

## **Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property and Authority to Amend a Heritage Easement Agreement – 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building)**

**Date:** May 29, 2019

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board  
Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** Spadina - Fort York (10)

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve the alterations to the designated heritage property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) in connection with a Site Plan Application to construct an enclosed elevated pedestrian walkway over Newfoundland Road connecting the Automotive Building and Hotel X, and that Council grant authority to amend the existing Heritage Easement Agreement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alterations to the designated heritage property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, with such alterations substantially in accordance with plans and drawings dated May 24, 2019, prepared by NORR Architects & Engineers Limited, on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services; and the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prepared by ERA Architects dated February 28, 2019 and HIA addendum dated May 24, 2019, on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and subject to the following conditions:

a. That prior to final Site Plan Approval for the property located at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) the owner shall:

1. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is substantially in accordance with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building), prepared by ERA Architects dated February 28, 2019, and HIA addendum dated May 24, 2019, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
2. Provide final site plan drawings substantially in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.1 above to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services
3. Register an amending Heritage Easement Agreement to update Schedule "B" photographs on the existing Heritage Easement Agreement registered on title for 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building), Instrument No. AT2012487, dated September 12, 2008.

b. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building), including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, the owner shall:

1. Amend the existing Heritage Easement Agreement for the property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) in accordance with the plans and drawings dated May 24, 2019, prepared by NORR Architects & Engineers Limited and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, and subject to and in accordance with the Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.1 above, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services including registration of such amending agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, as required in Recommendation 1.a.3 above.
2. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.1 above including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
3. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant, that is consistent with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for the Automotive Building at 2 Strachan Avenue prepared by ERA Architects, dated February 28, 2019 with HIA addendum dated May 24, 2019, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to amend the Heritage Easement Agreement registered on title to the Automotive Building property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building), Instrument No. AT2012487, dated September 12, 2008.

3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce any necessary bill in Council to amend the Heritage Easement Agreement.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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The Automotive Building, located at 2 Strachan Avenue, was listed on the City's Heritage Register, adopted by City Council on June 20, 1973.

A Heritage Easement Agreement was registered as Instrument No. AT2012487 on September 12, 2008.

The Automotive Building, located at 2 Strachan Avenue, was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act with the passing of municipal by-law 392-2009 on April 6, 2009:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2009/law0392.pdf>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Proposal**

The applicant proposes to construct an enclosed elevated pedestrian walkway over Newfoundland Road connecting the Automotive Building with the adjacent Hotel X building. The pedestrian walkway will extend from the second storey level of the hotel to the second storey level of the Automotive Building through a window opening located on the west elevation of the Automotive Building and will be supported by a single concrete column between the two buildings on Newfoundland Road.

### **Heritage Property**

The Automotive Building, located at 2 Strachan Avenue, is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as of April 6, 2009 with the passing of municipal by-law 225-2019.

Located on the southeast corner of Princes' Boulevard and Newfoundland Road, the Automotive Building is a two-storey building situated within the Canadian Exhibition

Grounds at 2 Strachan Avenue and was built in 1929 as an exhibition hall for the display of automobiles and automotive products.

The heritage attributes of the Automotive Building are related to its design, associative and contextual value as an excellent example of Modern Classical design with Art Deco detailing that is associated with the evolution of Exhibition Place where it is a local landmark. The Statement of Significance describing the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the property is included in Attachment 7 of this report.

The City's policies seek the conservation of the cultural heritage value, attributes and character of properties included on the Heritage Register.

## **Policy Framework:**

### **Official Plan**

The City of Toronto's Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed alterations:

3.1.5.4: "Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and adopted by Council."

3.1.5.5: "Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City."

3.1.5.25: "In addition to a Heritage Impact Assessment, the City may request a Heritage Property Conservation Plan to address in detail the *conservation* treatments for the subject heritage property."

3.1.5.26: "New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it."

3.1.5.27: "Where it is supported by the cultural heritage values and attributes of a property on the Heritage Register, the conservation of whole or substantial portions of buildings, structures and landscapes on those properties is desirable and encouraged. The retention of faces alone is discouraged."

### **Provincial Policy Statement and Planning Act**

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province. The Act states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to "the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest."

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The Planning Act requires that City Council's decisions affecting land use planning matters be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement.

Policy 2.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." Properties included on the City's Heritage Register are considered to be significant in this context. "Conserved" is defined in the PPS as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

Policy 2.6.3 states that "Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except 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."

## **Growth Plan**

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan") provides a strategic framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. Like other provincial plans, the Growth Plan builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the Greater Golden Horseshoe region.

The policies of the Growth Plan take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise. All decisions by Council affecting land use planning matters are required by the Planning Act, to conform, or not conflict, as the case may be, with the Growth Plan Policy 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that "Cultural Heritage Resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas."

## **The Standards and Guidelines**

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and the conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) and the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12) apply to this project.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

## COMMENTS

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Exhibition Place is home to a remarkable collection of heritage buildings set in a heritage landscape tracing its origin back to the original Provincial Exhibition. There are 18 listed or designated buildings on the site, many surrounded by unique landscaped open spaces which reflect the character and era of the buildings and structures they support.

The Automotive Building is one of the designated buildings within Exhibition Place. The designation by-law includes the decorative metal spandrels and the two-storey window openings organized by the stone pier columns as some of its heritage attributes. The windows within the openings were replaced in 2009 and are not included as heritage attributes. The Exhibition Place Cultural Heritage Landscape Assessment dated April 2019 includes the “palatial landscape” to the south of the Automotive Building as one Exhibition Place’s heritage attributes.

Staff have reviewed the Plans prepared by NORR Architects & Engineers Limited, dated May 24, 2019, the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared by ERA Architects dated February 28, 2018 and the HIA addendum dated May 24, 2019.

The proposed pedestrian walkway bridge will be situated within an existing window opening on the west façade of the Automotive Building. The bridge will be located on its least prominent frontage near the servicing entrances of the building, at the south-most window bay of the west façade.

The new bridge will affect views within Newfoundland Road, however this view is not one of the protected views noted in the Official Plan. Views from the pedestrian level within Newfoundland Road through to Trillium Park and Lake Ontario would remain. The bridge has a simple form and its cladding treatment has been designed to minimize its visual impact. The bridge is set back from the Lake Shore Boulevard frontage of the Automotive Building in order to lessen its visual impact and to ensure that the palatial character of the views of the Automotive Building and Exhibition Place from Lakeshore Boulevard would not be affected. Trees along Newfoundland Road will obscure long distance views of the bridge connection to the designated Automotive Building from Lake Shore Boulevard.

Following a request from HPS staff the plans were revised to minimize the impact of the bridge to the exterior of the Automotive Building. The revised scheme shows that one upper window and associated metal decorative spandrel will be removed to allow for the bridge connection to Hotel X within the existing window opening. The metal window and metal panel below will be stored on-site for future reference and to ensure the reversibility of the alterations. The lower window will be removed temporarily during construction in order to allow the insertion of the bridge structure but will be reinstalled following the completion of the bridge works.

The smooth stone masonry and fluted columns adjacent to the window will not be impacted as the bridge will be fastened internally through the existing window opening.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Staff is supportive of the proposal to alter the designated heritage property and to amend the Heritage Easement Agreement at 2 Strachan (Automotive Building) to allow for the construction of an elevated pedestrian walkway connecting the Automotive Building and Hotel X.

Staff is of the opinion that the proposal has been designed to conserve the cultural heritage value, attributes and character of the heritage property and that the heritage impacts of the proposal are mitigated by a minimal intervention approach consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

## **CONTACT**

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Urban Design, City Planning  
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## **SIGNATURE**

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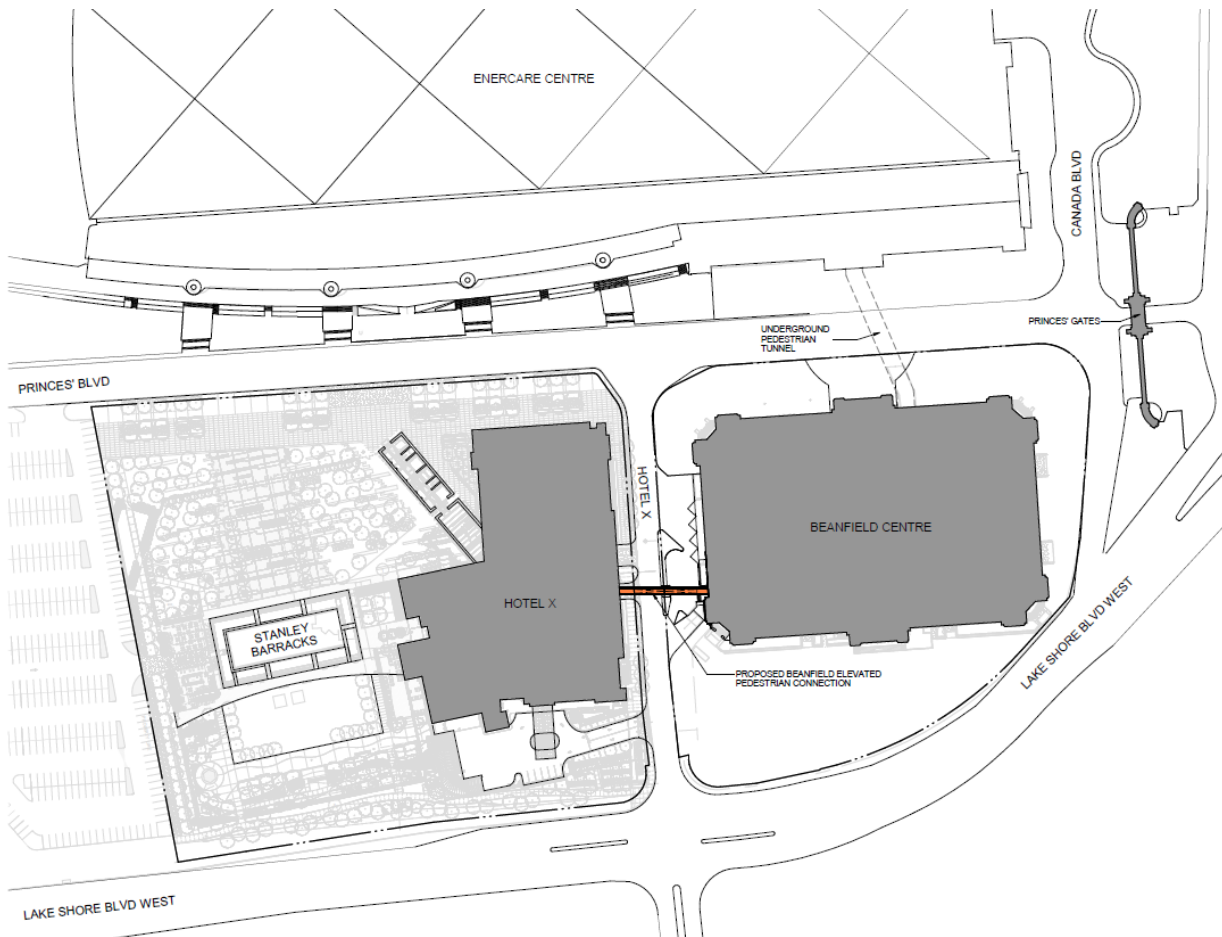
Mary MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services  
Urban Design, City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Location map  
Attachment 2: Site Plan  
Attachment 3: Photographs of existing building  
Attachment 4: Plans  
Attachment 5: Renderings  
Attachment 6: Plans  
Attachment 7: Statement of Significance, By-law Designation 392-2009

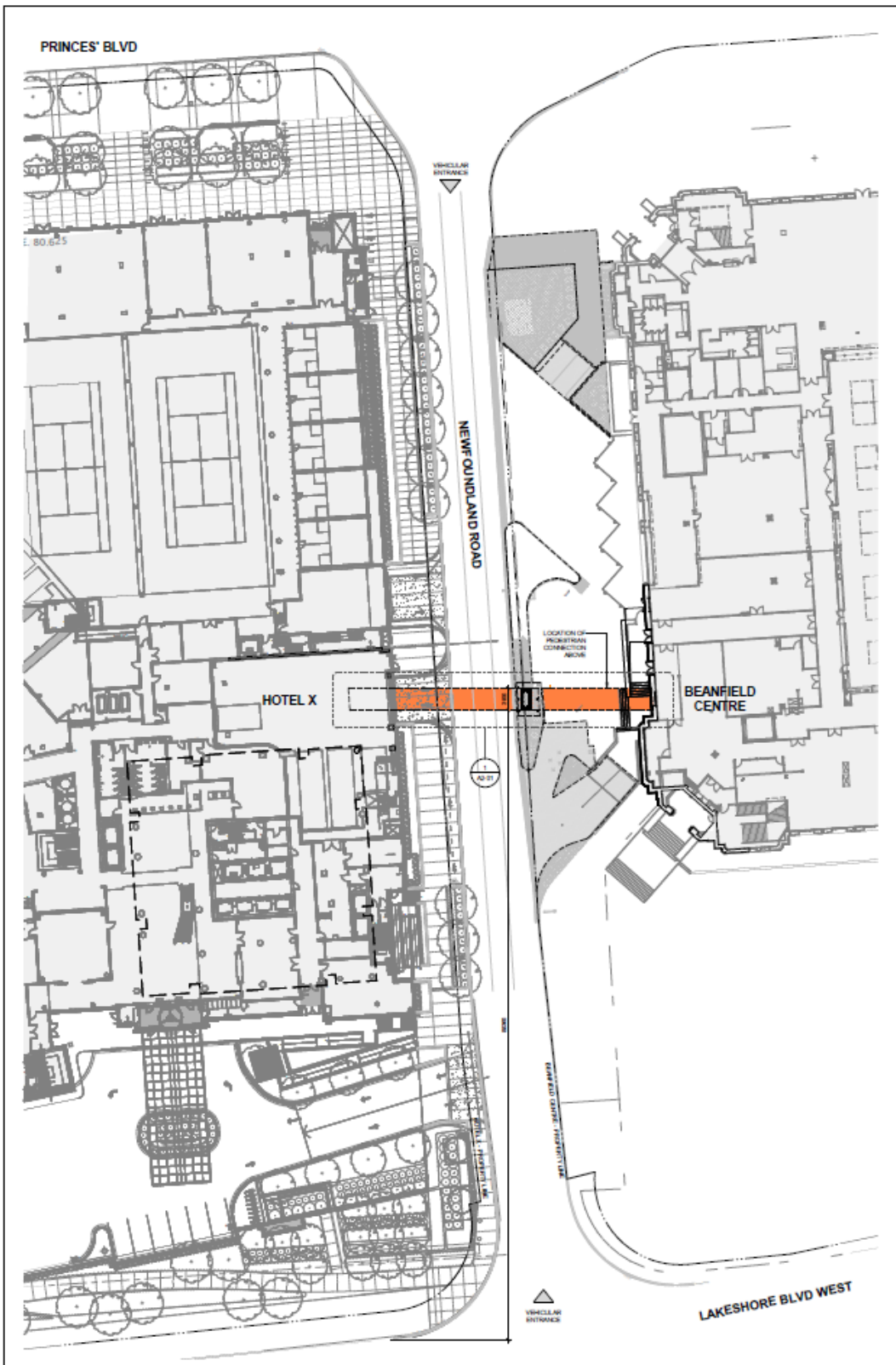
# ATTACHMENT NO.1: LOCATION MAP



Location map of Automotive Building (2 Strachan Avenue) and Hotel X. This map is for informational purposes only.



ATTACHMENT NO.2: SITE PLAN

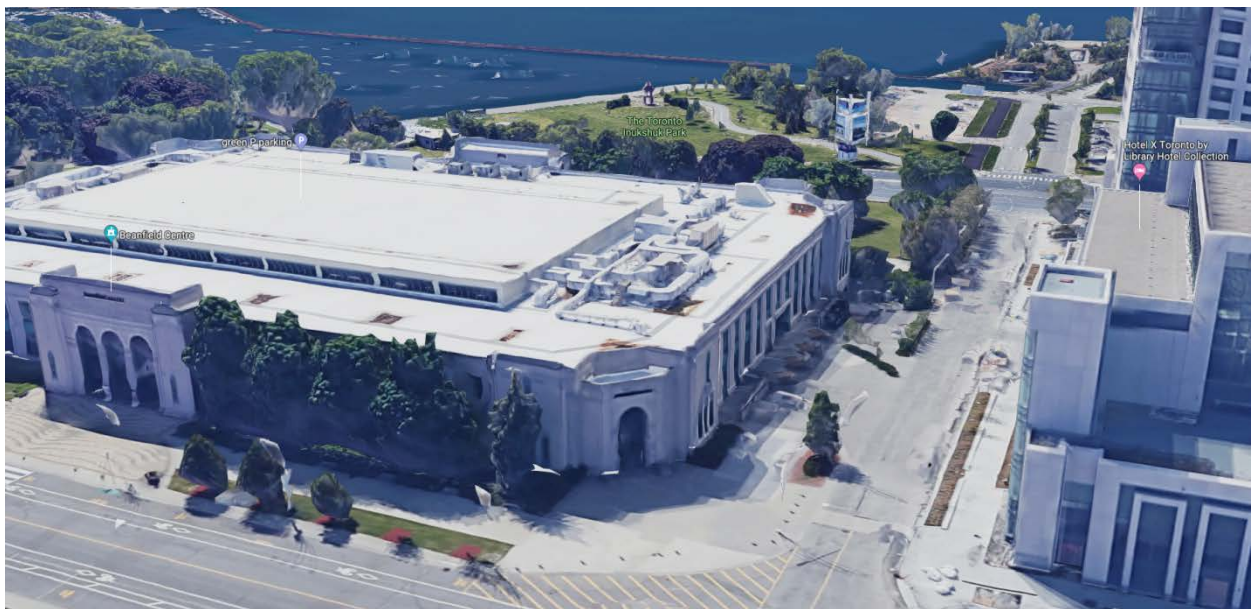


Site plan of proposed pedestrian bridge spanning Newfoundland Road.

## ATTACHMENT NO.3: PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING BUILDING

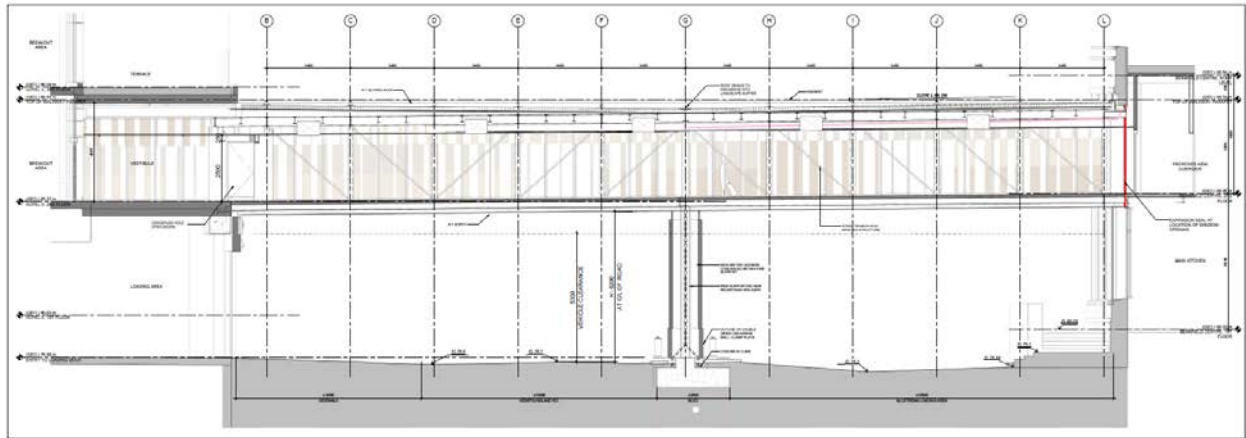


View of west façade of the Automotive Building showing the service entrances to the building and the twelve two-storey window bays. The proposed pedestrian bridge will extend from the second storey of the window bay furthest to the right.

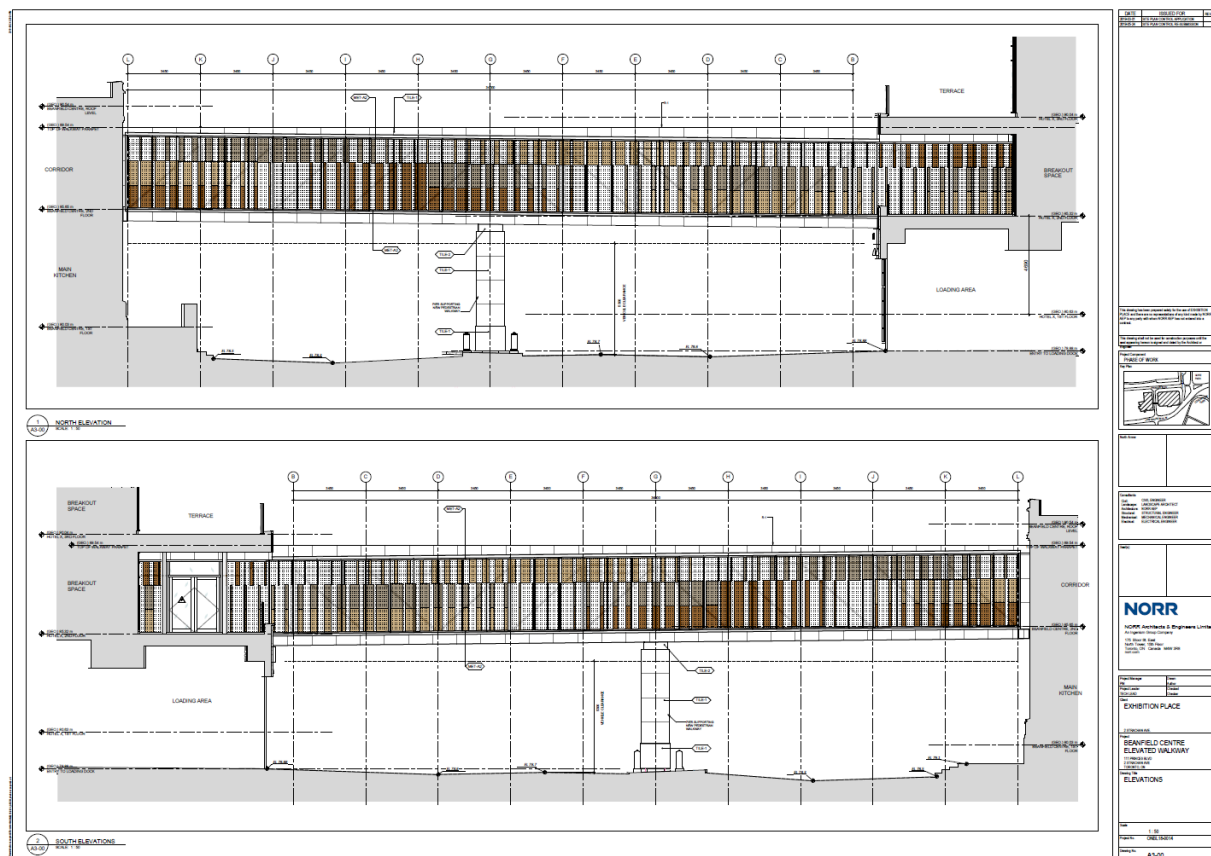


Aerial view of northwest corner of the Automotive Building. Hotel X is seen to the right (west) of the Automotive Building.

ATTACHMENT NO.4: PLANS



Elevation drawing of proposed pedestrian bridge.



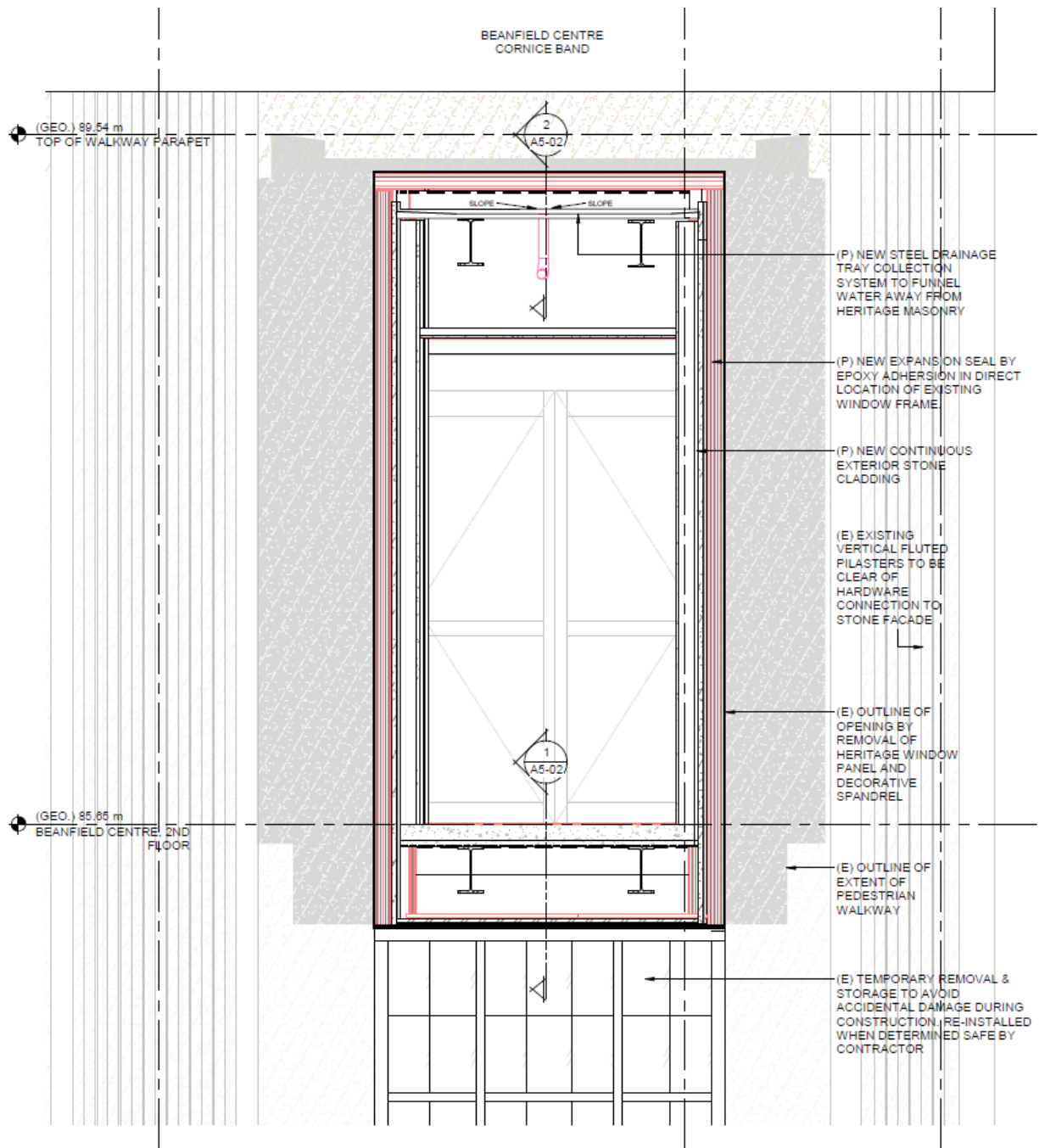
Elevation drawing of proposed pedestrian bridge showing design and colour arrangement.



2 EAST ELEVATION  
A3-01 SCALE: 1:50

West elevation drawing showing the proposed connection scheme for the pedestrian bridge.

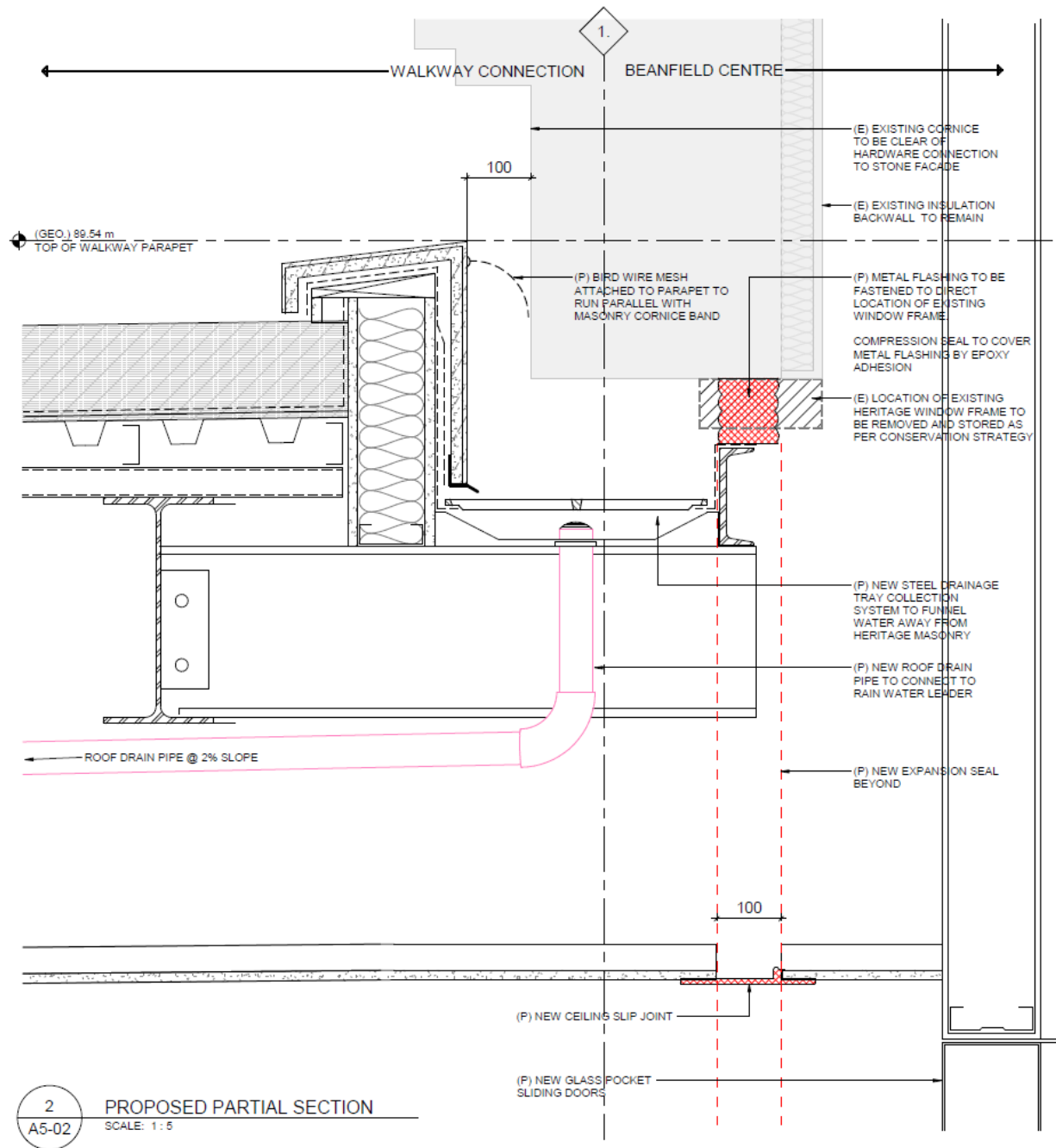




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A5-02

**BEANFIELD CONNECTION**  
SCALE: 1 : 20

Detailed elevation drawing showing connection scheme of the proposed pedestrian bridge to the west façade window opening of the Automotive Building.



Detailed section drawing showing connection scheme of the proposed pedestrian bridge to the west façade window opening of the Automotive Building.



## ATTACHMENT NO. 6: RENDERINGS



Rendering of proposed pedestrian bridge from Newfoundland Road looking north. The west façade of the Automotive Building is seen to the right and Hotel X is seen to the right.



## ATTACHMENT NO. 7: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Authority: Toronto and East York Community Council Item 13.5,  
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on March 3, 4 and 5, 2008  
Enacted by Council: April 6, 2009

**CITY OF TORONTO**  
**BY-LAW No. 392-2009**  
**To designate the property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) as being of**  
**cultural**  
**heritage value or interest.**

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) as being of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as 2 Strachan Avenue and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be posted on the City's web site for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4, Notice requirements under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection was served upon the Clerk of the municipality;  
The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The property at 2 Strachan Avenue, more particularly described in Schedule "B" and shown on Schedule "C" attached to this by-law, is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "B" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at 2 Strachan Avenue and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust and to cause notice of this by-law to be posted on the City's web site for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4, Notice requirements under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 6th day of April, A.D. 2009.

SANDRA BUSSIN,  
Speaker

ULLI S. WATKISS  
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

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City of Toronto By-law No. 392-2009  
**SCHEDULE "A"**  
**REASONS FOR DESIGNATION**

### Description

The property at 2 Strachan Avenue (Automotive Building) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located at the east end of Exhibition Place, the Automotive Building was completed in 1929 as an exhibition hall for the display of automobiles and automotive products. The property was listed on the inaugural City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1973.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Automotive Building at Exhibition Place has design value as an excellent example of Modern Classicism with Art Deco detailing from the era between World Wars I and II. Its design was described in contemporary periodicals as a harmonization of Classical principles with Modernity (RAIC Journal, November 1929, 405). The Automotive Building represented the transition from the Beaux-Arts inspired structures at the west and east ends of the site (including the adjoining Princes' Gates) to those of the next decade with their application of Art Moderne and Art Deco stylistic features (Horse Palace, 1931 and Bandshell, 1936).

The Automotive Building is associated historically with the evolution of Exhibition Place during the early 20th century. The property overlooking Lake Ontario was acquired for the exhibition grounds in 1878 after the provincial agricultural fair (later known as the Canadian National Exhibition or CNE) was permanently established in Toronto. With the gradual expansion of the site eastward to Strachan Avenue and the loss of numerous structures to fire, the grounds were reorganized and new edifices introduced during successive decades. The 1920s marked the unveiling of a ceremonial entrance on Strachan Avenue where the Princes' Gates (1927) opened onto a wide plaza flanked by the Electrical and Engineering Building (1928 and later demolished) on the north and the Automotive Building (1929) to the south. These buildings anchored the east end of the exhibition grounds and showcased the innovative technologies of the period.

The Automotive Building purportedly opened as the largest structure in North America designed exclusively to display passenger vehicles. While the development of the automobile was chronicled in exhibits at the CNE, by the early 1920s its popularity resulted in the opening of a separate structure for automotive products. During the later 20th century, the Automotive Building was upgraded and its purpose expanded from vehicular exhibits to other uses (including a recruitment centre for the Canadian Navy during World War II).

Toronto architect Douglas Kertland won the architectural competition to design the Automotive Building. Kertland received his architectural training in England and worked in the office of the important Canadian architect John M. Lyle before opening a solo practice in Toronto in the 1920s. While he received numerous commissions for churches, hospitals and bank branches, Kertland specialized in residential designs for clients in Forest Hill and other upscale Toronto neighbourhoods.

Kertland received an “honourable mention” in the 1931 Toronto Chapter of the Exhibition of Architecture and Applied Arts for the exterior detailing of the Automotive Building, which remains his best-known project in the city.

Contextually, the Automotive Building is a highly visible feature at Exhibition Place where it is placed inside the Princes’ Gates. Its scale and orientation on the site allow it to be viewed from inside the exhibition grounds and from the parkland along Lake Ontario, which it was designed to overlook across landscaped open space. With its location on the west side of Strachan Avenue

where it terminates the vista looking west along Lake Shore Boulevard West, the Automotive Building is a local landmark.

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Automotive Building related to its design, associative and contextual value as an excellent example of Modern Classical design with Art Deco detailing that is associated with the evolution of Exhibition Place where it is a local landmark are:

#### **Exterior attributes**

- The scale, form and massing.
- The large rectangular plan rising two stories with bevelled corners.
- Above the base of Queenston limestone, the artificial stone cladding with stone and metal detailing.
- The cornice marking the roofline.
- On the principal (south) and north facades, the organization of the walls with central and end pavilions elaborated with frontispieces, piers, cornice mouldings and Classical detailing.
- On the latter elevations, placement of the main entrances in the centre where trios of two-storey round-arched door openings have Classical detailing.
- The treatment of the principal (south) entrance, which is elevated and reached by a stone staircase.
- Flanking the north and south entries, the oversized piers with narrow rectangular window openings and reliefs with Art Deco detailing.
- Above the south and north entrances, the name bands labelled “AUTOMOTIVE BUILDING” in Roman letters.
- On the end pavilions, the trios of round-arched window openings beneath blind balconies with decorative metal screens.
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- The bevelled corners, where secondary entrances are placed inside monumental roundarched openings with stone carvings.

- On all the elevations, the organization by stone piers of the two-storey flat-headed window openings with decorative metal spandrels.
- Flanking the south end of the Automotive Building, the landscaped open space.

**Interior attributes**

- The continuation of the Classical and Art Deco detailing from the exterior to the interior foyers and lobbies described below.
- In the south and north foyers (found inside the south and north entrances), the terrazzo floors, the wall surfaces with niches on the east and west sides, the flat-headed openings with Classical detailing leading into the lobbies, and the Art Deco ceiling fixtures.
- In the south and north entrance lobbies (between the foyers and the auditorium), the coffered ceilings, the Classical detailing on the walls with columns, friezes and cornices, the terrazzo floors, the flat-headed openings with Classical detailing separating the lobbies from the auditorium, the staircases with balustrades and railings, the Art Deco ceiling fixtures and, at the mezzanine level overlooking the foyers, the balconies with decorative metalwork.