

USHCD DESIGNATION DESCRIPTION – 20 YORK STREET: 151 FRONT STREET WEST / 20 YORK STREET / 7, 7A & 7B STATION STREET & SKYWALK



Canadian National Express Building and York teamway: 20 York Street

Era: Pre-War
Style: Beaux-Arts
Heritage Status: Municipally listed 2005
Visible from Station forecourt: No
Connected to PATH system: Yes
Contributing: Yes

The Canadian National Express Building and York teamway has been listed as a heritage property of architectural and historical value, and its function as a cultural resource. The York Street 'subway' - a passageway extending along York Street beneath the railway viaduct was authorized in 1913 but not opened until 1931. The Express building, completed in 1929, acted as a terminus for horse drawn carts delivering goods from Union Station.

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According to the official listing documents:

“The Canadian Express building and York teamway have strong historical, architectural and contextual significance. The Express building is the only building of this type remaining near the Union Station environs. It is also the longest built in Toronto at 213m. They also have strong cultural value, existing as a public space that connects the waterfront to the financial district.”⁷

Today, the Canadian National Express Building and York teamway have been integrated into a pedestrian access system. In 1989, the Skywalk was constructed, passing through the second and third stories of the Express building. In 1997 the York teamway was renovated to provide pedestrian access to the waterfront. The York teamway also provides direct access to the Union Station train shed.

The façade facing Station Street is clad in stone and contains classical detailing. First floor entrances are set in stone surrounds with entablatures. Large flat-headed window openings are symmetrically placed in the upper stories. Large entablatures and nameplates marked “teamway” are found at the north and south entrances of the structure. The interior features concrete clad walls with robust columns and a flat roof. The east wall features a series of glazed archways as part of the York Street Gateway Project.

⁷ City of Toronto Economic Development, Culture and Tourism. Staff Report: 20 York Street listing 2004

USHCD DESIGNATION DESCRIPTION – SKYWALK: 151 FRONT STREET WEST
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Skywalk

Era: Post-War
Style: Post-Modern
Visible from Station forecourt: No
Connected to PATH system: Yes
Contributing: Yes

The completion of the Skydome (now Rogers Centre) marked a substantial milestone in the deindustrialization of Toronto's obsolete industrial lands south of Front Street. It was the first major investment within the railway lands since the CN Tower.

Opening in 1989, the Skywalk, designed by the IBI Group, was created as a means of facilitating and promoting pedestrian access to and from the stadium; reducing parking requirement and promoting use of public transit²². Skywalk connects the lands adjacent to the stadium with Union Station, the Metro Convention Centre and Toronto's PATH system. Easy and climate controlled access is facilitated from the City's core to the lands south of the railway.

²² B-A Consulting Group. SkyDome: Transportation Strategy and Operations Plan, 1988.

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The Skywalk was completed in 1989 to coincide with the completion of the Rogers Centre. Designed in the arcade style, the Skywalk consists of a large glazed passageway enclosed by a semi-circular arched roof reminiscent of early century European pedestrian areas. The Skywalk begins at the western most side of Union Station, passes through the second and third stories of the Canadian National Express building and crosses the Toronto rail viaduct at Simcoe Street. South of the railway the Skywalk traverses through the south end of the Metro Convention Centre and terminates in the plaza adjacent to the CN Tower, Roundhouse and Rogers Centre. The skywalk is a piece of urban infrastructure of growing importance; connecting the city to the increasingly developed rail lands. Furthermore, the skywalk offers unique views of Toronto's existing rail activity and provides a physical connection between to the district's two national historic sites: the Roundhouse and Union Station.

CONTEXT PHOTOS - 151 FRONT STREET: 151 FRONT STREET WEST / 20 YORK STREET / 7, 7A & 7B STATION STREET & SKYWALK



View to North/west corner of 151 Front Street



Simcoe Street View of 151 Front Street West and Skywalk