

153 and 185 Eastern Avenue - Alterations to Designated Heritage Properties Under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement

Date: April 27, 2026

To: Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 13 – Toronto Centre

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the alterations proposed for the designated heritage properties at 153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, in connection with a proposed development of the subject property. The proposed development application for the subject site contemplates the construction of three new residential towers, including commercial and community space uses.

The development site, 153, 169, 171, and 185 Eastern Avenue, known as the Dominion Wheel & Foundries Ltd. Complex, comprises two significant heritage properties at 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building) and 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building). The two buildings are unique examples of the industrial complex typology in the West Don Lands neighbourhood that reflect the historical evolution of the area from its earliest use as a Government Reserve, followed by its use as an important industrial centre in the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

On May 16, 2023, City Council stated its intention to designate the properties at 153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and on July 20, 2023, enacted Designation By-law No. 732-2023.

Heritage Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed alterations conserve the subject heritage properties and are consistent with the existing policy framework. The heritage impacts of the proposal are appropriately mitigated through the overall conservation strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council approve the alterations to the designated heritage properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of three new residential buildings with such alterations to the designated property substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated May 21, 2025, prepared by Core Architects Inc., and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and the Heritage Impact Assessment dated January 5, 2026, prepared by Philip Goldsmith Architect, and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, all subject to and in accordance with the Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and subject to the conditions as set out below.

2. City Council direct that its consent to the application to alter the designated heritage properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue, in accordance with Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, are also subject to the following conditions:

a. Prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue, 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 Planning, 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 the properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Execute and register on title a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue, substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated May 21, 2025, prepared by Core Architects Inc., and the Heritage Impact Assessment dated January 5, 2026, prepared by Philip Goldsmith Architect, all on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, subject to and in accordance with the Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.1, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, including execution and registration of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

3. Provide a Heritage Lighting Plan that describes how the exterior of the heritage properties will be sensitively illuminated to enhance their heritage character to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such a plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

4. Provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject property, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
5. Provide a detailed Landscape Plan for the subject property, satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
6. Submit a Signage Plan for the proposed development to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.
7. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.1, 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 Planning.
8. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing, in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan and Interpretation Plan.

3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary Bill in Council authorizing the entering into of a Heritage Easement Agreement for the properties at 153 and 185 Eastern Avenue.

4. City Council authorize the City Solicitor and City staff to take all necessary actions to implement City Council's decision.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

On October 1, 2004, City Council adopted the recommendations from the Toronto and East York Community Council to include the properties at 153, 169, 171, and 185 Eastern Avenue on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2004/agendas/council/cc040928/ts7rpt/cl017.pdf>

On August 25, 26 and 27, 2010, City Council adopted, with amendments, item TE36.20 for the Draft Plan of Subdivision, Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and the lifting of the "h" Holding Symbol for the West Don Lands, Phase 2, including the lands occupied by the subject properties. By-law 4-2011 was enacted December 8, 2010.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2010.TE36.20>

On February 2, 2021, City Council adopted item PH20.8, to request that the Province of Ontario and its Ministries immediately halt all demolition and construction work at 153-185 Eastern Avenue for a minimum of 30 days; provide thorough documentation and analysis of the cultural heritage value of the site, a Strategic Conservation Plan, and an Environmental Site Assessment; and engage with residents about the future of 153-185 Eastern Avenue.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH20.8>

On May 5, 2021, City Council adopted item TE24.11, the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendments for the updated King-Parliament Secondary Plan, which provides a framework for development with a full mix of uses that are designed to be compatible with their existing and planned context, to conserve the cultural heritage resources of the area, and to improve and expand the public realm.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE24.11>

On May 10, 11, and 12, 2023, City Council stated its intention to designate the heritage properties at 153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH3.12>

BACKGROUND

Site and Context

The subject site, 153, 169, 171, and 185 Eastern Avenue, is located on the south side of Eastern Avenue in the West Don Lands neighbourhood, between Rolling Mills Road to the west, Old Foundry Road to the north, and Palace Street to the south. The subject site contains the following heritage buildings:

- 153 Eastern Avenue: a two-storey rectangular industrial building (known as the "Cleaning Room"), located on the north-west corner of the subject site. The building was constructed in 1953 for the Dominion Wheel & Foundries Co. Ltd. to the designs of engineering firm Proctor, Redfern & Laughlin.
- 185 Eastern Avenue: a two-storey rectangular industrial building (known as the "Machine Shop"), located on the south portion of the subject site. The building was likely constructed in 1930. Significant additions were made to the building in 1940 (north addition linking the Machine Shop with the Storage Building to the north), 1946 (west addition) and 1947 (east addition), all to the designs of engineering firm James, Proctor & Redfern.

The two buildings were originally part of a larger industrial complex for the Dominion Wheel & Foundries Company. They were used for industrial purposes until the late 1980s, when they were among several properties expropriated by the Province of Ontario to provide affordable housing in a new mixed-use neighbourhood. While still within Provincial ownership, the buildings located at 169 Eastern Avenue and 171 Eastern Avenue were removed.

On November 17, 2025, a Heritage Permit application was made to allow for alterations to the heritage buildings on the subject site. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prepared by Philip Goldsmith Architect, dated January 5, 2026, was submitted to support the development application.

The subject property is not adjacent to any properties listed on the City's Heritage Register or designated under Part IV or Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Alteration Proposal

The development application proposes the in-situ retention of the original heritage structures and the construction of three new residential buildings. 'Tower A' (34 stories) and 'Tower C' (43 stories) are market housing buildings located along the north portion of the site, south of Eastern Avenue and east of the Cleaning Room building. 'Tower B' (31 stories) is an affordable housing tower proposed above the Machine Shop building along the south portion of the site, north of Palace Street.

A privately-owned publicly accessible space (POPS) is proposed for the south-west corner of the subject site. The Cleaning Room building is proposed to be used as commercial space. The eastern addition of the Machine Shop Building is proposed to be used as community space.

There is no underground parking proposed below the Cleaning Room building or the Machine Shop building. The underground levels are set back from the foundations of the Cleaning Room building by 2.0 metres and the Machine Shop building by 4.8 metres and 1.6 metres.

Heritage Planning Policy Framework

Cultural heritage resources are protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Planning Statement (2024). 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.

The Planning Act

The Planning Act guides development in the Province of Ontario. It 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" and 2(r) "to a built form that is well designed and provides for a sense of place."

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS), issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act, provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment.

The provincial policy-led planning system recognizes and addresses the complex interrelationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The PPS supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, and recognizes linkages among policy areas.

The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act and all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS.

Policy 4.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved." "Conserved" is defined in the PPS as the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act.

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS and shall conform with Provincial Plans. All comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS and conform with Provincial Plans.

Provincial Plans are intended to be read in their entirety and relevant policies are to be applied to each situation.

City of Toronto Official Plan

This application has been reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed alterations:

3.1.6.4 - 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 as adopted by Council.

3.1.6.5 - 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. Where a Heritage Impact Assessment is required in Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, it will describe and assess the potential impacts and mitigation strategies for the proposed alteration, development or public work.

3.1.6.6 - The adaptive re-use of properties on the Heritage Register is encouraged for new uses permitted in the applicable Official Plan land use designation, consistent with the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada".

3.1.6.26 - 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.

3.1.6.27 - 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 façades alone is discouraged.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

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

Standards and Guidelines

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9), the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project.

The Standards and Guidelines can be accessed here:

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

COMMENTS

Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the Heritage Impact Assessment submitted in support of the proposal for conformity with the Planning Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, and the City's Official Plan heritage policies.

Conservation Strategy

The conservation strategy involves the retention and rehabilitation of the Cleaning Room building in-situ, and the in-situ incorporation of the retention and rehabilitation of the south and a portion of the east elevation of the Machine Shop building into the base building of the new residential development. Salvaged brick will be used for repairs to the Cleaning Room building and the Machine Shop building walls. The existing windows are proposed to be replaced in-kind with new double-glazed, steel framed, multi-light windows that match the existing windows.

The details of the restoration work will be set out in a Conservation Plan to be completed to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. All final details regarding the design and treatment of new openings are to be secured in the Conservation Plan.

Cleaning Room (153 Eastern Avenue)

The Cleaning Room building is proposed to be retained as a whole building and repurposed for a commercial space or market. The scale, form, and massing of the two-storey, rectangular building with a shallow gable roof will not be altered, and the building will maintain its location, placement, and orientation within the larger industrial complex. The building's materials, including red brick cladding laid in a common bond and concrete detailing of the windowsills and foundation, are proposed to be cleaned and repaired where necessary. The extant window openings are proposed to be retained.

Previous demolition activity has altered the two eastern bays on the south elevation of the building and altered the two southern bays on the east elevation of the building. Plywood exterior covers currently close off openings where the masonry and windows have been removed. The conservation strategy proposes to reconstruct the two original window openings on the west elevation and the two original window openings on the south elevation based on documentary evidence. Below the reconstructed windows on the south elevation, the strategy proposes altering the symmetrical design and arrangement of the heritage building's elevations by introducing two new glass panels and two new doors facing the POPS space; however, the intervention is sympathetic to the industrial character of the building, and the four symmetrical original window openings will remain legible.

On the west elevation of the building, a former delivery overhead doorway (now filled in with concrete block) is proposed to be re-opened and a glazed screen will be installed. One opening on the east elevation of the building will be retained as a contemporary entrance, and a window will be added to the existing overhead garage door opening.

The interior fitments and equipment of 153 Eastern Avenue are proposed to be retained, including the travelling gantry crane and the secondary steel structure to support the gantry crane. The crane is proposed to be preserved as an artifact in its original location on supporting rails (but will not be functional). The internal design of this building will be determined once a final user is identified. Internal rooms related to the proposed building function, offices, washrooms and a machine room are suggested along the north wall with the rolling crane positioned to the south.

Machine Shop (185 Eastern Avenue)

The Machine Shop building is comprised of three different parts: the original central portion constructed between 1930-1935, the western addition constructed between 1942-1946, and the eastern addition constructed in 1947.

The eastern addition of the Machine Shop building is proposed to be retained as a whole building for a community space use. One existing window opening, located on the east side of the east addition, is proposed to be altered with the removal of a sill to install a new overhead door for open access/connection between the community space and the exterior space. The building's red brick cladding and the existing door opening on the north side of the building are proposed to be altered to introduce a new contemporary double door. The industrial door on the south elevation is proposed to be replaced with a contemporary glass panel. There are no anticipated impacts to the interior heritage attributes within the eastern addition, including the exposed structural

steel roof trusses, girts and wood roof decking, and the secondary steel structures for the former gantry crane.

The full south elevation of the Machine Shop building (comprising both the original portion and the western addition) and two bays of the west elevation (of the western addition) are proposed to be retained in-situ. On the south elevation, the applicant is proposing to retain the original door opening and install a contemporary glass entrance door as the main entrance to the residential building and the community space. Non-original entrances and openings on the retained south wall are proposed to be removed, and the sill/spandrel will be made good/rebuilt. At the southwest corner of the retained west elevation, the applicant is proposing new glass panels and a new entrance in an existing altered opening, which will not attempt to replicate the existing windows but reflect that these were large industrial doorways.

The north elevation (of both the original portion of the building and the western addition) and the remainder of the west elevation are proposed to be reconstructed. The proposed reconstruction will alter heritage attributes, including the design and arrangement of the building's elevations, the design and arrangement of the building's window openings, and the building's materials; however, due to previous demolition activity, these portions of the building have been removed except for the bare steel frame. The new walls are proposed to be designed to be consistent and sympathetic with the existing historic walls, using a matching brick with expressed pilasters. The sloping roof structure will be reconstructed at the same pitch as the original and with similar beams, purlins and wood deck appearance. The new structure will be reattached to the steel structure, providing lateral support. A Heritage Retention letter included with the application, prepared by Jablonsky, Ast and Partners dated April 4, 2025, describes the feasibility of the proposed retention system.

The interior of the original portion of the Machine Shop building and the western addition is proposed to be removed for the new structure to support Tower B and other related functions. A new double-height open interior space in a similar configuration to the existing, with exposed brick walls and concrete floor slab, is proposed in the new construction. The railway tracks embedded in the concrete flooring are proposed to be reinstalled in the new concrete floor. The existing steel beams, purlins and deck will be removed during construction and then reconstructed in areas outside of the footprint of Tower B. In this portion of the building, only half of the structure for the crane remains unaltered as the north section has previously been removed. The south gantry structure is proposed to be preserved.

Proposed Development

The development application proposes three new residential towers on the subject site. 'Tower A' (34 stories) and 'Tower C' (43 stories) are proposed to be located on the north side of the subject site, and their introduction will not alter the existing heritage buildings on the site, or their setback, placement and orientation on the site. The new 4-storey base building will be clad in a compatible brick palette, reinforcing the prominence of the retained heritage buildings.

'Tower B' (31 stories) is proposed to be located above the retained and reconstructed heritage elevations of the original portion of the Machine Shop building and the western addition. The introduction of a new tower will alter the scale, form, and massing of the two-storey building with shallow-gable roofs. To visually separate the tower from the roof of the historic building, Tower B includes a glazed reveal of 2 stories above the Machine Building (primarily constructed of contemporary black metal frame). The reveal is set back approximately 6 metres above the retained primary south elevation, 5.9 metres above the retained west elevation, 22.5 metres above the retained east elevation, and 1.35 metres above the reconstructed north elevation to the rear.

The tower, beginning on Level 5, is proposed to be stepped back above the retained primary south elevation by approximately 5 metres, 4.32 metres on the retained west elevation (stepping back an additional 7.45 metres at Level 13), 29.12 metres above the retained east elevation, and 0.3 metres above the reconstructed north elevation to the rear. The proposed step backs of the tower will offer three-dimensional legibility of the Machine Shop building and will not alter the placement and orientation of 185 Eastern Avenue, which terminates the view north on Tannery Road.

CONCLUSION

Heritage Planning staff are supportive of the alterations proposed for the designated heritage properties at 153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue in the context of the conservation and mitigation strategies proposed for the subject site. Heritage Planning staff support the retention strategy and are of the opinion that the proposal has been designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes, and character of the heritage property.

Heritage Planning staff are satisfied the proposal meets the intent of the Planning Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, and the City of Toronto's Official Plan heritage policies in conjunction with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. Staff recommend that Council approve the proposed alterations and grant authority to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement.

CONTACT

Neil MacKay
Heritage Planner, Heritage Planning
Urban Design, City Planning
Tel: 416.338.6441; Fax: 416-392-1973
E-mail: Neil.Mackay@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning
Urban Design, City Planning

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Aerial Photograph
Attachment 3 - Photographs
Attachment 4 - Selected Drawings

153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue

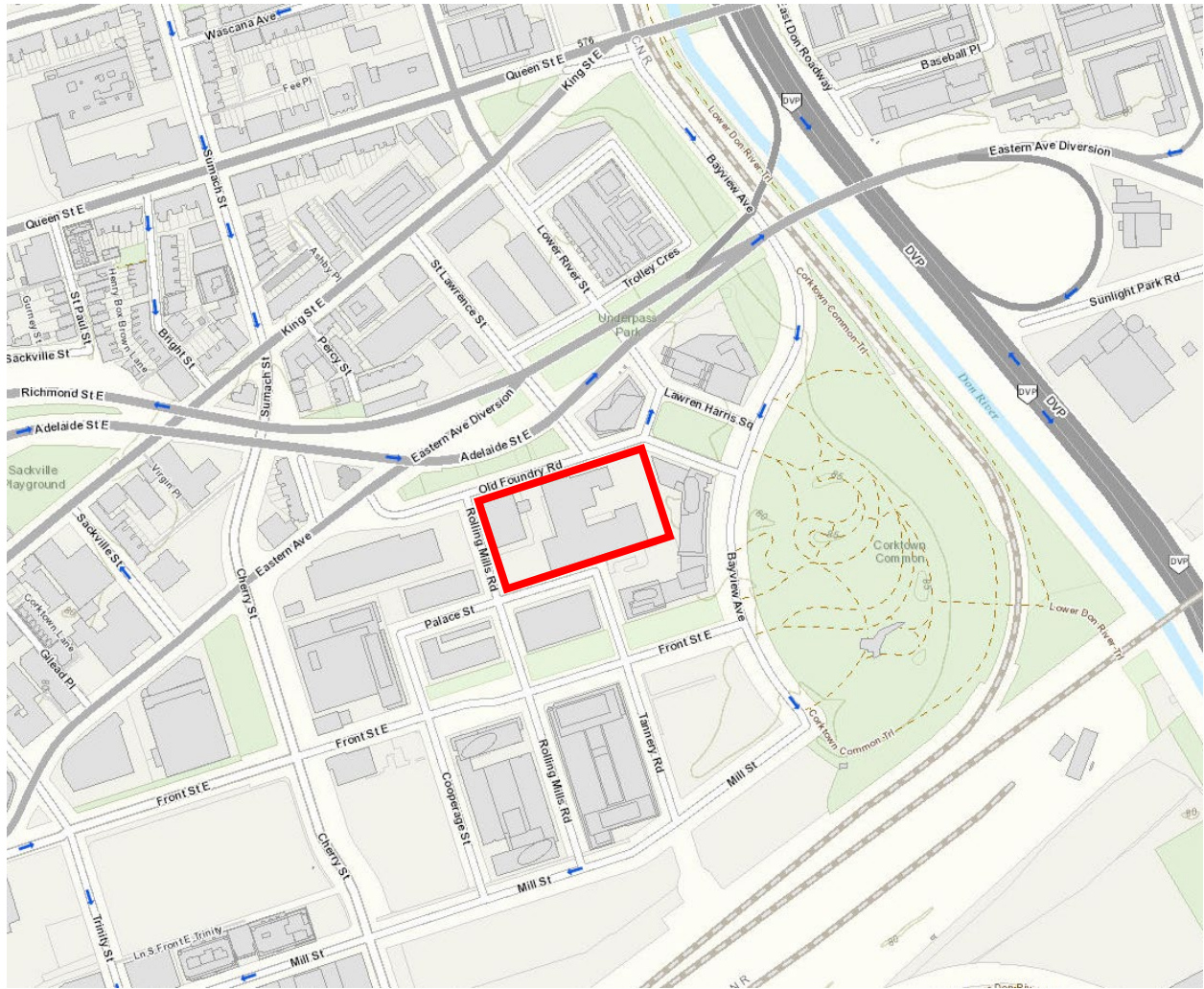


Figure 1. Location Map showing the property at 153-185 Eastern Avenue outlined in red, located on the south side of Eastern Avenue in the West Don Lands neighbourhood. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping).

153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue

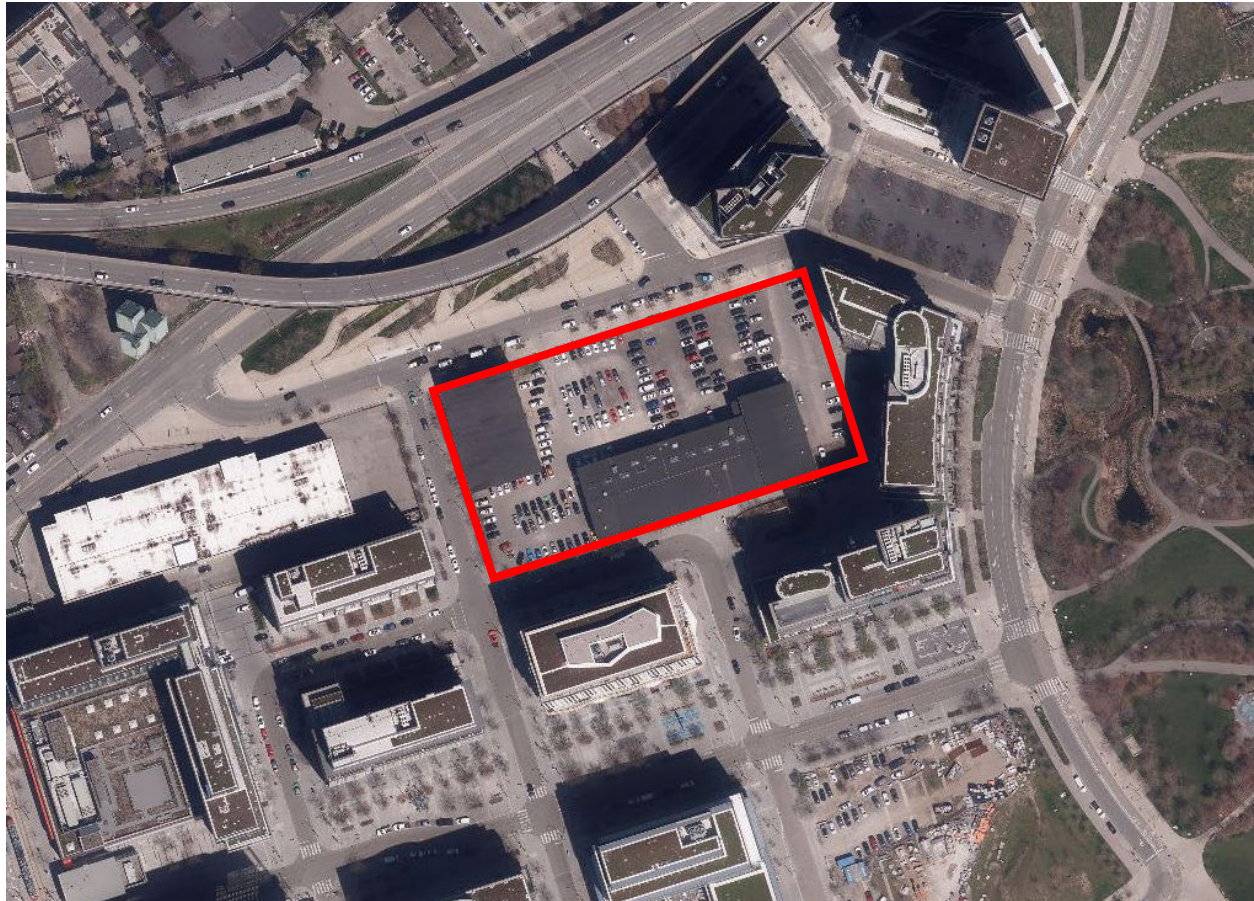


Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing the property at 153-185 Eastern Avenue outlined in red, located on the south side of Eastern Avenue in the West Don Lands neighbourhood. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping, 2024).

153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue



Figure 3: North and west elevation of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building), looking southeast (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 4: South and west elevation of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building), looking northeast (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 5: East elevation of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building), looking west (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 6: South elevation of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building), looking north (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).

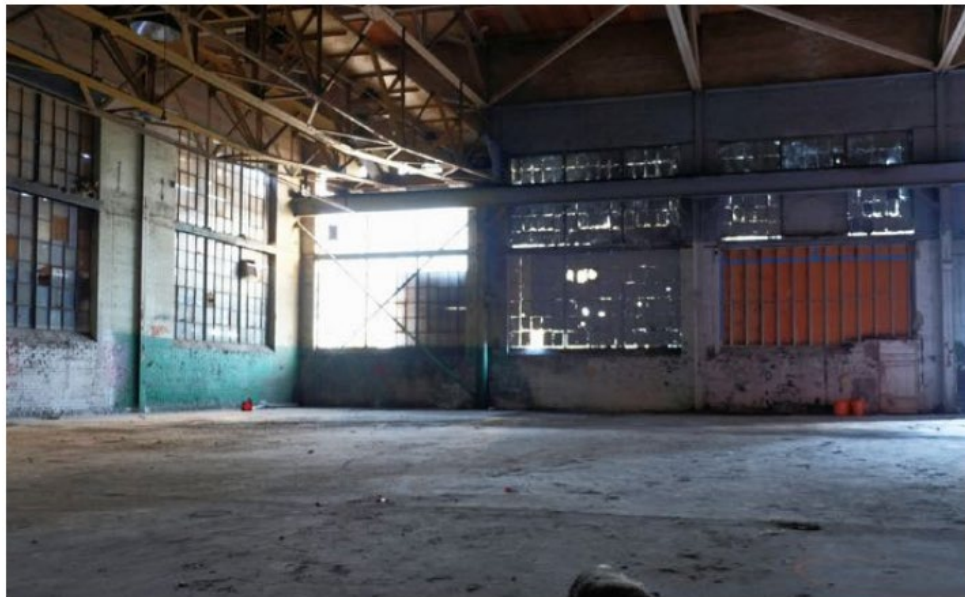


Figure 7: Interior view of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building), looking east (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 8: South and west elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building), looking northeast (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 9: East elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building), looking west (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).



Figure 10: North elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building), looking south (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).

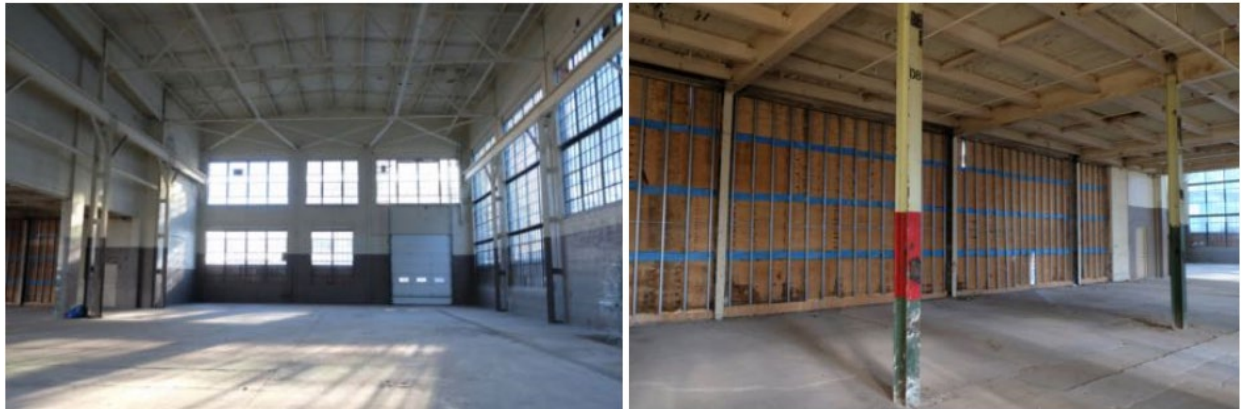


Figure 11: Interior view of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building), showing the eastern addition looking north (at left) and the central portion looking northwest (at right) (Philip Goldsmith Architect, 2025).

153 Eastern Avenue and 185 Eastern Avenue

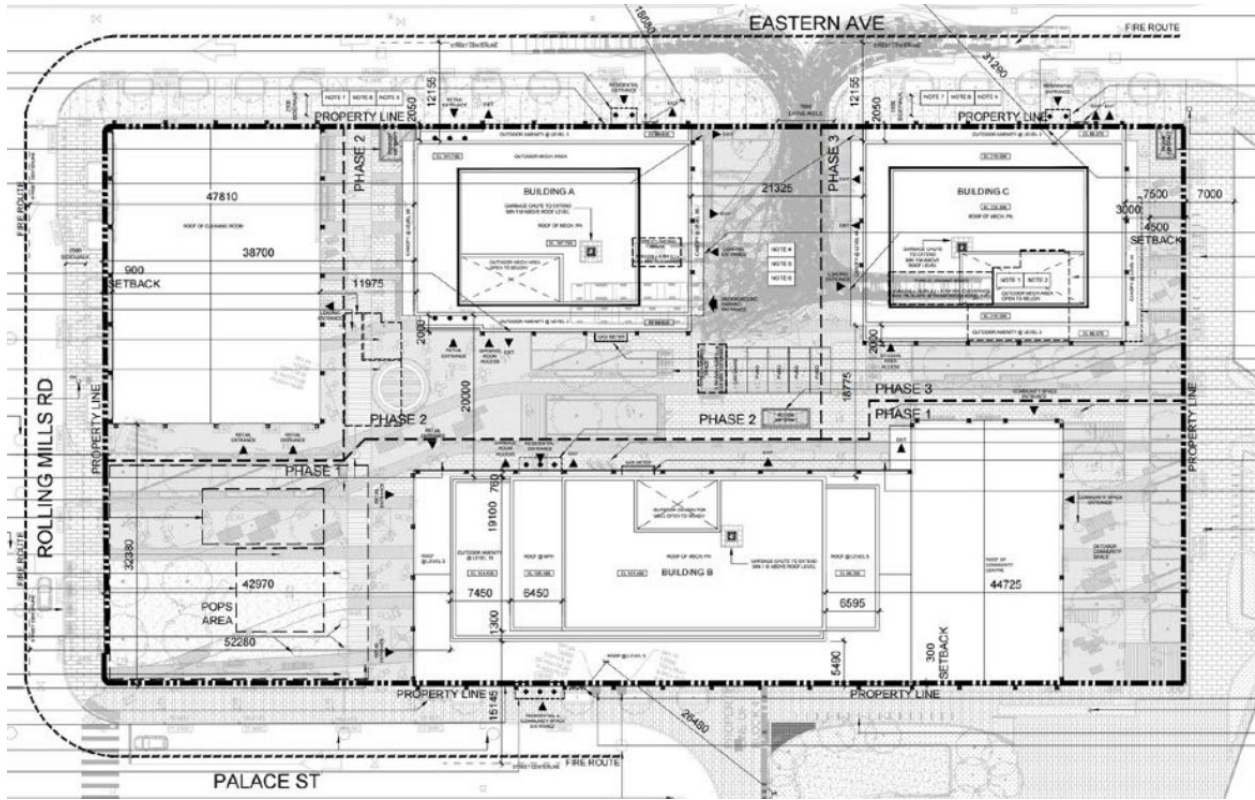


Figure 12: Proposed site plan for 153-185 Eastern Avenue included for illustration purposes (Core Architects Inc., 2025).

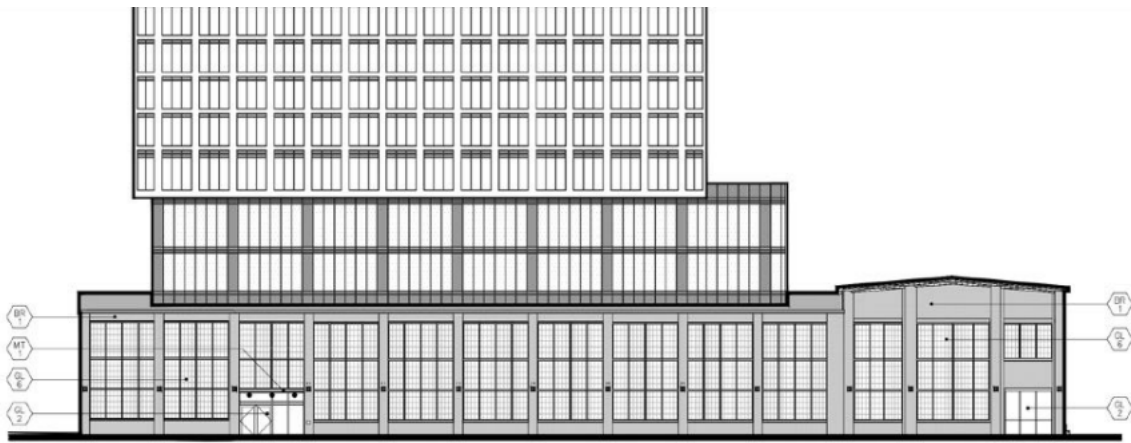


Figure 17: Proposed south elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building) (Core Architects Inc., 2026).

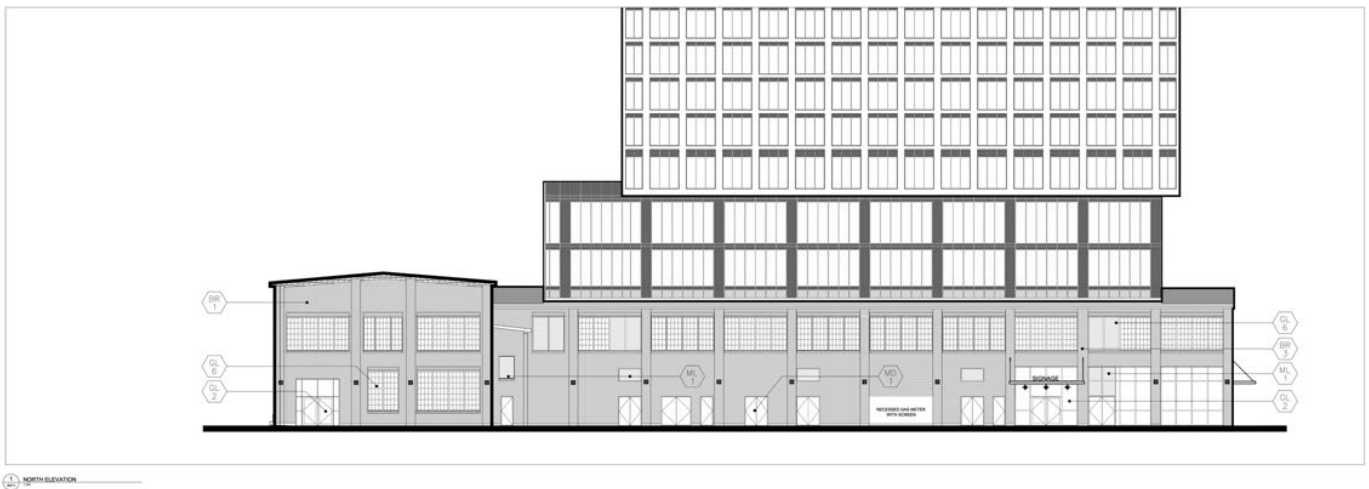


Figure 18: Proposed north elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building) (Core Architects Inc., 2026).

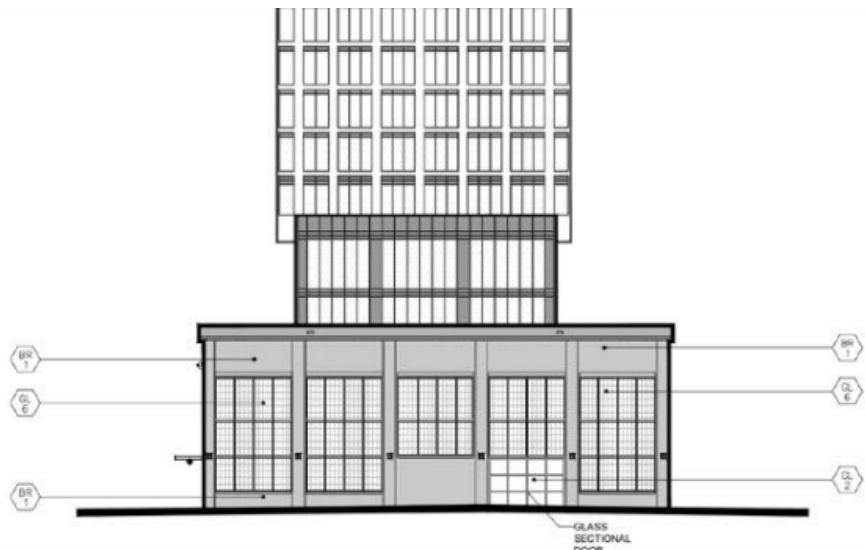


Figure 19: Proposed east elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building) (Core Architects Inc., 2026).

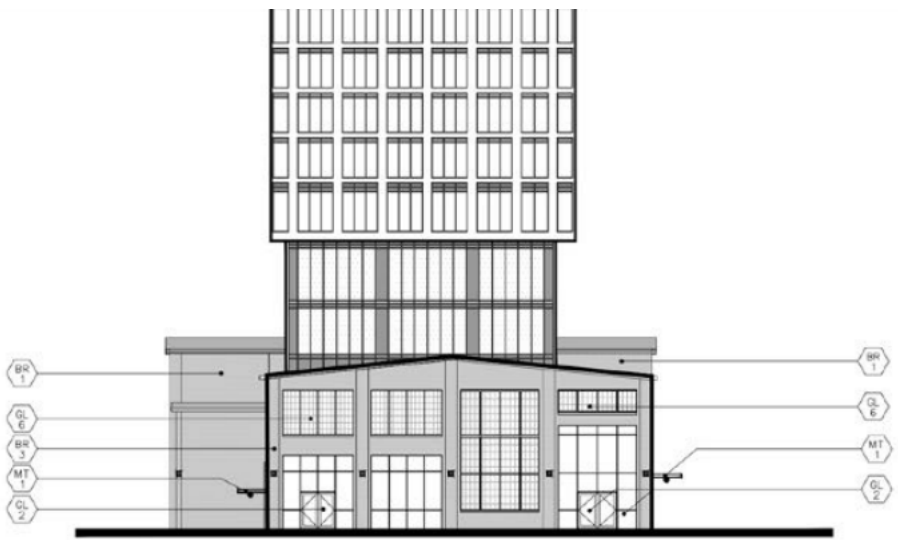


Figure 19: Proposed west elevation of 185 Eastern Avenue (Machine Shop building) (Core Architects Inc., 2026).



Figure 20: Proposed west, east, north, and south elevations of 153 Eastern Avenue (Cleaning Room building) (Core Architects Inc., 2026).



Figure 20: Rendering of the proposed development looking north (Core Architects Inc., 2026).



Figure 21: Rendering of the proposed development looking southeast (Core Architects Inc., 2026).



Figure 22: Rendering of the proposed development looking northeast (Core Architects Inc., 2026).

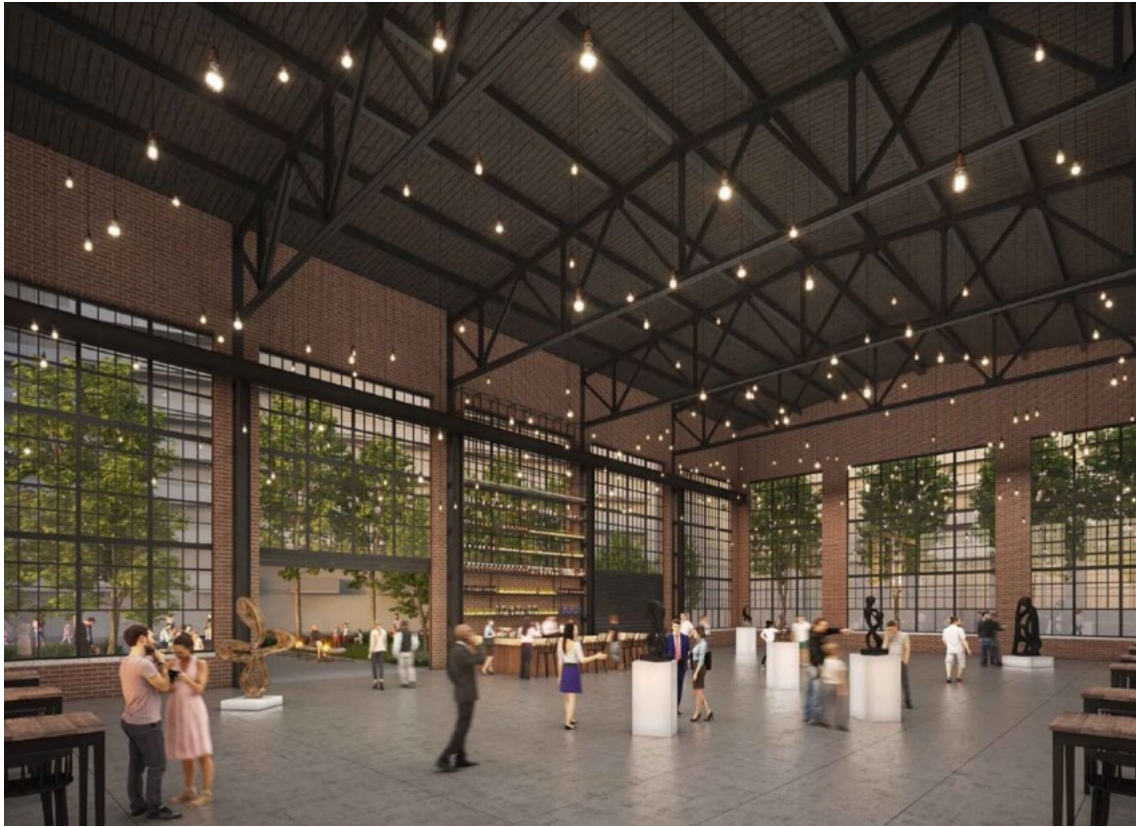


Figure 20: Rendering of the proposed interior space in the Cleaning Room building, looking south (Core Architects Inc., 2026).