

350 Bloor Street East – Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date: July 5, 2023

To: Toronto Preservation Board

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: 11 – University-Rosedale

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 350 Bloor Street East under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values.

Located at the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and the access ramp to Mount Pleasant Road, the property at 350 Bloor Street East contains a six-storey office building plus a single-storey mechanical penthouse above and partially exposed basement level below. The Modernist building is built into the upper portion of the Rosedale Ravine's south embankment and features an identical expression on its principal south, west and north elevations with its flat roof and precast concrete cladding that creates wedge-shaped columns and deep inset window openings hovering above a recessed, transparent base.

The property was built in 1968-1970 to the designs of renowned Modernist architect, John C. Parkin, who is described as "one of Canada's architectural pioneers, hacking out of Toronto's intricate thicket of late-Victorian Englishry a secure niche for the bold, utopian design of the international movement." Parkin also designed 50 Park Road (Ontario Association of Architects Building, 1954), 1150 Eglinton Avenue East (IBM Headquarters, 1968-1971), 200 University Avenue (Sun Life Building, 1958-1961) and as consulting architect at 100 Queen Street West (Toronto City Hall, 1959-1964).

The property was identified as a property of potential cultural heritage value in the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment undertaken in conjunction with the City-initiated Bloor-Yorkville Secondary Plan study (2021).

On August 30, 2022, the City received Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject property (File No. 22 172660 STE 11 OZ). The proposal seeks to permit a 63-storey mixed-use building on the subject site containing 675 new dwelling units that incorporates the south, west and north elevations of the existing building.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties and will be considered when determining how a heritage property is to be conserved. The subject property did not have heritage status at the time of writing this report; however, a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) completed by ERA Architects Inc. and dated June 22, 2022 was submitted to support the application.

The property is partially located within the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law and the TRCA Regulation Limit, as well as the Natural Heritage System in the City's Official Plan (OP).

In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The Bill 108 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1, 2021, which included a shift in Part IV designations related to Planning Act applications that would trigger a Prescribed Event. Section 29 (1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act now restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days after the City Clerk gives notice of a complete application.

A "Prescribed Event" is a point of time when the application for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application has been deemed complete and the City Clerk provides notice of that complete application to the public in accordance with the Planning Act.

The City Clerk issued a complete application notice on September 9, 2022. The property owner has provided a waiver to extend the 90-day timeline established under Bill 108 through August 4, 2023. As such, City Council would need to make a decision at its July 19-21, 2023 meeting to provide sufficient time for City Clerk to issue a notice of intention to designate before the waiver expires.

On November 28, 2022, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) received Royal Assent. Schedule 6 of the More Homes Built Faster Act amended prescribed event requirements under Section 29 (1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act and came into effect on January 1, 2023.

As of January 1, 2023, should a property be subject to an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application that would trigger a Prescribed Event, the property must be listed in the heritage register prior to the Prescribed Event occurring to designate a property. This requirement does not apply to a Prescribed Event that has occurred prior to January 1, 2023.

The application currently under review was deemed complete prior to Bill 23 changes to the Ontario Heritage Act coming into force, however, the Part IV designation must be in compliance with the Province's amended O. Reg. 9/06 under the Ontario Heritage Act, which takes effect as of January 1, 2023. The revised regulation establishes nine provincial criteria for determining whether a property is of cultural heritage value or interest.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets two or more of the nine criteria. The property meets four criteria relating to design/physical, historical/associative and contextual values.

Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 350 Bloor Street East under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 350 Bloor Street East (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3 to the report (July 5, 2023) from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning.
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of May 19, 2021 Toronto and East York Community Council adopted, as amended, item TE25.18 – Bloor-Yorkville Area – City-Initiated Secondary Plan – Status Update. The study area is generally bounded by Avenue Road to the west, the CP railway corridor to the north, Yonge Street/Rosedale Valley Road/Sherbourne Street to the east, and Charles Street to the south. The Secondary Plan will build upon the existing policy direction outlined in the in-force Site and Area Specific Policies 211 and 225, as well as updated policies, frameworks and guidelines, including the recently approved Downtown Plan. It also will take into consideration the findings and recommendations of a concurrent Heritage Cultural Resource Assessment for the Bloor-Yorkville area.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.TE25.18>

BACKGROUND

Heritage Planning Framework

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. Cultural heritage resources are considered irreplaceable and valuable assets that must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). Heritage Conservation is enabled through the Ontario Heritage Act. The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime, the Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and provides policies to guide decision making within the city.

Good planning within the provincial and municipal policy framework has at its foundation an understanding and appreciation for places of historic significance, and ensures the conservation of these resources are to be balanced with other provincial interests. Heritage resources may include buildings, structures, monuments, and geographic areas that have cultural heritage value or interest to a community, including an Indigenous community.

The Planning Act establishes the foundation for land use planning in Ontario, describing how land can be controlled and by whom. Section 2 of the Planning Act identifies heritage conservation as a matter of provincial interest and directs that municipalities shall have regard to the conservation of features of significant architectural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Heritage conservation contributes to other matters of provincial interest, including the promotion of built form that is well-designed, and that encourages a sense of place.

The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall conform to the Growth Plan and shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, both of which position heritage as a key component in supporting key provincial principles and interests.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

The Provincial Policy Statement provides policy direction on land use planning in Ontario and is to be used by municipalities in the development of their official plans and to guide and inform decisions on planning matters, which shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement articulates how and why heritage conservation is a component of good planning, explicitly requiring the conservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources, alongside the pursuit of other provincial interests. The Provincial Policy Statement does so by linking heritage conservation to key policy directives, including building strong healthy communities, the wise use and management of resources, and protecting health and safety.

Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development states that long-term economic prosperity is supported by, among other

considerations, the promotion of well-designed built form and cultural planning, and the conservation of features that help define character. Section 2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology subsequently directs that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". Through the definition of conserved, built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscape and protected heritage property, the Provincial Policy Statement identifies the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds on the Provincial Policy Statement to establish a land use planning framework that supports complete communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity. Section 1.2.1 Guiding Principles states that policies in the plan seek to, among other principles, "conserve and promote cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Metis communities". Cultural heritage resources are understood as being irreplaceable, and are significant features that provide people with a sense of place. Section 4.2.7 Cultural Heritage Resources directs that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.

<https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>

The Ontario Heritage Act is the key provincial legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in Ontario. It regulates, among other things, how municipal councils can identify and protect heritage resources, including archaeology, within municipal boundaries. This is largely achieved through listing on the City's Heritage Register, designation of individual properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, or designation of districts under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the authority to maintain and add to a publicly accessible heritage register. The City of Toronto's Heritage Register includes individual heritage properties that have been designated under Part IV, Section 29, properties in a heritage conservation district designated under Part V, Section 41 of the Act as well as properties that have not been designated but City Council believes to be of "cultural heritage value or interest."

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18>

On November 28, 2022, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) received Royal Assent. Schedule 6 of the More Homes Built Faster Act amended various sections of the Ontario Heritage Act. A majority of the key changes to the Act came into effect on January 1, 2023.

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

The City of Toronto's Official Plan contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. Indicating the integral role that heritage conservation plays in successful city-building, Section 3.1.6 of the Official Plan states that, "Cultural heritage is an important component of sustainable development and place making. The preservation of our cultural heritage is essential to the character of this urban and liveable City that can contribute to other social, cultural, economic and environmental goals of the City."

Policy 3.1.6.4 states that heritage resources on the City's 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."

Policy 3.1.6.6 encourages the adaptive re-use of heritage properties while Policy 3.1.6.26 states that, when new construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register does occur, it will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and will mitigate visual and physical impacts on it.

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

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

350 Bloor Street East

Research and Evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06

While the research and evaluation of the property referenced above is, in Staff's determination, sufficient to support the designation of the property at 350 Bloor Street East, it should be noted that new and additional relevant information on the subject property further expanding on its cultural heritage value following community input and additional access to archival records may be incorporated in the final version of a Part IV designation by-law.



Above: Current photo looking northeast from Bloor Street East and showing the south and west elevations of 350 Bloor Street East (Heritage Planning, 2023)

1. DESCRIPTION

350 BLOOR STREET EAST	
ADDRESS	350 Bloor Street East
WARD	University-Rosedale - 11
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	CON 2 FB PT TWP YORK PT LOT 20; RP 63R3309 PARTS 1 & 2
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Borders the Rosedale-Moore Park and North St. Jamestown neighbourhoods; located within the Bloor-Yorkville Secondary Plan study area
HISTORICAL NAME	N/A
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1968-1970
ORIGINAL OWNER	Shaw & Begg Limited Insurance Company
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial: Office
CURRENT USE*	Commercial: Office
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Architect: John C. Parkin of John B. Parkin Associates
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	See Section 2
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	See Section 2
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design, associative and contextual

HERITAGE STATUS	N/A
RECORDER	Heritage Planning: Liz McFarland
REPORT DATE	June 2023

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 350 Bloor Street East and applies evaluation criteria as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest. The application of the criteria is found in Section 3 (Evaluation Checklist). The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in the Conclusion of the report. Maps and Photographs are located in Attachment 1. The archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Attachment 2. The Statement of Significance is contained in Attachment 3.

I. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
	The area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.
1796	The Crown grants Township Lot 20, Concession 2 from the Bay to George Henry Playter, a Loyalist soldier
1855	Browne's Map indicates that lawyer, Charles Corbould, owns the subject property
1883	Village of Yorkville is annexed to the City
1883	The 1884 Goad's Historical Atlas (containing information gathered in the previous year) indicates that a single brick building is located at the centre of the subject property with three smaller wooden structures appearing near the Huntley Street Bridge. The property is owned by George Boyd.
1884-1885	Huntley Street Bridge is constructed across the Rosedale Valley Ravine, connecting Yorkville and Rosedale to the downtown core
1887	Village of Rosedale is annexed to the City
1912	The 1913 version of Goad's Historical Atlas indicates that this portion of Bloor Street East is built out with house-form buildings
1915-1918	The Bloor Street Viaduct is constructed, connecting Bloor Street East to Danforth Avenue over the Don Valley River and Ravine
1946-1950	Construction is underway on the Clifton Road extension (now, Mount Pleasant Road) between St. Clair Avenue and Jarvis Street. The Mount Pleasant Road underpass at Bloor Street East

	would form the future western boundary of the subject property at 350 Bloor Street East
1950 Jan 23	The Clifton Road Extension is completed
1954	The Yonge subway (Line 1) opens
1966	The Bloor-Danforth subway (Line 2) opens
1967	Shaw & Begg Limited Insurance Company acquires the subject property at 350 Bloor Street East
1968	John C. Parkin files initial architectural plans to permit the construction of an office building at 350 Bloor Street East for Shaw & Begg Limited (owner)
1970	Construction is completed on the property at 350 Bloor Street East and Shaw & Begg Limited is listed as the occupants in the City Directory
1974	Huntley Street highway north of Bloor Street is renamed Mount Pleasant Road ¹
1984	Guided Investments purchases the subject property
1989	NORR Partnership, successor firm to John B. Parkin Associates, Architects, is listed as a tenant in the City Directories. According to City building permit applications, the firm occupied the first three floors of the subject property. The property is owned by Wellington Insurance Co. at this time.
2005-present	Rogers Communications Canada Inc owns the property

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the properties which are the basis for determining historical or associative value of Criteria 4, 5 or 6 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

Site History

The Township of York was surveyed in the late 18th century. Immediately north of the 32 Toronto Park Lots and the original Town of York, 200-acre lots were laid out in two configurations. West of Yonge Street, between Yonge Street and Keele Street, lots were laid out north-south, and east of Yonge Street, between Yonge Street and present-day Woodbine Avenue, lots were laid out east-west. Around the turn of the 19th century, Township Lot 20 in the Second Concession from the Bay, which encompassed the site, was granted to George Henry Playter, a Loyalist soldier. Born around 1736 in Surrey, England, he moved to Pennsylvania and arrived in Toronto in 1793. The site is in the southwestern quarter of this lot near the intersection of three lots which met at Mount Pleasant Road-Huntley Street and the Second Concession (present-day Bloor Street). Castle Frank Brook, also known as Brewery Creek or Severn Creek, is a waterway that previously flowed through Rosedale Ravine near the subject property.² Portions of the brook have been integrated into the city's sewer network or been buried. Castle Frank was the estate of John Graves Simcoe named after his son, Francis. In the early 1800s,

¹ Land Registry records for Concession 2 from the Bay, Township Lot 20, Block 4

² "Castle Frank Brook", lostrivers.ca

the estate of William and Mary Jarvis was named Rosedale. By 1808, a settlement named Yorkville was established near the intersection of Yonge Street and Bloor Street.

During the second half of the 19th century, the incorporation of new infrastructure and municipal annexation were the key drivers of development in the Yorkville-Rosedale area. Major investment in regional and international rail in 1851 stimulated rapid growth in Toronto. However, the area surrounding the site grew slowly due to its remote location at the city limits and its proximity to the Rosedale Ravine. By 1852, Yorkville was incorporated as a village and served as a major agricultural route connecting farmers outside of the city with the increasingly large market in Toronto. On the subject property, a single building owned by “Corbould Esq” appears on the 1855 JO Browne Homewood Estate Map (Image 2). Archival research indicates that Charles Corbould, a lawyer from Orillia, was born in 1799 and died in 1893.

Yorkville’s location at the intersection of Yonge Street and Bloor Street ensured the growth of other industries such as hospitality and tourism as well as industrial uses. The village was home to many successful inns while the nearby surroundings along Castle Frank Brook hosted several brickyards and breweries. Public transit, in the form of horse drawn cars, was introduced along Sherbourne Street in 1870, sparking further development in the area. By 1876, Sherbourne Street and Jarvis Street became major north-south roadways in the eastern part of the city. During the transition away from horse drawn carts to engine powered vehicles, tracks were laid along Sherbourne Street for a streetcar between 1878-1881. The 1880s were notable for the city’s expansion eastward and facilitated through the construction of several bridges across the Don Valley. Further, in 1883, the City of Toronto annexed the village of Yorkville.

1884 fire insurance plans indicate that street layouts and patterns of lot subdivision north of Bloor Street were unlike the areas south of Bloor Street East between Yonge Street and Avenue Road, which were heavily subdivided and featured a dense built form (Image 3). Most structures along this portion of Bloor Street were masonry, while wooden structures were more prominent on side streets, as seen in St. James Town and Cabbagetown. Additionally, the extension of Bloor Street East eastward past Glen Road and the extension of Sherbourne Street north over Rosedale Ravine, were being planned. A simultaneous northward expansion occurred with the construction of the Huntley Street bridge, completed in 1885, across the Rosedale Valley Ravine connecting the villages of Yorkville and Rosedale with Toronto (Images 4 and 5). In 1887, the village of Rosedale was annexed by the city. In 1884, the subject property at 350 Bloor Street East was owned by George Boyd and hosted one masonry structure near the centre of the property with three small wooden ancillary structures near the White (Huntley) Bridge. Land Registry records indicate that by 1893 ownership of the property had transferred to W. E. Kiely, previously the owner of the property to the east, who combined the two properties and constructed two additional masonry structures (Image 6)

Toronto underwent intensive change in the first decades of the 20th century. A population boom owing to high birthrates and immigration led to a significant increase in the construction of residential buildings. This population growth was a driver of intense apartment construction between the 1920s and the 1950s. Further, completion of the Prince Edward (Bloor Street) Viaduct in 1918 reshaped travel across the Don Valley

and transformed Bloor Street-Danforth Avenue. The roadway became a significant east-west thoroughfare connecting previously separated, newly annexed villages and neighbourhoods. People living east of the Don Valley could now much more easily access this part of the city and vice versa. In 1906, the Village of North Rosedale was annexed by the city.

The 1913 fire insurance plans indicate that the subject property and nearby surroundings had densified with single dwelling masonry structures (Image 7). By this time, Huntley Street, North Sherbourne Street, and Glen Road had iron bridges connecting each side of Rosedale Ravine. Rosedale Valley Road was completed, allowing direct connection between this portion of Yonge Street and the Don Valley. Despite completion of the roadway, the areas on either side would remain distinctly separate. To the north were the larger residential lots of Rosedale, and to the south were the smaller, denser lots of St. James Town and Cabbagetown.

During the 1920s, the block where the subject property is situated was subdivided into the Bloor Estates Limited. The block, known as Block 4 on the City land survey, was bound by Huntley Street bridge to the west, Bloor Street to the south, Sherbourne Street to the east, and Rosedale Ravine to the north (Image 8). According to the early 20th century city directories, during this era, there was a mixture of residential and commercial uses on the block. According to the Land Registry, during the 1940s, grantors on the block where the Site is situated included the Toronto General Trusts Corporation, the Mayor and Treasurer of the City of Toronto, and the Dominion Life Insurance Company among others. A 1946 aerial image looking north into Rosedale showed the replacement of the Huntley Street/Mount Pleasant Road bridge (Image 9). During this era, the built form of this section of Bloor Street East generally resembled that of Rosedale with its low-rise house-form gable roof buildings. However, other building types like low-rise flat roof commercial and apartment buildings are also visible. The subject property at 350 Bloor Street East is located adjacent to the east of the bridge on the south side of the Rosedale Ravine.

By the mid-20th century, Bloor Street was well positioned to rapidly and intensely densify, continuing its status as one of the city's primary high streets. The densification along this corridor of Bloor Street between Avenue Road in the west and Sherbourne Street in the east was largely fueled by completion of the subway with Line 1 opening in 1954 and Line 2 in 1966. Originating from the intersection of Bloor Street West and Bay Street, the corridor became increasingly occupied by high-rise buildings during the 1950s and 1960s. It was an attractive area due to its commercial history, proximity to downtown, connectivity to other parts of the city, and regulatory flexibility. Construction of the Mount Pleasant Bridge and the Clifton Road Extension was completed by 1950, extending Jarvis Street north to St. Clair Avenue East, becoming Toronto's first expressway (Images 10 and 11). This helped with alleviating traffic congestion in the downtown core and facilitated automobile commuter travel between downtown and midtown. Additionally, a new Sherbourne Street bridge was constructed between 1953 and 1957 replacing the earlier bridge in its place.

The 1970s and 1980s solidified the dominance of tall office buildings along the corridor. The Site was located at the nexus of several neighbourhoods and on the edge of the city's midtown and downtown. During this era, a series of Modernist concrete

commercial buildings were constructed between Avenue Road and Sherbourne Street along Bloor Street, among which the Site is one of them. Others include The Colonnade (1963) at 131 Bloor Street West, 77 Bloor Street West (1969), 80 Bloor Street West (1973), and the Manulife Centre (1974) at 55 Bloor Street West. According to the Land Registry, during the 1950s, prominent grantors on the block where the Site is situated included the Treasurer of the City of Toronto and the Toronto-Dominion Bank. Later during the 1960s, with owners including Greekay Holdings Limited, the Clifton Manor Apartments Limited, and Gunnar Realty Limited. In 1967, Shaw & Begg Limited acquired the property and began construction on the Site in 1968. By 1984, Guided Investments Ltd. gained ownership of the property, followed by Wellington Insurance Company and finally Rogers Communications Canada Inc in 2005.

Since Bloor Street East's post-war wave of development, the area has experienced moderate growth, both in terms of type and scale. Its built form context along Bloor Street East between Yonge Street and Sherbourne Street has been established since the 1980s. This area remains a major commercial and transportation corridor within downtown, and the city more broadly. The area is a mixed-income neighbourhood of the city situated between the higher income neighbourhoods of Yorkville-Rosedale-Moore Park and the lower income neighbourhood of St. James Town. Along Bloor Street East, there are a few contemporary high-rise residential buildings, such as the Bellagio at 300 Bloor Street East and 388 Bloor Street East. These more recent apartment towers supplement the older residential buildings nearby such as 360 Bloor Street East and 77 Huntley Street. In 2012, the Mt. Pleasant Road bridge underwent rehabilitation.

350 Bloor Street East

The present building on the Site was one of the many modern office buildings constructed during the post-war development of the subway in Toronto. Designed by John C. Parkin, the largely concrete building was constructed between 1968 and 1970 for owner, Shaw & Begg Limited Insurance Company who were also occupants for over a decade.³ Construction of the existing building was part of a wave of mid-to-highrise Modernist and Brutalist development along the eastern portion of Bloor Street adjacent to Rosedale Ravine. John C. Parkin designed the building to be embedded within the Rosedale Ravine through the incorporation of rear terraces.

Rather aptly, NORR Partnership, the successor design firm to John B. Parkin Associates Architects, took over tenancy of several floors at the subject property for their offices in 1989.

Since 2005, the property at 350 Bloor Street has been part of a network of buildings that form the headquarters of Rogers Communications.⁴ Rogers Communications Building (1956) at 333 Bloor Street East, formerly Confederation Life Insurance Company Building, was constructed as the head office of Canadian insurance company

³ Herbert Begg was director of several insurance companies, President and Managing Director of Shaw and Begg Insurance, and later Chairman of Edward Stockdale's company. He built his home at 205 Lytton Blvd in 1923 and in 1928 bought the reserve land to the south of Lytton Blvd and created a sunken garden known today as Begg's Garden ("Lytton Park Reach", lostrivers.ca)

⁴ According to Google Street View, the Rogers sign appeared on the existing building in 2011.

“Confederation Life.” Rogers AT&T Centre (1992) at 1 Mount Pleasant Road / 1 Ted Jarvis Way (formerly 777 Jarvis Street), also known as Rogers Corporate Campus, was the next building completed. Confederation Life Insurance Company was liquidated and went defunct in 1994 with Rogers acquiring 333 Bloor Street East soon after.

Architect: John C. Parkin and John B. Parkin Associates

John Creswell Parkin (1922-1988), considered to be one of the most important post-war architects in Canada, was described by the Ontario Association of Architects as “A pioneer of the International Style in Canada”.⁵ (Image 12)

After graduating from the University of Manitoba’s School of Architecture in 1944, Parkin moved to Toronto where he briefly worked at the offices of Marani & Morris. In 1946, he moved to Boston to study at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design, where he attended classes taught by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, who are viewed as having introduced the Modernist movement to North America. When John C. Parkin returned to Toronto after graduating in 1947, he and John B. Parkin (no relation) formed John B. Parkin Associates along with John B. Parkin's brother Edmund (1913-1994) an engineer. John C. Parkin served as Chief Designer. By the end of the 1950s, John B. Parkin Associates was the largest and most influential architectural firm in Canada.

John B. Parkin Associates⁶ were Toronto's leading Modernist architects, described as “a highly competent professional firm that quickly became known as one of the most progressive in Canada and in the 1950s and 1960s gained international recognition.”⁷ By the end of the 1950s, the firm was capturing a high percentage of the most important commissions of the time. These included the Part IV Designated Sun Life Building (1958-1961), the Yonge Subway line, Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) Building (1954), Pearson International Airport Terminal 1 (1964; demolished), and Ottawa Union Station, as well as collaborating on master plans for York and Brock universities. John C. Parkin was the Chair of the advisory committee on design at Expo '67 in Montreal. The firm collaborated as the architects of record on major commissions with international architects such as Toronto City Hall (Viljo Revell) and the Toronto Dominion Centre (Mies van der Rohe). Parkin Associates also made a substantial contribution to Don Mills including Don Mills Shopping Centre (1959), Ortho Pharmaceuticals (1956; demolished), the Bata International Centre Building (1965; demolished), the Part IV Designated IBM Headquarters at 1150 Eglinton Avenue East (1967; 1970-1971), Imperial Oil (1963), Don Mills Collegiate and Junior School (1965) and the firm’s own offices (1956; demolished).

In the year that the Massey Medals were inaugurated, the firm won 5 of the 9 medals, the record for the highest number of medals awarded to a firm in a single year. Following John B. Parkin's retirement from the firm in 1969, John C. Parkin established the Parkin Partnership, winning the competition for the National Gallery of Canada in 1976 (unbuilt) as well as the commission for the extension to the Art Gallery of Ontario to house the Henri Moore collection. Other former Parkin Associates established the

5 Ontario Association of Architects. (1988). Parkin, John Creswell.

6 John B. Parkin Associates is the name generally cited for the firm.

7 Howarth, Thomas, p.12.

firm of Neish, Owen, Rowland and Roy (NORR), today comprised of 800 professional employees in offices worldwide.

In terms of honours and recognition for his contribution, in 1972 John C. Parkin was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada for his services to architecture, urban planning, industrial design and the arts. In 1979, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) awarded Parkin its Gold Medal. Parkin died at Toronto on November 22, 1988.

Reflecting on John C. Parkin's impact, Toronto Star columnist Christopher Hume noted in 1991: "More than just about anyone else, it was Parkin who dragged Toronto, and Canada, kicking and screaming into the modern age. It was also Parkin who brought a bigger perspective to architectural issues."⁸

Lamenting the loss of a number of John C. Parkin's most significant works, art and architecture critic John Bentley Mays described Parkin as "one of Canada's architectural pioneers, hacking out of Toronto's intricate thicket of late-Victorian Englishry a secure niche for the bold, utopian design of the international movement".⁹

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining design or physical value of Criteria 1, 2 or 3 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

"Our modern concrete legacy is a critical element that distinguishes our city."
~ George Thomas Kapelos, [*Concrete Toronto*]

Original architectural plans (Images 13-22) and archival photos (Images 23-29) show that the property at 350 Bloor Street East was designed in 1968 and completed in 1970 as a modern office building with open plan offices rising six storeys, with a seventh-floor mechanical penthouse aligned with the elevator core oriented along the east wall. Two lower levels, the first partially exposed, contain maintenance and underground parking space. The design was influenced by the International Style as evidenced by the strong visual emphasis on orthogonal lines, the legible rectilinear grid, the lack of ornament, and the adoption of concrete, glass and metal as preferred materials. However, its use of modular precast concrete and the building's dialogue with its natural setting also suggest influences from later modernist style which was becoming popular in Toronto at the time of construction.

Square in plan, the length of the building fronts equally onto Bloor Street East, which includes the main entrance, and Mount Pleasant Road where the west elevation navigates a steeply descending slope downward toward the Rosedale Ravine. The building is separated from the adjacent property to the east at 365 Bloor Street East by a service laneway that leads to underground parking. The east elevation has no openings aside from a vertical band of stacked windows delineating the stairwells at the

⁸ Toronto Star (March 1, 1991)

⁹ The Globe and Mail (February 19, 1997)

north and south corners, and is mainly composed of precast concrete panels. The north elevation faces the Rosedale Ravine. (Images 30-33)

Despite its scale, the building has a prominent presence on its site for several reasons. First is its form and massing, which emulate other modern towers that followed the rigorous discipline of verticals and horizontals. The large, wedge-shaped columns that form a covered pedestrian colonnade on the south, west and north elevations emphasize verticality, as does the appearance of additional height gained by the exposed lower level on the west and north elevations (as viewed from Mount Pleasant Road), and the precast concrete panels with their smaller wedge-shaped columns contribute to the building's strong orthogonal character.

The cladding is a system of precast concrete components including wedge-shaped column, wall and soffit panels. The precast components are structurally connected with concealed anchors to the perimeter beams of the cast-in-place waffle slabs. The south, west, and north elevations are characterized by the regular pattern of the wedge-shaped precast columns in between each window, which creates a 90-degree condition at one return, and an extended angled condition at the other. The window assemblies at the second-sixth storeys are composed of aluminum frames with double-glazed IGUs and an insulated opaque spandrel panel at the lower portion. (Images 35-36)

A ground floor colonnade is located at the south, west and north facades, where a continuous double glazed dark aluminum curtain wall assembly is setback from the wedge-shaped perimeter columns. Due to the steep grading change towards the ravine to the north, the first lower level of the building has an at-grade relationship at the north elevation. The ground floor colonnade becomes a balcony at the west and north elevations. On the south side at Bloor Street East, a curvilinear concrete planter surrounds two of the original wedge-shaped columns. According to City building records, this was a later intervention (1990s). The paving material at the ground floor colonnade/balcony is large precast concrete panels of similar sizing to the precast soffit panels, with narrow dark granite paver accents at the portion along Bloor Street. (Images 37-43)

At the exposed lower level on the north elevation are three metal garage doors serving the first and second lower-level maintenance and indoor parking areas. Directly opposite, the concrete retaining wall along the north property boundary abutting the ravine features regularly spaced niches faced with metal grilles, which are intended to house exterior light features (some of which are currently missing). A concrete stairwell providing access to the underground portion of the site is integrated into the retaining walls at the northeast corner of the property.

Relying not on size, but rather on the experience of the viewer and the relationship to the landscape, the property at 350 Bloor Street East may be seen to represent a shift on the part of John B. Parkin Associates and Chief Designer John C. Parkin to a new approach to architecture, a second wave Modernism that was more organic and open to reintroducing context to design. This is manifested in the way the dramatically simple cubic form responds to its verdant and steeply sloped and site topography, and the experience afforded the visitor from the concrete pedestrian terrace on the north elevation to the mature trees rising from the ravine below. (Images 44-45) Parkin's

concurrent design for the Part IV Designated IBM Headquarter in Don Mills (1150 Eglinton Avenue East) similarly embraces this shift toward a late modernist interest in the interrelationship of building and landscape, particularly in the 1968-1971 complex's materiality and texture with its two-toned brick and verdant hilltop setting.¹⁰

iv. CONTEXT

The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining contextual value of Criteria 7, 8 or 9 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The City of Toronto Property Data Map attached as Image 1 (Attachment 1) shows the site of the property at 350 Bloor Street East.

The area surrounding the subject property is a mixed-use neighbourhood consisting of mid-20th century office and apartment towers, late 19th century to mid-20th century commercial, religious, and institutional buildings, and contemporary mid and high-rise residential and mixed-use buildings. The intersection of Bloor Street and Mount Pleasant Road is located at the nexus of several neighbourhoods and on the edge of the city's midtown and downtown areas. These neighbourhoods include Yorkville to the west and north, St. James Town to the south and east, Rosedale to the north, and Upper Jarvis to the south. Additionally, the Site is adjacent to Rosedale Ravine, part of the Don River Valley, which was crucial for the lifeways of Indigenous communities and greatly influenced colonial settlement and development patterns in early 20th century eastern downtown and midtown. The subject property is located near two subway stations, those being Yonge-Bloor Station (1954) and Sherbourne Station (1966). Rogers Communications headquarters is located at 333 Bloor Street East, at the southwest corner of the intersection of Bloor Street East and Mount Pleasant Road. Their satellite buildings include the existing building on the Site and 1 Mount Pleasant Road.

The section of Bloor Street between Avenue Road in the west and Rosedale Valley Drive in the east is largely comprised of mid-to-late 20th century commercial offices clad in glass, steel, and concrete. These buildings are associated with the wave of mid-20th century commercial development of Bloor Street, which centered around Bay Street. This stretch of Bloor Street also features mid-to-highrise mid-20th century residential and commercial buildings, and a number of contemporary mixed-use towers. Contemporary Modernist and Brutalist concrete buildings include The Colonnade (131 Bloor Street West, 1963), 77 Bloor Street West (1969), 80 Bloor Street West (1973), and the Manulife Centre (1974) at 55 Bloor Street West.

The portion of Mount Pleasant Road between Jarvis Street in the south and Elm Avenue in the north is an important north-south connection that spans the Rosedale Ravine, connecting the midtown residential neighbourhoods of Rosedale, Moore Park, and others with the Bloor Street corridor and downtown. Mount Pleasant Road was the city's first expressway, which connected downtown with midtown. While the buildings along this stretch of Mount Pleasant Road vary in age, architectural style, and scale, the

¹⁰ City Planning report, 1150 Eglinton Avenue East, 2020.

built-form character of the street is distinctly different from that of Bloor Street. Specifically, the built-form of Mount Pleasant Road north of Bloor Street is predominantly residential, low density, and low-to-midrise.

3. EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act, and the City of Toronto is also required to use these criteria when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "✓" if it is applicable to the property, with explanatory text below.

DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

The property has design value or physical value because it	
1. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	✓
2. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
3. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

Representative example of a style, material and construction method

The building at 350 Bloor Street East has design value as a significant representative example of architectural precast concrete in Toronto. Constructed in 1968-1970, this prominently-sited Modernist office building anchoring the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and Mount Pleasant Road is characterized by the treatment of its principal south, west and north elevations. These elevations are constructed as a unitized curtain wall system entirely composed of non-structural precast concrete panels on the exterior above a recessed, transparent base. Each is distinguished on the second to sixth storeys by a uniform arrangement of precast concrete panels with square openings separated by wedge-shaped concrete columns, and the visual contrast between the concrete elements and the deeply-inset rectangular windows creates a vibrant orthogonal pattern of light and shadow. This elegant design is characteristic of the versatility of precast concrete, and of the range of buildings associated with this material and construction method during the Modern period in Toronto.

The property is also valued for the interrelationship between its built form and existing landscape, where the heavy concrete massing of the building design steps down to the north from its Bloor Street East entrance in response to the site's steeply-sloped topography on the south embankment of the Rosedale Valley Ravine. A pedestrian colonnade comprised of wedge-shaped concrete columns wrapping around the exterior south, west and north elevations at the first-floor level transitions into a colonnaded terrace on the two latter elevations due to the site's dramatic grade change.

HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The property has historical value or associative value because it	
4. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	N/A
5. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
6. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	✓

Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect who is significant to a community

The property is valued for its association with the architectural firm of John B. Parkin Associates, one of Canada's leading Modernist and most prolific firms of the 1950s and 1960s that contributed many significant buildings to Toronto during this period. Designed and built between 1968 and 1970 by John C. Parkin, the firm's Chief Designer and one of Canada's most important modernist architects, the property at 350 Bloor Street East exemplifies the firm's work at this time which incorporates an ongoing commitment to the rationalism and rigour of Modernist design alongside an exploration of the contextual interrelationship and juxtaposition of modernist buildings placed in verdant settings. The property at 350 Bloor Street East also represents a final collaboration between John B. and John C. Parkin, before John B. relocated to the Los Angeles in 1969.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value because it is	
7. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9. a landmark.	N/A

Important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area

The property at 350 Bloor Street East is also valued for maintaining the character of the area which features many 20th-century commercial and office buildings of distinctive high-quality design along this portion of Bloor Street East between Yonge and Sherbourne streets, including mid-century modern examples.

Physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings

The design of the building also responds to, and provides continuity with, the adjacent Rosedale Valley Ravine where it has been visually, physically and historically linked to its surroundings for more than 50 years.

CONCLUSION

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 350 Bloor Street East and determined that the property meets 4 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. As such, the property should be designated.

Designed and built in 1968-1970 by renowned Modernist architect John C. Parkin of John B. Parkin Associates, Canada's largest architectural firm at the time, the property at 350 Bloor Street East is a significant representative example of architectural precast concrete in Toronto whose elegant design is characteristic of the versatility of precast concrete, and of the range of buildings associated with this material and construction method during the Modern period in Toronto. The property is also valued for the interrelationship between its built form and existing landscape, where the heavy concrete massing of the building design steps down to the north from its Bloor Street East entrance in response to the site's steeply-sloped topography on the south embankment of the Rosedale Valley Ravine where it has been visually, physically and historically linked to its surroundings for more than half a century.

The Statement of Significance: 350 Bloor Street East (Attachment 3), comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Maps and Photographs
Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources
Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation) - 350 Bloor Street East

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS:
350 BLOOR STREET EAST

ATTACHMENT 1

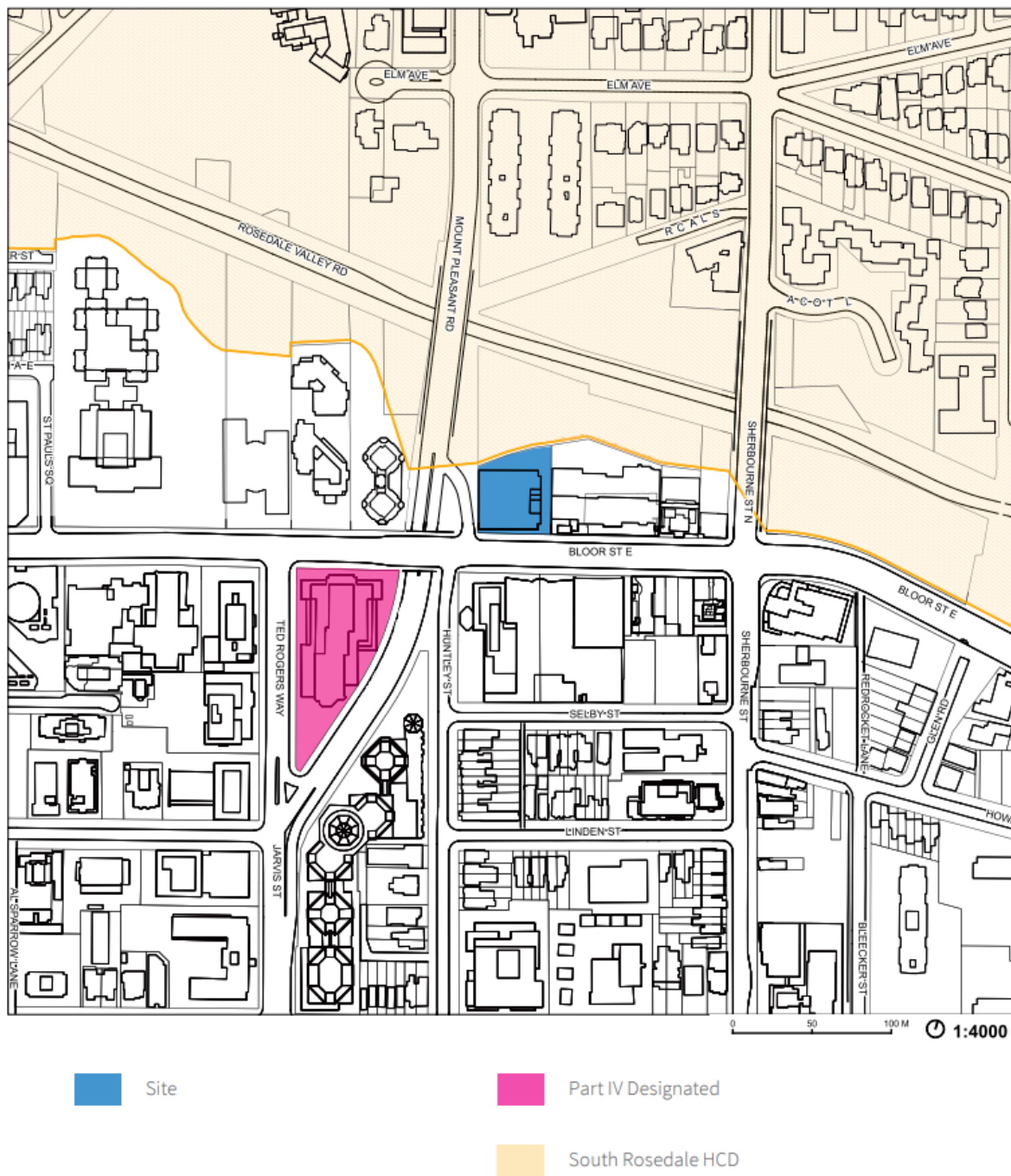


Image 1. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property is not shown. The arrow marks the location of the property at 350 Bloor Street East. (City of Toronto iView mapping; annotated by ERA)

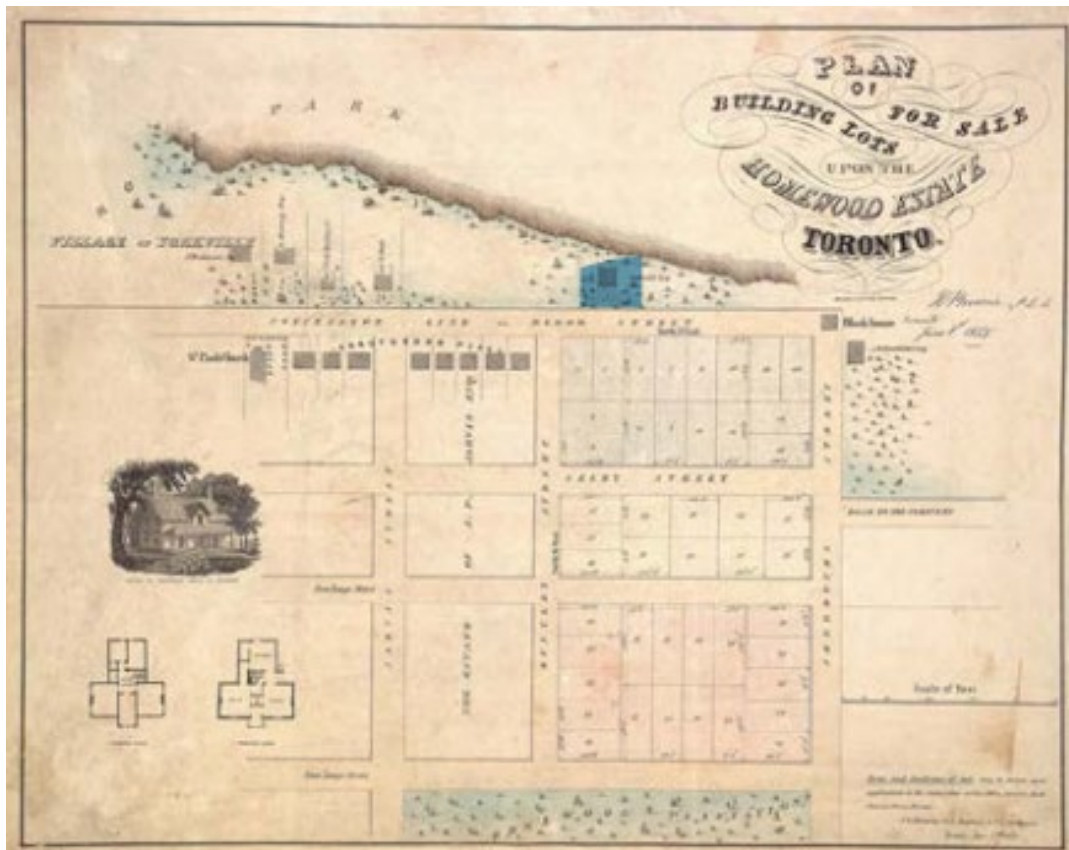


Image 2. 1855 JO Browne Homewood Estate with the approximate location of the subject property indicated in blue (City of Toronto Archives)

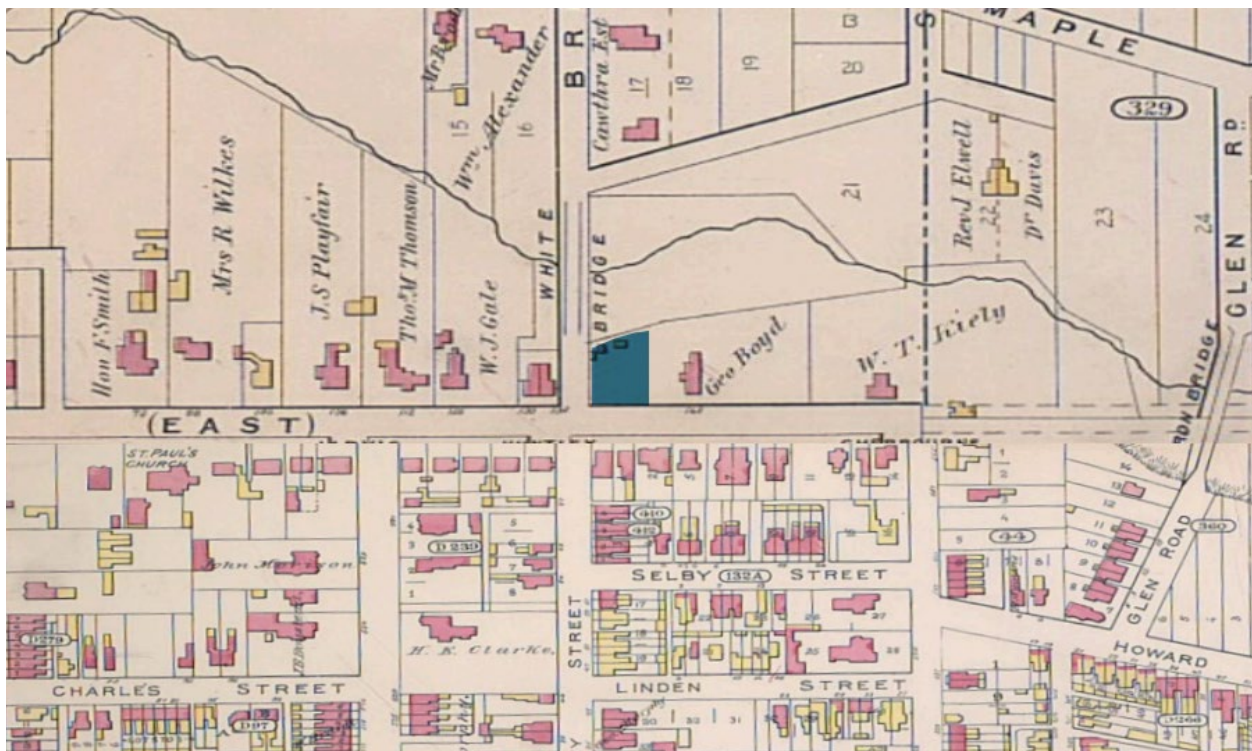


Image 3. 1884 Fire Insurance Plan with the approximate location of the subject property indicated in blue (Ng)



Image 4. 1885 photograph looking northeast at the Huntley Street bridge crossing the Rosedale Ravine toward Rosedale (Toronto Public Library)



Image 5. 1909 photograph looking southward along the Huntley Street bridge toward Bloor Street from Rosedale. The subject property and future site of the current building at 350 Bloor Street East is indicated by the arrow (Toronto Public Library).



Image 6. 1893 Fire Insurance Plan with the approximate location of the Site indicated in blue. At this time, the north side of Bloor Street East consisted of a number of masonry structures, but was far less dense than the south side. Additionally, there were 2 masonry structures and 1 small wooden structure on the subject property (Ng)

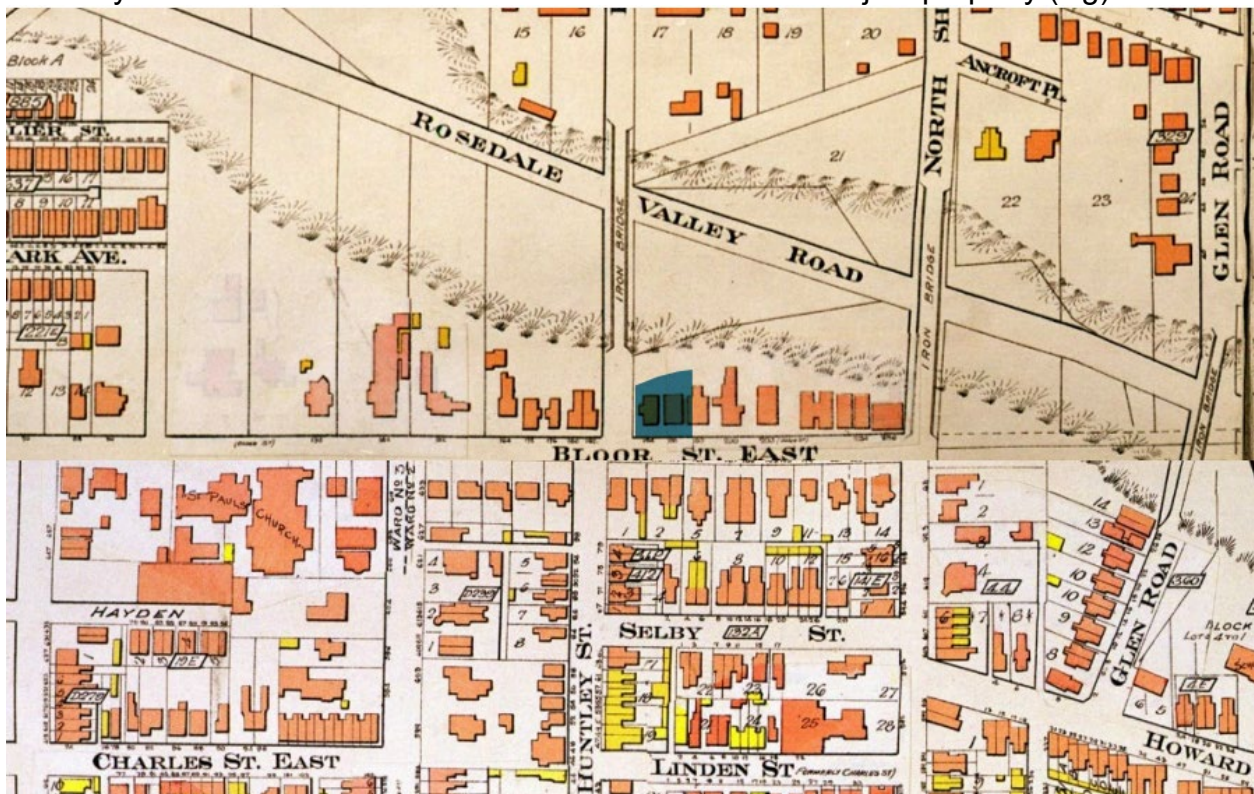


Image 7. 1913 Fire Insurance Plan with the approximate location of the subject property indicated in blue. Note the completion of Rosedale Valley Road and the Sherbourne Street bridge (Ng)

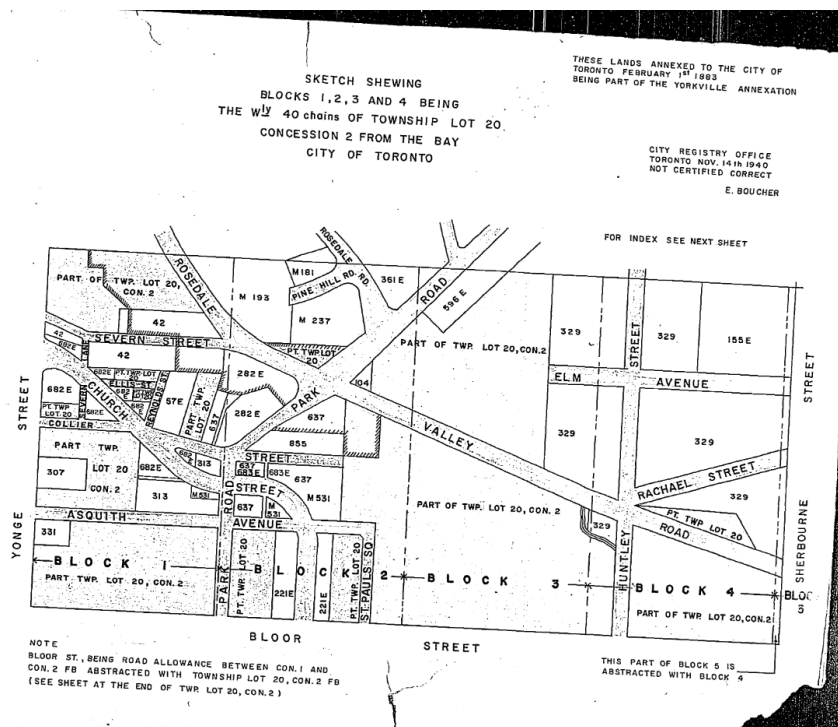


Image 8. 1940 City Registry Office land survey showing Block 4 of Township Lot 20 at bottom right, which would be the future location of the current property at 350 Bloor Street East (LRO)



Image 9. 1946 aerial photograph looking north from south of Bloor Street East at the Clifton Road Extension under construction. (Toronto Public Library)



Image 10. 1946 aerial photograph looking northwest at construction of the Bloor Street underpass and Clifton Road Extension, later renamed Mount Pleasant Road, from south of Bloor Street East (Toronto Public Library).



Image 11. 1957 aerial photograph with the approximate location of the Site indicated in blue. At this time, the north side of Bloor Street East is fairly dense. Note the completion of Clifton Road Extension (Mount Pleasant Road) across Rosedale Ravine. (City of Toronto Archives).

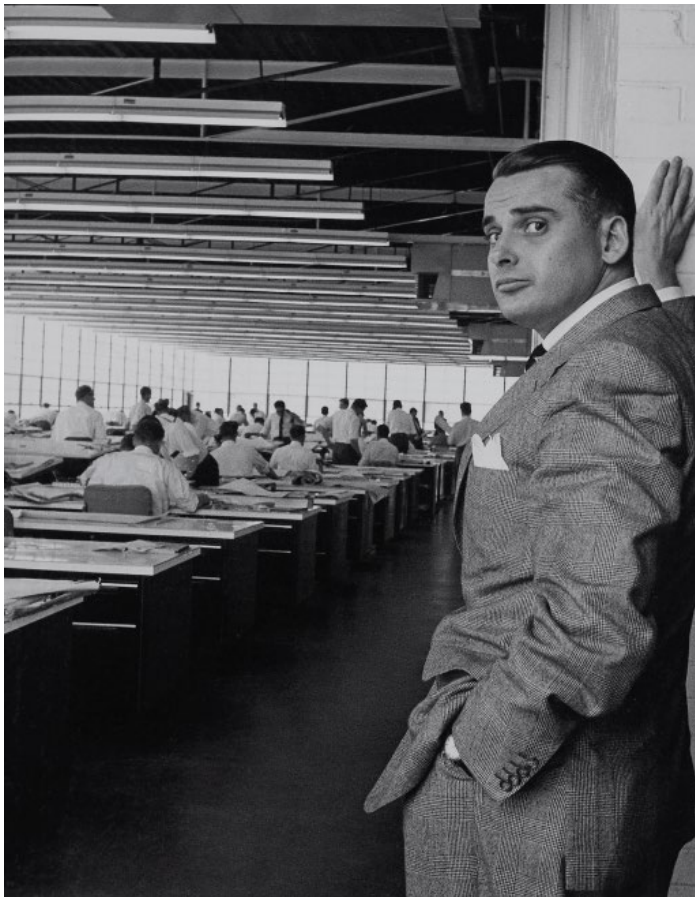


Image 12. Roloff Beny, Drafting Room, John C. Parkin, Toronto, 1964, gelatin silver print, 39.3 × 29.3 cm; image: 39.2 × 29.3 cm, purchased 1966, Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography (no. 66-5618), National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

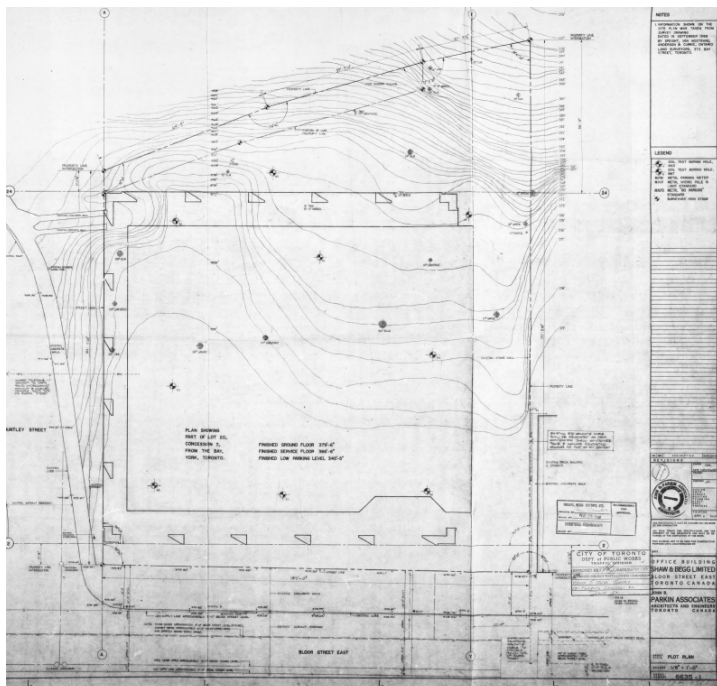


Image 13. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the plot plan. (City Building Records)

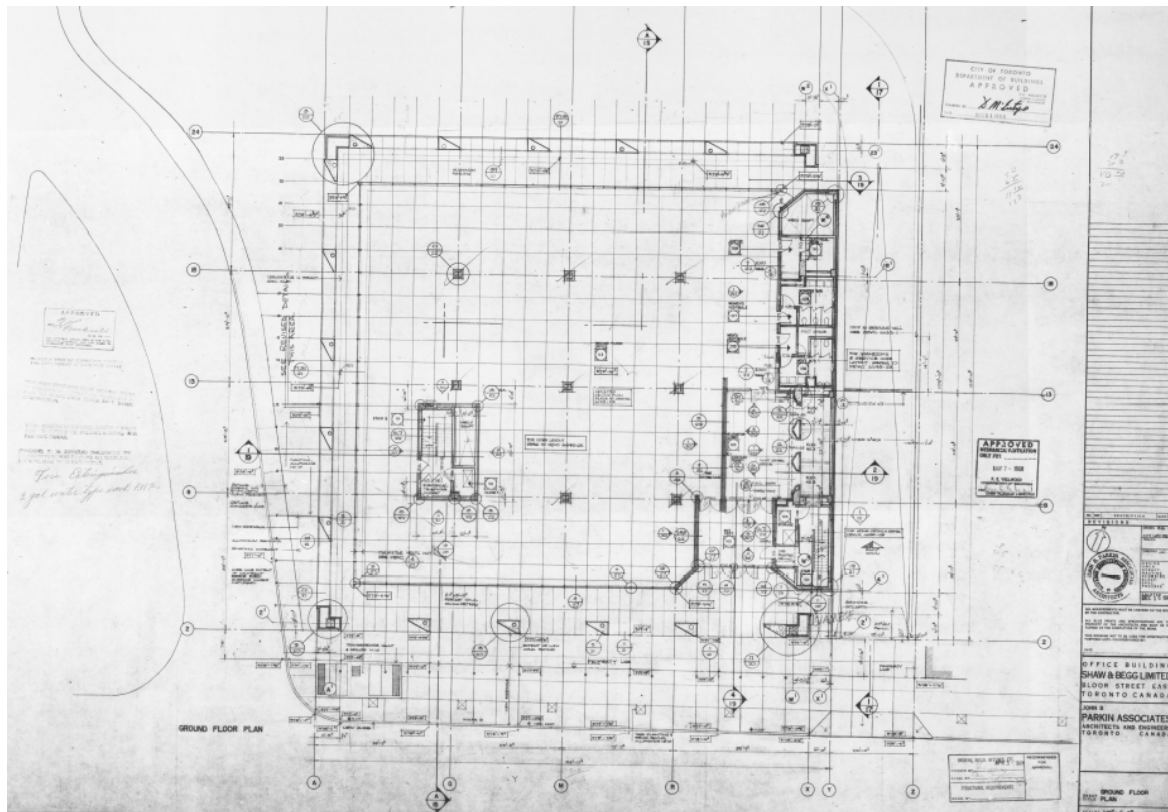


Image 14. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the ground floor plan. (City Building Records)

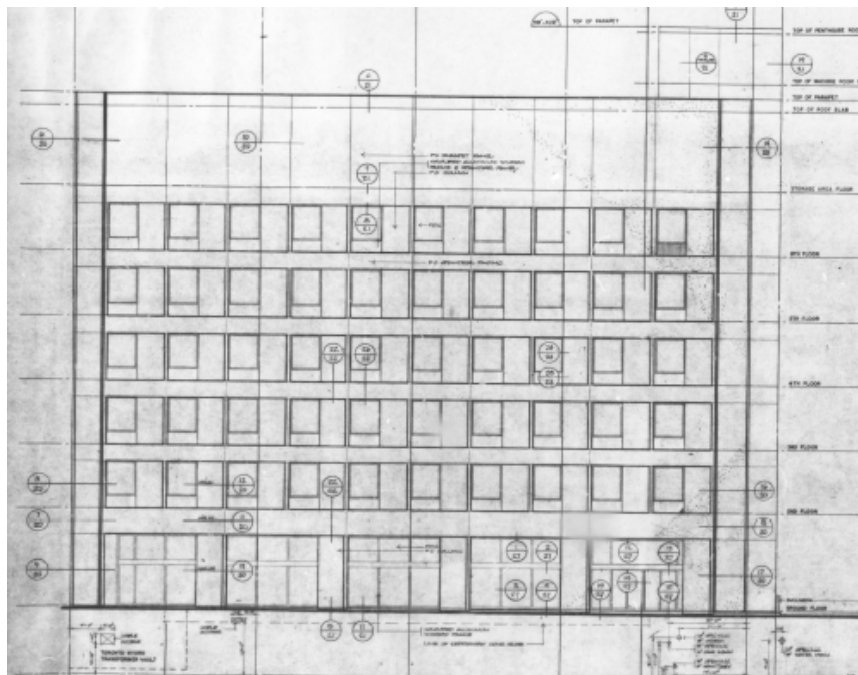


Image 15. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the south elevation. (City Building Records)

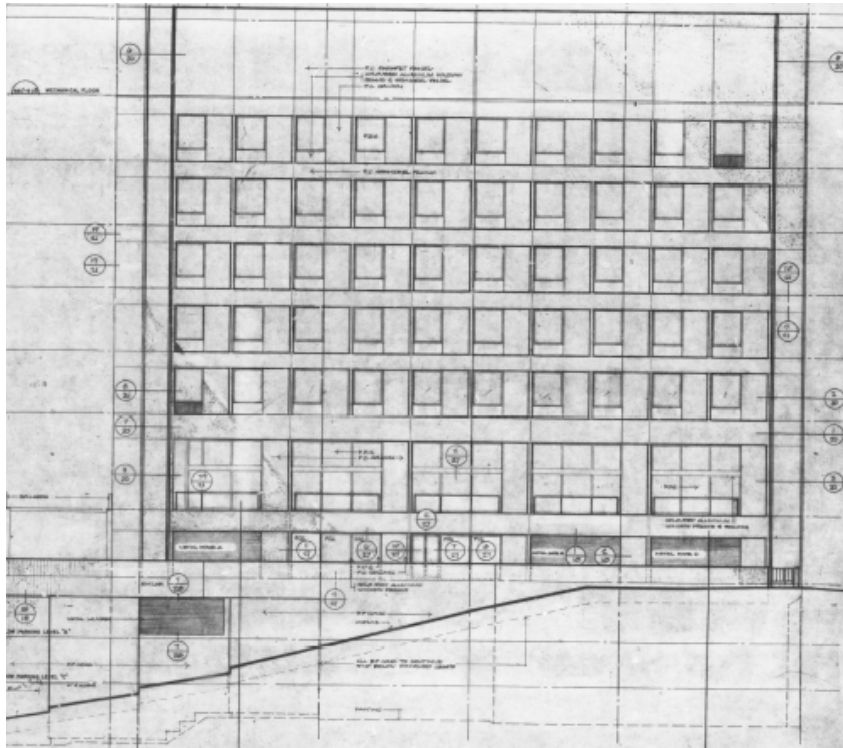


Image 16. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the north elevation. (City Building Records)

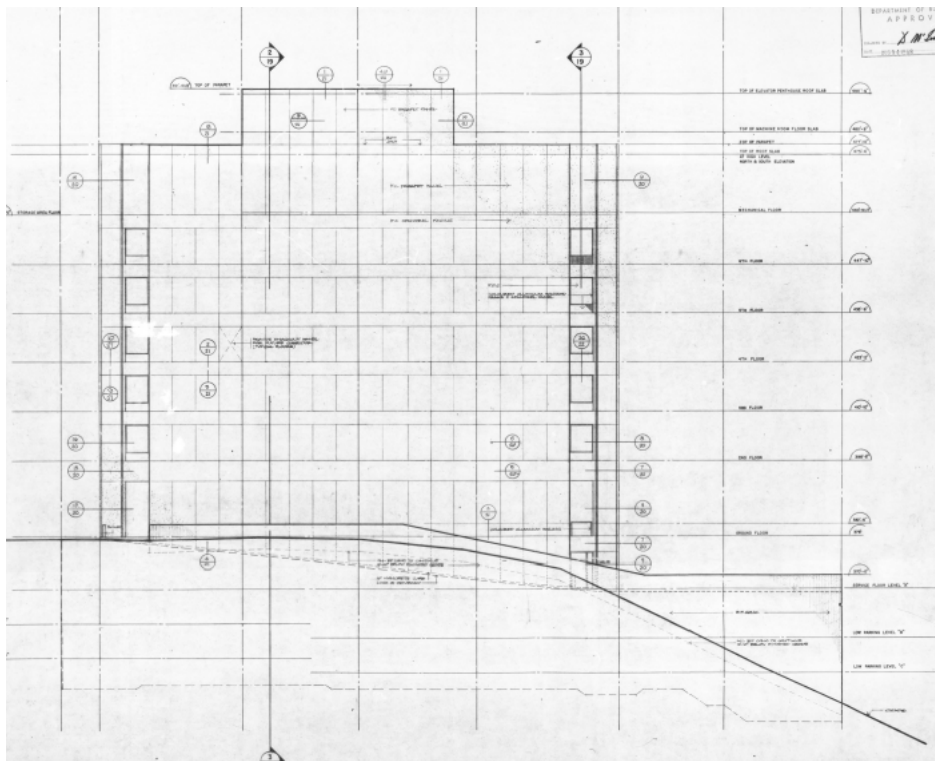


Image 17. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the east elevation. (City Building Records)

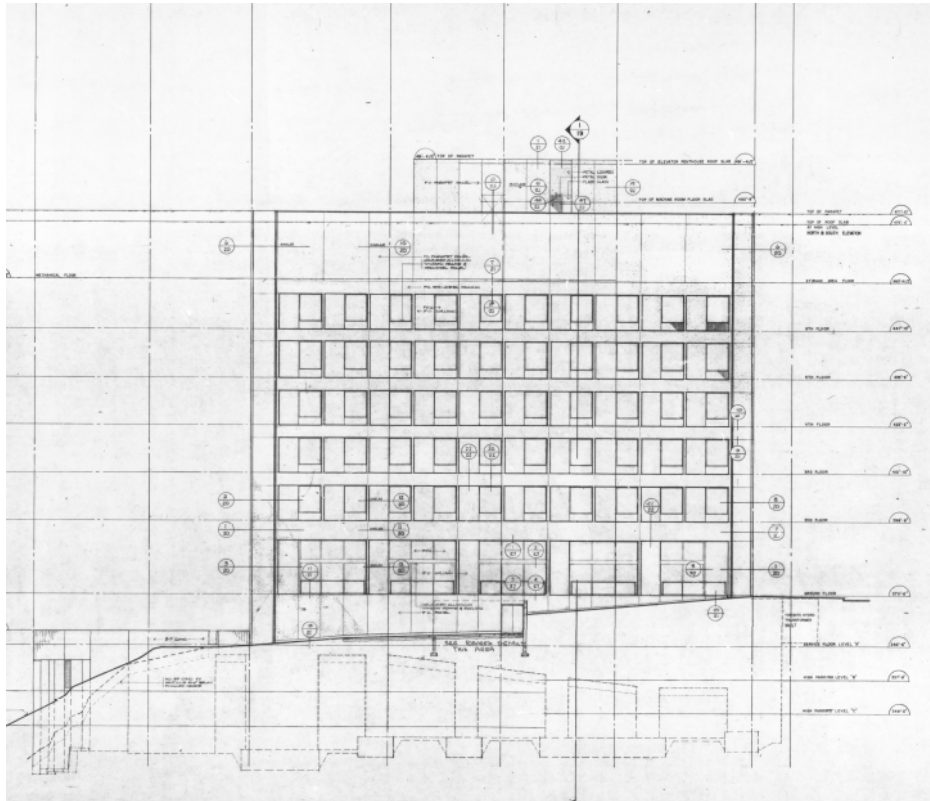


Image 18. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing the west elevation. (City Building Records)

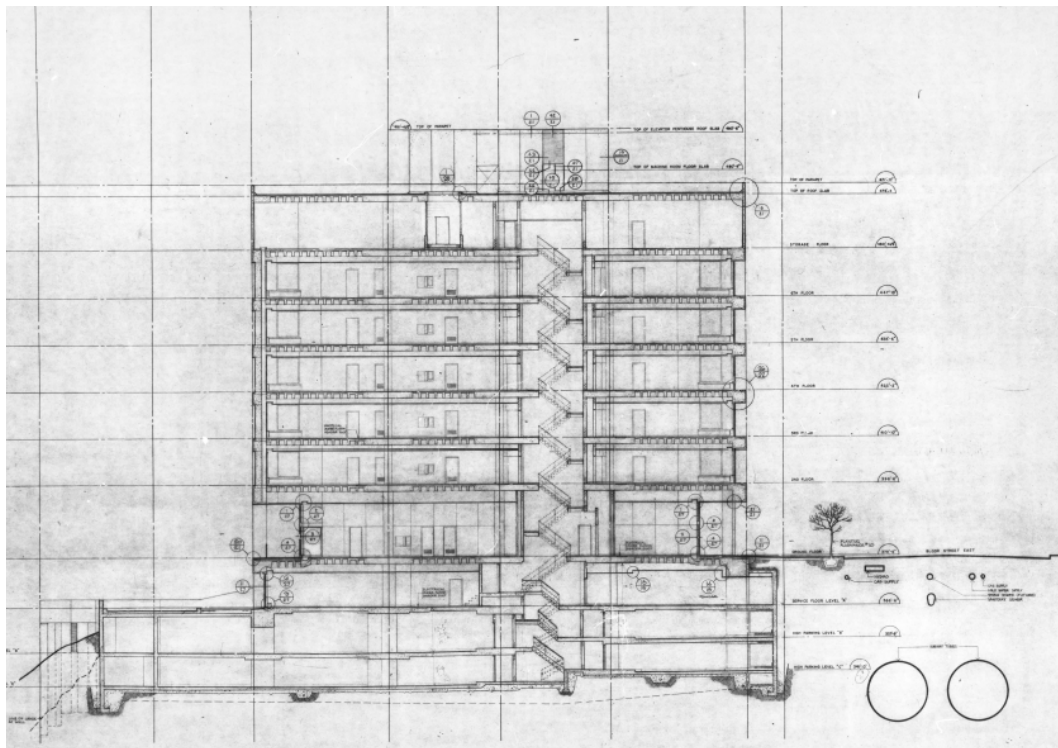


Image 19. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing a section through the building and looking east. (City Building Records)

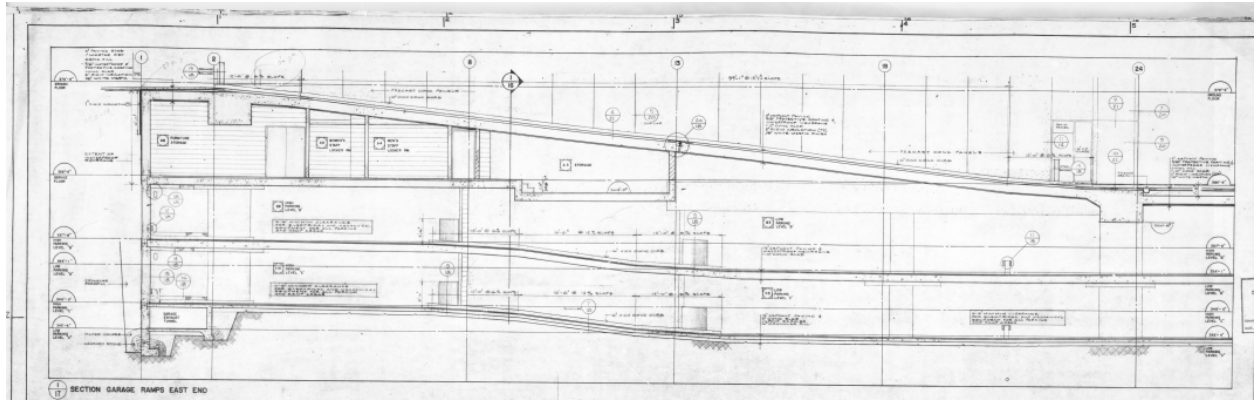
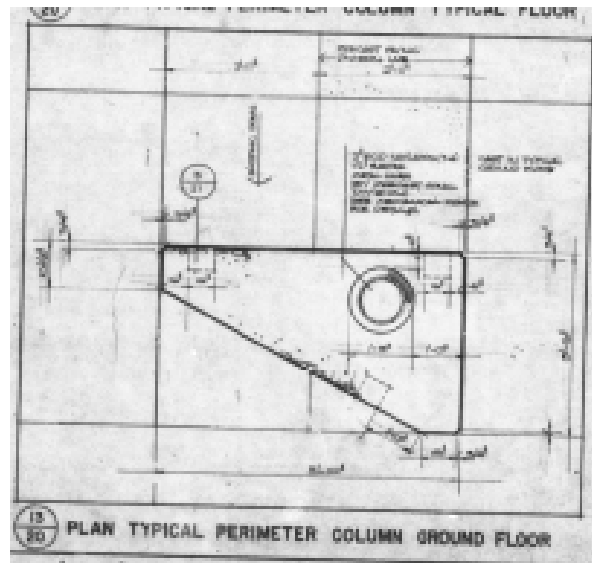
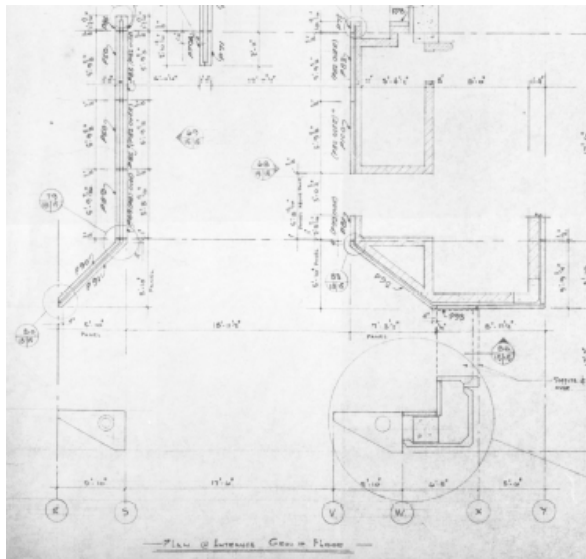


Image 20. Original architectural drawing by Parkin showing a section through the lower levels. (City Building Records)



Images 21 and 22. Original architectural drawings by Parkin showing the main entrance plan (left) and plan of a typical pre-cast concrete perimeter column (right). (City Building Records)



Image 23. 1968 photograph of Site during construction looking westward at the excavation area (Panda Associates).



Image 24. 1968 photograph looking northwest toward the Rosedale Ravine. The Site's northeast corner can be seen to the left (Panda Associates).



Image 25. 1969 photograph during construction, looking at the south and west elevations (Panda Associates).



Image 26. c. 1969 photograph during construction, looking at the south and east elevations with the Mount Pleasant Bridge spanning Rosedale Valley Road and Ravine at right (Panda Associates).

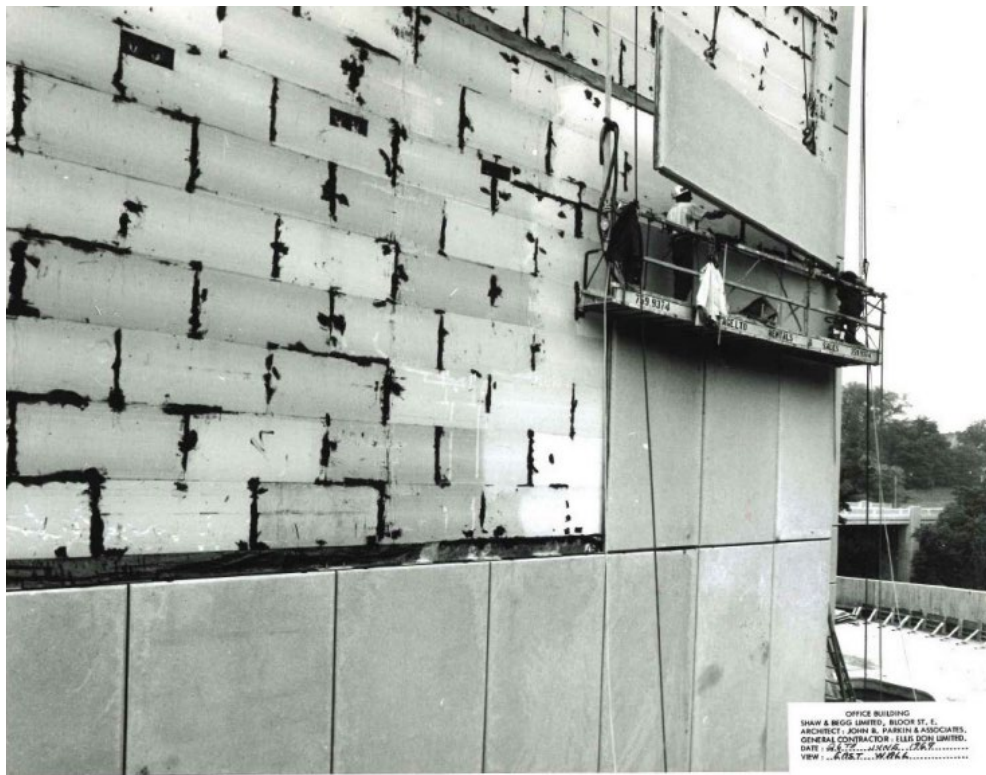


Image 27. 1969 photograph during construction, showing the installation of concrete panels on the largely blank east elevation (Panda Associates).



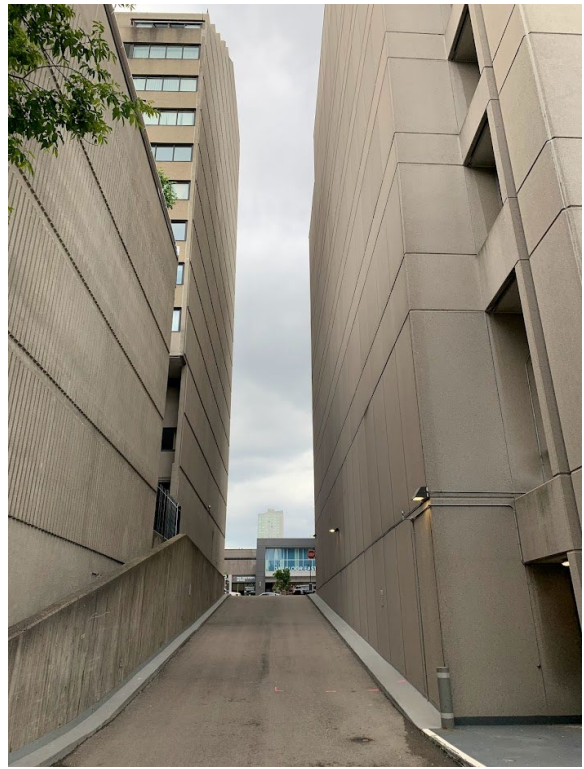
Image 28. 1969 photograph of the building interior during installation of concrete panels. Also visible is the waffle form of the second-storey concrete floor slab above (Panda Associates).



Image 29. 1969 photograph of Site during construction looking southeast and showing the property's interface with Bloor Street East elevated at background right and the ravine setting that falls away at left with the southern part of the Mount Pleasant Bridge in the foreground (Panda Associates).



Image 30. Current photograph showing the south elevation from Bloor Street East. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Images 31 and 32. Current photographs showing the east elevation as viewed from the south (left) and north (right). (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 33. Current photograph showing the north elevation with the colonnaded pedestrian terrace and exposed lower level containing the entrance to the second lower level parking garage. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 34. Current photograph showing the west elevation from Mount Pleasant Road. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 35. Current photograph looking up at the pre-cast concrete panels and openings on the south elevation (Heritage Planning, 2023)

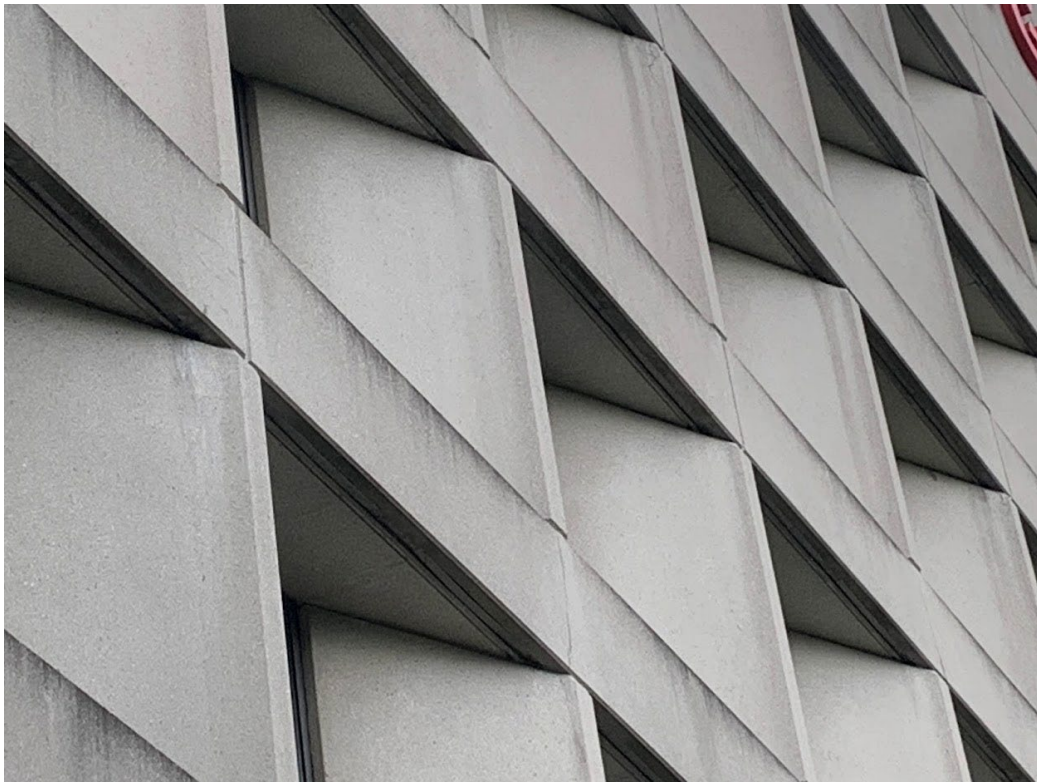


Image 36. Detail of the pre-cast concrete panels and wedge-shaped columns (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 37. Current photograph of a pre-cast concrete perimeter column on the east elevation (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 38. Current photograph of the pedestrian colonnade and glazed ground floor curtain wall, looking east along the south elevation (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 39. Current photograph showing the undulating 1990s concrete planter added to the base of several perimeter columns on the south elevation (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 40. Current photograph looking west along the pedestrian colonnade from the main entrance (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 41. Current photograph of the main entrance on the south elevation from the public realm on Bloor Street East outside the pedestrian colonnade (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 42. Current photograph looking north and showing the transition of the pedestrian colonnade to a colonnaded terrace on the west elevation.



Image 43. Current photograph looking south and showing the colonnaded terrace on the west elevation and the steep grade change of the site. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 44. Current photograph looking north at the interface between the concrete perimeter retaining wall of the site and the Rosedale Ravine beyond. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 45. Current contextual photograph looking south along Mount Pleasant Road Bridge to the subject property, at left (Heritage planning, 2023)

Archival Sources

- Abstract Index of Deeds, CON 2 FB PT TWP YORK PT LOT 20; RP 63R3309 PARTS 1 & 2
- Archival maps and atlases
- Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives
- Canadian Architectural Archives, University of Calgary, Panda Associates Digital Image Collection
- City of Toronto Building Records
- City of Toronto Directories

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

ATTACHMENT 3

(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

350 BLOOR STREET EAST

The property at 350 Bloor Street East is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

Description

Located at the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and the access ramp to Mount Pleasant Road, the property at 350 Bloor Street East contains a six-storey building plus single-storey mechanical penthouse and exposed basement level. The Modernist building is built into the upper portion of the Rosedale Valley Ravine's south embankment and features an identical expression on its principal (south), west and north elevations with its flat roof and precast concrete cladding that creates wedge-shaped columns and deep inset window openings hovering above a recessed, transparent base.

The property was built in 1968-1970 to the designs of renowned Modernist architect, John C. Parkin, who is described as "one of Canada's architectural pioneers, hacking out of Toronto's intricate thicket of late-Victorian Englishry a secure niche for the bold, utopian design of the international movement." Although several award-winning / landmark Modernist buildings designed by Parkin were demolished in prior decades, there are few surviving examples of his work including the properties at 50 Park Road (Ontario Association of Architects Building, 1954), 200 University Avenue (Sun Life Building, 1958-1961) and 100 Queen Street West (Toronto City Hall, 1959-1964, consulting architect). Following John C. Parkin's death in 1988, NORR Partnership, the successor design firm to John B. Parkin Associates Architects, occupied several floors of 350 Bloor Street East for their offices.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Design/Physical Value

The building at 350 Bloor Street East has design value as a significant representative example of architectural precast concrete in Toronto. Constructed in 1968-1970, this prominently-sited Modernist office building anchoring the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and Mount Pleasant Road is characterized by the treatment of its principal south, west and north elevations. These elevations are constructed as a unitized curtain wall system entirely composed of non-structural precast concrete panels on the exterior above a recessed, transparent base. Each is distinguished on the second to sixth storeys by a uniform arrangement of precast concrete panels with square openings separated by wedge-shaped concrete columns, and the visual contrast between the concrete elements and the deeply-inset rectangular windows creates a vibrant orthogonal pattern of light and shadow. This elegant design is characteristic of the

versatility of precast concrete, and of the range of buildings associated with this material and construction method during the Modern period in Toronto.

The property is also valued for the interrelationship between its built form and existing landscape, where the heavy concrete massing of the building design steps down to the north from its Bloor Street East entrance in response to the site's steeply-sloped topography on the south embankment of the Rosedale Valley Ravine. A pedestrian colonnade comprised of wedge-shaped concrete columns wrapping around the exterior south, west and north elevations at the first-floor level transitions into a colonnaded terrace on the two latter elevations due to the site's dramatic grade change.

Historical/Associative Value

The property is valued for its association with the architectural firm of John B. Parkin Associates, one of Canada's leading Modernist and most prolific firms of the 1950s and 1960s that contributed many significant buildings to Toronto during this period. Designed and built between 1968 and 1970 by John C. Parkin, the firm's Chief Designer and one of Canada's most important modernist architects, the property at 350 Bloor Street East exemplifies the firm's work at this time which incorporates an ongoing commitment to the rationalism and rigour of Modernist design alongside an exploration of the contextual interrelationship and juxtaposition of modernist buildings placed in verdant settings. The property at 350 Bloor Street East also represents a final collaboration between John B. and John C. Parkin, before John B. relocated to the Los Angeles in 1969.

Contextual Value

The property at 350 Bloor Street East is also valued for maintaining the character of the area which features many 20th-century commercial and office buildings of distinctive high-quality design along this portion of Bloor Street East between Yonge and Sherbourne streets, including mid-century modern examples. The design of the building also responds to, and provides continuity with, the adjacent Rosedale Valley Ravine where it has been visually, physically and historically linked to its surroundings for more than 50 years.

Heritage Attributes

Design/Physical Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 350 Bloor Street East as representative of the Modernist style include:

- The heavy concrete massing of the six-storey building plus mechanical penthouse storey on a square plan with a flat roof and exposed basement level on the west, north and east elevations
- On the principal south, west and north elevations, the curtain wall system of precast concrete panels above the first storey and rising to the flat roof, with their modular and uniform arrangement, deep-set square openings, wedge-shaped columns and rectangular openings containing glazing with dark metal frames and spandrels at the second to sixth storeys

- The recessed first-storey base with its floor-to-ceiling glazing set in dark metal framing and pedestrian colonnade of wedge-shaped concrete columns found at the principal south, west, and north elevations
- The main entry on the south elevation which is recessed from the rest of the base and defined by two flanking, wedge-shaped concrete panels that mimic the form of the adjacent pedestrian colonnade
- The setting of the building atop the south embankment of the Rosedale Valley Ravine with its mature trees and steeply-sloped topography that fall away from the building's north, west and east elevations

Contextual Value

Attribute that contributes to the value of the building at 350 Bloor Street East as defining, supporting and maintain the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to its setting:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on its prominent lot anchoring the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and the on-ramp to Mount Pleasant Road (northbound), and with its main entrance fronting onto Bloor Street East