more developments planned for the future. Little remains of the site's industrial past. The only standing reminder is a small collection of former warehousing buildings located at Front and Simcoe streets.

Similarly, the extensive industrial properties adjacent to the harbour have gradually been replaced with recreational, residential, entertainment and commercial facilities as industry leaves the city. Yet, the process of redevelopment is far from complete. Beginning in the mid 1960's several large-scale master plans were commissioned to determine how best to use this space. These include a proposal by prominent international architects including Buckminster Fuller and John Andrews. However, none have been fully realized. The largest such proposal was the Metro Centre of 1968<sup>13</sup>. Backed by the CN/CP rail companies, the plan called for massive housing, office, transportation and recreational facilities, encompassing the area from Yonge to Bathurst streets, and from Front to the Gardiner Expressway. It also called for the significant demolition of Union Station. However, public outcry resulted in the cancellation of the project and the creation of the heritage legislation under which Union Station is currently protected. One piece of the Metro Centre was realized: the CN Tower, but the controversy surrounding the plan halted development within the area for several decades.

The development of the Skydome – now the Roger's Centre (1989), the Harbourfront light rail (1990), Harbourfront Centre (1991), and several high density housing projects have been instrumental in urbanizing the former railway lands and central waterfront, yet changes have been slow. Many of the 5000 acres remain undeveloped. However, as a result of the recent work of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, an influx of high-density housing, and the future revitalization of Union Station, attention has once again returned to the rail lands and central waterfront.

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13 Toronto Planning Board, Metro Centre. (Toronto: 1970).

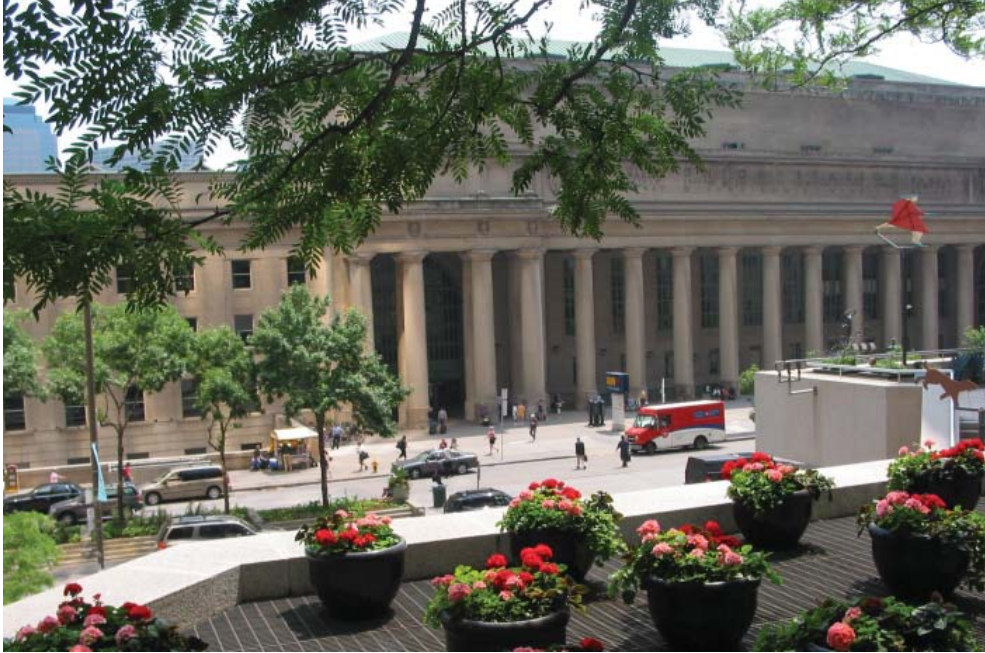


Figure 19. E.R.A. Architects Inc.

## Union Station Today

To ensure the preservation of Union Station's heritage and its significance in the functioning of Toronto's downtown core, the City of Toronto purchased Union Station from the Toronto Terminals Railway Company in 2000. This was the first step in a comprehensive revitalization plan for the station which includes increasing capacity for its GO, TTC, and VIA stations, and adding significant retail and office space to the station.

As part of this redevelopment process, the area surrounding Union Station has been recognized as significant in both its form and function. In containing a number of heritage properties, including the National Historic Site of the John Street Roundhouse, and historical precedents in Toronto's planning and design, the monumental influence of Union Station and its function in the city can be better understood.

Today, the station is poised to embrace its modern role as Toronto's urban transportation hub and important role as an instrument in connecting the city north and south. New developments in the district provide a great opportunity to celebrate the rich and influential history of Union Station in Toronto and contribute to the continued growth and evolution of the area into the 21st Century.

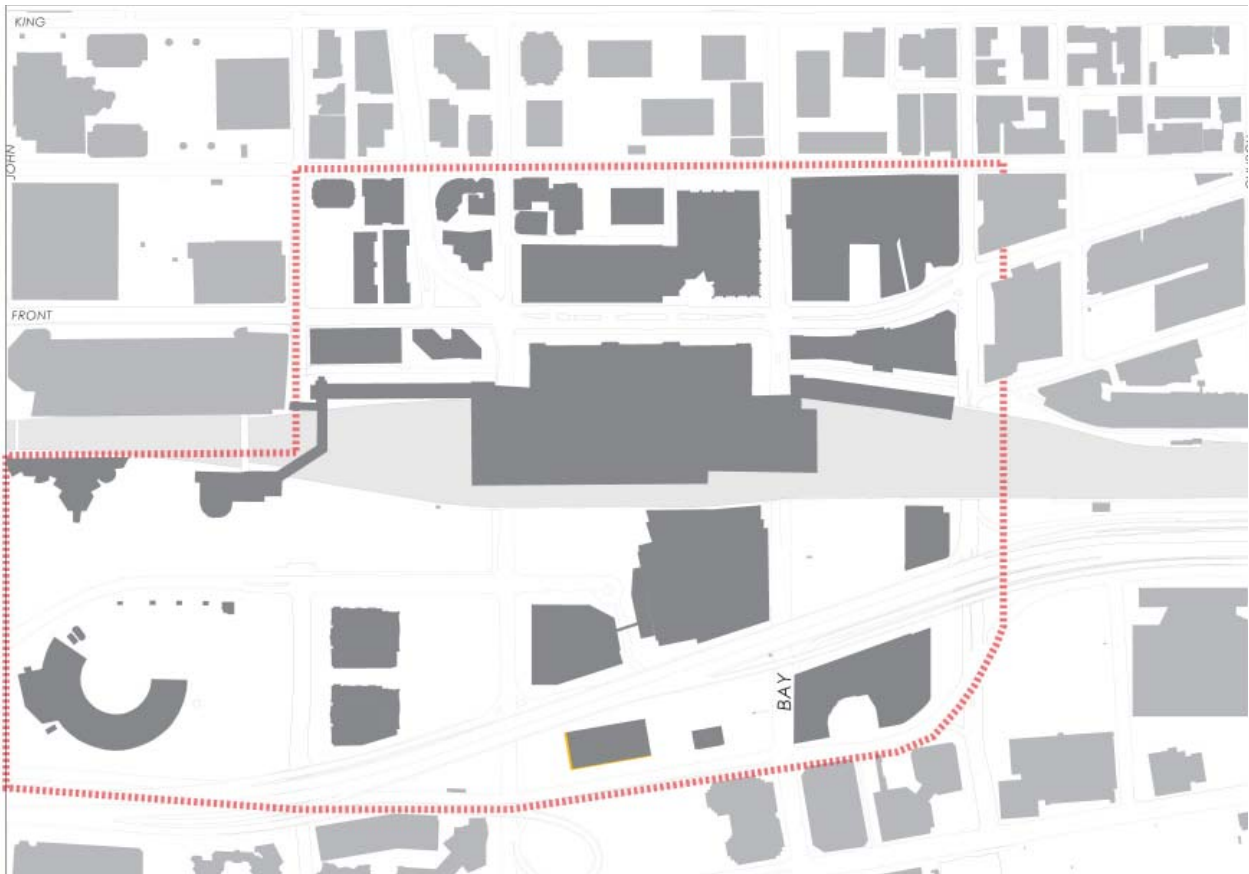


Figure 20. E.R.A. Architects Inc.

## 6.2 DEFINING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Over several generations, Union Station prompted massive investment and development in itself and Toronto's downtown core. The distinctive character and variety of the associated buildings have been assembled into the Union Station Heritage Conservation District. The district encompasses major portions of the built legacy of the Beaux-Arts / John Lyle era of development, and pieces of heritage from Toronto's commercial and industrial past. This includes parts of the rail infrastructure, harbour activity, post-war office towers and the CN Tower, all of which were interdependent with Union Station. Delineation of an appropriate boundary for the Union Station District as a Heritage Conservation District is a crucial task in ensuring the integrity and special character of the area.

Originally defined by City Staff, the Union Station District Plan and its Heritage Conservation District component encompassed an area bounded by Wellington Street to the north, John and Rees streets to the west, Lake Shore Boulevard/Harbour Street to the south and Church Street to the east. Analysis of the area's historical development patterns, cultural resources and current planning conditions have informed a dialogue among team members, city managers and the public in determining a district boundary that recognizes the cultural heritage of both Union Station and its surroundings. These discussions have provided an effective policy framework for future growth and development in this portion

of the city. The resulting Union Station Heritage Conservation District boundary runs from Wellington on the north, to Yonge along the east, Lake Shore Boulevard/ Harbour Street on the south, and Simcoe Street to the rail corridor and Rees Street on the west. It is to be understood comprehensively for its heritage character, urban design elements, and transportation context.

The center of the district is focused on the Beaux-Arts corridor along Front Street that contains examples of post-war monumental office construction that were built to take advantage of the city's transportation hub at Union Station.

Yonge Street functions as the district's center eastern border. It bounds the Dominion Public building, the easternmost example of Union Station era architecture, and separates the Financial District from the St. Lawrence neighbourhood to the east.

Wellington Street acts as the district's northern border. It marks the transition from one urban quality to another. To the south is Beaux-Arts Toronto. To the north is the Financial District dominated by post-war office projects. Both eras have a strong presence on the street, making Wellington a logical northern boundary to the district.

The southern area of the district encompasses examples of built form associated with rail and harbour activity, which developed in tandem with the Union Station. This includes the rail lands, the Toronto Viaduct, the John Street Roundhouse, and the CN Tower. The John Street Roundhouse is a site of national historic significance and an important example of facilities and technologies of Toronto's rail age. The Harbour Commission Building marks the southern border of the district. It is an important landmark, signifying the massive civic investment in the rail dominated industrial harbour. It also acts as a reminder of the many phases of shoreline extension.

The western boundary of the district south of the rail yards is the CN Tower. The CN Tower plays a key role in the history of both the industrial rail lands and Union Station. As the only built piece of the CN proposed late 60's project known as the Metro Centre, it is representative of an important era in Toronto planning and architectural history. The fallout of the Metro Centre was catalytic to the heritage movement, the election of the reform council and the civic uncertainty regarding large scale development of the rail lands which has persisted to this day. The CN Tower is both representative of Toronto's fascination with high modernism, as well as its early rejection of modernism which led to projects such as the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, the cancellation of the Spadina Expressway, and the preservation of historic buildings such as Old City Hall and Union Station itself. The CN Tower is intrinsically linked to Union Station and the rail lands, and is an important piece of heritage within the district.

The western boundary north of the rail yards is Simcoe Street. Today Simcoe Street marks a zone of transition between the Financial District and the Entertainment District to the west. In the past it marked the eastern border of the rail yards north of Front, an area that previously contained the Parliament and government house. At the turn of the last century,

Union Station Heritage Conservation District boundary runs from Wellington on the north, to Yonge along the east, Lake Shore Boulevard/ Harbour Street on the south, and Simcoe Street to the rail corridor and Rees Street on the west.

the industrialization of this area led to the creation of the first and second Union Station at Front and York, and to the current Union Station at Front and Bay. All that remains today of the railroad heritage of this site are a few warehouses and factories located on Front and Simcoe streets. These examples of industrial fabric are the last of their kind in the city's central core. They are a reminder of the industrial side of the rail industry, and act as a foil to the glamour of the Beaux-Arts monuments. The completion of the proposed Simcoe tunnel connecting the street north-south will further lend itself as a prominent east-west boundary and justify future study and planning for the areas adjacent to it.

The Union Station Heritage Conservation District contains examples of architecture from perhaps the most influential period of downtown city building in Toronto's history. Contained within its boundaries are the key structures relating to Union Station, from hotels to factories, to industrial rail yards to the institutions responsible for infilling the harbour. All represent different participants in the evolution of the city's core. The history contained in the district relates to the development of Toronto as a whole, characterizing its cultural, commercial and architectural heritage. Effective planning will ensure its continuing contribution in the years ahead.

## 6.3 BUILT HERITAGE EVALUATION

The heritage character of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District is not defined by a single historical period or architectural style, but is rather an amalgam of several time periods, styles and developments, all of which are important historically, culturally and architecturally in creating a collective asset for the City of Toronto.

The architectural styles within the district are part of a chronology of development of the city centre, spanning over a century. The built form within the district illustrates the evolving role of Toronto and of Canada itself. Many architectural eras and styles coexist within the study area. The Union Station Heritage Conservation District defined by this Plan contains a significant number of buildings of heritage interest, a number of which have left legacies that are among the finest examples in Canada.

As part of this Heritage Conservation District Study the buildings within the district have been evaluated on an individual basis using available archival materials, the City of Toronto Heritage Inventory, and the Ministry of Culture's Criteria for Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The evaluated properties have been categorized by their period of development, identified for their relationship to new development to the south, and their contribution to the district's character as defined by the Ministry's criteria and endorsed practices of the City of Toronto's Heritage Preservation Services.

E.R.A. Architects Inc. in collaboration with the consultant team and the city staff undertook the evaluation of all the buildings in the district. Evaluations were based on existing documentation. As the district's character continues to evolve these evaluations should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that an accurate representation of their contributing qualities is maintained.

The Ministry of Culture's Criteria for Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest identifies the following criteria for evaluation:

### Design or Physical Value

- Demonstrates a rare, unique, representative or an early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method; or
- Displays a high degree of artistic merit or craftsmanship; or
- Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement; or
- Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of a particular builder, designer or theorist.

### Historical or Associative Value

- Has strong associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that has made a significant or unique contribution to a community; or
- Yields information that contributes to an understanding of a culture or community.



The Union Station District contains a significant number of buildings of heritage interest, a number of which have left legacies that are among the finest examples in Canada

#### Contextual Value

- Is particularly important in establishing the character of an area; or
- Provides a physical, historical, functional, visual lineage to its surroundings; or
- Create a symbolic, aesthetic or visual landmark.<sup>14</sup>

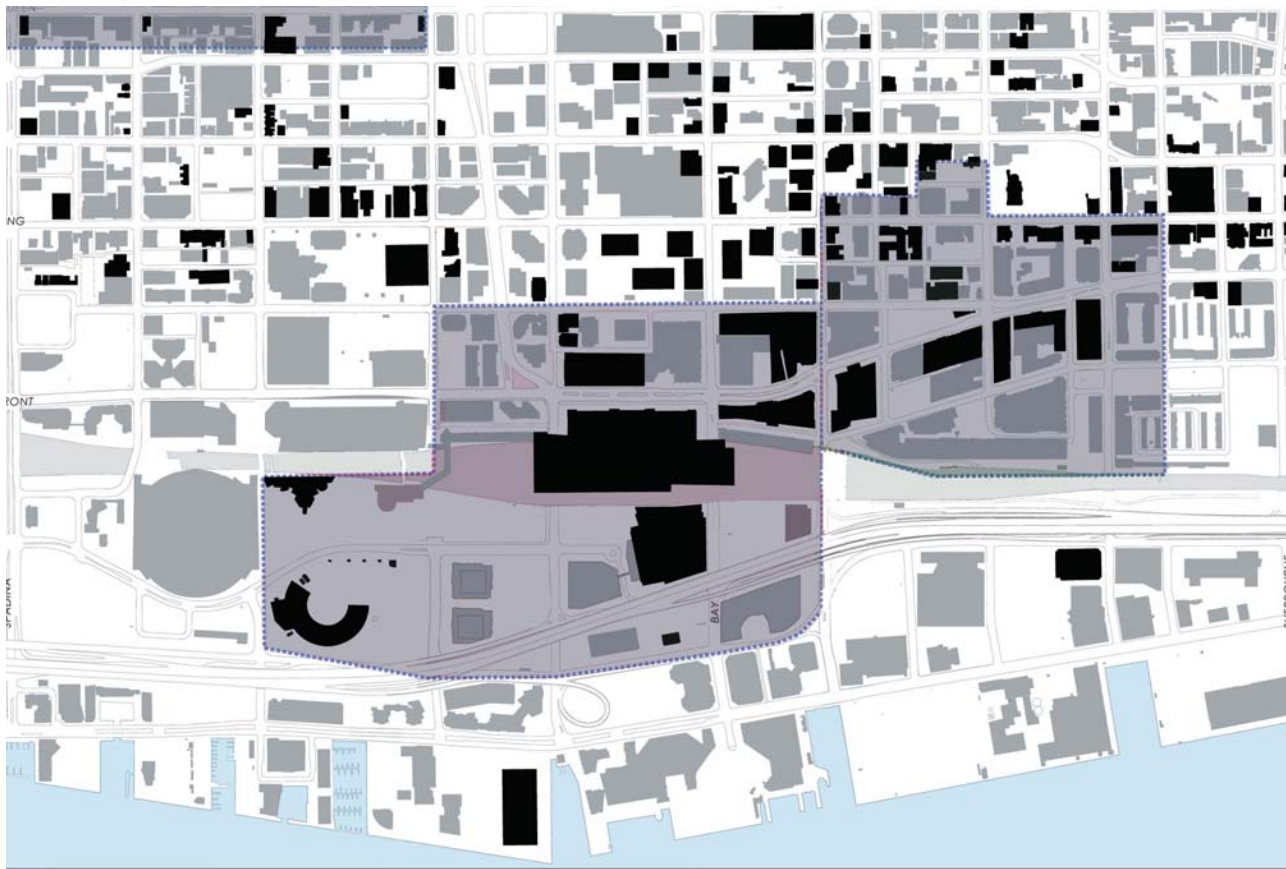
The properties that meet one or more of the above criteria have been categorized as 'Contributing'. These properties are understood as having historical, cultural or architectural significance to the defined district. Conversely, those properties that fail to meet any one of the above criteria have been categorized as 'Non-contributing'.

The results of this individual property evaluations have been included in Appendix I. of this document. The subsequent drawings summarize the study's findings.

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14 Ontario Ministry of Culture, Municipal Criteria to Determine Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest: Ontario Regulation 9-06. Issued January 25, 2006.

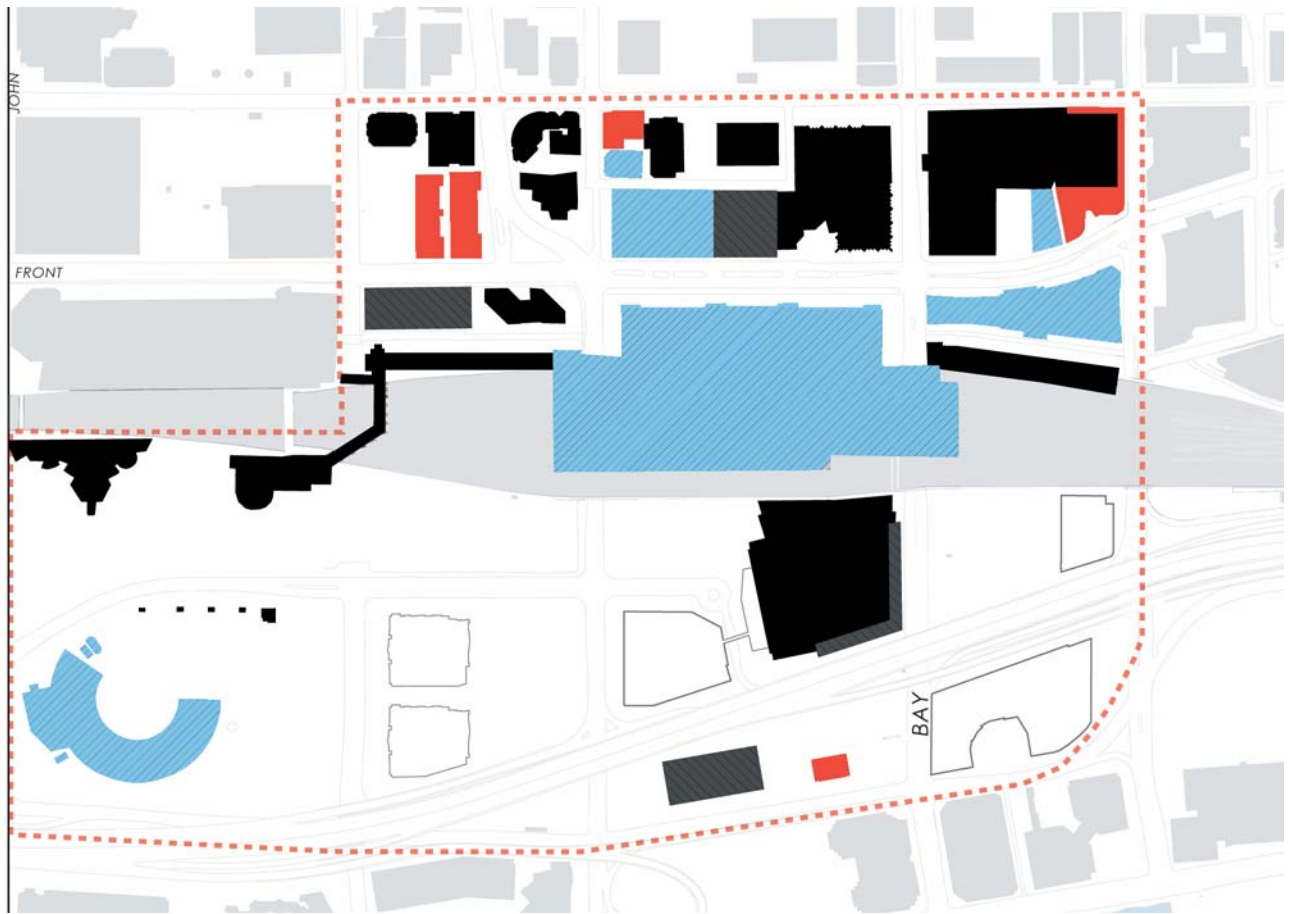
### 6.3.1 BUILDING INVENTORY



..... Proposed Heritage Conservation District Study Areas

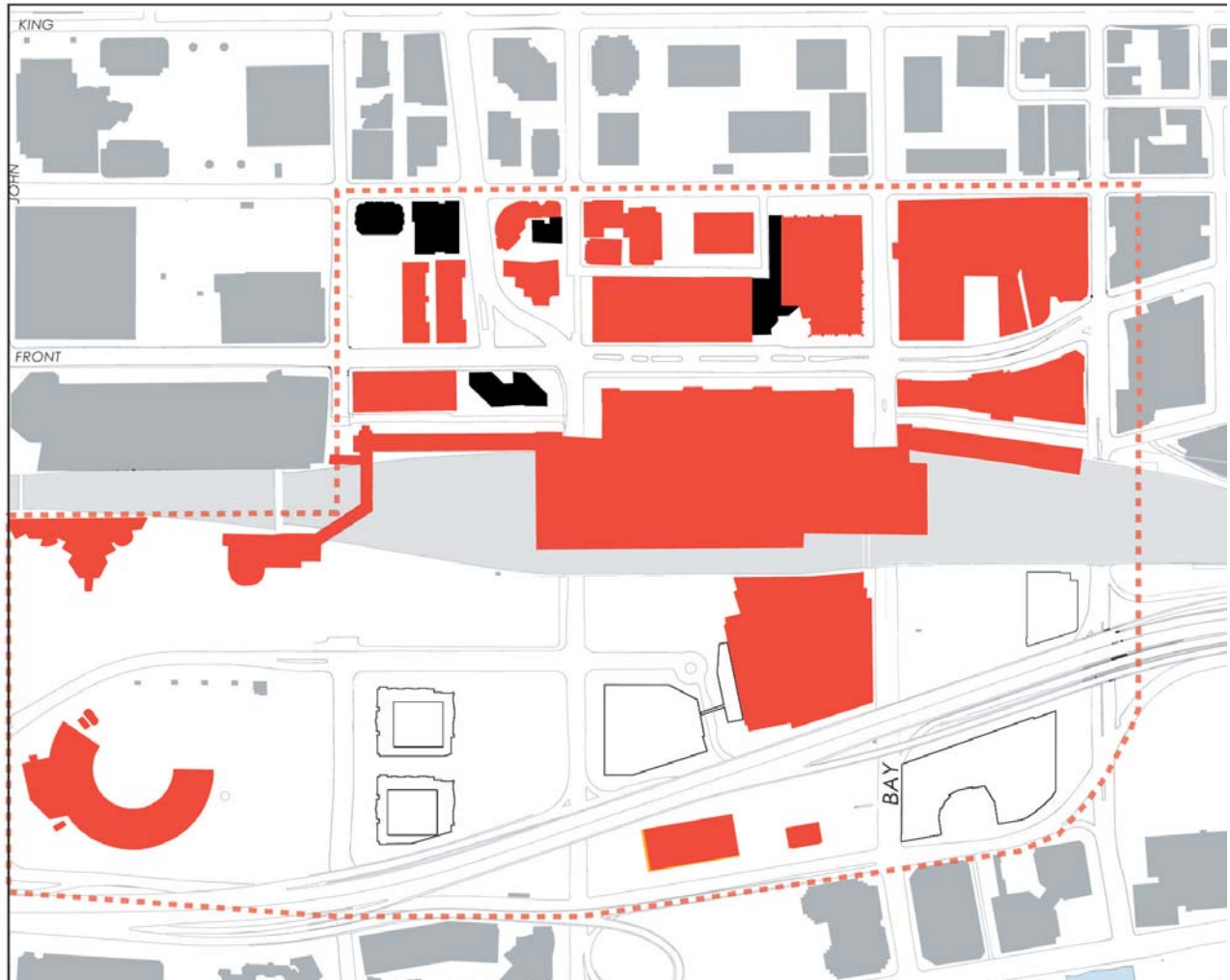
■ Existing Heritage Properties

### Heritage Property Inventory



- Victorian and Early Twentieth Century 1850-1920
- Pre War- Buildings Contemporaneous to Union Station 1920-1945
- Post War- Early Modern 1945-1960
- Post War- High and Post Modern 1960-2005
- Post War

Periods of Development



**Contributing Buildings**

Properties which contribute to the character of the Precinct and/or are historically, architecturally or culturally significant

**Non-Contributing Buildings**

Properties which do not contribute to the character of the Precinct and/or are not historically, architecturally or culturally significant

**Under Construction**

## Contributing Buildings



Figure 24. Front Street at 5:20pm, March 26, 1931(Andreae)

### 6.3.2 STREETSCAPE ANALYSIS

The distinct development history of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District has created unique streetscapes and open spaces that contribute significantly to the character of the area as they create a relationship among the district's component parts. As well, these elements provide an opportunity to further enhance the prominence of Union Station in the landscape of downtown Toronto.

#### Front Street and the Lyle Plan

The assemblage of monumental buildings constructed in anticipation of Union Station in accordance with John Lyle's master plan, creates one of the most grand and cohesive streetscapes in the country. With Federal Avenue unrealized, Front Street has become the area's main corridor, and has benefited from the portions of John Lyle's vision that were enacted. Its assemblage of large-scale buildings erected in the 1920's and 30's, several of which dominate Front Street, characterizes the area. A variety of architectural styles, including Beaux-Arts and 'Chateaux', are unified through massing and material, utilizing a palette predominantly of sandstone. The character is reminiscent of old world grandeur, yet these structures also exude the optimistic spirit of the early twentieth century 'rail age'. The result is a unified street wall of early twentieth century civic architecture running

between York and Yonge streets. These buildings represent a significant historical asset to the urban landscape of Toronto.

### Cohesive Monumentality

The portion of Front Street adjacent to Union Station exists in the centre of an area of large-scale structures, yet the 'Union Station era' properties are set apart from the rest. While design considerations for projects within the Financial District generally end at their property line, Union Station era buildings relate to one another as a whole. Their design was not completely controlled by the property developers, but were also influenced by the integrated nature of the John Lyle inspired plan.

This particular assemblage of projects defines a cohesive public realm. Public buildings provide civic space and amenities, which the architecture of other private initiatives respect, bound and define. Union Station is distinguished as the building of main importance through its site relationship and monumental scale, while its material and form directly relate to its neighbours. Its spatial quality is dependent on the bounding qualities of adjacent properties. The volume implied by Union Station and the façade of the Royal York Hotel generate a sense of civic monumentality that is dependent on their relative scale and location to each other. A change to one structure would alter the visual impact of the other.

These buildings express individuality and function, while maintaining a direct relation to one another. Architectural and design ideals were maintained beyond project property lines, creating a resonance between projects, resulting in a whole that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

### Relation to Adjacent Urban Form

The streetwall of the Front Street corridor acts as a container, creating a definitive border between the areas to the south. It also acts to accentuate the Yonge/University "loop". The loop is a deviation from the typical Toronto grid that is comprised of the eastern curve of University and the northern curving section of Front Street at Yonge. The "loop" bounds the Union Station era buildings. The cohesive structure of this area acts as a foil to the variety of forms from multiple eras north of Front Street. It responds to the monumentality of the towers looming in the Financial District to the north, while at the same time maintaining a human scale.



Figure 25. View of Royal York looking north from 7th floor rooftop garden, 33 Harbour Square

## Historic Views

The view corridor from Lake Ontario to the Royal York Hotel presents a significant visual linkage between the district's component parts. It acts as a visual landmark for visitors to the city and maintains an understanding of the district's past. Likewise, its impact in the urban form to the south provides ample sunlight to Union Station's forecourt and allows the mid-rise character of Front Street to maintain civic prominence. It has been recognized as an important element to the Toronto skyline and has been protected by provisions laid out in the Railway Lands Secondary Plans and the more recent Union Station Master Plan.

The southern streetwall along Front Street is mid-rise in character. The area is bounded, but not blocked and isolated. Its form allows ample sun light into the forecourt of Union Station, and onto the surface of the adjacent skyscrapers. It is a contained space, but not a canyon, allowing the station's forecourt to act as a 'gateway to the city', providing a visual connection to downtown as a whole.



Figure 26. View of Lake Ontario looking south from 7th floor rooftop garden, 33 Harbour Square

## Connectivity

As the urban transportation hub and historic ‘gateway to the city,’ Union Station maintains relationships to several neighbourhoods and districts. It is also an area of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

The section of Front Street between University Avenue and Yonge Street offers connection to many adjacent districts. Front Street is crossed by pedestrians at multiple points. At peak hours, pedestrian activity far outnumbers vehicular traffic.

The south side of Front, which consists of Union Station and the Dominion Public Building, is a solid mass only broken by entrances to the buildings and bisecting streets. The north side also achieves little porosity in the block between York and Bay – containing the Royal York Hotel and the Royal Bank Plaza. The hotel has been significantly enlarged since its original construction with little connection to the street, while the erection of the Royal Bank Plaza in 1976 replaced commercial buildings to the east. Historical images suggest that these former occupants were quite lively with street oriented commerce. The Royal York Hotel can be accessed by only one portal on its south elevation, as the majority of its mass is an unbroken stone façade. The west elevation of the hotel facing York Street is more porous, containing another portal, and access to a restaurant, whose presence is



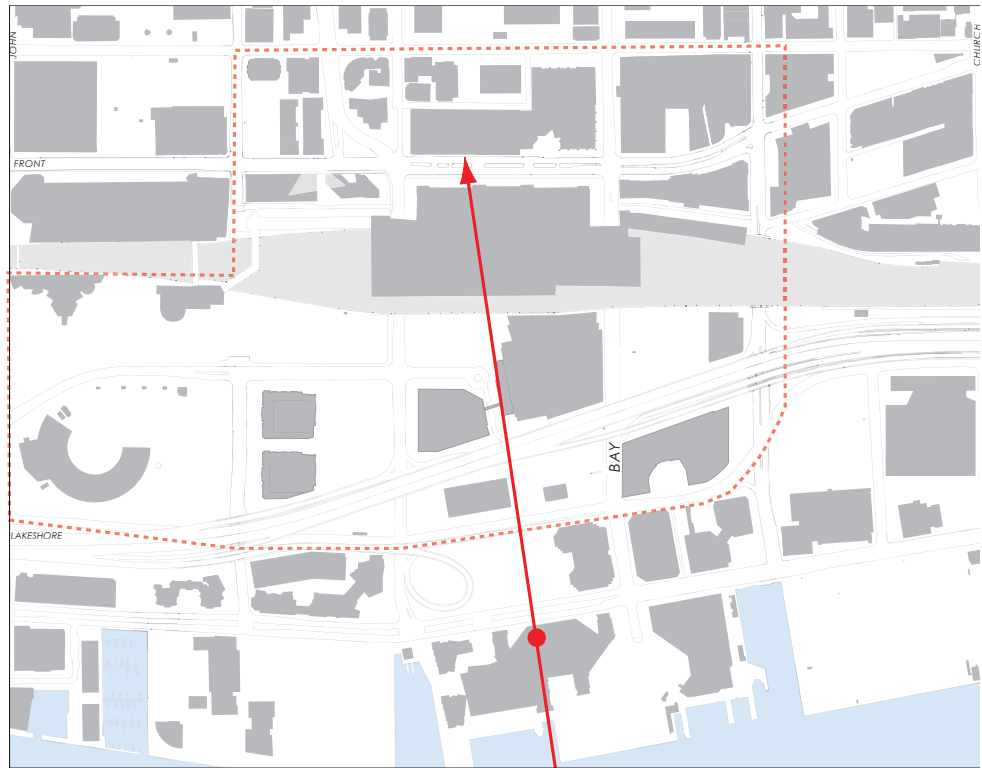


Figure 27. The view from Lake Ontario to the Royal York Hotel acts as a visual landmark for visitors to the city and maintains a link with the District's past.

made evident by a stuccoed appliqué emulating the Japanese vernacular overlaid upon the hotel's original stone façade. Various building portals offer multiple access points to the PATH system, however building facades are generally closed and limited to controlled entry points. Laneways adjacent to the Royal York hotel act as a makeshift pedestrian access to the TD Centre to the north. The north side of Front Street east of Bay is however more porous. A public square to the south of BCE Place offers several modes of access into that complex, and street-oriented restaurants and commerce are located at the eastern end of BCE place along Front and Yonge streets.

Connections to the west are achieved through Front Street, yet this relationship is not architecturally formalized. The character of the streetscape to the west changes quite abruptly west of York Street at 123 Front (CitiBank Place), where the influence of the John Lyle Plan stops. 123 Front Street cant to the north consistent with the curvature of the Dominion Public Building, enclosing the area of the Entertainment District beyond. The adjacent Hummingbird Centre to the east responds to the presence of the adjacent 1930's buildings through its material palette, and acts as a gateway to the St. Lawrence neighbourhood.

Connections southward are less clear. Created as part of the Toronto Viaduct, completed in 1927, the station's teamways were originally used as service routes for carriages that

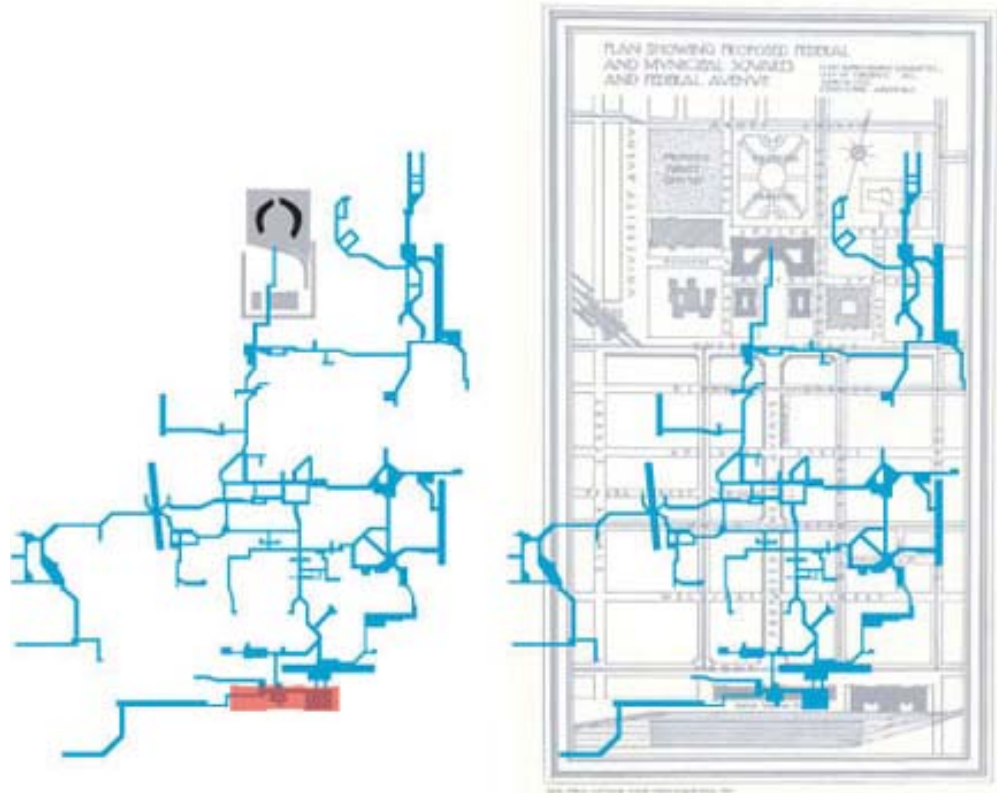


Figure 28. PATH system + Lyle Plan

transported baggage. Today teamways at York and Bay streets have been converted to pedestrian use and continue a tradition of separating functions. Likewise, the station's moat, initially intended as a throughway and cabstand, now functions as a pedestrian walkway and car rental parking area. Together these elements represent a historical precedent in the separation of pedestrian, vehicular and rail traffic. However, modern developments have subdued the function of these elements and pedestrian flows south are generally channelled through the PATH or light rail transit connections made within the station.

### Commerce and Use

Though a rich history of at grade commerce existed in the area, most buildings in the Front Street corridor offer commercial services only within the buildings themselves. Union Station, the Royal York Hotel, and Royal Bank Plaza all contain extensive retail facilities in their sub-grade 'PATH' levels, but very little on the ground floor. BCE Place contains some retail space and restaurants along Front Street, and extensively along Yonge Street. On the west edge, 123, 144 and 156 Front Street contain restaurants at grade. The presence of at grade retail outlets intensifies further west toward the Entertainment District. The Dominion Public Building does not contain any retail or commercial activity. Front Street itself holds informal commerce in the form of street vendors and entertainers.



Figure 29. Front Street from Bay

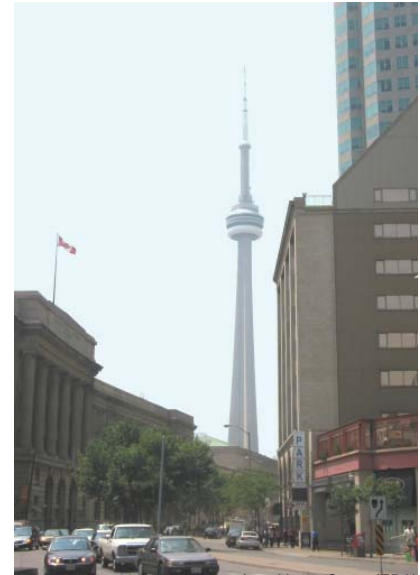


Figure 30. Looking west from Yonge Street (ERA)

The forecourt of Union Station is a large open public space that includes works of art and seating. Taxi stops, bus traffic and drop off areas bound the space and often make the area quite congested. Thousands of commuters accessing the TTC and GO Transit systems pass through this space during rush hour. Unlike the TD Centre to the north, the area is rarely programmed with events. Its principal function is as an access way to Union Station. Wellington Street

Wellington Street marks a transition from the Beaux-Arts character of Front Street, to the Financial District dominated by post-war office projects to the north. It is a logical border to the Union Station Heritage Conservation District, marking the shift from one urban quality to another.

Wellington is a unique streetscape in Toronto. It is completely enclosed by built form and its tower-in-the-plaza design makes the street a canyon. Confined by the presence of monumental structures, it is nearly isolated from the main streets of the core and sits at the heart of the financial towers. Towers of varying heights completely surround the street, yet building massing maintains view corridors to the CN Tower to the southwest.

Wellington Street is of a remarkable character and is bounded by monumental heritage structures from multiple eras. The streetscape is dominated by the TD Centre. Wellington



Figure 31. Looking south towards back of Royal York Hotel through TD Waterhouse



Figure 32. South side of Wellington Street at York Street

is in fact encompassed by it, with the TD-Bank Tower to the north and the TD-Waterhouse Tower and 95 Wellington office building to the south. The Royal York Hotel also has a large presence in the area. Its sandstone cladding acts as a backdrop to the adjacent modern steel and glass. The Toronto Club and Prudential House add texture to the street, their mid-rise scale a contrast to the surrounding towers.

True to planning of the era, commerce is largely kept underground, though there are patios within the TD Centre. The TD Centre itself is a highly used area, playing host to a variety of functions. Pedestrian traffic is heavy, especially during rush hour when many thousands of commuters make their way to Union Station, often through a small plaza of the TD-Waterhouse tower, which leads to the Royal York Hotel's servicing lane.

### Railway Lands

The land to the south of Union Station are currently in transition. Once an industrial district positioned to the south of the city, this area now lies between the city center and its post-industrial waterfront. Until recently the only buildings to occupy this land were directly related to the railroads and industry, such as the John Street Roundhouse and Postal

Delivery Building. Now, many of these buildings have been retrofitted for post-industrial



Figure 33. Site of proposed Union Plaza, looking west from the ACC



Figure 34. Looking south from CN Tower towards Roundhouse Park (ERA)

use.

New cultural, commercial, and housing projects are being developed in this area. Despite rapid development, a distinctive, unifying ‘character’ appropriate to the area’s civic role has yet to be established. New developments provide a great opportunity to relate the land’s rail history to the modern city north and south by establishing a functional link with Union Station’s south side. Exercising comprehensive design ideals in establishing a cohesive public realm among new developments will provide a modern interpretation of Union Station’s historical significance in the fabric and function of downtown Toronto.

The intention of the John Lyle plan of 1911 was to facilitate cohesion within the newly formed business, administrative and transportation centre along Bay Street, bounded by Union Station at the bottom. An opportunity exists for these same principles of connectivity and organization to be utilized when planning and developing the post-industrial rail lands, with Union Station at the top. Furthermore, with respect to heritage, the limited number of buildings and artifacts which make reference to the site’s industrial and rail past should be celebrated and reinforced as the area changes function. Accordingly, there is an opportunity for new public space in this area to emphasize existing heritage and civic resources, as well as enhance and accommodate the evolving functions and flows of Union Station.



Figure 35. Ideagram (ERA)

## 7.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

The heritage character of the Union Station District illustrates several periods of development. The architectural legacies and development patterns underline the prominence of Union Station as a node of urban activity.

Since the opening of the station, the district has remained a focus for pedestrian activity in downtown Toronto. Different phases of development have resulted in varied streetscapes. These open space patterns describe the district's historical relationship to adjacent downtown districts and its important role as a multimodal transportation hub. Today the district's significant public space provides an opportunity to celebrate its important historical identity.

A strong Beaux-Arts presence around Union Station creates one of the most stylistically cohesive areas in the City of Toronto. This civic-minded architecture speaks strongly to the prominence of Union Station as a centre of urban activity. As a transportation hub linked to TTC and the PATH system, Union Station has catalyzed the development of some of the largest examples of modern architecture and urban design in the world.

Post-war office towers such as BCE Place and modernist developments like the CN tower represent a distinct shift in built form. The John Street Roundhouse and other red brick industrial buildings are interspersed throughout the district and act as reminders of an era in which the district played a substantially different role within the city. Many architectural eras and styles coexist within the Union Station Heritage Conservation District. One does not predominate – yet they are unified in their monumentality.



## 8.0 HERITAGE DISTRICT GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are recommended for managing change in the Union Station Heritage Conservation District with the view of preserving the architectural integrity of the district and creating an integrated public realm that recognizes the cultural significance of Union Station. The intent of these guidelines is to ensure that alteration and development in the district contributes to and strengthens the character of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District, as defined by the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value in this Plan.

These guidelines are not intended as strict regulations but are to provide assistance in the design and decision-making process. All alteration and development within the district will require prior approval of Heritage Preservation Services, and in some cases City Council, in addition to other existing building and planning approvals unless exempted under the terms in Section 9 of this Plan. Assistance in interpreting these guidelines will be available from staff of Heritage Preservation Services.

## 8.1 DEFINITIONS

The following terms included in these guidelines have the following meanings:

### Contributing Buildings:

Properties that contribute to the character of the district and/or are historically, architecturally or culturally significant as identified in the Heritage Evaluation or determined by further evaluation

### Non-Contributing Buildings:

Properties that do not contribute to the character of the district and/or are not historically, architecturally or culturally significant as identified in the Heritage Evaluation or determined by further evaluation

### District:

The Union Station Heritage Conservation District Heritage Character: As defined by the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value as defined by this District Plan.

### Good Quality Contemporary Design:

A building of current design and construction with evidence of high quality detailing, materials, and craftsmanship which responds to its context and the heritage character of the district

### Compatible Alterations:

Alterations that enhance rather than compromise the appearance and character of the building and surrounding buildings and contribute to the heritage character of the district.

## 8.2 GENERAL HERITAGE PRINCIPLES

The Union Station Heritage Conservation District contains buildings that are historically, socially, culturally and architecturally significant to the City of Toronto. The goal of these guidelines is to ensure the continued significance of the district, as well as maintain and enhance its important role in the shaping of Toronto.

**Preserve original or historically significant materials and architectural features that correspond to the district's periods of significance:**

Distinguishing historic architectural elements, as well as the character of a building's structure, should not be destroyed. Removal of historic architectural features is strongly discouraged, and is only appropriate if said features cannot be restored.

**Repair rather than replace:**

Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible. Continual maintenance can prevent deterioration.

**Replace with comparable features or materials:**

Removal or alternation of significant architectural features should be avoided whenever possible. However, if replacement of such features is unavoidable, historic evidence, in the form of physical, photographic or historical record should be referenced for accurate replacement.

**Draw from existing examples within the district:**

When replacement or reconstruction is necessary and there are no clues from the building or through research, other contributing buildings in the district may act as useful examples. For alterations, new elements and new buildings, lessons can be learned from other buildings about the design of a building element and use of materials in a way that respects its neighbours. New elements may be interpretive, but should always preserve the integrity and scale of the district's character.

**Allow for creative and contemporary design solutions:**

Inventiveness in new construction should be encouraged as long as such projects respect the historic character of district.

## 8.3 DESIGN GUIDELINES

These design guidelines have been developed in conjunction with the entire Union Station District Study consultant team. This comprehensive set of guidelines is intended to address specific design issues in the Union Station District with respect to the cultural heritage character of the Heritage Conservation District as defined by this plan.

### 8.3.1 CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

Properties that contribute to the character of the district and/or are historically, architecturally or culturally significant are considered to be “contributing”.

#### Additions and Alterations

Additions may be approved, depending on their impact within the district. Additions that are not prominently visible – especially from Union Station, will generally be approved. Those that are visible will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Additions will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- The new structure respects the general size, shape and scale of features associated with the property or district.
- The site plan respects the general site characteristics associated with the property or district.
- The design respects the general historic and architectural characteristics associated with the property or district
- The materials choice respects the existing character of the property and district as a whole. Material choice not directly emulating what exists will be contextual and appropriate.
- Any addition is to be connected to the property in a way that does not alter, change, obscure, damage or destroy any significant building features.
- Additions, renovation and alterations that enhance the character of the district, and are compatible with the overall planning goals of the district will be encouraged, yet subject to thorough review.

#### Demolition

- The demolition involving any contributing building in the district will only be approved after thorough review in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

### 8.3.2 NON-CONTRIBUTION BUILDINGS

Properties which do not contribute to the character of the district and are not historically significant are considered “non-contributing”.

#### Additions and Alterations

- Alterations to non-contributing buildings are acceptable, and may vary from small storefront alterations to complete replacement of facades.
- All alterations should take into consideration the overall character of the district.
- Minor alterations need only be consistent with the existing building. If the alterations are extensive enough to change the character of the building, then the guidelines for new construction should be followed.

#### Demolition

- Demolition of non-contributing buildings is acceptable in the district, and new compatible infill construction is strongly encouraged. All new construction shall follow the guidelines for new construction.

### 8.3.3 NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction presents the opportunity to add richness to the district by optimizing available vacant parcels or by replacing non-contributing buildings. The juxtaposition of historic and contemporary architecture is a strong aspect of the existing character of the district. The continued addition of new buildings is encouraged.

New construction must understand the relationship of its location within the district and respond sensitively to existing heritage resources. A design is considered appropriate if it exhibits sound contemporary design that respects the district's existing historic architectural qualities without replicating them. Of particular concern, are issues of siting, size, massing, scale, materials, relationship to the existing streetwalls, and the relationship to the public space system within the district. Furthermore, the district is adjacent to several other influential neighbourhoods with distinct characteristics. New buildings within the district yet bordering adjacent areas should respond as gateway buildings, taking into consideration both their effect within the district, the adjacent neighbourhood, and their function as a bridge between the two.

Designers of new buildings should look to surrounding buildings for context, and especially consider the relationship of the building to Union Station. No set of guidelines can replace a design professional's judgment and expertise in determining a design appropriate for the district. The following criteria however, should be considered:

- The new structure respects the general size, shape and scale of the features associated with adjacent properties and the district as a whole, as well as directly considering its relationship with Union Station.
- The site plan respects the general site characteristics associated with the property itself and district as a whole.
- The design respects the general historic and architectural characteristics associated with the district
- The materials chosen are considered in context with those of adjacent contributing properties and with the district as a whole
- In the case of additions, critical significant features on existing buildings are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.

#### 8.3.4 ADJACENT PROPERTIES

In recognizing Union Station’s central role in the historical development of downtown Toronto, it is important to maintain and enhance the physical and visual connections that exist between Union Station’s adjacent neighbourhoods including the Financial District to the north, the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood to the east, the rail lands and waterfront to the south, and the Entertainment District to the west.

The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement states that “development and site alterations may be permitted on adjacent lands to protected heritage property where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.<sup>156</sup>”

- Development in these surrounding areas should respect and enhance established visual and physical connections to Union Station

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156 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005 Provincial Policy Statement. (Toronto: 2005).

### 8.3.5 PUBLIC REALM

The public realm provides a stage for the daily life of the city, comprising gathering spaces such as parks, public squares, streets, path networks, and the interior of shopping malls. The design of functional aspects of the public realm, such as sidewalks, streetscapes, and boulevards, provides public spaces with both form and a sense of place.

The connective function of the Union Station District strongly defines the nature of its historical development. Enhancements in permeability, porosity and amenity of the streetscapes in the district provide a real opportunity to promote a physical dialogue with the district's historical past. Enhancing connectivity and maintaining open spaces through public realm improvements promote the heritage character of the district and contribute to providing distinguished public spaces. Similarly, the consolidation and simplification of streetscape elements in the district, including paving, curbs, tree grates, signage and base plates, vertical elements, and lighting has a strong impact on the general quality and understanding of the public realm.

The following guidelines have been identified to achieve an overall enhanced public realm:

#### PROMOTE HERITAGE CHARACTER

All aspects of the public realm need to recognize the heritage character of the district. Lighting should be used to emphasize building forms at night, in a manner representative of the grandeur of the architecture. Historical precedents in planning around Union Station, such as the John Lyle Plan of 1911, should be used to inform the importance of establishing connections to the south of the district. Historical connections, both visual and physical, should be maintained and enhanced, such as the view of the Royal York Hotel and the physical connections between the John Street Roundhouse and Union Station. The moats, teamways, and bridges of Union Station should be better utilized as important linkages between areas of the district.

#### ASPIRE TO HIGHEST STANDARDS OF DESIGN EXCELLENCE

streetscape elements should be of high-quality design and enduring materials that are appropriate to the district's historic character. The approach to design and materials used should reflect good contemporary design to emphasize the district's evolving character. Designs using inauthentic historical pastiche, for example mock-Victorian, should be avoided because they look backwards, and when executed using modern techniques do not have the quality of craft of the original.



## STREETSCAPE FURNITURE SHOULD FIT INTO THE STREET RATHER THAN BE THE FOCUS OF IT

Street furniture should have high standards of functionality, durability, environmental performance, and visual attractiveness. Materials such as stainless steel should be used because they wear well and do not require continual maintenance. Pedestrian comfort should be encouraged by considering and supporting pedestrian flow, needs of elderly, visually impaired, etc.

## MAINTAIN OPEN SPACES

Open spaces, such as Roundhouse Park, serve critical functions by helping to maintain the environmental quality of the district, in addition to providing a calm gathering space. Open spaces should be properly protected and maintained.

## REDUCE CLUTTER

In order to reduce clutter on the streetscape, the size and number of objects like waste and recycling receptacles and newspaper boxes should be reduced. For example, the three-unit garbage receptacle should be reconsidered as three separate components. Consolidated newspaper boxes should be used to replace the banks of 10-20 boxes chained together.

## COORDINATE DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

The overall design of the public realm should be carried out in a consistent and well-coordinated manner to ensure that design measures complement each other and work towards enhancing the district's identity.



## 9.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO PLANNING PROVISIONS

As part of the study process all existing planning controls and policies of the study area have been reviewed for compliance with the preceding guidelines. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the policies of the current Official Plan and municipal zoning by-laws. No amendments to existing planning controls are being recommended, however the view corridor of the Royal York Hotel as described in the Union Station Master Plan 2005 may have an impact on the potential design of buildings in that corridor.



## 10.0 IMPLEMENTATION

In designating the Union Station Heritage Conservation District, City Council takes the following actions:

- The Union Station Heritage Conservation District, with boundaries as illustrated in this Plan, is designated as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- All individual properties within the district be added to the City of Toronto’s Inventory of Heritage Properties as properties designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The District Plan is adopted by by-law to guide all development and demolition in the district.

Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act states that “ no property owner in the Heritage Conservation District shall alter any part of the property, erect, demolish or remove any building or structure on the property, other than the interior of any structure without a permit.”

The City of Toronto has adopted a streamlined process for the issuance of permits in Heritage Conservation Districts through delegation By-law No. 1005-2001. The following

section describes this process and outlines those circumstances in which exterior alterations maybe deemed minor in nature and no permit is required.

## 10.1 MINOR ALTERATIONS

Part V, Section 42(1) 1., of the Ontario Heritage Act specifies that permits are required for the alteration of any part of the property, other than the interior of any structure or building within a Heritage Conservation District. Therefore, under the Act and according to the Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan, no heritage permit is required for interior alterations.

In addition, the Toronto City Council has provided that a permit will have been issued for certain alterations to the external portions of a building or structure. Therefore, no heritage permit is required for:

- An alteration that is not visible from the street,
- Exterior painting of wood, stucco or metal finishes,
- Repair, using the same materials, of existing exterior features, including roofs, wall cladding, dormers, cresting, cupolas, cornices, brackets, columns, balustrades, porches and steps, entrances windows, foundations and decorative wood, metal, stone or terracotta,
- Installations of eavestroughs,
- Weatherproofing, including installations of removable storm windows and doors, caulking and weatherstripping, and
- Installations or exterior lights.

Under the terms of this Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan, no heritage permit will be required for additions or alterations to the following properties that have been identified in our study:

- The PATH System
- The Metro Toronto Convention Centre

Although a permit is not required in the above instances, property owners and residents are encouraged to conform to the spirit and intent of the Heritage Character Statement for the Union Station Heritage Conservation District.

## 10.2 HERITAGE PERMITS ISSUED BY CITY STAFF

In Heritage Conservation Districts, City Council has authorized city staff to issue Heritage Permits on behalf of council when the work is compatible with the guidelines of the Heritage Conservation District Plan. The proposed work can involve construction of a building or a structure, or alteration to the exterior of a building or structure, excluding those matters set out in Section 9.1 of this Plan.

Permit applicants are encouraged to meet with city staff in the Heritage Preservation Services section of the Planning Division regarding proposed work. These meetings will help city staff to understand the proposal and assist applicants in meeting guidelines.

During the review of applications Heritage Preservation Services may seek the comment of the Union Station Revitalization Public Advisory prior to reporting to the Preservation Board.

For any work requiring the issuance of a building permit, the building permit is deemed to be the Heritage Permit; no additional permit will be required.

Should an alteration not require a building permit but relate to a matter not exempt from the requirement of a heritage permit as described in Section 9.1 of this Plan, city staff may issue a separate heritage permit. These Heritage Permits are for alterations visible from the street and include, but are not limited to, such matters as:

- new aerials, antennas and skylights;
- new vents on the roof or from the basement;
- exterior air conditioning units;
- masonry cleaning or painting;
- replacement of existing architectural features, such as windows.

In delegating authority to staff, City Council may decide that it, rather than staff, will make a decision on any permit application. At any time prior to the issuance of a Heritage Permit, City Council, at the request of the Ward Councillor, may consider a Heritage Permit application.

### 10.3 HERITAGE PERMITS ISSUED BY CITY COUNCIL

When a heritage permit application does not, in view of city staff, comply with the district guidelines or when it involves the demolition of a structure in the Heritage Conservation District, City Council will decide on the application. In making its decision, City Council will be provided with the advice of city staff and information provided by the applicant.

### 10.4 CANADIAN REGISTRAR OF HISTORIC PLACES

The Canadian Registrar of Historic Places is a federal-provincial-territorial partnership that provides an online searchable register of locally, provincially and federally recognized heritage properties across Canada.

Following approval by council, Heritage Conservation Districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act are eligible for listing on the Canadian register. Such recognition does NOT place additional controls on the district or properties, but provides communities the opportunity to promote local heritage resources. Heritage properties within a listed Heritage Conservation District may also be eligible for federal financial incentives.



## 11.0 CONCLUSION

This Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan identifies Union Station and its surroundings, bounded by Wellington Street to the north, Yonge Street to the east, Harbour and Lake Shore Boulevard to the south and Simcoe Street, the rail corridor and Rees Street to the west, as a Heritage Conservation District of significant cultural heritage value.

Through an historical analysis and evaluation of the study area, this Plan identifies the area as important for its rich history as an industrial rail centre of the 19th and early 20th century; historical precedents in planning and urban design laid out by the works of John Lyle and others; monumental architecture including the National Historic Sites of Union Station and the John Street Roundhouse, and other developments like the CN Tower and BCE Place; layered development patterns relating the Financial District, Entertainment District, waterfront and St. Lawrence Neighbourhood; and nodal function as an inter and intra-city transportation hub.

Based on these heritage attributes this Plan identifies an opportunity to celebrate the rich and dynamic history of this district in the city. It is the intention of the district guidelines included in this Plan to direct the management of change in the Union Station Heritage Conservation District with the view of preserving the architectural integrity and heritage character of the district while creating an integrated public realm that recognizes the area's cultural significance and accommodates Union Station's evolving role within the city.



## 12.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## City of Toronto Staff

### City Planning Division

#### Toronto & East York District

Jeff Bateman, Transportation Planning  
Angus Cranston, Community Planning,  
Tim Laspa, Transportation Planning  
Eric Pedersen, Urban Design  
Kathryn Thom, Community Planning

Heritage Preservation Services, Policy and Research  
Denise Gendron  
Guy Zimmerman

Patricia Simpson, Union Station RFP Co-ordinator

Margaret Dougherty, Strategic Communications  
Division

## Consultant Team

### architectsAlliance

Pat Hanson, Project Manager  
John van Nostrand  
Carlos Moreno  
Jocelyn Deeks  
David Agro  
Nasim Adab  
Sebastien Dausse  
Hiral Desai  
Karen Nasmith

### ERA Architects Inc

Michael McClelland  
Kirsten Stein  
Graeme Stewart

### ENTRA Consultants

Angela Iannuzziello  
Derek Dalglish

### Bruce Mau Design

Amanda Ramos

### Diana Gerrard Landscape Architecture

Diana Gerrard

### Metropolitan Knowledge International (MKI Canada)

Jeff Snider  
Alka Johri

### Beth Kapusta

#### Additional Contributors:

Union Station Revitalization Public Advisory  
Committee

Michael Guy, Toronto Railway Historical Association  
Orin Krivel, Toronto Railway Historical Association  
Derek Boles, Toronto Railway Historical Association  
Rollo Myers, Chair of Walks and Gardens Historical  
Society

Glenn Garwood, City of Toronto, Project Leader,  
Cultural Affairs



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