

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

January 5, 2004

To: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto South Community Council

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject 71 Front Street West (Union Station) – Intention to Designate under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement
Toronto Centre-Rosedale - Ward 28

Purpose:

This report recommends that the property at 71 Front Street West (Union Station) be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and authority be granted to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement to provide for the permanent protection of the heritage building.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) Council state its intention to designate the property at 71 Front Street West (Union Station) under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (2) if there are no objections to the designation in accordance with Section 29(6) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the solicitor be authorized to introduce Bills in Council designating the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (3) if there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Clerk be directed to refer the proposed designation to the Conservation Review Board;
- (4) authority be granted by City Council for the execution of a Heritage Easement Agreement under Section 37 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* with the Union Pearson Group or any other head tenant approved by City Council to lease and operate Union Station on the City's behalf using substantially the form of easement agreement prepared in

February 1987 by the City Solicitor and on file with the City Clerk, subject to such amendments as may be deemed necessary by the City Solicitor in consultation with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

- (5) Union Pearson Group or any other head tenant provide Heritage Preservation Services with two (2) copies of the required photographs for inclusion in the Heritage Easement Agreement; and
- (6) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The property at 71 Front Street West is located on the south side of Front Street West between Bay Street and York Street as shown in Attachment No. 1. The property contains Union Station as shown in attachment No. 2. City Council listed the property on the first City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1973, and passed an Intention to Designate the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in December 1975. Because the site was owned in part by the federal government, it was not possible to pass a designating by-law at that time. Union Station was declared a National Historic Site by the Government of Canada in 1985 and designated under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act in 1989.

In August 2000, the City purchased the Station and GO Transit purchased the rail corridor and train sheds. This required the consent of the Government of Canada pursuant to the Heritage Railway Station Protection Act. As a condition to granting this consent, the Federal Government required that Union Station be protected by a Heritage Easement Agreement (HEA) held by the Federal Minister of Canadian Heritage (Parks Canada). This HEA was executed and registered as part of the sale transaction in August 2000. The areas protected by this HEA are described in detail in the Baseline Documentation Report that contains a photographic inventory of the heritage features within the Station Complex.

In July 2002, City Council selected Union Pearson Group as the preferred proponent from the Request for Proposals to restore, develop and operate Union Station, and directed staff to negotiate the appropriate agreements to give effect to their proposal.

At its meeting held July 22, 23 and 24, 2003, Toronto City Council approved a Master Agreement to enter into a long-term lease with the Union Pearson Group to restore, revitalize and operate Union Station on behalf of the City of Toronto.

City staff and the Union Pearson Group continue to finalize the lease terms and the concept design. Construction work at Union Station is expected to begin by the end of 2004.

Comments:

The purpose of a HEA with the City and Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* is to make Union Station eligible for the Heritage Tax Incentive Program should the program be

implemented by the City. Provincial requirements for the Heritage Tax Incentive Program are that the property be designated under the Act and protected by a Heritage Easement Agreement with the municipality.

The Heritage Tax Incentive Program is a municipal program enacted under Provincial Legislation to provide tax relief to properties in which the eligible heritage features are preserved.

The HEA with the City will protect interior features in the unshaded areas as shown in the attached 10 floor plans (Attachments Nos. 3 through 12). The protected areas proposed by the HEA are identical to the area protected by the HEA held by the Federal Government. The shaded areas are not eligible for the Heritage Tax Incentive Program. The east, west and north facades will also be protected by the HEA, with the exception of increased accessibility at key points within the moat and teamways.

Should the resolution of the lease terms and the concept design impact the protected areas in the City's HEA, authority to amend the HEA will be sought from the City Council after consultation with the Toronto Preservation Board.

It is appropriate at this time for council to restate its intent to designate the property at 71 Front Street for the reasons discussed below. These reasons, which exclude the train sheds and tracks owned and operated by GO Transit, are more comprehensive than the reasons cited by Council in its intent to designate the property in 1975.

Reasons for Designation:

The property at 71 Front Street West is recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural resource value or interest. Union Station was completed in 1927 as the shared terminal of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway (later part of Canadian National Railways). Union Station extends across a city block from Bay to York Streets where it is set back from Front Street in an open plaza that emphasizes its scale. With the Dominion Public Building to the east and the Royal York Hotel, opposite, Union Station forms part of a precinct of landmark buildings around the Front and Bay intersection. Opening as the largest railway terminal in Canada, Union Station is historically significant as the transportation hub of Toronto. Architecturally, Union Station is considered the best example of a Canadian railway facility designed in the Beaux-Arts tradition. The design is recognized as the collaboration of the Montreal firm of Ross and Macdonald with CPR architect Hugh Jones and the noted Toronto architect John Lyle. Union Station was declared a National Historic Site by the federal government in 1975, and was among the first properties designated under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act in 1989.

Union Station blends the monumentality, Classical inspiration and spatial planning of Beaux-Arts design principles with Canadian iconography. The heritage attributes consist of the exterior walls and roofs, the moat and team ways, and selected areas on the interior, principally in the Great Hall, West Wing and Concourses. Clad with limestone and rising the equivalent of seven stories from a raised base, the exterior of the complex is organized with a centre block flanked by

wings that terminate in pavilions. Behind a Doric colonnade that identifies the principal entrance, the centre block is extended by a raised attic and covered by a hipped roof. The cornice continues across the adjoining wings (east and west) where the symmetrically placed flat-headed window openings decrease in height in each storey. On the ends, hipped roofs and oversized round-arched entrances distinguish the pavilions. Classical detailing with inscriptions and a datestone marks the north façade. The train shed is not included in the Reasons for Designation.

On the interior, the rational spatial arrangement is identified as a significant feature. From the central Great Hall (ticket lobby), a ramp extends down to the departures concourse, which is flanked by the arrivals corridors that lead to the arrivals concourse where the moat provides access to Front Street. In the Great Hall, the overall scale and Classical detailing, the vaulted, tiled and (at the ends) coffered ceilings, the marble floors and limestone walls, the thermal and clerestory windows, the oversized round-arched openings, the stairs to the arrivals concourse below, and the carved inscriptions are significant elements. The Classical detailing and oversized skylight that mark the waiting room in the West Wing, the design of the departures ramp, the columns in the departures concourse, and the original vitrines in the arrivals corridors are notable elements. Important original finishes, detailing, fittings, fixtures and hardware throughout the building are identified on the drawings in the Review of Heritage Zones (1999) prepared by the federal government. Detailed descriptions of the property are found in the federal government's Heritage Character Statement (1989) and Commemorative Integrity Statement (2000).

Conclusions:

It is appropriate at this time that Council designate Union Station and grant the authority to enter into a heritage easement agreement.

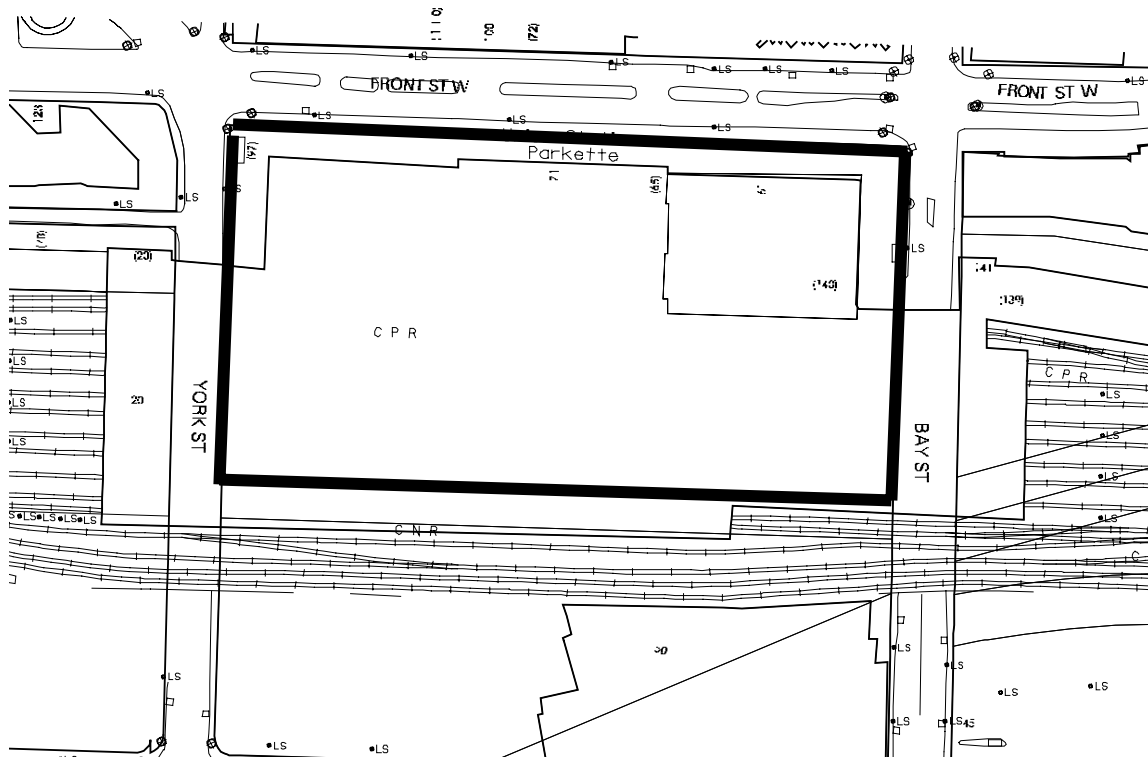
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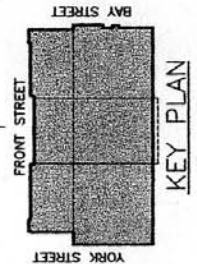
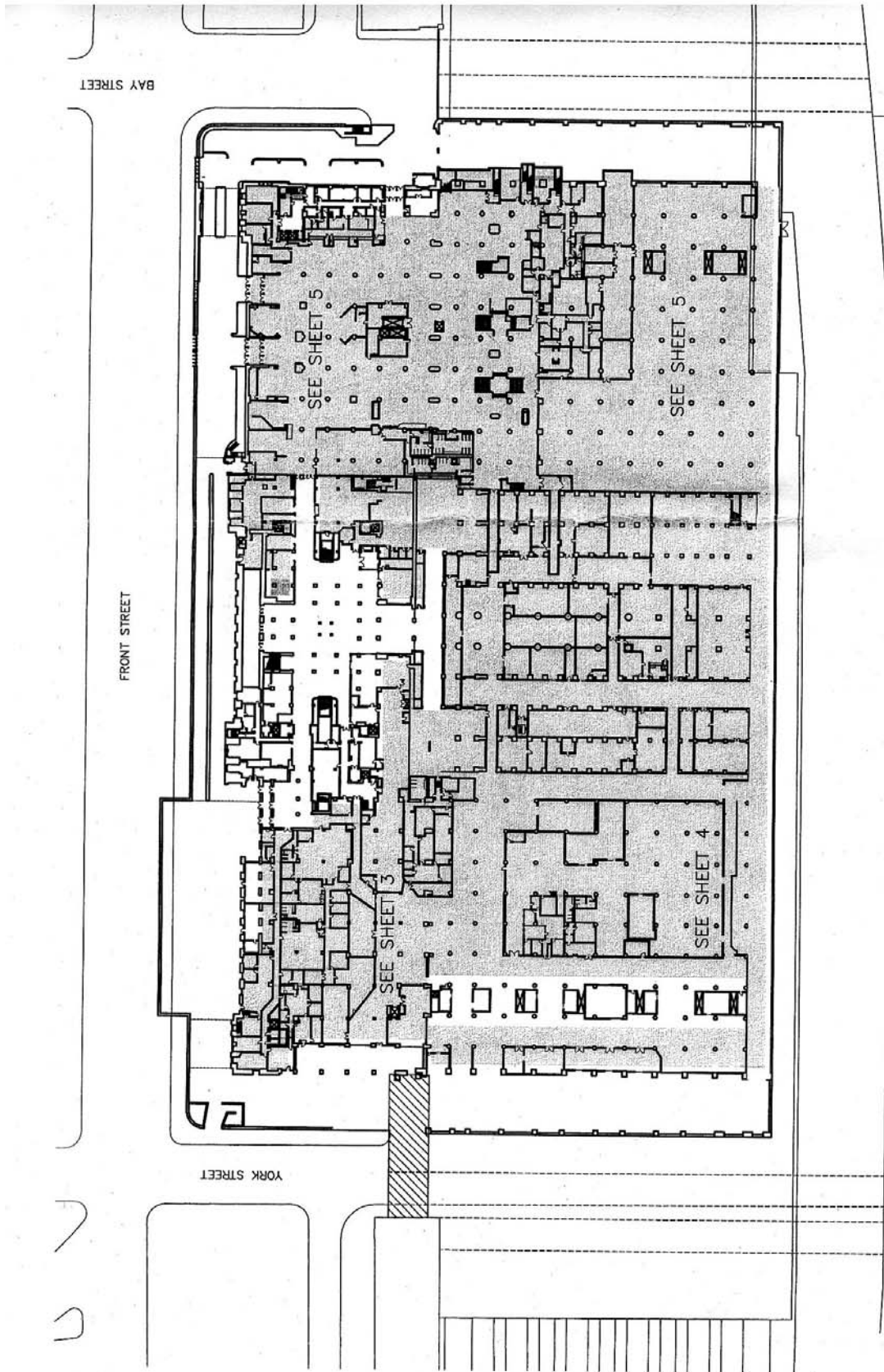
Joe Halstead
Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

List of Attachments:

Attachment No. 1	Location Map	– 71 Front Street West
Attachment No. 2	Photographs	– 71 Front Street West
Attachment Nos. 3-12	Floor Plans	– 71 Front Street West

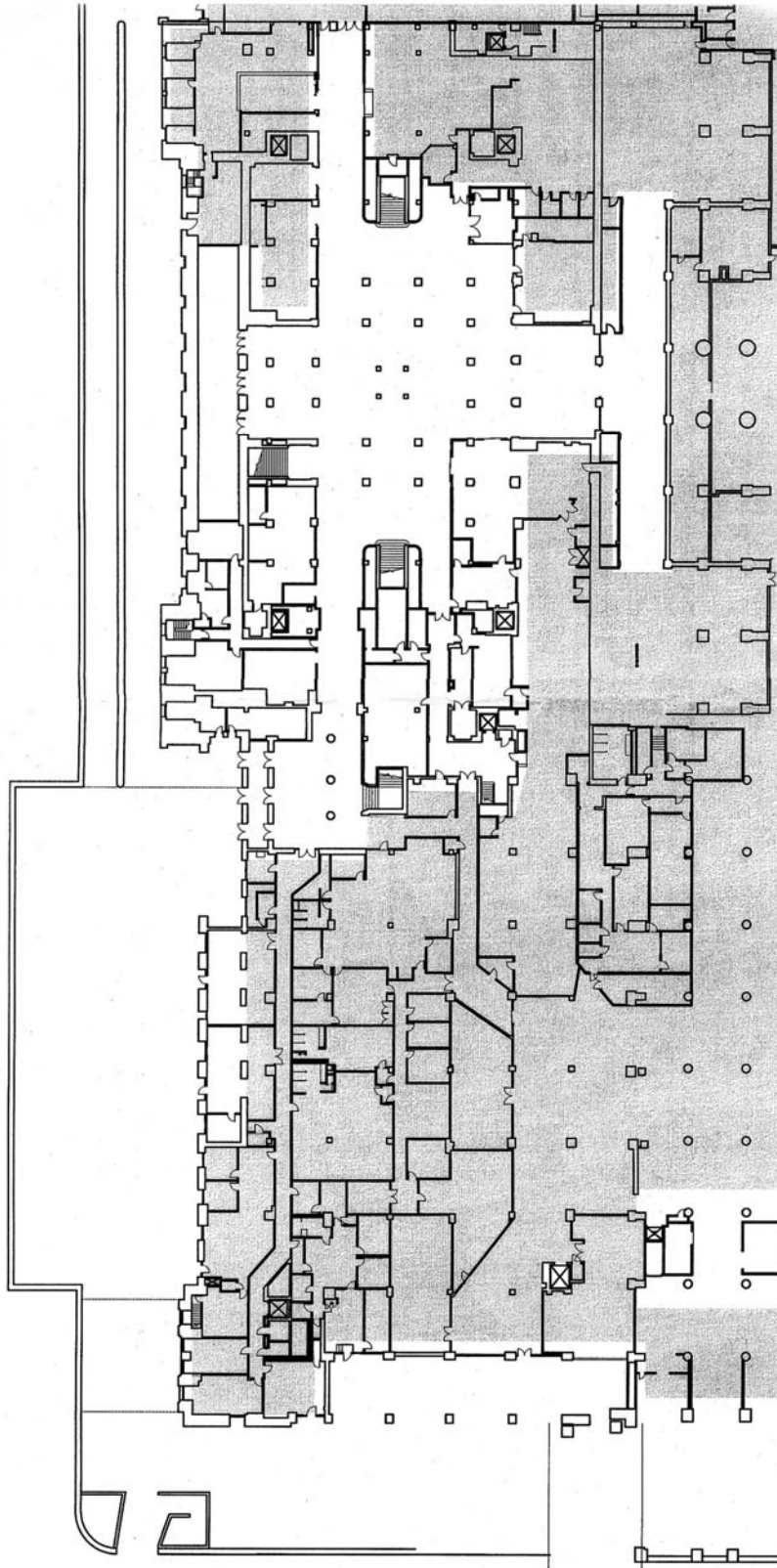




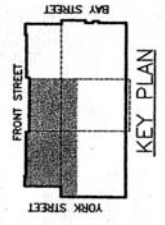


SHEET 1

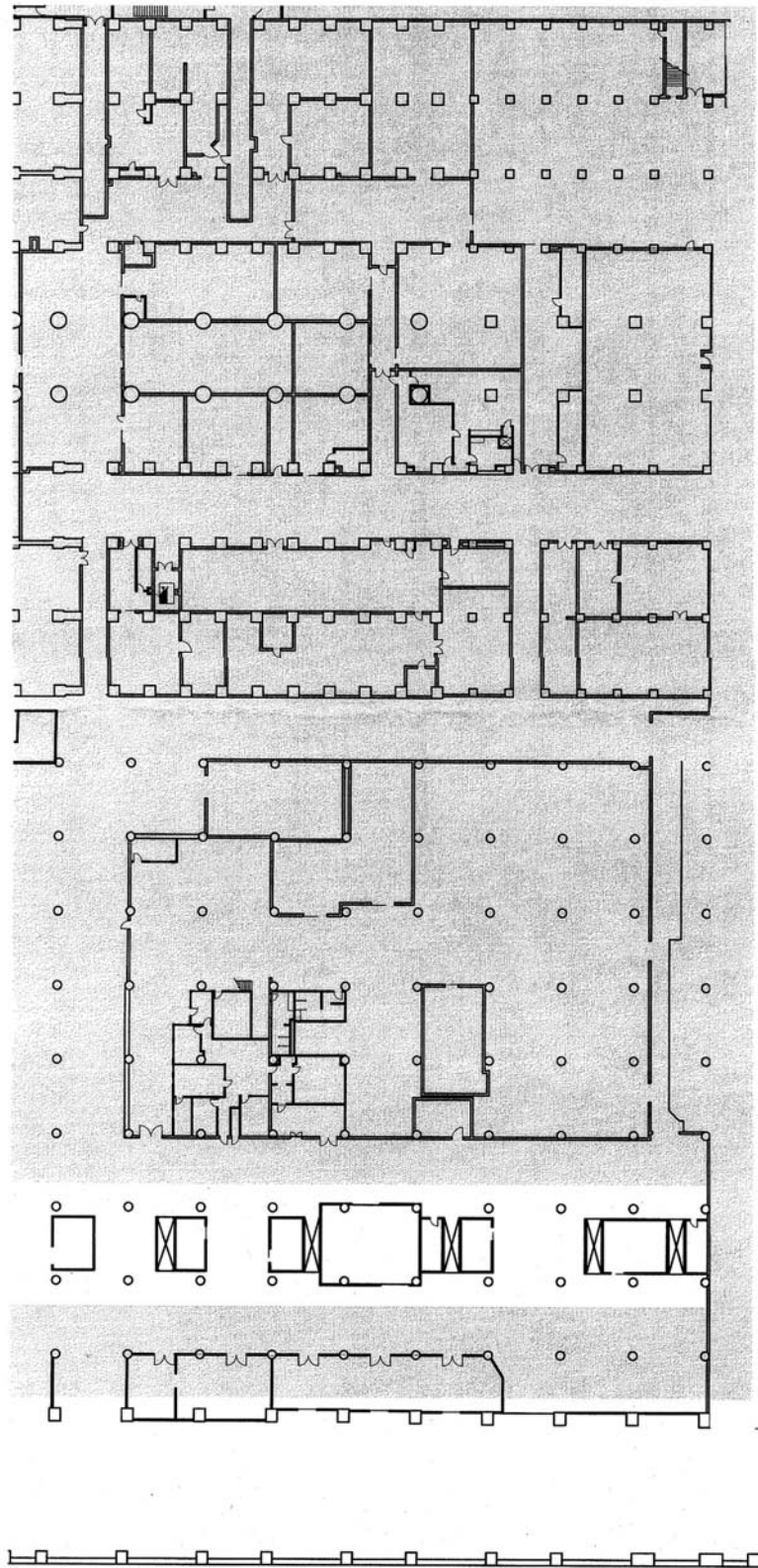
SITE PLAN - MOAT AND TEAMWAY LEVEL



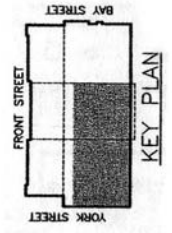
LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN - NORTH END



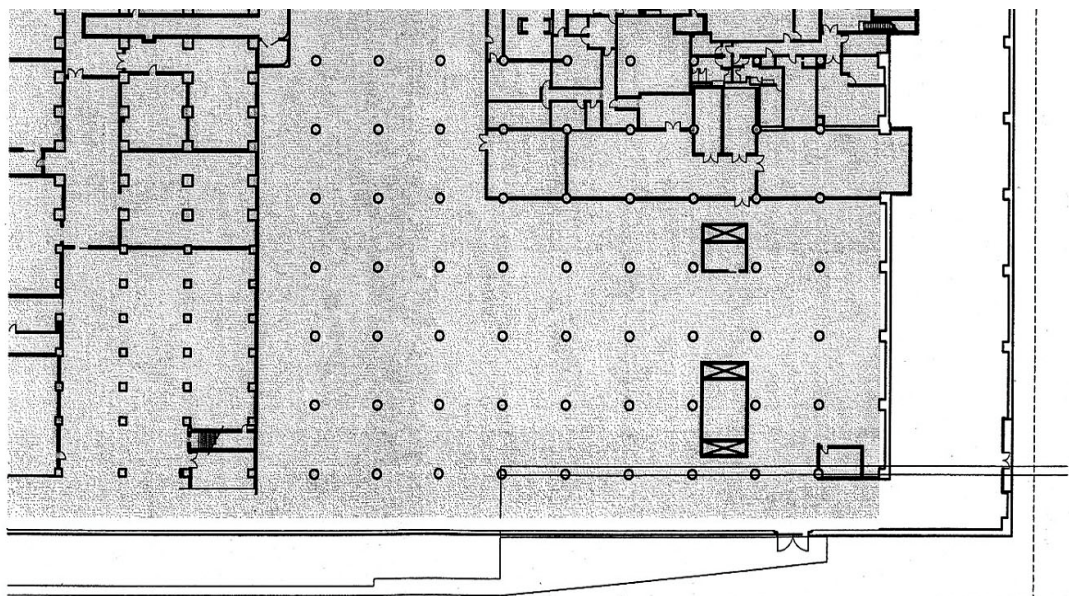
SHEET 3



LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN - SOUTH END



SHEET 4



EAST BLOCK FLOOR PLAN - LOWER LEVEL

SHEET 5

