



East View of Market Precinct Gateway

HISTORY AND LIFE

History

The origin of the St Lawrence neighbourhood dates back to the creation of the original Town of York in 1793. At the time Front Street was the shoreline of Lake Ontario. The original ten block settlement grew westward towards Jarvis Street, facilitated in part by the establishment of a farmer's market.

This farmer's market, or Market Block, bounded by King Street, Front Street, Market Lane and Jarvis Street has been in continuous public use since the early 1800s as a market place, and has also accommodated City Halls and a cultural hall; there have been at least 5 public market buildings on the site since 1803.

The existing St Lawrence South Market, the former North Market and St Lawrence Hall were at one time all linked; a steel and glass archway bridged across Front Street connecting the South and North Market buildings. Our proposal, based on the traditions of covered open air markets, attempts to reassert the authentic and formative relationship that has always existed between St Lawrence Hall and

the South Market (see accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment). The materials palette and form for the project were developed after a careful and thorough study of the existing historic buildings in this area.

The excavation of the site will unearth valuable archaeological material. Our proposal strongly advocates developing an interpretive program with this material for education regarding the site history and possibly reusing original material from the foundation within the new design.

Life

This project owes its origins to significant public participation and input from a number of St Lawrence Neighbourhood and St Lawrence Market organizations working with city staff. This process confirmed the importance of the Farmers' and Antique Markets to the community but also recognized the need to both increase utilization and density for the site as well as significantly raise the architectural calibre of the North Building. The 200 years of continuous 'dirt on potatoes'

public life that has characterized the site has provided both social and built form authenticity which is a very strong foundation and inspiration for our project.

To understand the site, urban quality indicators and patterns of pedestrian use and traffic at the St Lawrence district and the POA court facilities were recorded and analyzed to help us understand a day in the life of this significant place in the city. This work reinforced our conviction that the redevelopment of the North Market site will be a powerful urban catalyst promoting a new commitment to the diversity, energy and promise of a pedestrian centred precinct.



LT. Philpots 1818 Map of York



West View of the Gateway Framing the Gooderham Flat Iron Building