

**THE ISLINGTON  
GALLERY OF ART:**  
An Architectural Implementation of  
'The Third Place'

By

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

This thesis proposes turning a Toronto subway station into a gallery that will display temporary exhibitions of contemporary art. Islington subway station, on the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue, will anchor a future civic and cultural centre and will become the social and public focal point of Etobicoke Centre. The building will turn this neighbourhood into a vibrant community, creating a self-sustaining node around which people will live, work, and play.

This proposal has been inspired by urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg's concept of the 'third place'. In contrast to the first and second places of home and work, the third place encompasses the social realm, being a neutral space where people can gather and interact. The proposal for the Islington Gallery of Art also adapts new urbanist Peter Calthorpe's theory of the 'Transit Oriented Development' where the subway station is the central node in the neighbourhood. Both of these concepts will be discussed further in the thesis. The Islington Gallery of Art will bring commuters a direct connection with culture. This gallery will transform the public space of infrastructure into a setting for informal public life. A third place will be created where one currently does not exist.

The thesis combines the three narratives of public space, public transportation, and civic culture in the design of a mixed-use building. It explores how transportation infrastructure and architecture can combine with contemporary art to instigate the development for a new kind of place, one that isn't a traditional street or square, near the periphery of the City of Toronto.

# ABSTRACT

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OPPOSITE: *fig. 1.1 The Islington TTC station is located near the corner of Islington Avenue and Bloor Street West, the site chosen for the design proposal.*

This thesis envisions an art gallery built inside and over the existing Islington Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) subway station, enticing the approximately 50,000 people that pass through this station every day to escape from daily commute. This addition to the station offers a hybrid building type that combines an interior public space with municipal infrastructure on the western fringes of the City of Toronto. The Islington Gallery of Art will be accessible to and shared by community residents, commuters, and tourists alike. Contemporary art will become integrated with daily routine in this station/ gallery. It will become an informal place for community gathering that should bring different populations into concert.

This building will foster a public social realm that reflects urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg's concept of the 'third place'. For Oldenburg, besides the two realms of daily life that encompass home and work, there is a third more informally social realm or 'third place' that is a neutral urban space where people can gather and interact.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the more private realms of home and work, public social interactions typically occur spontaneously in the third place and this place, as Oldenburg argues, is what satisfies the human need to belong to a community in the city.

# INTRODUCTION

fig. 1.2 Map of Toronto Centres  
 SOURCE: Etobicoke Secondary Plan





The City of Toronto's Official City Plan outlines the areas between and around the Islington and Kipling TTC subway stations as the future Etobicoke Centre, a node in the western part of Toronto similar to Scarborough Centre in the east and North York Centre in the north. Islington station is already the threshold to downtown Toronto for Etobicoke's commuters and citizens because it is also the nucleus of the western node.

By 2030, traffic through Islington station is projected to double, making it as important a transportation hub as Eglinton station is today. Like Eglinton station did for midtown Toronto, it is possible to see the Islington station, located at the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue, at the western end of the subway, transform Etobicoke's historic Islington neighbourhood into a dynamic and vibrant urban centre.

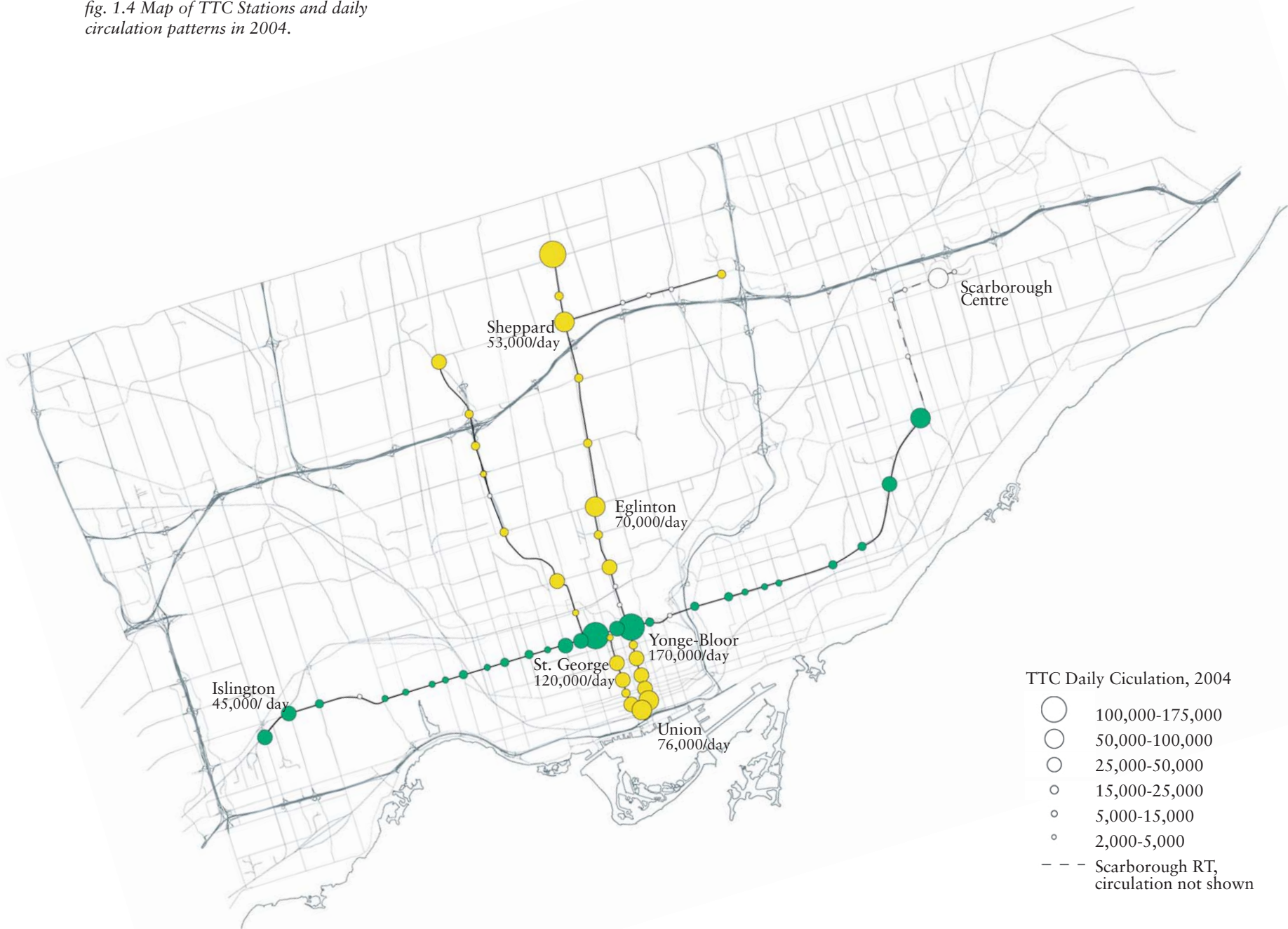
In 1998, the City of Toronto amalgamated with the former municipalities of York, East York, North York, Etobicoke, and Scarborough. Although the former municipalities have become part of a new 'Toronto', the old names are still used by residents and what was once called the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto is now called 'Downtown'. York and East York are the inner ring suburbs. These suburbs were built up after the war as streetcar suburbs containing relatively dense and mixed-use streets. Etobicoke, Scarborough and North York are the outer ring of post war suburbs and have always been more automobile oriented.

The Yonge/Eglinton urban node, located at the northern edge of the 'old' part of Toronto, developed around the Eglinton Avenue subway station, which was once the last stop on the Yonge TTC line built in the 1950s. Like the Yonge and Eglinton intersection, the North York Centre also developed along Yonge Street but beyond the prewar city fabric, and takes advantage of the 1970s extension of the Yonge TTC line. Driven by the presence of the subway, recent explosions in



*fig. 1.3 Area of the Etobicoke Centre as outlined in the Toronto Official Plan. The site of the Islington TTC station is highlighted. Scale 1:20 000*

fig. 1.4 Map of TTC Stations and daily circulation patterns in 2004.



mixed-use land development along Yonge Street have made North York more urban, and it has established its own downtown around Mel Lastman Square. Before Toronto's amalgamation, the Scarborough City Centre was developed under the old City of Scarborough government and alongside the Scarborough Rapid Transit line, a 1985 LRT which extends from the easternmost Kennedy station of Toronto's east-west Bloor-Danforth subway line.

Of the former municipalities that make up the amalgamated City of Toronto, Etobicoke had and still has the lowest population density and has always been more isolated than the other suburban city nodes largely due to the vast expanses of industrial land located there. Etobicoke's historic strip of Islington Village, however, within walking distance of the Islington TTC station, is a thriving mixed-use neighbourhood that is much smaller but historically more established than even North York Centre. It has the infrastructural capabilities and development possibilities of any of Toronto's major nodes of activity.

A third place created at an expanded Etobicoke Centre has the potential to draw together the residents of the area and create a community from its now disparate elements. The Islington Gallery of Art developed in this thesis will provide the beginning of such a third place: a start to a promising future in the development of the Etobicoke Centre.



*fig. 1.5 An example of a traditional third place in Toronto is Queen St. W.: street artists, street vendors, ice cream trucks, street cars, shopping, and plenty of cafes to choose from where one can relax and enjoy the city.*

## The Third Place

Vital neighbourhoods in major cities demonstrate that in order for daily life to be relaxing and fulfilling, there should be a balance between three realms of daily experience. Urban sociologist and Professor Emeritus at the Department of Sociology at the University of West Florida, Ray Oldenburg, is best known for his book, *The Great Good Place*, where he identifies these three realms as the domestic, the productive, and the social. The social realm is what Oldenburg calls the 'third place' which, as part of informal public life, offers the basis for building and celebrating a community.<sup>2</sup> Sidewalks, streets, squares, pubs, cafes, post offices, and corner stores are at the heart of a community's social vitality. By drawing people together in these spaces, a 'third place' is created where one can cultivate a broader social life and expand one's social awareness beyond the walls of home and office.

The problematic impact of the urban reforms of the modernist movement in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century laid the groundwork for the social based urbanism movement to which Ray Oldenburg's *The Great Good Place* belongs. The modernist doctrine standardized urban planning to impart an abstract order on the actual chaos and fragmentation of the city. As a result, the existing city was replaced by a rational city based on a strict separation of functions. Starting in the 1950's, an influential group of architects, urban designers, planners, and sociologists voiced a rejection towards those modernist values of Robert Moses, Le Corbusier, and other proponents of the CIAM (*Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne*). Involved in the rejection of the modernist schemes, in both Europe and North America were as varied a group of voices as Team X (Ten), Jane Jacobs, Lewis Mumford, Christopher Alexander, Peter Calthorpe, and Richard Sennett, to name a few.

The work of Team X (Ten) influenced Oldenburg's thesis of the third place. Team X (Ten), for example, offered a great deal of utopian thinking in the social life of cities in light of the monumental task of rebuilding in Europe throughout the post-war years.\*<sup>1</sup>

\*<sup>1</sup>: Team X was formed in 1953 from some younger members of CIAM and was lead by Alison and Peter Smithson, Aldo Van Eyck and Jacob Bakema. They questioned issues pertaining to modernization, the welfare state, consumer society, the role of the architect within the context of urban design and the identity and belonging of the citizen. From their observations of daily routine and understandings of existing urban patterns, Team X's architectural proposals were situated within a social, historical and site specific context that re-established the values of the traditional pedestrian-oriented street.

\*<sup>2</sup>: Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) is a derisive critique of modernist planning policies that Jacobs claimed were destroying many existing inner-city communities, this book is arguably the most influential book written on urban development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Jacobs made a passionate plea for the city of diversity, and went so far as to ridicule suburbia which at the time was becoming the residential ideal for millions of Americans. Jacobs promoted a dense, mixed-use urban aesthetic that preserves the uniqueness intrinsic to individual neighbourhoods. Her evolutionary approach dictated four principles for the successful functioning of vital city neighbourhoods where the urban dweller is a participant in the performance of the "sidewalk ballet". Firstly, a district needs to serve multi functions, to ensure that people are on the streets on different schedules. Secondly, Jacobs believed short building blocks and intricate street structure were a benefit to citizens. Thirdly, Jacobs claimed that there should be a variety in the use, structure, and age of buildings in a neighbourhood. Lastly, Jacobs advocated for a dense concentration of people within a district.<sup>6</sup> Only in combination with one another, according to Jacobs, could these conditions generate a diversity that is needed for the security, social cohesion and economic development of neighbourhoods within the city.

Jane Jacobs, writing from New York and Toronto, was also a skeptic of any type of planning and like Team X, challenged the CIAM doctrine. Jacobs' *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) and Mumford's *The Highway and The City* (1964) expressed a vision for urban structure as a shared space for different uses where human beings live in communities characterized by layered complexity, small scale and a seeming orderly chaos.\*<sup>2</sup> Jacobs' activism and rebellion established a trend that led to the formation of the so-called social planning movement involving intellectuals, sociologists, geographers, architects, and urban designers.<sup>3</sup> Christopher Alexander's *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* (1977) aimed to realize an organic urban plan through pattern analyses and participative processes of design.<sup>4</sup> This critique of modernism continued. Writing later and a protagonist of the New Urbanism movement of the 1980's, urban planner and architect Peter Calthorpe recommended solutions and alternatives to counteract the phenomenon of suburban sprawl in *The Pedestrian Pocket Book* (1989) and *The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community and the American Dream* (1993). The basic model that Calthorpe demonstrated was a compact, walkable community with a hierarchy of public and private architecture, and open spaces conducive for face-to-face social interaction.\*<sup>3</sup> Throughout the 1980's, William Whyte, author of *The Social life of Small Urban Spaces* (1980) and Jan Gehl, Danish architect and author of *Life Between Buildings* (1987), participated in the social urbanism movement through their solutions for the public landscape, which conveyed a common goal of increasing public places for informal sociability.

Oldenburg followed with *The Great Good Place* (1989), which picks up where Gehl and Whyte leave off. Oldenburg believes that the absence of informal, not-at-work, not-at-home social life is the cause of contemporary North Americans' disconnection and cause of the frequent break-up and misery of isolated families. Like Whyte, Oldenburg condemns large scale urban and suburban developments. In *The Great Good Place* he explains that the growing disconnection

between the North American family and the city is caused by the strict specialization of spaces and roles. Oldenburg's sociological theory draws upon Richard Sennett and Philip Slater and upon Georg Simmel's early essay on sociability.\*<sup>4</sup> In the spirit of de Tocqueville, Oldenburg envisions third places as vital mediating structures that facilitate community life beyond the intimacy of private domestic roles and the narrow impersonality of the institutionalized world of work. While Oldenburg's argument for the importance of the informal public life in contemporary society is not a new one in sociological literature, *The Great Good Place* is a contribution in depicting the value of informal group affiliation and social support networks in society. Oldenburg demonstrates a rejection of modernist principles and a celebration of the social life in a community through what he defines as the 'third place' following in the tradition started by Team X, Jacobs, Alexander, Calthorpe and Sennett.

Without such places, the urban area fails to nourish the kinds of relationships and the diversity of human contact that are the essence of the city. Deprived of these settings, people remain lonely within their crowds. The only predictable social consequence of technological advancement is that they will grow ever more apart from one another.<sup>5</sup>

Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, v.

According to Ray Oldenburg, the third place provides escape and relief from stress at home and work. As a core setting in the neighbourhood, it is where one is most likely to encounter other residents of the neighbourhood. It is a meeting place where people can gather to find out news about the community. The social experience that a common meeting place offers is a defining characteristic of a vital neighbourhood. Through interactions with others in the community, the third place becomes a world of its own and provides psychological comfort and support to the individual. In this way, once an individual has a third place, it also has him.<sup>10</sup>

\*<sup>3</sup>: *The New Urbanism doctrine is inspired by a small-town philosophy, attempting to rebuild community life through urban design that avoids mono-functional zoning with the integration of open spaces in residential areas. New Urbanism inherently applies Jacobs' conditions for generating diversity, by building new communities and repairing old ones that aim to mix people of different incomes, ethnicity, race and age, on land of different uses while integrating buildings of different architectural types. New urbanism speculates on the relationship between social behavior and physical form.*

\*<sup>4</sup>: *Richard Sennett presents a variation on the familiar thesis "mass society-atomization-decline of community-alienation"<sup>7</sup> which was described a century earlier by social philosopher and forerunner of sociology Alexis De Tocqueville. Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man* (1977), speaks of classical social theory in its concern for the meaning of modernity, the nature of social cohesion, and the relationship between person and polity.<sup>8</sup> Philip Slater, in *The Pursuit of Loneliness: American Culture at the Breaking Point* (1970), critiques the culture which produced the counter-culture and the opposition to which it stands. This book is a study of American values and national character, alongside the emergence of new cultural forms in American society. Georg Simmel's essay, *The Philosophy of Money* (1900), presents an original theory on the social transformation of the self, through interaction and the growing intellectualization of the self in the metropolis. Simmel describes a world of paradoxes, shades, and ambiguities that are both social and moral.<sup>9</sup> De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835-1840), draws upon European philosophy to interpret his observations of American society, in a critique of American society. His theme on the mediocrity of democracy conveys America's archetypal middle-class society as a model not to be imitated, and as a warning of what must be avoided.*



*fig. 1.6 Police barricade at Dundas Square:  
Yonge Street closed to vehicles for a summer  
street festival.*



The North American suburban lifestyle consists historically of the twin pillars of home and work, where people travel directly in their cars from one to the other and back. A third place between these two has not been able to develop as successfully as in the historically evolved city centre. Third places thrive best in communities where walking allows for people to engage in face to face contact, and where walking takes people to more destinations than the automobile. If there does exist a third place in today's suburb, it could be in the form of its shopping malls and big box stores. These facilities, usually located centrally, serve a number of outlying developments within a region and need to be reached by automobile. There is little chance of meeting new people in these settings.

The Islington Gallery of Art proposed in this thesis, offers a local place where both Islington and Etobicoke community members can gather and call their own. It offers a non-commercial, cultural space that acts as a threshold to the larger metropolitan city where the visitor can be both spectator and contributor to the social realm. The circulation zone in the proposed gallery has been designed as a public square-as-third place. Directly connected to the subway concourse level by ramps in a six storey atrium, the gallery circulation freely accommodates transit riders and residents of the Islington community by remaining open the same hours as the subway station. People move freely on these ramps to each gallery floor, animating the Bloor Street façade. Resting places, lingering places and places for social interaction are provided on each level, where people can sit, talk or look out at the city. The Islington Gallery of Art is both for watching and for being watched, lessons it has learned from the city square, the ultimate third place. The café and outdoor terrace on the top floor is another destination located within the public circulation zone. The other half of the building contains the art galleries which are closed and open during regular business hours. The Islington Gallery of Art forms a complete place of respite between home and work, and is a core setting in the neighbourhood where one may go and stay as long as the building is open.\*

*\*Although the building described is conceived to accommodate a general public, the author understands that as social beings, we live in a world with others where norms, rule systems, and supervisors are potential constraints on an individual's freedom.<sup>11</sup> Different degrees of freedom and control exist in different situations, which are dependent on various factors such as the norms and behaviors of the individuals and groups using the space and the management of the space.<sup>12</sup> This thesis does not engage in this territory directly nor does it provide a framework for dealing with these situations, but it does provide a setting for different spheres to overlap such as commuter traffic and art gallery visitors. This thesis deals with the physical form which serves as a contribution to the city in an effort to enhance the neighborhood. The aspects of social control and politics are beyond the scope of this thesis. This thesis adapts Ray Oldenburg's term 'third place' and uses it to refer to the social realm in life, in between the domestic and productive realms. The social realm is established when a community of people gather at their own will, within reason and accept rules that may be imposed on them by the constraints of an interior environment.*

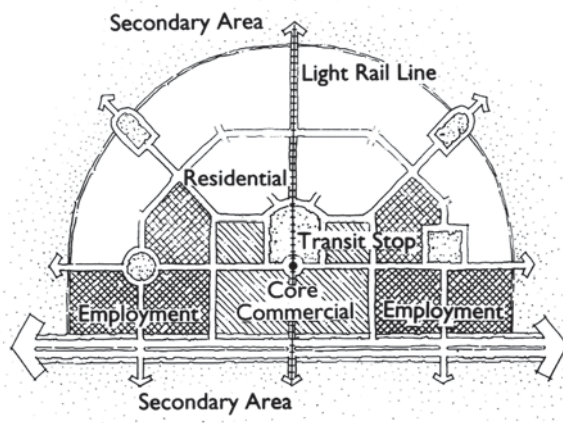
## Infrastructure

Today the public world is shrunken and fractured. Parks, schools, libraries, post offices, town halls, and civic centres are dispersed, underutilized, and under funded. Yet these civic elements determine the quality of our shared world and express the value we assign to community .... Our basic public space, the street, is given over to the car and its accommodation, while our private world becomes more and more isolated behind garage doors and walled compounds. Our public space lacks identity and is largely anonymous, while our private space strains toward a narcissistic autonomy. Our communities are zoned black and white, private or public, my space or nobody's.<sup>13</sup>  
Peter Calthorpe, *The Next American Metropolis*, 23.

The second conceptual basis of the Islington Gallery of Art is derived from New Urbanist architect and author Peter Calthorpe's reversal of the form of the car-oriented suburb into his design concept of the 'Transit Oriented Development' or TOD. Such a new community for Calthorpe is necessarily a 'nodal' one, meaning it is centered on the node created by the presence of a transit stop. Such a place integrates civic and retail activities with moderate and high density housing areas, and jobs and public spaces. Shared public spaces, described in Calthorpe's theory, recognize the need for an identifiable social centre in the TOD neighbourhoods. The transit station also offers community residents a connection to the city, providing convenient and ready access to downtown. One has an alternative to driving his car, with the option of using subway or bus. Critically, the transit-oriented community is a walkable environment, bringing destinations such as local shopping, parks, day care, and civic services into close proximity to each other. In this way, each 'transit village' becomes an active hub that could attract people, with its easy infrastructural links, from all over the larger city.

According to Calthorpe's theory, city growth is concentrated in and around such dense urban centers along the lines of rapid transit, a form which encourages infill and redevelopment efforts, and eliminates

fig. 1.7 Diagram of new urbanist, Peter Calthorpe's theory of an urban Transit Oriented Development (Transit Village).  
SOURCE: *The Next American Metropolis*, 57.



the danger of random growth in distant sites served only by highways. Although these ideas are not new according to Calthorpe, “they are simply a return to the timeless goals of urbanism... fundamentally different from the ideas that have guided planning for the last two generations.”<sup>14</sup> Overall, Transit Oriented Development brings more people into everyday face-to-face contact, within a dense and diverse neighbourhood of land uses and housing types; it provides one with more choices on where to live and how to travel.<sup>15</sup>

The urban culture of the Islington site is one of constant movement: from the arrivals and departures of subway, buses, taxis, and the passage of trains on the adjacent Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) line; to the commuters parking cars and walking to the subway station and the bus terminal; the residents of the community crossing the CPR, or walking along Islington Avenue to the apartment neighbourhood on the other side of the CPR right-of-way; shoppers promenading along the retail strips on Bloor Street West and Islington Village on Dundas Street West; or going to Tom Riley Park for outdoor recreation.

Vehicular and human traffic binds the various elements of the site. Although it is neither possible nor desirable in today’s metropolis to eliminate automobile traffic, it is feasible to promote areas of pedestrian activity strong enough to compete with vehicular traffic. To this end, the thesis design proposal offers connections, in the form of pedestrian paths, from the Islington Gallery of Art to Islington Village, and to Tom Riley Park that will link with the Toronto Bike Path system along the Ontario Hydro Corridor. Outside the thesis project itself; there are additional articles in the various section of the appendix that broaden the thesis argument and description of the anticipated culture of an expanded Islington station and Art Gallery. The appendix section on “The Subway” describes the important role of transit infrastructure in the City of Toronto, “The Art Gallery” section provides an overview on



fig. 1.8 Olafur Eliasson. *The Weather Project*, 2003. *The Tate Modern, Turbine Hall*

Art has an overwhelming ability to inspire, provoke, and involve the public. For instance, in 2003, Olafur Eliasson's installation transformed the grand space of the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, Britain's national museum of modern art in London, England. It was overpowered by the immense feeling of warmth from a huge shining sun. The installation was extremely engaging. It surprised Londoners and tourists with the awe inspiring feeling of a shining summer sun during a London winter, when the real sun hardly shines at all. People came to the Tate to drench themselves in a surrogate sun. People lay on the floor of the darkened Turbine Hall by the hundreds. A foggy mist permeated the space. The ceiling above was covered by a mirror reflecting the people in the hall below. The sun, made up of a semi-circular form of hundreds of mono-frequency lamps, reflected in the mirror above to create a full sphere linking the real space with the reflection. The purpose of mono-frequency lamps was to emit light at such narrow frequencies so that colours other than yellow and black were invisible. Olafur Eliasson transformed the Turbine Hall into a vast duotone landscape. Because it was free, the exhibit was open to anyone wanting to experience the sun on any given gloomy day in London.

the developing form and function of the art gallery and its current role as a local community arts centre; and finally, a schematic program for the future needs of the growing community is described in the appendix section, “The Islington Gallery of Art inspires Etobicoke’s Future Vision”.

Cities act as preservers of civilization. The Greeks originally imagined the city as a congregation of common people in the street. *Polis*, the Greek word for city, originally meant ‘throng’ or crowd, which relates to *poly* (many) and parallels the Latin *pleo* (plenty, full) and *plebs* (crowd, mob, common plebeian).<sup>16</sup> People engage in the life of the city to partake in its action, not to escape it. In *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, William H. Whyte, author and intuitive urban analyst, affirmed that people go by choice to lively places because what attracts people most is other people.<sup>17</sup> It is in the public realm of the city that people meet and congregate. It is here, that they can sit, stand, gossip, or watch other people go by. These passive contacts are the most common in the public space, where one can choose to be present among others in a public setting in a relaxed and undemanding way. When people circulate and experience other people in public spaces, the number of new stimuli is endless.<sup>18</sup> No moment is the same. More people are attracted to the square that creates a ‘self-reinforcing process’,<sup>19</sup> where continuous activity generation grows in scope and duration by the people that assemble there.

The Islington Gallery of Art adopts the attributes of the public square in an interior environment that can function year round, regardless of climate or season. Seeing others in action in an environment that we share with them inspires us. People that are involved in their community are more apt to care about it. A stable, resilient, and cohesive local community adds to the well being of the larger society.<sup>20</sup>

*“...The regeneration of cities must look to the street as well as to the structures rising from it, to culture as well as to civilization, to soul as well as to project...Culture has the possibility of rising up when a handful of people fall in love with each other’s ideas. They become drunk and insane with ideas. This moves the culture. In this way we harness the outrage, bridle the objections and possibly generate fresh surprises...”*

James Hillman, *Volume 2: City and Soul*.

## Culture in Toronto

In 2003, the City of Toronto published a 10 year Culture Plan with the goal to place Toronto as a 'Creative City' on par with cities such as Chicago, Milan, Barcelona, Montreal, and San Francisco.<sup>21</sup> Creative Cities, according to the report, augment their resident's already high quality of life with arts and educational institutions, vibrant street life, and ethno-cultural and intellectual diversity. Creative Cities, also, are driven by people with ideas and draw talent from elsewhere, while holding on to those they develop.<sup>22</sup> Toronto's Culture Plan is based on the following principles:

City Council recognizes that culture plays an essential role in building and sustaining a diverse urban community that is socially and economically healthy.

The City's cultural programs will promote inclusivity and celebrate cultural diversity.

Toronto residents and visitors should have affordable and convenient opportunities to participate in the cultural life of the city.

City Council will play a leadership role to ensure that Toronto has a vibrant, active and strong cultural life.<sup>23</sup>

The Toronto Culture Plan further asserts that maintaining art, culture and heritage are not only essential to Toronto's quality of life but economic future as well. In Toronto, each dollar invested (directly and indirectly) in cultural activities generates 3.2 dollars in economic activity.<sup>24</sup> By 2013, the Culture Division is aiming to see an additional investment of \$25 million in the cultural sector, which would generate \$80 million in economic activity.

In order for Toronto to remain competitive as a cultural capital it must invest more dollars per capita each year on arts, culture, and heritage, than it currently does. As of 2003, Toronto spent only \$13.81 per capita each year on cultural endeavors, (which equals about five adult subway cash fares).<sup>25</sup> Vancouver spends \$17.71, Chicago \$21.95, Montreal \$26.62 and San Francisco \$86.01.<sup>26</sup>

One way that Vancouver and Montreal raise extra funds for cultural tourism is through hotel room levy. Montreal's \$2 a day room tax and Vancouver's 2% hotel room tax help fund and promote culture and tourism in these cities.<sup>27</sup> Some American cities have also adopted this system. Toronto, however, still relies on a small share from property taxes plus additional funds from both Federal and Provincial governments for its cultural funding, even though analysts agree Canada's big cities are too big and too complex to depend on property tax alone.<sup>28</sup>

There are several funding sources the City of Toronto could use to develop its cultural institutions. Some measures are currently available to the city, while others would require Provincial legislative changes. Currently, the Hummingbird Centre, the St. Lawrence Centre, and Toronto Centre for the Arts have ticket surcharges to cover capital costs and building upkeep. One way the city, instead of patrons, could bridge the funding gap is to invest funds collected on admissions to 'Places of Amusement', which include sports arenas, nightclubs, and commercial exhibitions. Since the city collects levies on new developments to meet growth-related capital infrastructure requirements such as roads, sanitary sewerage, waterworks, firefighting, libraries, parks and recreation, transit and development-related studies,<sup>29</sup> the Province could amend the *Development Charges Act* to collect development charges for cultural facilities as well. Another source of revenue arises when the city allows an increase in height or density of new developments. According to Section 37 of the *Planning Act*, Toronto receives community benefits; which, for example, could include cultural facilities, public art, or streetscape improvements.<sup>30</sup> Implementing the above mentioned measures would bring millions of dollars into the art, culture and heritage sectors, bringing Toronto closer to the spending of other major North American cultural capitals.

In November 2005, the City of Toronto Culture Division published a progress report describing which measures have been implemented so far to realize the 2003 Culture Plan. The priority actions that the Culture Division outlined in this report were: to promote creativity in 2006; to continue investment in the major cultural



institutions and Toronto Arts Council; to invest in city cultural facilities; commission public art; and to expand arts services and programs for youth.<sup>31</sup>

To implement the above-mentioned measures, Toronto's City Council has committed to increase capital investment in the cultural sector. In 2005, per capita investment on culture was \$15.71, up \$1.90 from 2003. The Culture Division hopes this figure will continue to increase by \$2.70 per year over the next three years.<sup>32</sup> Although the City has not implemented the hotel room levy as suggested in the 2003 Culture Plan as a source of revenue in addition to property tax, it has approved \$1 million from Section 37 of the *Planning Act* for the restoration of the historic Wychwood TTC streetcar facility towards a multi-tenant arts facility. City Council has also approved an exponential increase in the future funding for Toronto's Arts Council, which was up 5% in 2005, from 2003.<sup>33</sup>

City grants have increased 11% in 2005 from 2003,<sup>34</sup> giving rise to the unprecedented building and expansion of close to a dozen major arts and cultural institutions,<sup>35</sup> launching Toronto into a 'Cultural Renaissance'. These major cultural institutions are the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, the National Ballet School, the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, and the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD). In effect of these policies was that Toronto was designated by the Federal government, in 2005, as a Cultural Capital.

Alongside this achievement, the first priority of promoting creativity in the city became realized through the 'TO Live with Culture' campaign, lasting from September 2005 until December 2006. This campaign includes mostly free festivals, performances, and a major marketing initiative to raise public awareness and interest in Toronto's culture sector.<sup>36</sup> Specific events in the City range from *Get on Track with Culture* where visual arts, film, and station performances charged Eglinton station in October, 2005 to a *Nuit Blanche* event, in October, 2006 featuring free contemporary art exhibitions throughout the entire city from sunset to sunrise, based on Paris' annual *Nuit Blanche*.<sup>37</sup>

Concurrent with the renovation and expansion of the AGO, ROM, OCAD, and Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, the Toronto Community Foundation (TCF) has proposed the revitalization of three subway stations along University Avenue, Toronto's future arts avenue, "to boost cultural tourism and public transit in Toronto."<sup>38</sup> The *Arts on Track* project will see the renovation of St. Patrick, Museum, and Osgoode subway stations, by linking them visually to the cultural institution in their respective vicinities.

TCF President and CEO Anne Swarbick is leading work with individual donors, government, cultural institutions, and Toronto's business community to finance this project. The *Arts on Track* project shows that the City is already endorsing a combination of public transit with culture, providing local precedents for the Islington Gallery of Art.

The Islington Gallery of Art would be part and parcel of this Cultural Renaissance, helping the City of Toronto gain a distinct and innovative presence on the cultural stage, as the future focal point in the Etobicoke Centre.

fig. 1.9 Renderings of the proposed Museum, Osgoode and St. Patrick TTC stations.  
SOURCE: Toronto Community Foundation, Press Release November, 2005.  
CREDIT: Diamond and Schmitt Architects/ Cicada Design



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, 22.
- <sup>2</sup> Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, 14.
- <sup>3</sup> Houben and Calabrese, eds, *Mobility: A Room with a View*, 84.
- <sup>4</sup> *Post Ex Sub Dis*, 18.
- <sup>5</sup> Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, Introduction: v.
- <sup>6</sup> Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 151.
- <sup>7</sup> Hendershott, Anne. *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Jan. 1991), pp.78-79.
- <sup>8</sup> Calhoun, Craig. *Social Forces*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (June 1978), pp. 1255-1256.
- <sup>9</sup> Ardit, Jorge. "Simmel's Theory of Alienation and the Decline of the Nonrational". *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 14, No. 2. (Jul., 1996), pp. 93-108.
- <sup>10</sup> Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, 39.
- <sup>11</sup> Carr, *Public Space*, 137.
- <sup>12</sup> Carr, *Public Space*, 137.
- <sup>13</sup> Calthorpe, *The Next American Metropolis*, 23.
- <sup>14</sup> Calthorpe, *The Next American Metropolis*, 43.
- <sup>15</sup> Bernick, *Transit Villages*, 67.
- <sup>16</sup> Hillman, *The City as Dwelling*, 2.
- <sup>17</sup> Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, 19.
- <sup>18</sup> Gehl, *Life Between Buildings*, 23.
- <sup>19</sup> Gehl, *Life Between Buildings*, 75.
- <sup>20</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community\\_of\\_place](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_place), sourcing <http://www.pps.org/info/placemakingtools/placemakers/roldenburg> and <http://www.bettertogether.org/>
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., 4
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid., 22.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 6.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., 5, quoting: Investment in City cultural programs: John P. Palmer. *Bread and Circuses: The Local Benefits of Sports and Cultural Businesses*. Urban Papers series. *Commentary* (C.D. Howe Institute), no. 161, March 2002. Palmer based his formula on work by John Siegfried and Andrew Zimbalist. Investment in arts and culture grants: Toronto City Council, Economic Development and Parks Committee, Report No. 1 to City Council meeting, February 4-6, 2003. "2002 Cultural Facilities Capital Grants Recommendations (All Wards)." Recommending adoption of a report by the Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, November 21, 2002.

- <sup>25</sup> City of Toronto Culture Division, *Culture Plan Progress Report*, November, 2005.  
<http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/Culture-Plan-Progress-Reportpdf.pdf>, 10.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 5, quoting City of Toronto, Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism. "Per Capita Funding of Culture by Major Municipalities." Report to City Council, Economic Development and Parks Committee. June 12, 2002.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid., quoting Vanessa Lu. "Luring the Visitor Buck." *Toronto Star*: March 8, 2003.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 27.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 28.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> City of Toronto Culture Division, *Culture Plan Progress Report*, November, 2005.  
<http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/Culture-Plan-Progress-Reportpdf.pdf>, 20.
- <sup>32</sup> City of Toronto Culture Division, *Culture Plan Progress Report*, November, 2005.  
<http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/Culture-Plan-Progress-Reportpdf.pdf>, 10.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid, 8.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid, 6.
- <sup>35</sup> [http://www.livewithculture.ca/livewithculture\\_ca/about/cultural\\_renaissance\\_projects/](http://www.livewithculture.ca/livewithculture_ca/about/cultural_renaissance_projects/)
- <sup>36</sup> City of Toronto Culture Division, *Culture Plan Progress Report*, November, 2005.  
<http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/Culture-Plan-Progress-Reportpdf.pdf>, 22.
- <sup>37</sup> [http://www.livewithculture.ca/layout/set/print/livewithculture\\_ca/about/signature\\_events/](http://www.livewithculture.ca/layout/set/print/livewithculture_ca/about/signature_events/)
- <sup>38</sup> [http://www.tcf.ca/about\\_us/pressrelease.html](http://www.tcf.ca/about_us/pressrelease.html)

*“Urban space is experienced as an event rather than as an object... In the public sphere of cities, viewing ourselves as actors is a prerequisite for urban communicative behaviour ...theatrical means are employed to intensify the atmosphere, to choreograph sequences of movement, to alternate between tension and relaxation, concealment and revelation. Like dance and ritual translated into form, everyday actions can derive a unique force from the articulation of the space around them.”*

Janson, Alban and Burklin, Thorsten. *AuftritteScenes*, 13

# THE ISLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD

The intersection of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue is proposed for development to help establish Etobicoke Centre as another node in the City of Toronto: “Located at the western gateway to the city between Lester B. Pearson International Airport and Toronto’s downtown core, Etobicoke Centre offers a strategic location to attract business and residents alike.”<sup>1</sup> Located outside the downtown core but close to the city limits, Etobicoke Centre is 15 kilometres to downtown Toronto, or approximately a 20 minute subway ride.

## Regional Site Analysis



*fig. 2.1 ROAD STRUCTURE: The site of the design proposal is bound by Bloor Street West, Islington Avenue, and the CPR. Regionally, the site is surrounded by a triangle formed by Bloor Street West, Montgomery Road, Dundas Street West, and divided north/south by Islington Avenue. The orthogonal grid, where subdivisions were built lies in contrast to the winding roads traversing through the Apartment Neighbourhood. Vehicular traffic can conveniently access the Gardiner Expressway, located 2km directly to the south of Islington TTC station.*



*fig. 2.2 BUILT FORM: Directly to the north of Islington TTC station, the Central Apartment Neighbourhood is an island among the surrounding post-war subdivisions. Built during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, the apartment towers are scattered in "park like" settings, in an adaptation of functionalist planning principles. The CPR cuts off access to the subway station from the residential towers.*

fig. 2.3 LAND USE: The regional triangle and surrounding context comprises a mix of land uses including residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial. Jane Jacobs' first principle of a thriving, living neighbourhood is the integration and development of mixed land uses.

Land Use

- Green Open Space
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Mixed Use
- Post-War Subdivisions



fig. 2.4 UNDEVELOPED LAND: Adaptation of the functionalist planning principles has left acres of vacant land between apartment buildings. Located adjacent to a subway station, this is prime land for future development and densification.

Undeveloped Land

- Vacant Land
- Parking Lot





fig. 2.5 DENSITY: The densest area of the site is within the Central Apartment Neighbourhood, containing around 17,000-31,000 persons per square km per census tract.

Persons per square km  
per census tract (2001)

- 17,001 - 31,000
- 1,501 - 9,000
- 87 - 4,500

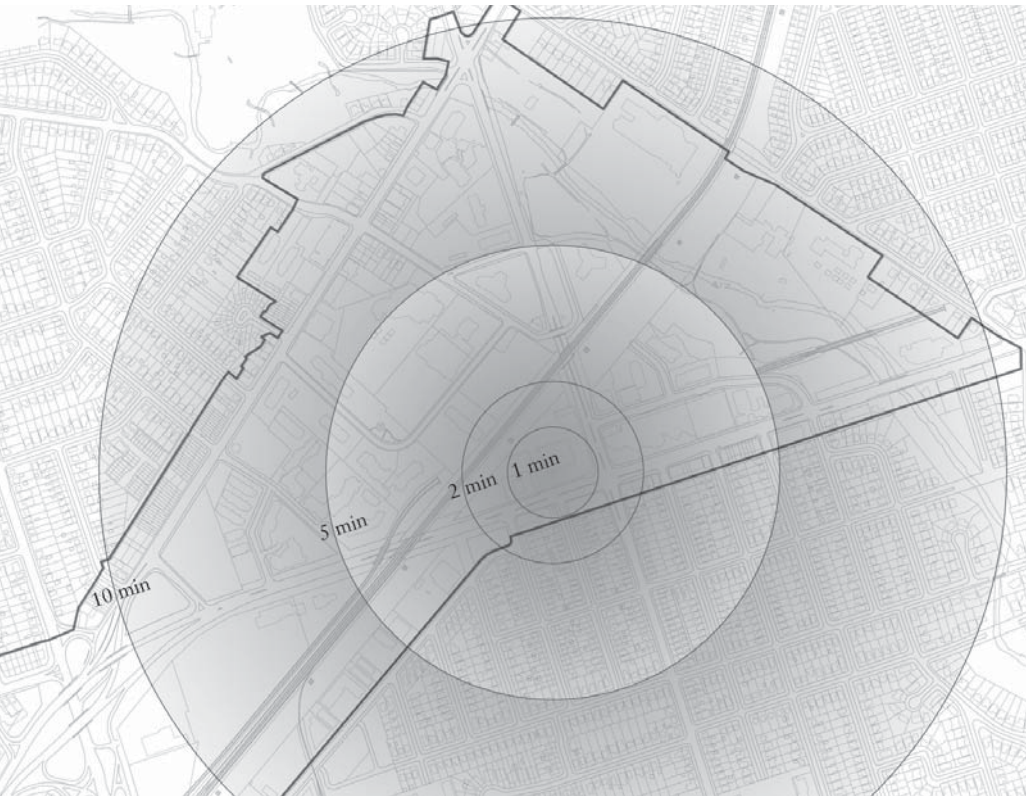


fig. 2.6 WALKING: The entire regional site triangle is within a 10 minute's walking distance to Islington station.

80m = 1 min. of walking  
400m = 5 min. of walking







*fig. 2.8 Dundas St. Islington c. 1925*  
“Dundas Street looking west across the Mimico Creek, west of Islington Avenue”.  
SOURCE: <http://www.etobicokehistorical.com/Pictures/pictures.html>

OPPOSITE ABOVE: *fig. 2.9 4709 Dundas St. W.: Montgomery's Inn, as it stands today.*

OPPOSITE BELOW: *fig. 2.10 Typical post WWII subdivisions surrounding the site area.*

## 1. Historic Islington Village

Historic Islington Village is located along Dundas Street West between Islington Avenue and the Six Points interchange. Islington Village was originally known as Mimico, but the name was changed in 1858 to avoid confusion with the postal station in Toronto's Mimico Lakeshore neighbourhood. Elizabeth Smith, who was the wife of Thomas Smith and a proprietor of the local hotel, chose the name after her birth place in England. In the early 1800s, Islington Village was centered on Dundas Street and Burnhamthorpe Road. Dundas was one of the first roads to be built in the province and was a prime location for settlers.<sup>2</sup>

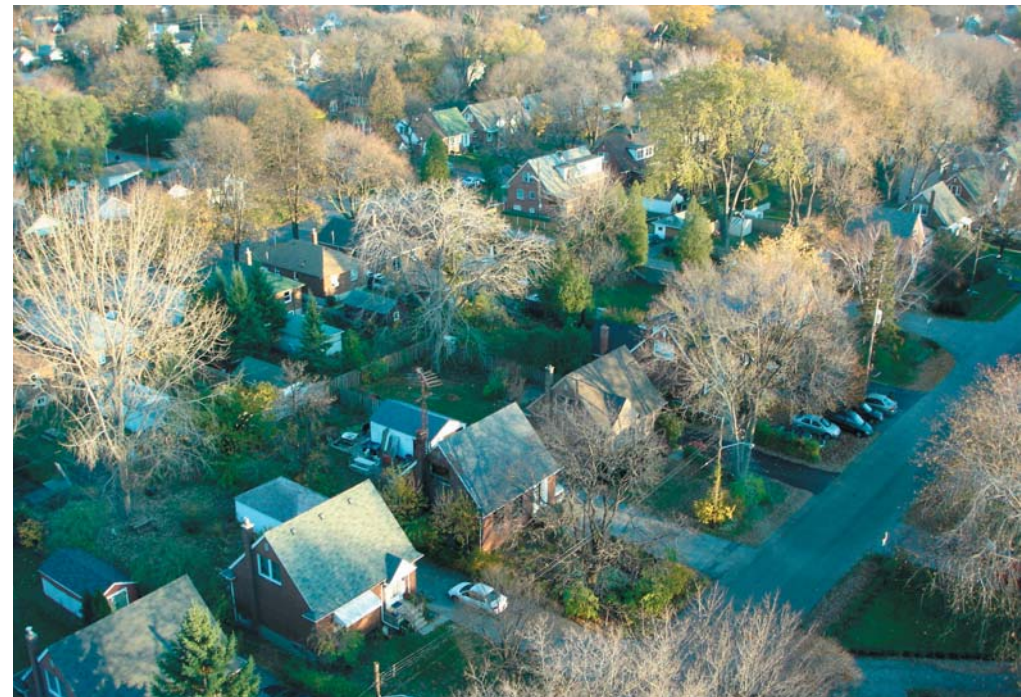
Stores, churches, a school, and a post office were the first public structures established in Islington Village. Thomas Montgomery's Inn was the focal point of the village; customers mainly included farmers traveling to and from the flourishing mills on the Humber River.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Montgomery cut Montgomery Road through his farm, which spanned the area from Dundas Street to Bloor Street, to provide convenient access to his inn for the farmers and others. Operation of the Inn ceased in 1856. Located at 4709 Dundas Street West, the large stone building still stands on the hill east of Mimico Creek and is now a local Museum and Tea House. It is one of the few buildings from the Old Village of Islington to survive the construction of residential subdivisions which took place shortly after WWII.

The Islington Burial Grounds, opened in 1807, are located on Dundas Street West. Built in 1843, the Methodist Church east of the Burial Grounds was the first church built on Dundas Street. This cemetery is now called Islington Pioneer cemetery, and remains a public property as well as one of the oldest cemeteries in Toronto.

In 1879, Canning Avenue, now Cordova Avenue, was cleared so that the market gardeners south of Dundas Street could have direct access to the Village and new railway station. The Credit Valley Railway, which became the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), to Detroit began operation through Islington on September 19, 1897.<sup>4</sup> People used the new railway for access to business and shopping in downtown Toronto. This kind of access to downtown made it preferable to live close to the railway station, which led to the construction of homes close to this station.

After WWI, there was a sharp increase in Islington's population. These people were mostly commuters who took the bus to work in downtown Toronto. The focus of village life shifted from the Methodist church to the auditorium of the 1920 public school, where people gathered for plays, concerts, card parties, dances, etc.<sup>5</sup> After WWII, a new influx of people to new subdivisions confirmed a transformation from village life to suburban living. Fields became filled with houses. The arrival of the subway in 1968 led to the construction of high-rise apartments.\*

*\*Refer to appendix A-1 for a photomontage elevation of Islington Village today.*





## 2. Islington TTC Subway Station and Bus Terminal

The Islington TTC subway station opened in 1968 as a terminal providing rapid transit to central Toronto. It is complete with a kiss-n-ride facility and commuter parking for over 1200 vehicles in three adjacent lots. This subway stop prompted high density office and residential development that occurred throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980, the Bloor line was extended west to Kipling, which is now the final stop.

Currently, Islington station stands as a major hub of transportation in the western periphery of Toronto and eastern Mississauga. It has a daily circulation of nearly 44,000 people,<sup>6</sup> which includes riders of the TTC subway and buses as well as Mississauga Transit. Islington station is the only subway station through which Mississauga Transit operates, with 16 bus routes. Buses frequently arrive at and depart from this terminal. There is also an Airport Express bus that travels to and from Islington Station. Furthermore, the GO train, which provides service between Union Station and Mississauga-Milton, travels along the adjacent CPR and stops at Kipling Station. Even though Kipling station is similar to Islington in many respects – both serve as major commuter transfer points in western Toronto – the area hasn't attracted the level of development found near Islington Station.<sup>7</sup>



ABOVE: *fig. 2.11 Islington TTC subway station.*

BELOW: *fig. 2.12 Islington TTC bus terminal.*

A Rapid Transit Extension from Kipling to Mississauga City Centre was one of six proposed lines assessed by the TTC in 2001, based on a projected 2.7 million population increase in Toronto by 2021. The Environmental Assessment Report, completed in 1993, outlined three options for the rapid transit line, either along the Dundas Street corridor, the CPR corridor or the Ontario Hydro corridor. This report predicted that the extension of the Bloor-Danforth Subway would increase east-west capacity to approximately 30,000-36,600 persons per hour during the morning peak hour.<sup>8</sup> It would also relieve east-west traffic congestion, diverting auto and bus traffic to stations west of Highway 427. Moving the airport express bus service to a station west of Highway 427 would decrease travel time to the airport. The extension would increase significantly accessibility to public transit and encourage transit use in the western suburbs. Commuter bus terminals and parking facilities could relocate from both Islington and Kipling stations to another location further west along the rapid transit extension, thereby freeing up lands for development.<sup>9</sup> The 2001 TTC Rapid Transit Expansion Study concluded, however, that the western extension was not a priority at that time. Lack of funding was a problem, but being mainly along industrial land, the corridor did not meet the requisite density. The success of rapid transit relies on a density of at least 100 residents or jobs per hectare surrounding the station. Currently, there are 100-250 persons/jobs per hectare around Islington station.<sup>10</sup>

A western rapid transit extension would address existing and future transportation deficiencies across the southern part of the Mississauga/Etobicoke boundary. The extension would increase public transit capacity leading to higher transit usage throughout Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon and Halton Region.

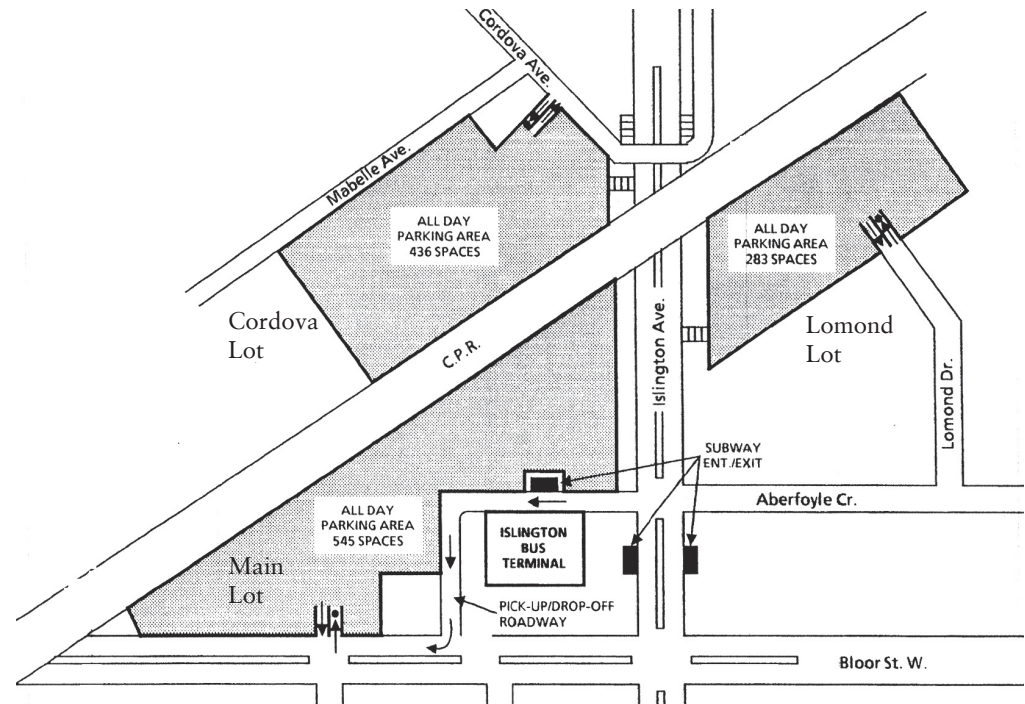


fig. 2.13 The TTC commuter parking lots at Islington Station. Not to Scale. SOURCE: TTC Operational Planning Dept.



fig. 2.14 The proposed stations in the TTC Bloor-Danforth western expansion study extend from Kipling station.



ABOVE: *fig. 2.15 The Ontario Hydro Corridor runs parallel to the CPR.*

BELOW: *fig. 2.16 Mimico Creek running through Tom Riley Park.*

### **3. CPR and Ontario Hydro Corridor**

The CPR and Ontario Hydro Corridor separate the Islington station and Bloor Street from the Central Apartment Neighbourhood. The Milton-Union Station GO train travels parallel to the CPR line at speeds up to 105 km/hr. In addition to passenger trains, about seventeen to twenty-two expedited freight trains pass on the track every 24 hours at an average speed of 72-80 km/hr.<sup>11</sup> The Hydro Corridor runs parallel to the south side of the railway.

### **4. Tom Riley Park**

Tom Riley Park, located at 50 Montgomery Road, includes 29.2 acres of green space with Mimico Creek winding its way through the park, and is connected to a broader system of open spaces by pedestrian and bicycle pathways. A variety of recreational facilities exist here including a baseball diamond, lawn bowling field, tennis courts, rugby/football/soccer fields, a children's playground, a pool, a lacrosse and ice rink. Mimico Creek and Tom Riley Park are a part of the natural heritage system in Toronto.

### **5. Office Space**

There is a total of 1.3 million square feet of office space within the Etobicoke Centre area. Located primarily in the vicinity of the Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue intersection, there are approximately 10,000 workers in offices, of whom 69% are full time employees.<sup>12</sup> Office employment comprises 73% of the jobs in the area, whereas 8.7% of the jobs are in the service sector and 8.4% are in retail. The Clarica Centre towers at the intersection of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue consist of three towers, a concourse level, and underground parking,

Population Density 2001  
 Total Population for Toronto= 2,481,494

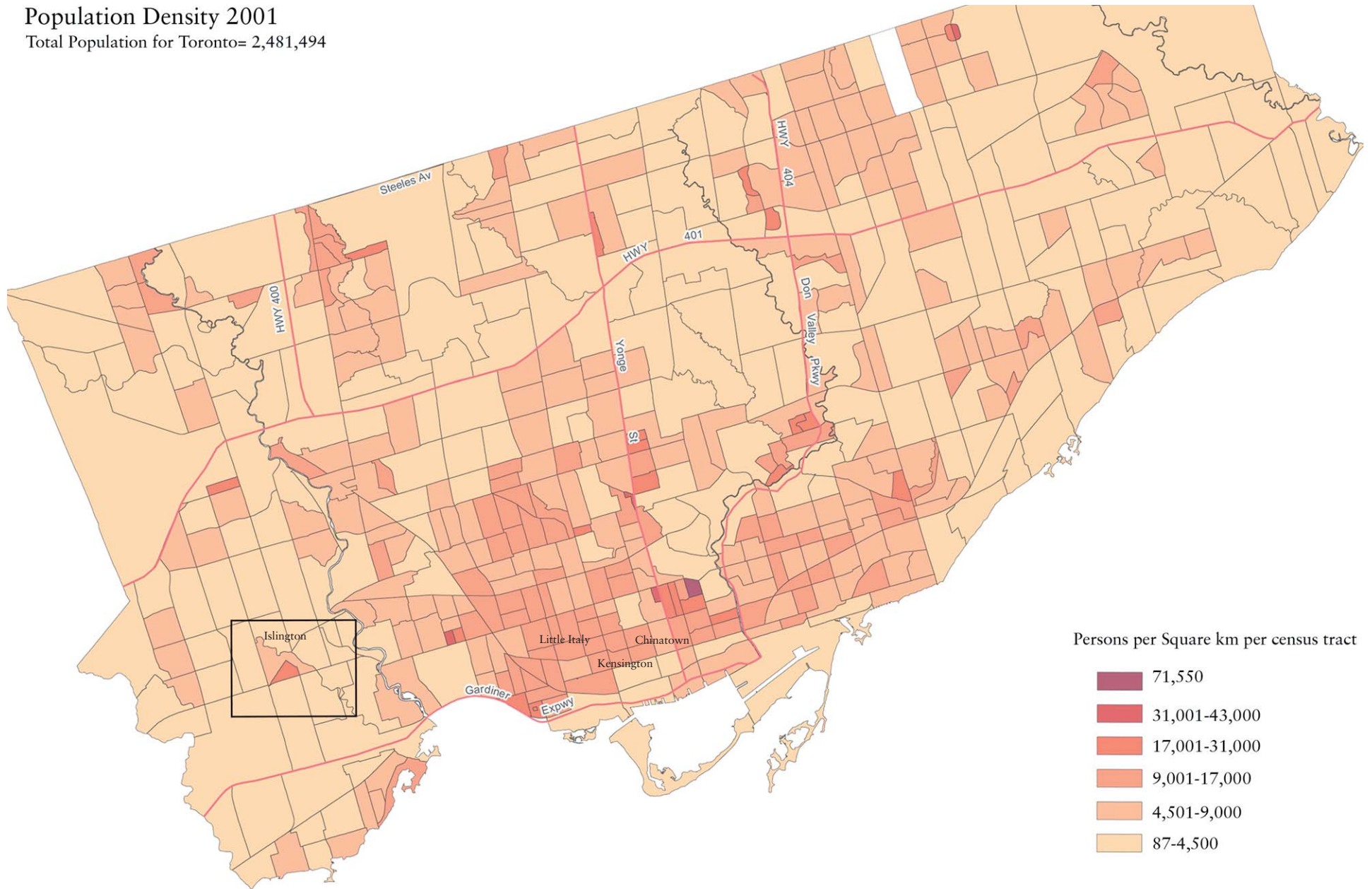


fig. 2.17 Map of Toronto Population Density in 2001, by census tract  
 SOURCE: Statistics Canada, 2001; DMTI Spatial 2002. Map prepared by Brock University Map Library, 2003.



and contribute a total of almost 850,000 square feet of office space of which 99% are occupied.<sup>13</sup> Two towers of 20 and 16 floors each were built in 1981. The third tower was built in 1991, with 17 floors of office space. Because of cost and location, between two subway stations and near the airport, this area is attractive for small and medium sized firms and has the potential to attract more businesses in the future.

## **6. Central Apartment Neighbourhood**

The Central Apartment Neighbourhood is enclosed in the triangle between Bloor Street West, Dundas Street West, and Islington Avenue. Directly north of the Islington subway station and on the other side of the CPR, this area contains a density of around 17,000-31,000 persons per square kilometre per census tract which is equivalent to the downtown Toronto census tracts of Little Italy, Kensington, and Chinatown (see map on facing page).

This mixed-use neighbourhood contains apartment buildings ranging from 6 to 36 stories in height, with 9,850 persons living in 4,715 dwelling units.<sup>14</sup> Ninety percent of these dwelling units are apartments, of which 82% are rented, and 44% of these rentals is social housing. Middle-aged persons (25-64 years) make up the largest proportion of the population in this area and seniors (65+) make up the second largest group. The number of children (0-14) is quickly catching up to the seniors' population, as there is an influx of young immigrant families with children.<sup>15</sup> According to the *City Centre West Directions Report Appendix* which referred to the *Social Indicators and Priority Areas Report*, this site has a higher concentration of children (0-14) than the City as a whole and the number of 0-4 year olds is higher here than in the City.<sup>16</sup> The three schools located in the area are all operating at their enrollment capacities.



ABOVE: *fig. 2.18 The Central Apartment Neighbourhood (looking north towards Bloor Street from the top floor of a 20 storey building on 2 Fieldway Road).*

BELOW: *fig. 2.19 New condominium developments under construction on Michael Power Place (November, 2005).*

The community houses a population of considerably lower income than the city average.<sup>17</sup> The top five home languages spoken, not including French or English, are Korean, Polish, Serbian, Ukrainian, and Italian.<sup>18</sup> These immigrant groups tend to be very mobile with large segments moving in and out of the area over relatively short periods of time, due to the good supply of affordable rental housing and social housing stock available, most of which was built in the 1970s and still remains in good condition. Each of the four social housing buildings has a waiting list, indicating the need for more affordable housing.

In 2001 and 2004, condominiums and townhouses were built on the western edge of the site, near the Six Points Interchange. Future developments on available land within the triangle have already been approved. In a conversation with Bill Kiru, Senior Planner of the West District, it was learned the aim for these developments is to attract empty nesters from the adjacent community currently living in detached homes, as well as singles and young couples looking to live on their own for the first time. In this way, neighbourhood diversity will be maintained on this site through the variety of housing types that attract residents with different levels of income.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> City of Toronto, *Etobicoke Secondary Plan*, 1. [www.toronto.ca/torontoplan/pdf/etob1\\_50.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/torontoplan/pdf/etob1_50.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Given, *Islington Village*, [http://www.montgomerysinn.com/Villages/body\\_villages.html](http://www.montgomerysinn.com/Villages/body_villages.html)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.montgomerysinn.com/Villages/body\\_villages.html](http://www.montgomerysinn.com/Villages/body_villages.html)

<sup>5</sup> Carrier, *Villages of Etobicoke*, 29.

<sup>6</sup> “Total All-Day Passengers at Islington Subway Station”, e-mail Jan. 12, 2006 from Peter Janas, Supervisor-Data Collection & Analysis, Service Planning TTC.

<sup>7</sup> City of Toronto, *City Centre West Secondary Plan: Directions Report Appendix, A-2*

<sup>8</sup> Ontario, Let’s Move, *Bloor-Danforth subway westerly extension : environmental assessment report : executive summary*, 5-30

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Toronto Transit Commission, *Rapid Transit Expansion Study*, 5, <http://www.toronto.ca/ttc/pdf/rtes2002.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [www.cpr.ca](http://www.cpr.ca), *Community Connect Line* 1-800-766-7912, inquiry regarding the 113 P5-8 CPR track.

<sup>12</sup> City of Toronto, *City Centre West Secondary Plan: Directions Report Appendix, A-2*.

<sup>13</sup> <http://toronto-3300-bloor-street-west.commercial-office-space-for-lease-5-932-fl.space4lease.ca/>

<sup>14</sup> City of Toronto, *City Centre West Secondary Plan: Directions Report Appendix, A-21*

<sup>15</sup> City of Toronto, *City Centre West Secondary Plan: Directions Report Appendix, A-21*

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., A-3

<sup>18</sup> *Islington City Centre West Social Profile #2*, [www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf2/cpa14.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf2/cpa14.pdf)

*“Museums offer us a different dimension to our normal lives. They establish themselves as cultural centres, communities of interest. They invite us to make cultural choices, which align us to others. They ‘devalue’ information in favour of imagination and creativity. They encourage risk-taking in interpretation and understanding. They provide a safe, calm sanctuary and yet encourage dangerous, risky turbulent thinking. They display objects, which are not for buying. They offer a range of interpretation, of plural voices, plural forms, text, digital, live, image and object. Museums should reflect not only their own view of themselves but also the views and voices of those outside their walls.”*

Sylvia Lahav, “A Special Place/A Learning Space: museums in the twenty-first century,” *The Art Book*, September 2000, Volume 7, Issue 4, 22.

# THE ISLINGTON GALLERY OF ART

The Islington Gallery of Art functions as a detour for commuters and residents of the broader community; it is a place in between home and work where people will pause to participate in a kind of public space that does not currently exist in this suburban area of Toronto. Some social interchange already occurs on the platform level of the Islington subway station, and more active social contact occurs above the subway platform on the entry concourse level. The new building is intended to act as a social condenser, attracting this activity to become a part of the gallery experience. Its exhibitions of contemporary art will be addressed to and conceived for the public.

The Islington Gallery of Art adapts the building typology of the Kunsthalle, a community arts centre that does not purchase or store its own art pieces i.e. a ‘non-collecting’ gallery. It exhibits temporary installations which change every two to three months. The non-collecting gallery will often borrow from a city’s major institutions or showcase traveling work from contemporary artists. Attracting local residents, the arts centre/community centre promotes the museum as a popular public place.



MABELLE AVENUE

CORDOVA ROAD

ABERFOYLE CRESENT

ISLINGTON AVENUE

BLOOR STREET WEST

CPR

## Connection and Accessibility

The Islington station will become accessible from different parts of the surrounding site area. A proposed path from the Central Apartment Neighbourhood via a new bridge that runs over the CPR will give residents convenient and direct access to the station. This bridge would lead not only to the Central Apartment Neighbourhood, but also will ramp down to grade and become a path that extends to Dundas Street West, the main street of Islington Village. This is one of two imperative connections that will encourage the public to visit the Islington Gallery of Art and its environs.

The second connection is to link the site to Toronto's bike path system. This path will help the City of Toronto towards its goal of having every resident by 2011 be within a five minute bicycle ride to the Bikeway Network.<sup>1</sup> The pedestrian/bike paths will run parallel to the Ontario Hydro Corridor. A new pedestrian/bike bridge beside the railway bridge will extend this path over Islington Avenue and through Tom Riley Park to the bicycle paths beyond.

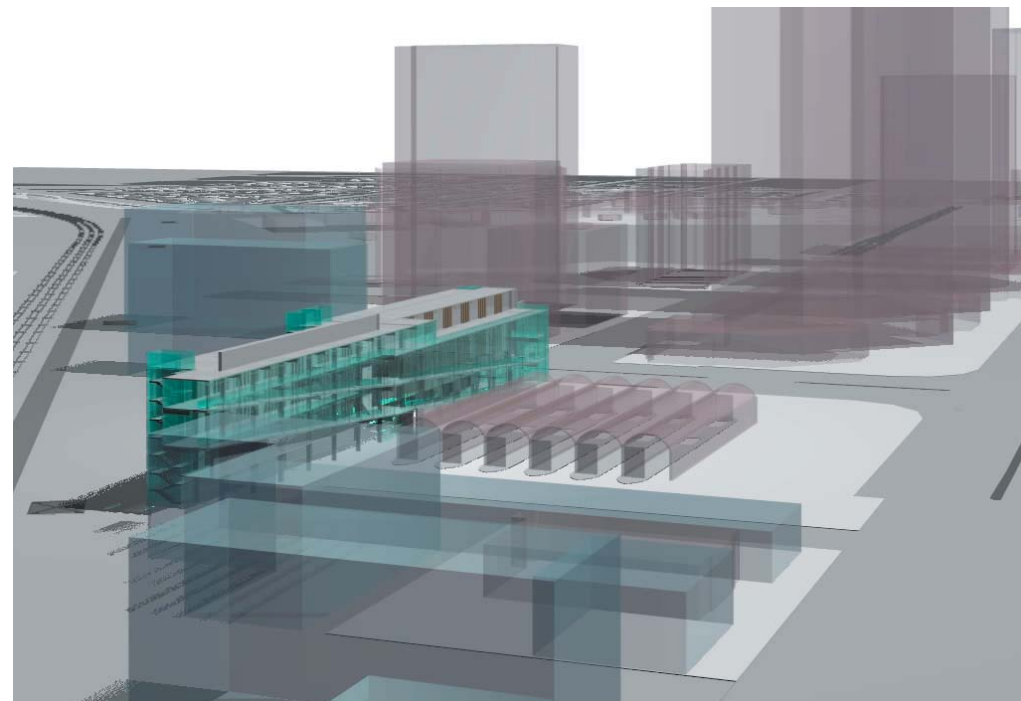
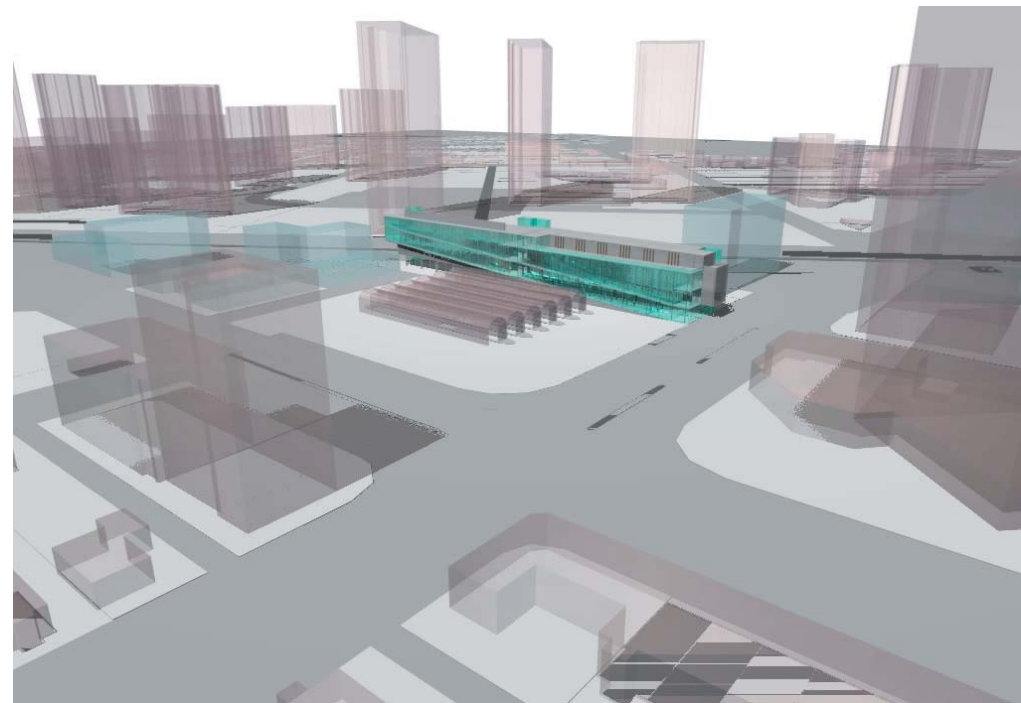
Access across the neighbourhood site triangle and to the station is necessary to trigger a charged community atmosphere. A thoroughway that links Boor Street with Islington Village on Dundas Street, and a pedestrian crossing over Islington Avenue to Tom Riley Park will strengthen the nodal capacity of Islington neighbourhood in the Etobicoke Centre.

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.1 Site and location plan of the Islington Gallery of Art, showing paths to Islington Village and to Tom Riley Park. Scale 1:2000.*

ABOVE: *fig. 3.2 The context of the Islington Gallery of Art on the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue, with new path to Islington Village.*

BELOW: *fig. 3.3 The new path leading to Tom Riley Park runs parallel to the Ontario Hydro Corridor and CPR.*

*The light blue buildings are notional, (according to the future vision plan, see appendix A-5).*



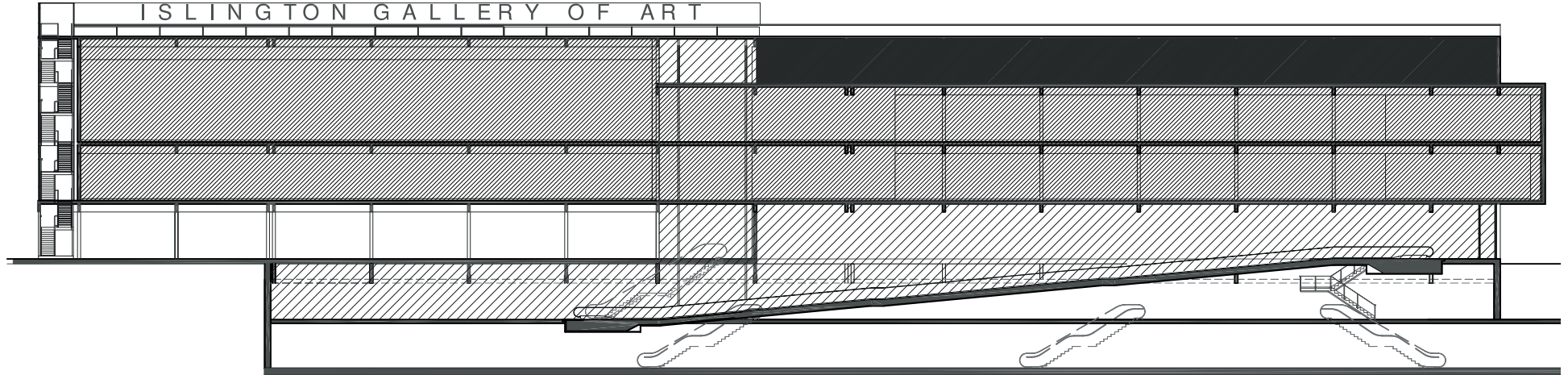





fig. 3.4 Parti diagrams in long and cross section.

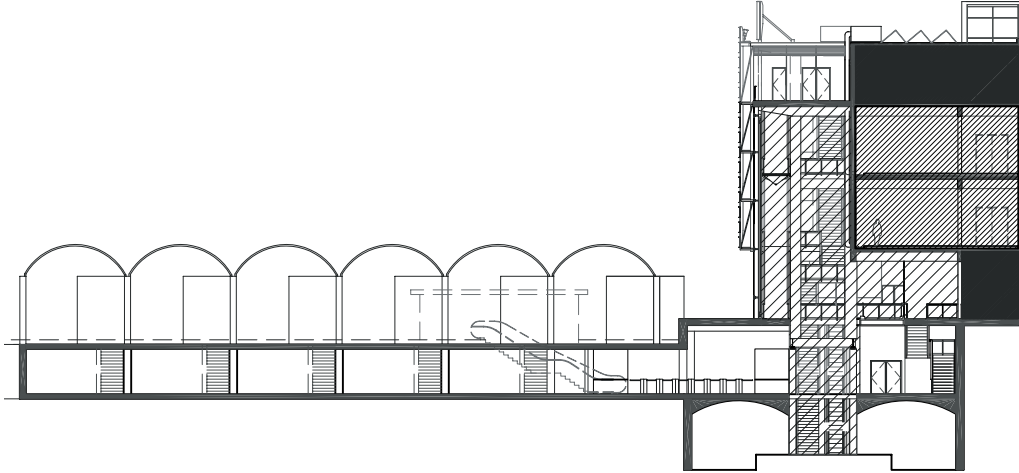
-  *Enclosed Galleries*
-  *Open Circulation*
-  *Administration*

## Building Parti

The south side of the building is an enclosed glass box. This is the main gathering space where people may rest on the seating provided between galleries, or where people circulate across ramps to each floor. The mechanical, structural, and circulation systems that support the galleries are visible in this space, which functions as the core of the building. The north side, on the other hand, is a solid concrete box containing the galleries. The concrete walls that enclose the galleries extend upwards from the underground structures that bear the subway platform. In this way, the building is an extrusion of the subway platform, with long 'platform' galleries on the second and third floors of the building.

In section, half of the building rises up from the subway concourse level where building merges with subway station in the atrium hall; the other half of the building hovers above the taxi pick up/drop off maintaining this natural and well known meeting area.





There is a division of space and a play of opposites: the galleries are completely enclosed and reserved for those with tickets, while the circulation side, exposing the building services where ramps extend the length of the building, is as public as the subway station and remains open during the same hours as the station. The circulation zone provides a setting for socializing, containing the atrium hall, a roof café, and a roof terrace, whereas the galleries offer an opportunity for contemplation. The combination of these experiences in one building provides a deviation from daily ritual, giving this building the function of a third place. The polarity between the contained gallery side and the open circulation side places the tranquil spaces of the individual next to the public street activity of the collective in the city.



6:55:08



6:55:14



6:55:18



6:55:24



6:55:30



6:55:36



6:55:42



6:55:48



6:55:54



6:55:56



6:56:08

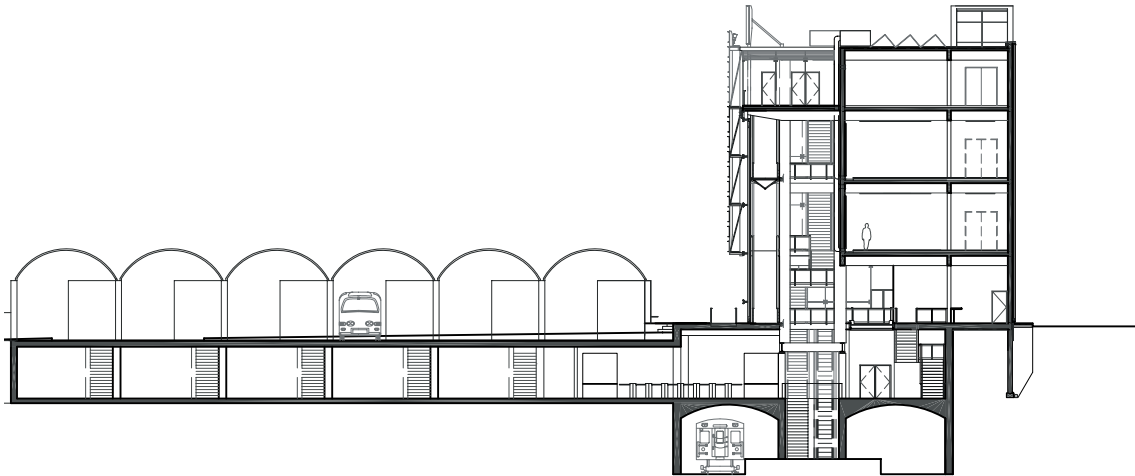


6:56:14

## The Atrium

It is in the atrium space that the distinction between art gallery and subway station is blurred. When subway riders ascend the stairs or escalators from the subway platform below, they enter into the six storey atrium on the concourse level. It is here where art receives the transit riders, who, in turn, become the gallery visitors. People get a sample of what the gallery offers, enticing them to visit the exhibits above before moving on to their point of destination.

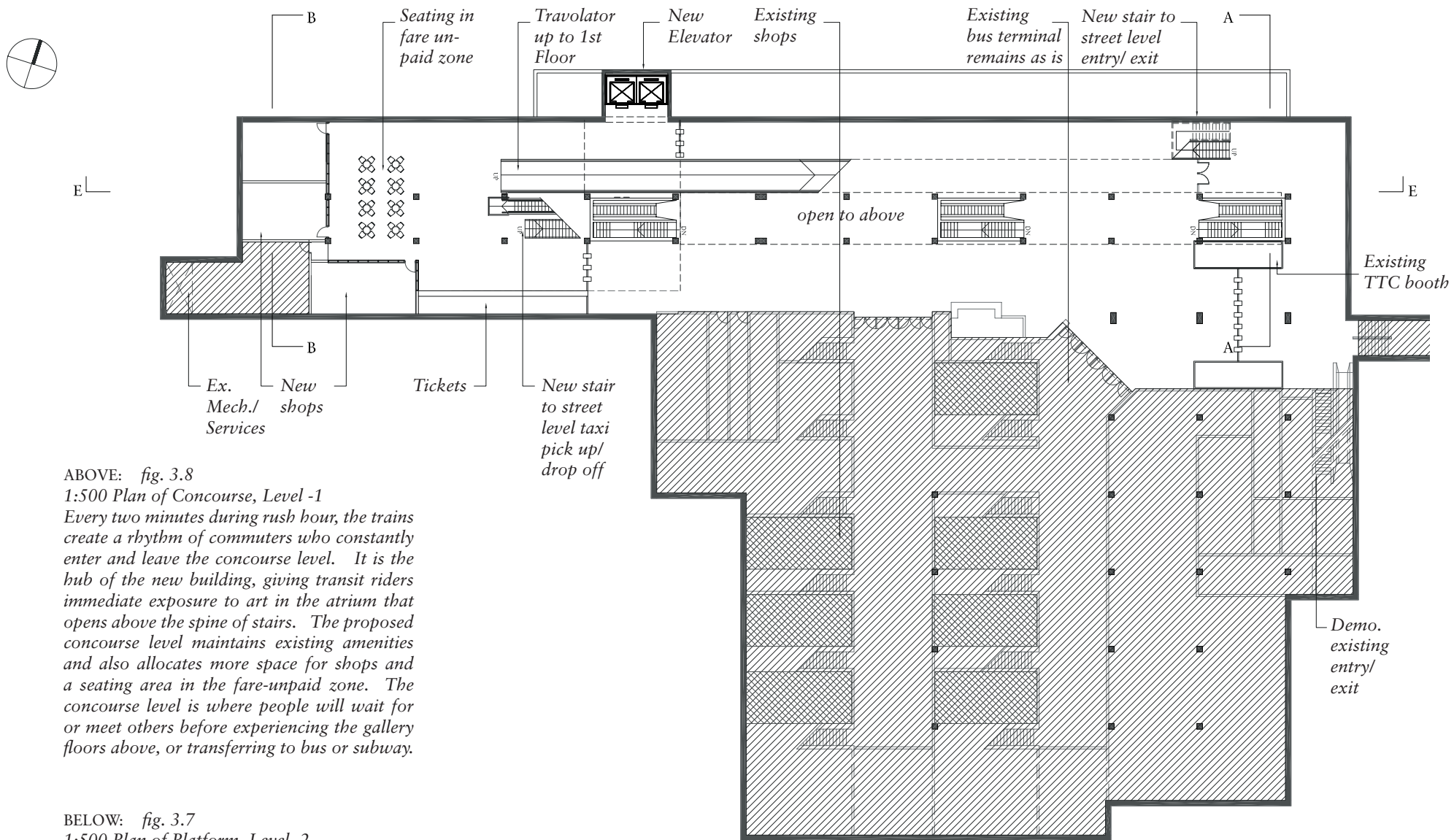
The regular arrival and departure of the subway trains, every two minutes during rush hour, creates a rhythmic movement of commuters entering and leaving the concourse level. This rhythm is the pulse of the building, echoing in the grand hall atrium. In one day, 50,000 or so people will pass through this station by either bus or subway. This large and diverse audience is ideal for receiving the art on display.



OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.5 The concourse level of the Islington TTC station, during rush hour on Dec.2, 2005.*

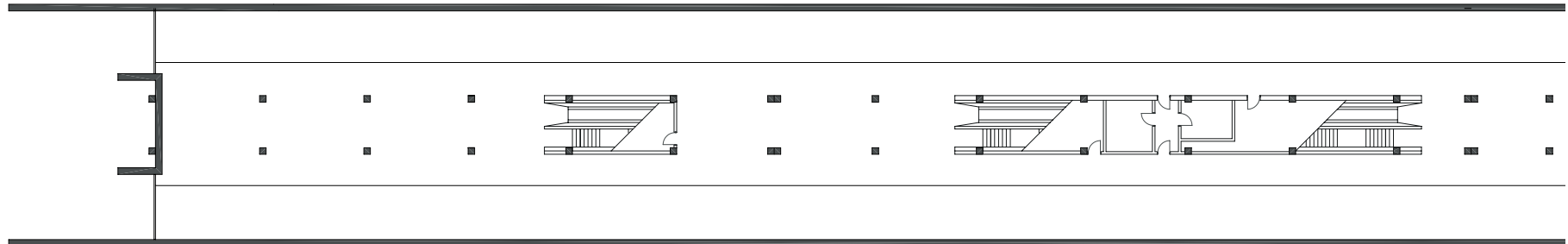
*The concourse level becomes part of the grand hall atrium, visible from all areas in the building, providing a visual accompaniment to the rhythm of the expansion and contraction of arriving and departing commuters that fill and empty the stairs that go down into the subway.*

*fig. 3.6 1:500 Cross Section AA through concourse atrium, and roof terrace - the circulation zones; through the single height gallery spaces, and administration on the top floor - the enclosed areas.*



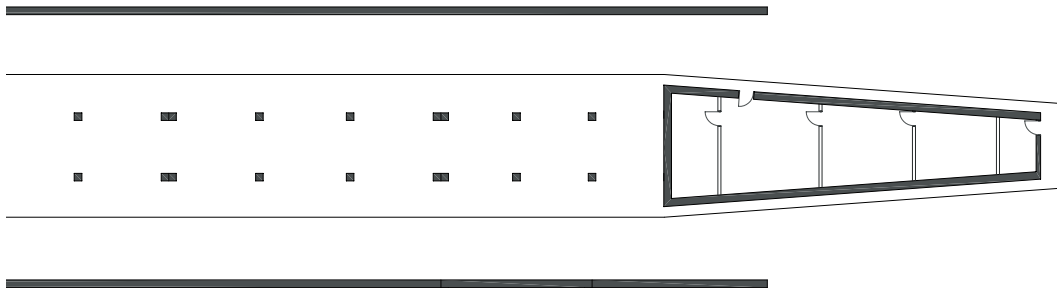
ABOVE: fig. 3.8  
 1:500 Plan of Concourse, Level -1  
 Every two minutes during rush hour, the trains create a rhythm of commuters who constantly enter and leave the concourse level. It is the hub of the new building, giving transit riders immediate exposure to art in the atrium that opens above the spine of stairs. The proposed concourse level maintains existing amenities and also allocates more space for shops and a seating area in the fare-unpaid zone. The concourse level is where people will wait for or meet others before experiencing the gallery floors above, or transferring to bus or subway.

BELOW: fig. 3.7  
 1:500 Plan of Platform, Level -2



Artists will be commissioned to exhibit temporary installations in the atrium space, following the example of the Tate Modern Turbine Hall in London. The atrium floods the concourse level with natural light, exaggerating the concourse as a covered public street and linking subway station with art gallery.

Currently, the concourse level provides some amenities for the transit riders passing through the Islington station, including a bakery/deli, coffee shop, dry cleaners, two shops selling women's clothing, and a snack bar/newspaper stand. These services are located in the fare-paid zone, between subway and bus transfers. As the hub of the new building, the concourse level will be renovated to provide more space for shops and cafes with a seating area in the fare-unpaid zone, for people to await or meet others before moving on to the gallery floors above.



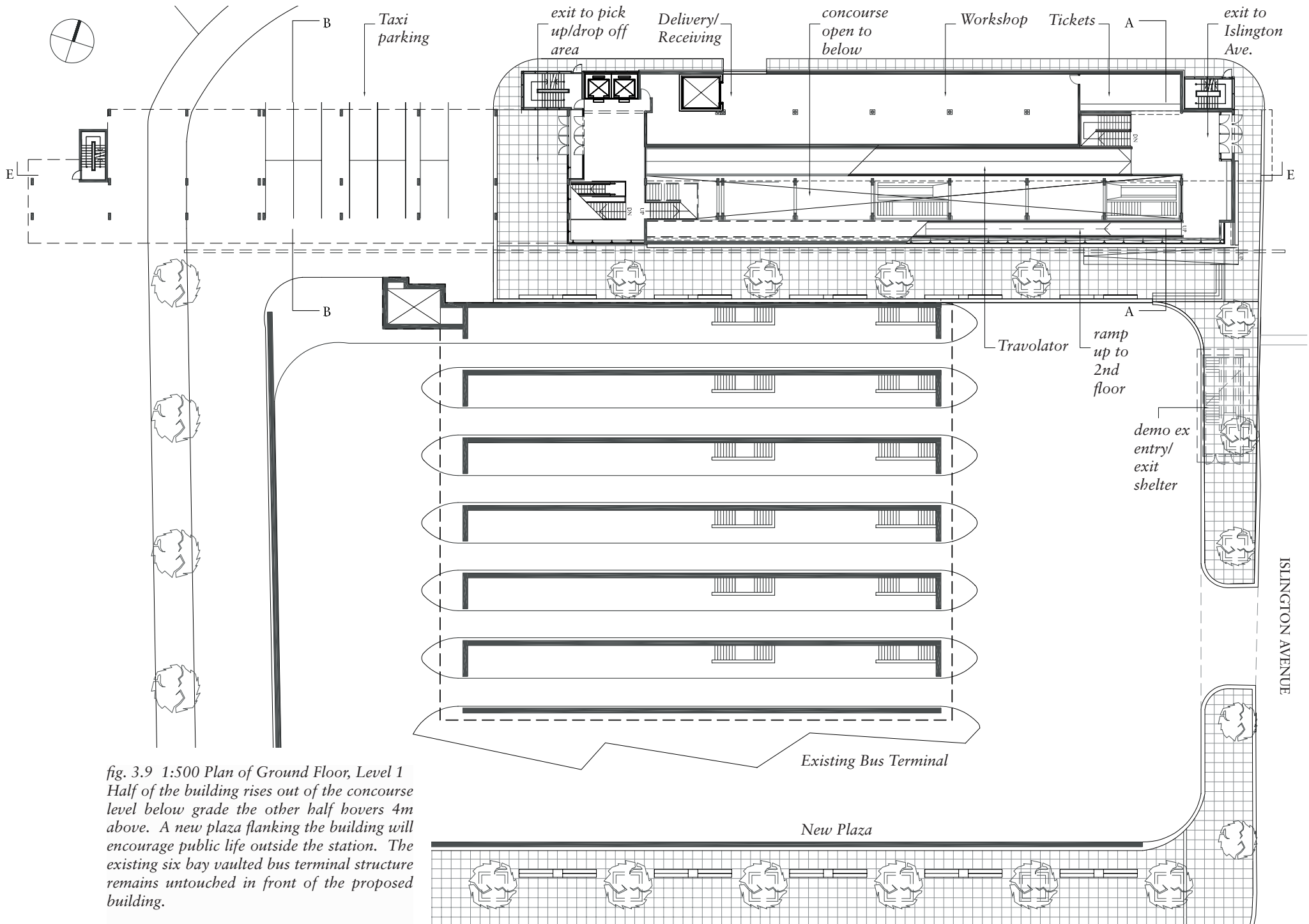


fig. 3.9 1:500 Plan of Ground Floor, Level 1  
 Half of the building rises out of the concourse level below grade the other half hovers 4m above. A new plaza flanking the building will encourage public life outside the station. The existing six bay vaulted bus terminal structure remains untouched in front of the proposed building.

## Circulation

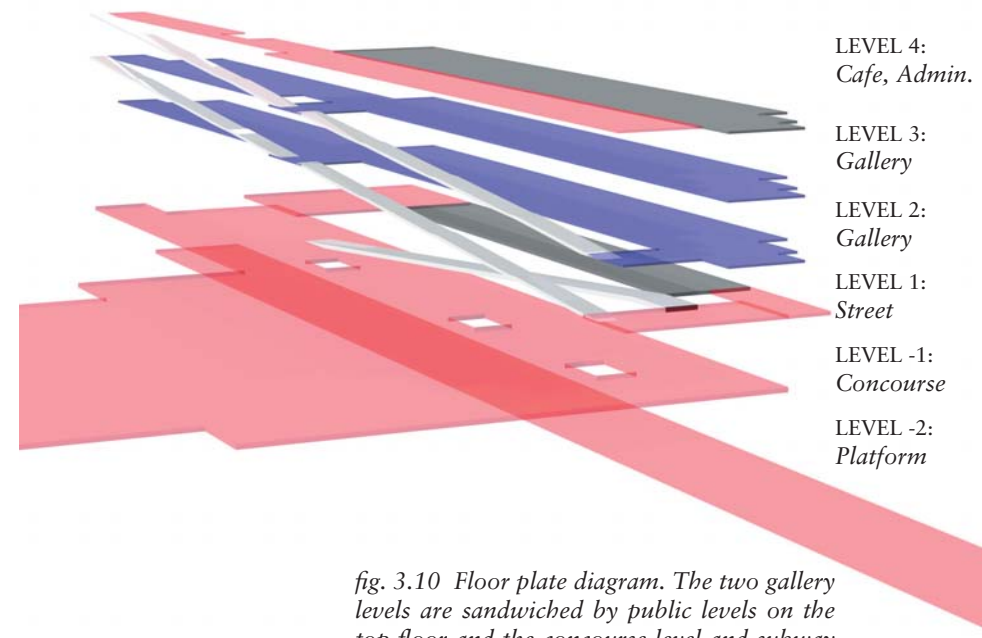
Circulation is the generating force in the design. The spine of stairs and escalators, located along the center of the subway platform, is the main organizational principle for the building. The atrium opens above these stairs that connect platform level with concourse level. The primary path of travel through the building is a cyclic flow along ramps that ascend from the concourse level.

The spiral flow of people in museums is a classic twentieth century model. Frank Lloyd Wright in the Guggenheim Museum (1943-59), and I.M. Pei in the galleries at Everson Museum (1961-69), are just two examples.

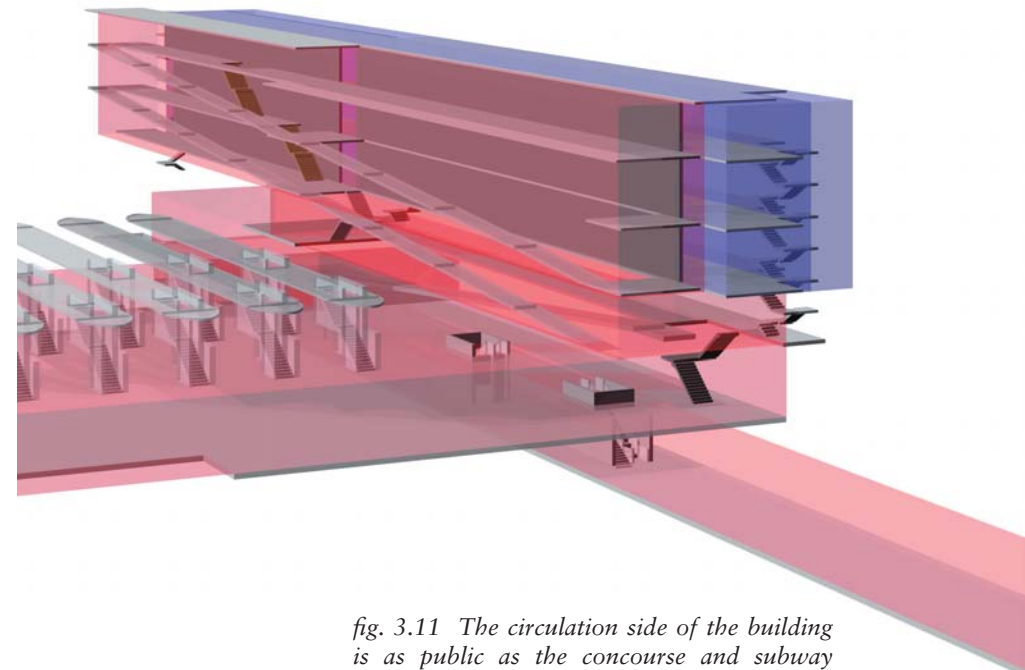
In the Islington Gallery of Art, the ramps are floating platforms in the atrium space that reach each of the three public levels in the building. Movement on the ramps is visible through the transparent wall facing Bloor Street, animating the south façade of the building. As the atrium transmits sounds from the trains arriving and departing below, one begins to feel the space with all of one's senses, as if one was walking on a public sidewalk in the city.

The visitor enters the gallery from a ramp that leads from street level to second level. The entry, in the middle of the floor, is directly to the left of the atrium. Before entering the gallery, one has an opportunity to enjoy the art installation(s) in the atrium space at the same time as overlooking the concourse level below where a rush of commuters go down to the platform. When a visitor enters the gallery, he is surrounded by art as he moves across this platform. The visitor then exits the galleries at either the east or west doors to continue his path to the top, where he can rest at the cafe or go out to the sculpture terrace. The grand stairs provide a direct route back down to the subway.

During the day, the visitor is always in natural light, even in the secondary forms of vertical circulation such as the glass elevators and wide scissor stair beside the elevators, or in any of the fire stairs. At night, the glass box becomes a glowing light fixture illuminating the street outside. The choreography of movement through the building and back down again to the subway becomes visible to the city.



*fig. 3.10 Floor plate diagram. The two gallery levels are sandwiched by public levels on the top floor and the concourse level and subway platform below.*



*fig. 3.11 The circulation side of the building is as public as the concourse and subway platform levels.*

*“...Should one build a space that actually isn’t a space, in which everything is possible, or should one create a place that artists have to come to terms with? That is the eternal question in museum building...”*

Jean Nouvel, on his design for the Fondation Cartier from Mack, Gerhard. *Art Museums into the 21st Century*, 77.



## The Galleries

The museum creates discourse that enables the viewer to become aware of an object and its frame. The museum is a participant in contemporary culture, and a place for both display and dialogue. As community life declines in the face of individual pursuits, the museum promotes the realm of the 'other', the realm of the imagination that draws a community together again. A twenty-first century gallery provides a setting for people to demonstrate how they are moved and stimulated by art. Continually changing exhibits present art as an ongoing cultural process in a place that itself is transitory. Displayed in a place of infrastructure, available to all citizens of a city, art is integrated into society on a universal level.

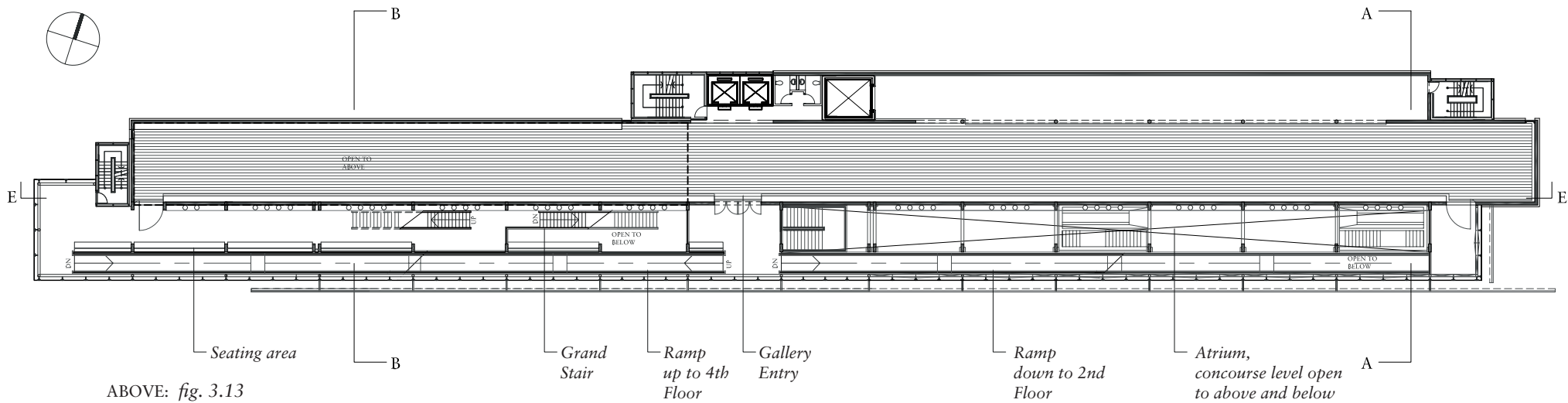
Within the Islington Gallery of Art, in addition to the atrium and circulation spaces already mentioned, there are two stacked platform galleries dedicated to the exhibition of contemporary art. The galleries are 120 metres long, like the subway platform below, and imitate the experience of walking along the platform. Instead of seeing the repetition of advertisements, however, visitors view different forms of contemporary art. The galleries are intended for visitors to look at art in a flow of continuous motion, seeing art in this way resembles the experience of travel, which connects one to an experience in a transient world.\*

*\*Refer to appendix A-3 for a photomontage of the St. George platform elevation.*

Diffused natural light enters the galleries through the glazed doors at each gallery entry point – in the middle of the floor, and at each end – where there are also controlled views to the outside through punched windows in the exterior north facing walls. Fixtures are hung from an open grid attached to the exposed concrete beams. Matte strips of artificial light where floor meets wall recall the separation between the subway platform and the wall opposite the track.

*fig. 3.12 The Islington TTC station platform. The experience of the galleries in the Islington Gallery of Art emulates the display used in the subway platform.*

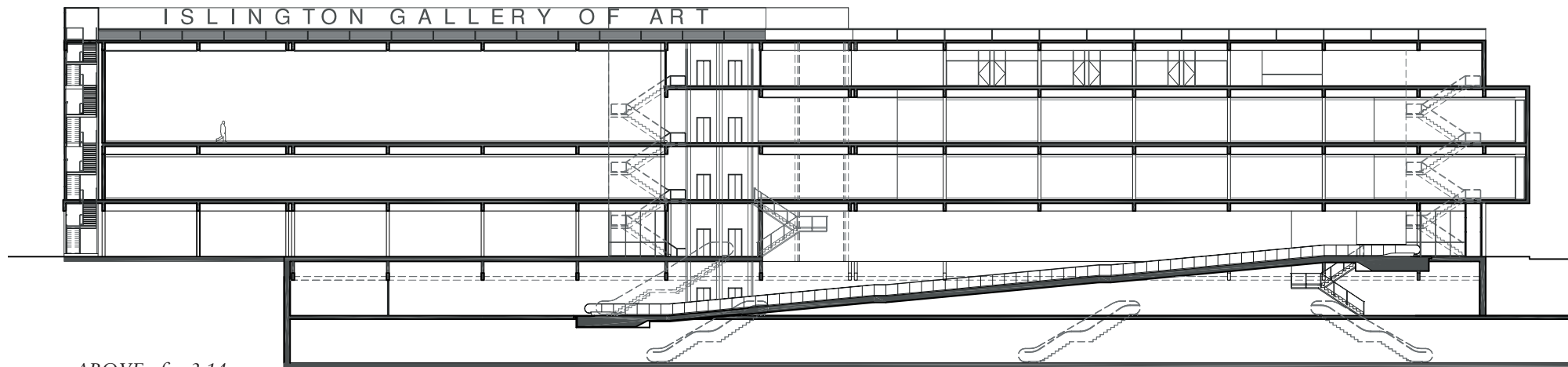




ABOVE: fig. 3.13

1:500 Plan of Gallery, Level 3

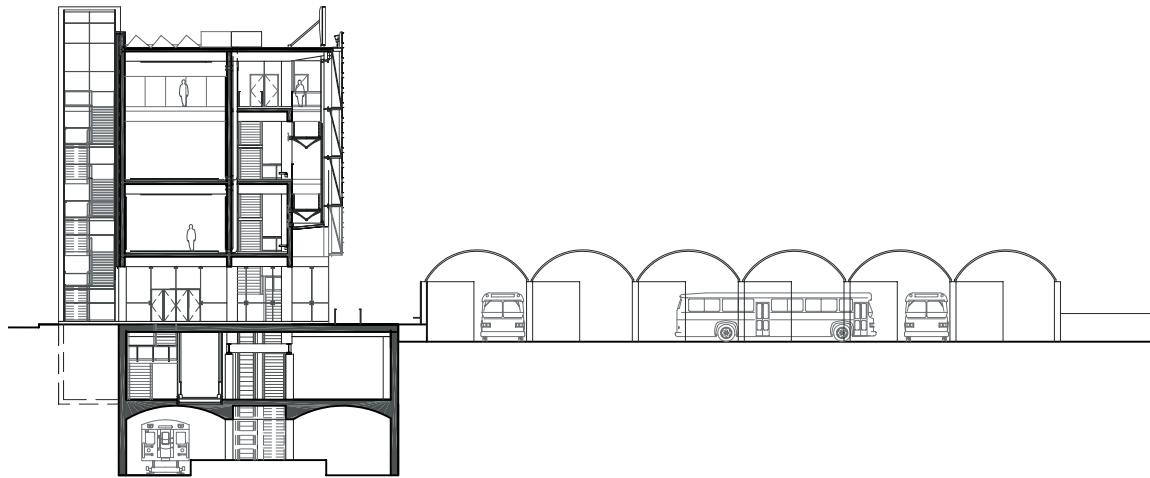
Typ. gallery plan for levels 2 and 3. The gallery plan represents an extrusion of the subway platform below. The services and functions of the building are visible in the open circulation zone of the building, which acts as a public square as third place in an interior environment.



ABOVE: fig. 3.14

1:500 Longitudinal Section EE through the gallery 'platforms.' The west half of the third floor gallery is a double height gallery space, allowing for versatility in exhibitions. The east half of level 3, and all of level 2 is single height gallery space at 4.4m high. A moving ramp takes commuters up from concourse level to street level.

The galleries provide versatile exhibition space. The building can host several exhibitions at the same time or be used for only one event. Portable partitions can be built in the wood shop on ground level and installed by the curator to suit a given exhibition. These adjustments would allow for 'sets' to be constructed in the gallery spaces. The galleries would be tuned to the particularities of each installation of exhibits, and the spaces would become theatrical stages for the works of art.



*fig. 3.15 1:500 Cross Section BB through the taxi pick up/drop off on grade and the double height gallery on the 3rd floor. The circulation zone and structure in the building align with the circulation and structure in the subway and concourse levels.*

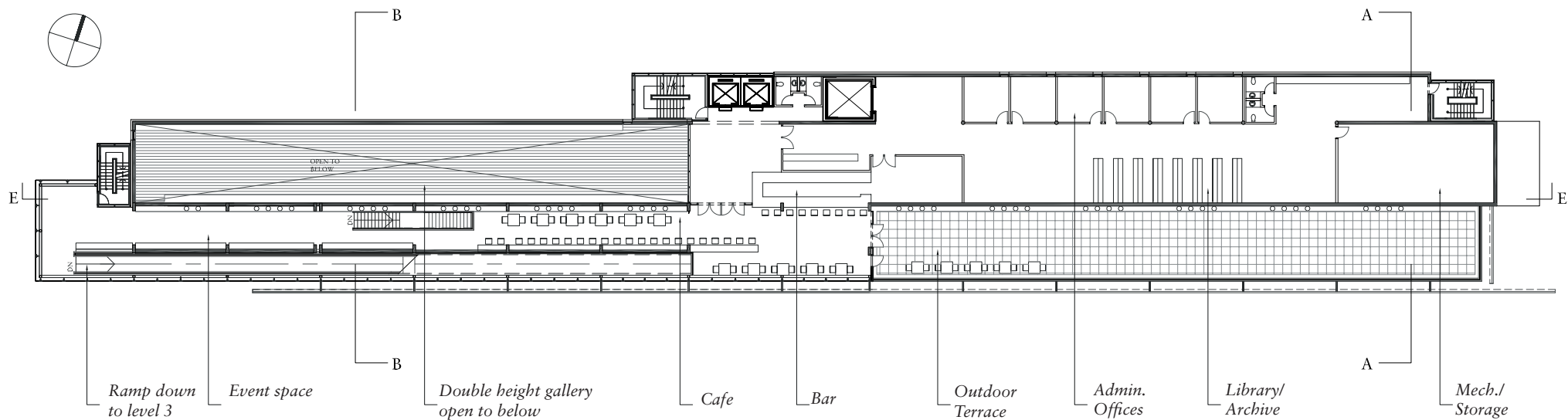


fig. 3.16

1:500 Plan of Cafe and Offices, Level 4

The cafe and outdoor terrace are located on the top floor of the building, as well as offices for the administration staff.

## The Cafe

On the top floor of the Islington Gallery is a 170 square metre cafe offering a view of the city. The capacity of the café is 100 people, including the adjoining outdoor terrace. In addition to serving light refreshments, the roof terrace offers a variety of possibilities for social events, including opening receptions and launch parties for the gallery. To bypass the galleries, one can go directly to the cafe via the grand stair in the centre of the building and linger with others, and then descend and view the galleries from top to bottom.

## Administration

The Islington Gallery of Art has 600 square metres set aside for administration purposes. This includes a receiving area and workshop on grade and the offices on the fourth floor. Saw-tooth skylights over the administration offices provide ample natural light for the full-time staff.

The digital lighting electrical control system for the galleries is located in the administration area on the top floor. The administration space is modeled on the Power Plant Gallery in Toronto, which has nearly 550 square metres of support area for a workshop, cataloguing, publications and archives, as well as offices for a curator, director, membership coordinator, and head of development, head of facilities and finance, and head of installation.

## Structure

The building is a 'system of systems' comprised of the base structure, the façade system, the ramp system, and the mechanical system. The structural grid is based on the structure supporting the subway platform. The existing structural core in the subway platform is extruded with new reinforced concrete columns that continue up through the building. The galleries are contained by concrete shear bearing walls aligned on this grid. The south glazed façade is made up of sheets of 2 metre by 3.4 metre structural toughened insulated glass panels (e.g. Pilkington Planar), attached by cast stainless steel four leg spider connections, braced by pre-stressed cable trusses bolted to a steel truss suspended from the ceiling structure that resolves the overall wind loads. The absence of mullions creates an uninterrupted glass surface distinct from the steel structure that supports the ramps. The ramp system is analogous to those of bridges. Supported by steel trusses, the ramp zone develops the facade into a multi-tiered bridge. Solar control on the façade is maintained by a screen of perforated aluminum panels that clip on to their own steel structure and suspended from the building's exterior. The screen resists lateral forces that act on the façade truss. The aesthetic of the perforated aluminum panels emulates the blurred motion of a passing subway.



*fig. 3.17 Ramp/ Façade Module: Each 8m concrete column bay is enclosed on the south façade by four 2m wide panels of structural glass, spider bolted and supported by the façade brace, connected to four 2m x 2m steel truss ramp modules.*

## Mechanical System

The mechanical system and temperature control of the gallery is based on principles of energy conservation and sustainability. Space temperature control is separate from the ventilation. The massive concrete structure produces a high thermal mass, storing cool nighttime temperatures which help keep the galleries cool during the day. The concrete is composed of a mixture of at least 50% fly ash, which emits far fewer greenhouse gasses than conventional concrete.<sup>2</sup> Constant temperatures are maintained with radiant heating and cooling pipes embedded in the concrete floor slabs, circulating heated or cooled water generated by ground-source heat pumps. The radiant heating/cooling system satisfies the building's temperature control system, meaning the air system only needs to provide treated, and filtered outdoor air. As a result, the air distribution infrastructure can be about 20% of the size of a conventional 'all-air' heating and cooling system, saving as much as 50% of the energy use.<sup>3</sup>

Gallery ventilation system is provided by a displacement ventilation system. This concept is based on the Swiss BATISO building physics approach, an acronym for Bâtiment Isotherm — constant temperature building.<sup>4</sup> Fresh outdoor air is delivered to the space at a low level, at low velocity, and at a temperature only slightly lower than the desired space temperature, allowing the fresh air to circulate evenly across the entire space. Warm air from the subway station below is recovered in a heat exchange unit and is used to preheat the fresh ventilation air being delivered to the building. Fresh air is driven upward by stack effect and buoyancy forces around the heat sources, e.g. people within the space.<sup>5</sup> The warmed air rising to the ceiling is removed by the central exhaust system. By removing the heat generated by ceiling level lights at ceiling height, they are not included when estimating building cooling loads.<sup>6</sup> This approach takes advantage of stack effect to circulate fresh air, and uses the exhaust air from the subway station to preheat the incoming air.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/bikeplan/pdf/chapter05.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> John E. Czarnecki, "York Computer Science Building acts as vessel for natural ventilation," *Architectural Record*, February, 2003, 142.

<sup>3</sup> Terri Whitehead, "Community action: Gleneagles Community Centre, West Vancouver," *Canadian Architect*, January, 2005, 20-24.

<sup>4</sup> McDonell Geoff, "Displacement Ventilation," *Canadian Architect*, April, 2003, 32.

<sup>5</sup> Earth Tech, "Glen Eagles Community Centre: Comfort and Efficiency Powered by Green Energy", <http://www.westvancouver.ca/upload/documents/Gleneaglesenergy2.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.advancedbuildings.org/main\\_t\\_vent\\_displ\\_vent.htm](http://www.advancedbuildings.org/main_t_vent_displ_vent.htm)

*“...there must be a neutral ground upon which people may gather. There must be places where individuals may come and go as they please, in which none are required to play host, and in which all feel at home and comfortable.”*

Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, 22.

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.18 The concourse level is the hub of the new building, giving transit riders immediate exposure to art installations in the atrium that opens above the spine of stairs leading up from the subway platform.*







THIS PAGE: *fig. 3.19 The grand stair on the second floor is located beside the gallery entrance in the middle of the building. People circulating on the ramps animate the Bloor Street facade.*

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.20 The Atrium, where artists will be commissioned to design exhibits for the six storey space. The concourse level is below, and the ramp zone flanks the south glazed Bloor Street facade.*

ART CREDIT: *Arthur Young, Bell-47D1 Helicopter.*





THIS PAGE: *fig. 3.21 Single height gallery space, typical for the east half of the gallery platforms.*  
ART CREDIT: Shelley Adler

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.22 Resting places, lingering places and places for social interaction are provided on each gallery floor, where people can sit, talk or look out at the city through the Bloor Street façade.*



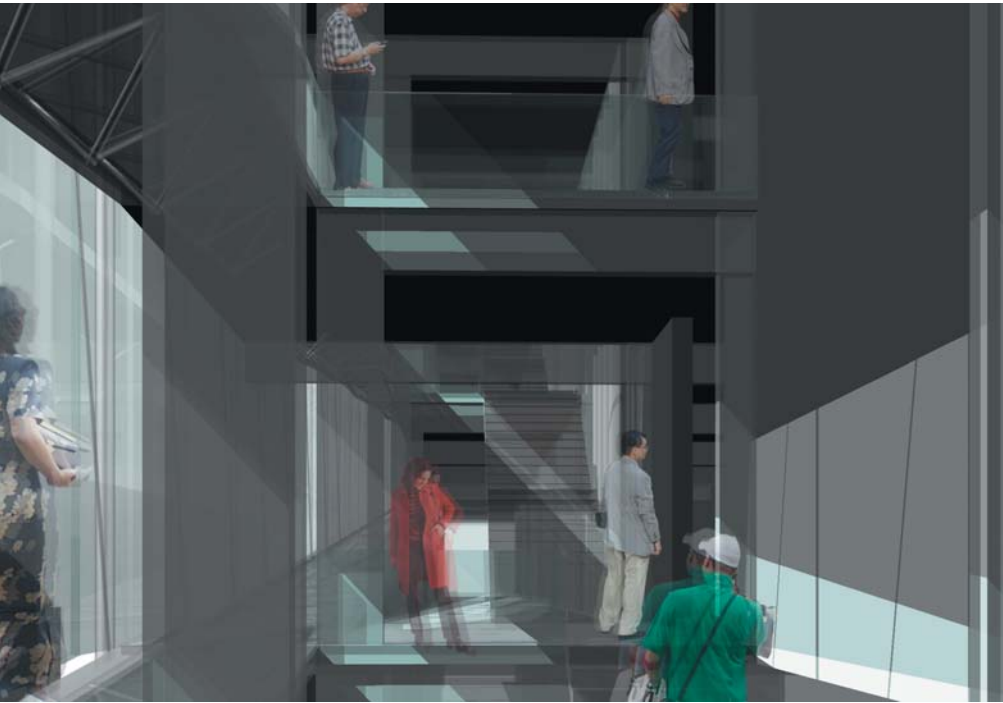


THIS PAGE: *fig. 3.23 Ramp up to 3rd floor gallery entry.*

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.24 The galleries stage and show off the art on display. Both the single and double height gallery spaces can accommodate for a variety of exhibitions of contemporary art.*

ART CREDIT: *Donald Judd, Andy Warhol*





THIS PAGE: *fig. 3.25 Grand stair beside gallery entry.*

OPPOSITE: *fig. 3.26 The gallery visitor can experience the cafe and outdoor terrace by taking this ramp up to the 4th floor.*





*“Despite the growing trend towards virtual reality, we still yearn for a concrete counterpart with which we can interact and to which our senses can respond... the focus is on the experience of one’s own movement within the city (which no screen can simulate). The feeling of closeness and expanse, apprehension and liberation, ascending and descending, shifting and rotating, resistance and overcoming obstacles acceleration and deceleration, and breath and pulse.”*

Janson, Alban and Burklin, Thorsten. *AuftritteScenes*, 13

# CONCLUSION

Nowadays where the same shops, brand names, logos, and images seem to punctuate urban space the world over, one might visit a gallery to experience something different, variable, untried or tested, often unpredictable and occasionally experimental. The Islington Gallery of Art will suit the needs of a society always hungry for change.

A way to get to know the city is not only through its infrastructure, but through its art galleries. They are meeting places, nodes and heterotopias. The Islington Gallery of Art will provide a glimpse of modern culture as one passes through the Islington subway station during a daily commute. It will provide a diversion from daily routine as one travels through the gallery spaces. At the same time, this gallery will be a third place that can harbour a diverse population and invite human connection. Adapting Ray Oldenburg's concept of the 'third place', and Peter Calthorpe's model of the 'Transit Oriented Development', the Islington Gallery of Art is a mixed-use building that combines an art gallery type with public infrastructure, and could be a prototype for a new kind of community centre where 'culture' is at the heart of bringing people together.

The site elements that include Historic Islington Village, Islington TTC Subway Station and Bus Terminal, CPR and Ontario Hydro Corridor, Tom Riley Park, Office Space, and Central Apartment Neighbourhood are the points of departure for the character and identity that describe the everyday rituals occurring on this site. These ever changing neighbourhood elements in proximity to the Islington Gallery of Art are the accumulated evidence of the human stories in this community and provide the framework for establishing a living city. Living cities are ones in which people can interact with one another and provide stimulation from the array of experiences they offer.

At first the building will seem to stand out in this distinct landscape, but over time, as the site changes and development occurs, and as cultural activities become established here, the Islington Gallery of Art will become the stitch that ties the elements together to form the new urban centre. Although urban design is outside the scope of this thesis, the principles of Jane Jacobs and Peter Calthorpe influenced the design of the Islington Gallery of Art and inspired a vision for the surrounding site context where community buildings replace the existing TTC commuter lots.\* The building and its future surrounding will transform negative space made up of the existing parking lots, into positive and creative space.

*\*Refer to Appendix A-5, for the future vision plan.*

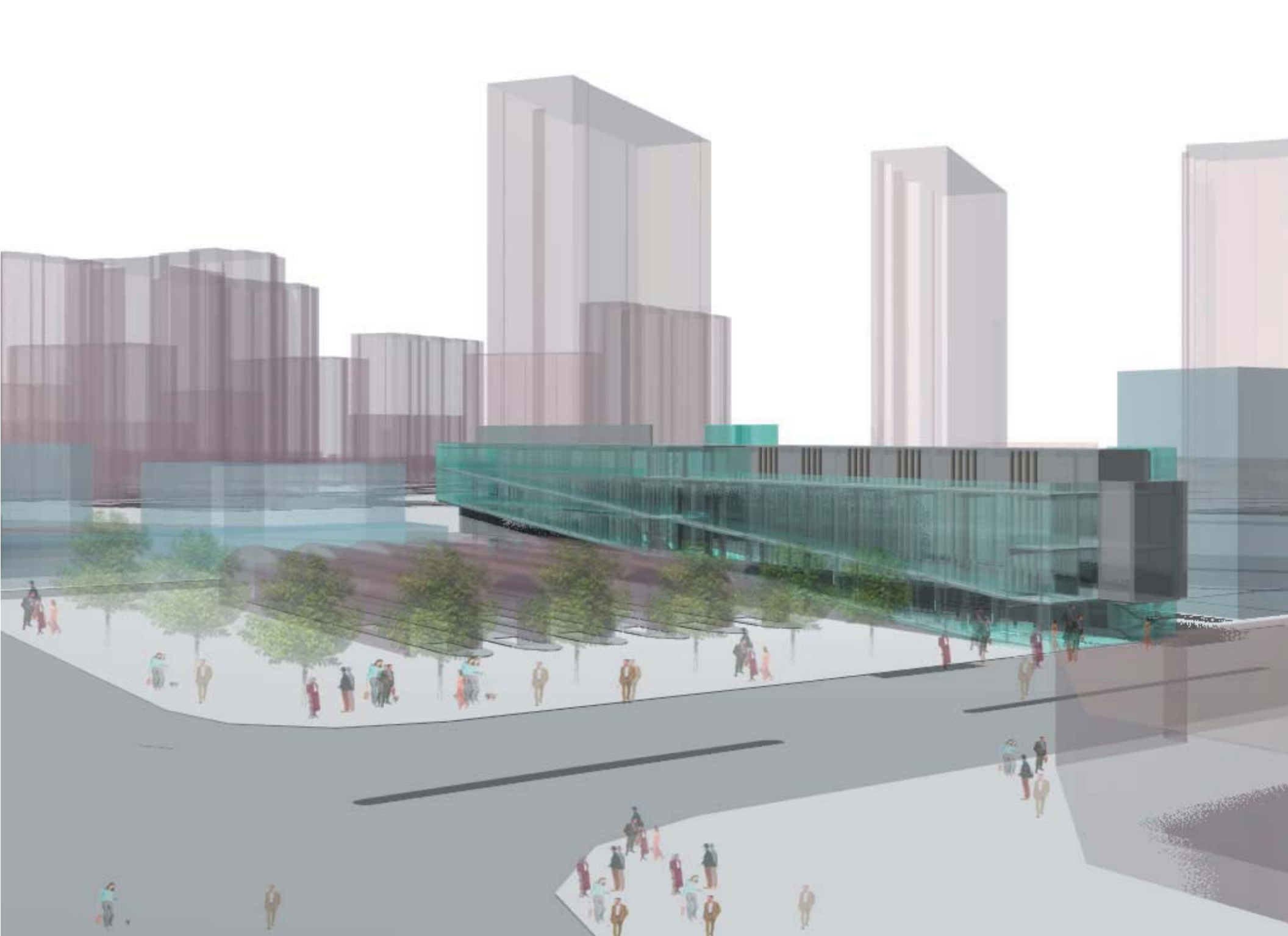
The medieval dimensioning of popular city spaces is still among the favourites in the world, where people go to participate in the life of the city. The history of human settlement shows us that cities were originally organized around the two basic components: streets and squares. The streets and squares “constitute the very essence of the phenomenon ‘city’” where the streets represent the linear pattern of human movement, and the square is based on the eye’s ability to survey an area.<sup>1</sup> The public spaces of a city act as destinations the individual is motivated to seek out, where it is possible to satisfy the psychological

needs for contact, knowledge, and stimulation by experiencing others in the public environment. These cities were built for people, unlike modern suburbs, which are built for the automobile.

New York, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver are the four North American cities closest to European square-centered cities. The first time that a born and bred North American visits these cities or large European ones, he or she always comes back impressed with the city centre square. The Islington Gallery of Art simulates the experience of being in a European square.

The proposal for the Islington Gallery of Art on the site of the Islington TTC station, located at the intersection of Islington Avenue and Bloor Street West, incorporates fundamental principles of the third place, in the form of a building, where people can gather, linger, and participate in a social realm near the periphery of the City of Toronto. Using Calthorpe's model of the Transit Oriented Development, the new building will act as a contribution to this neighbourhood and it will foster the generation of a new social dynamic. The transit village thrives when population density increases around a transit station and a short walk exists for residents to the station: the station is the gateway to the community, physically and symbolically linking surrounding neighbourhoods. The Islington Gallery of Art proposes an intersection of public spaces and identities which delineates a new urban arena. This delineation inevitably will lead to a social change in the Etobicoke Centre.

This building will be a new gem waiting to be discovered when someone arrives at the Islington station stop. The experience of walking through the gallery's grand atrium on the concourse level will instantly become a part of one's memory. Even if every 100<sup>th</sup> person stops to wander through the galleries, this building could have 500 daily visitors and be well used by the general population. The enclosed gallery spaces are reminiscent of the subway platform. The open circulation side of the



building acts as an interior public square, where people can circulate on ramps to each floor, or can linger in the seating areas provided. The atrium space links the two gallery levels with the concourse and subway. The top floor of the building contains a café and an outdoor terrace which can also function as space for special events. Since a cultural environment attracts people, the Islington Gallery of Art will become a popular public community arts centre, or kunsthalle. In this way, the Islington Gallery of Art will create a cultural shift to a more art-conscious state of mind making the Etobicoke Centre a more artful and inclusive place.

Aristotle summarized all rules of city planning in observing that a city must be so designed as to make its people at once secure and happy.<sup>2</sup> The streets and squares act as stage sets where the public become actors and the others on the periphery are either watching or participating. This participation gives the city its identity, diversity, and culture. All human activity meets and intersects in the city, or in this case, a subway station. A collision of forces occurs. It is here that one seeks speed and escape, arrival and departure, anonymity and acceptance. Embodying the paradigm of a modern city on a reduced scale, the Islington Gallery of Art is a third place that provides a setting for city dwellers to participate in the urban social realm.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Gehl, *Life Between Buildings*, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Sitte, *Planning According to Artistic Principles*, 3.

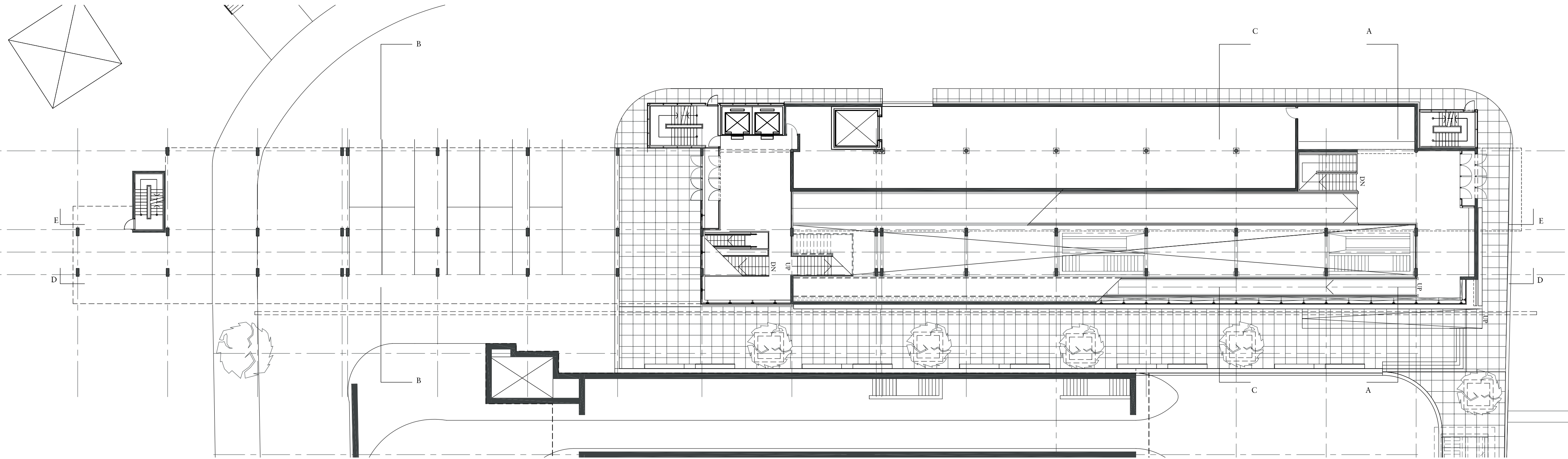
OPPOSITE: *fig. 4.1 The Islington Gallery of Art, on the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue.*





# DESIGN DRAWINGS

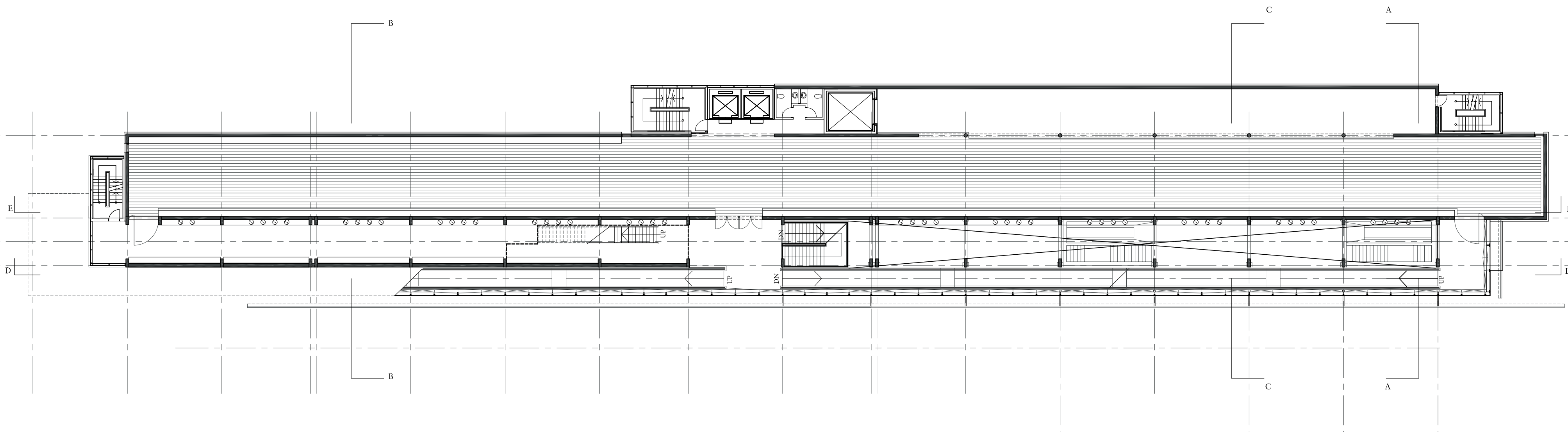






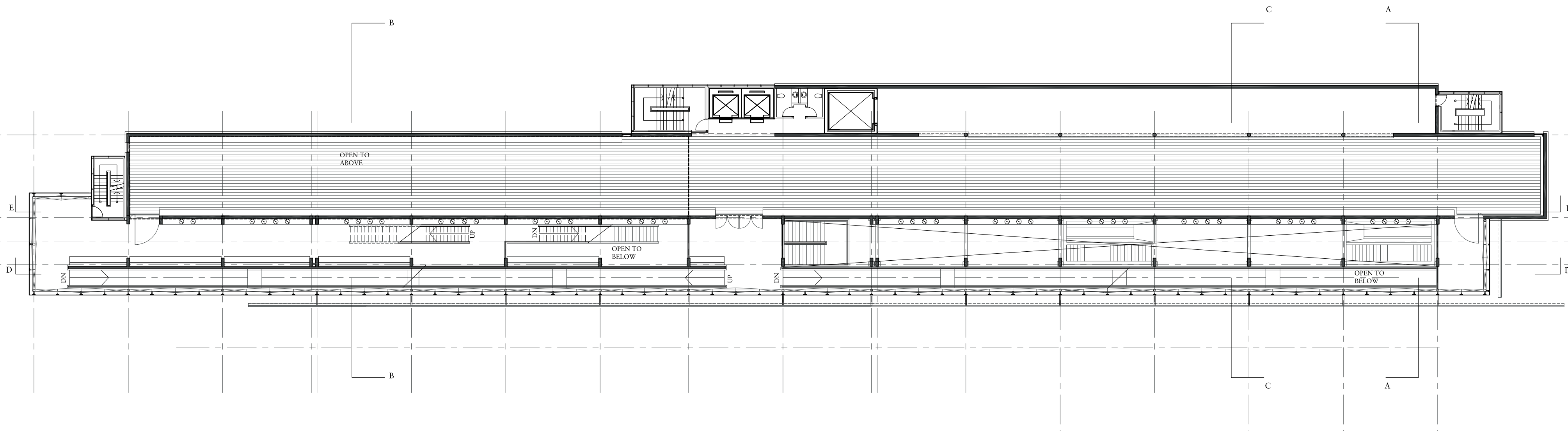
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 Scale 1:250

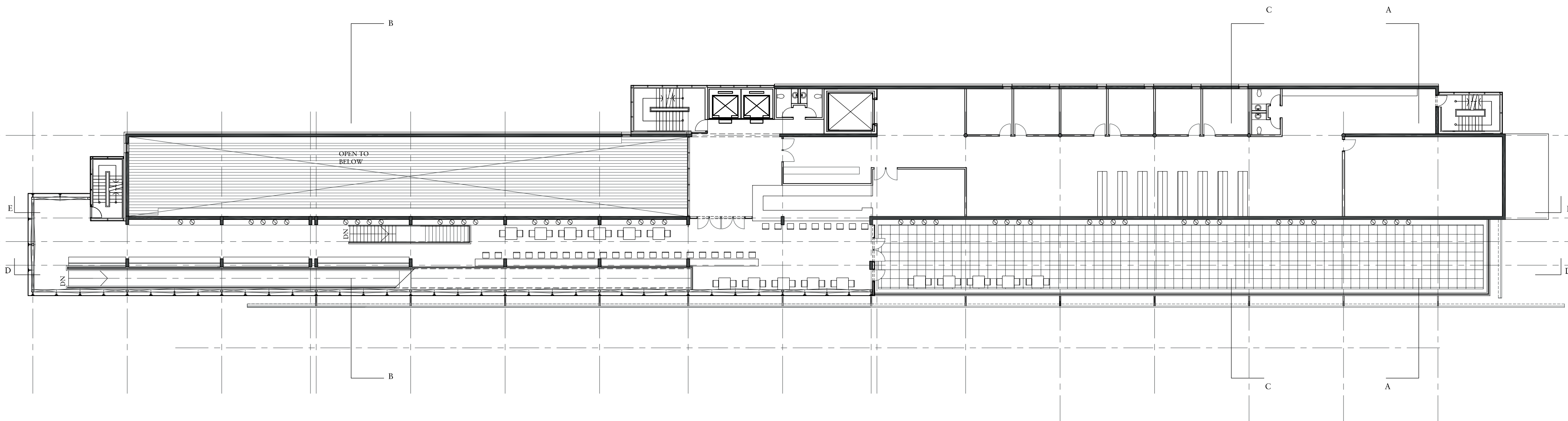




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0 3m CAFE, ADMIN, LEVEL 4  
Scale 1:250

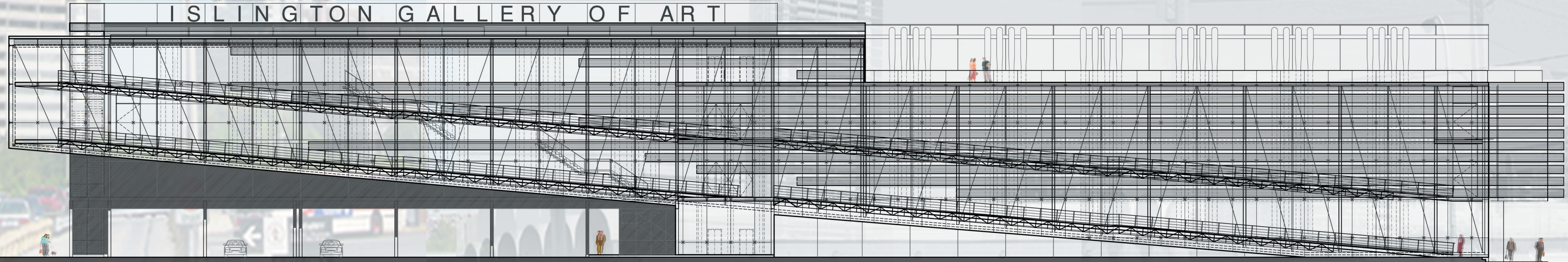




ISLINGTON GALLERY OF ART

BLOOR STREET ELEVATION  
Scale 1:500







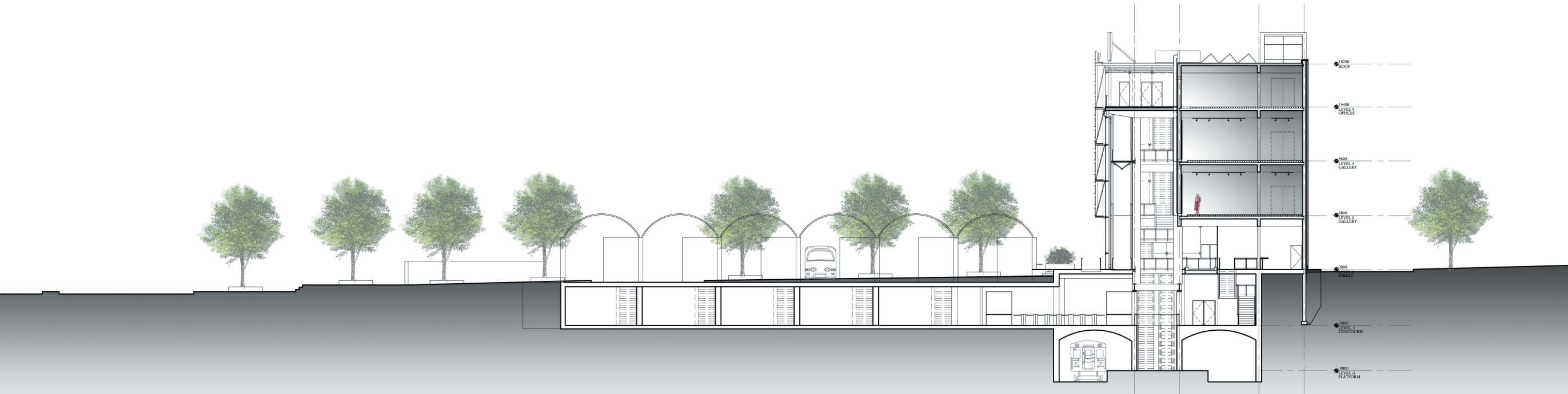






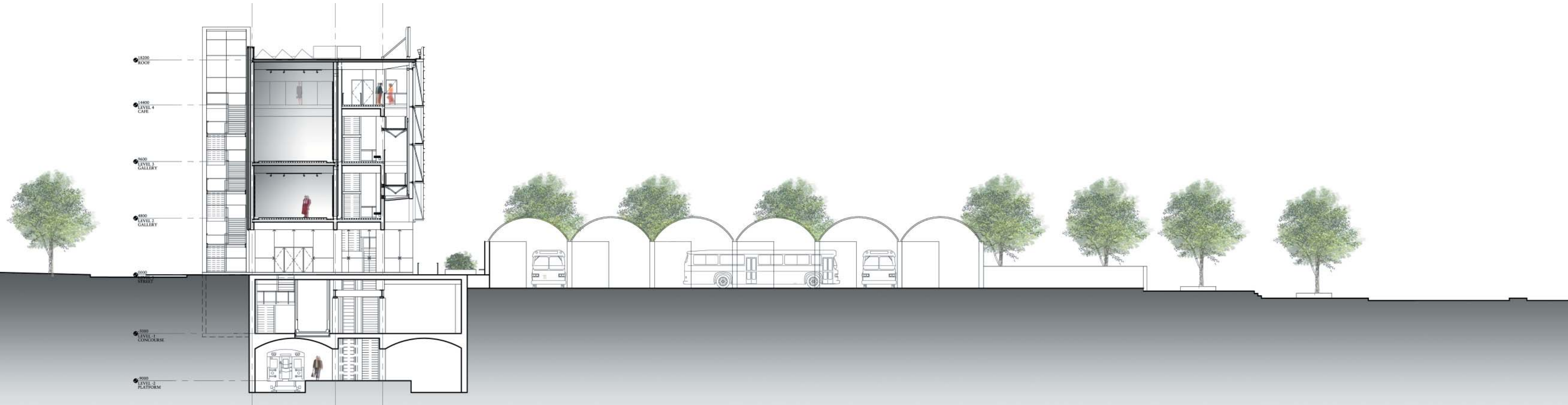






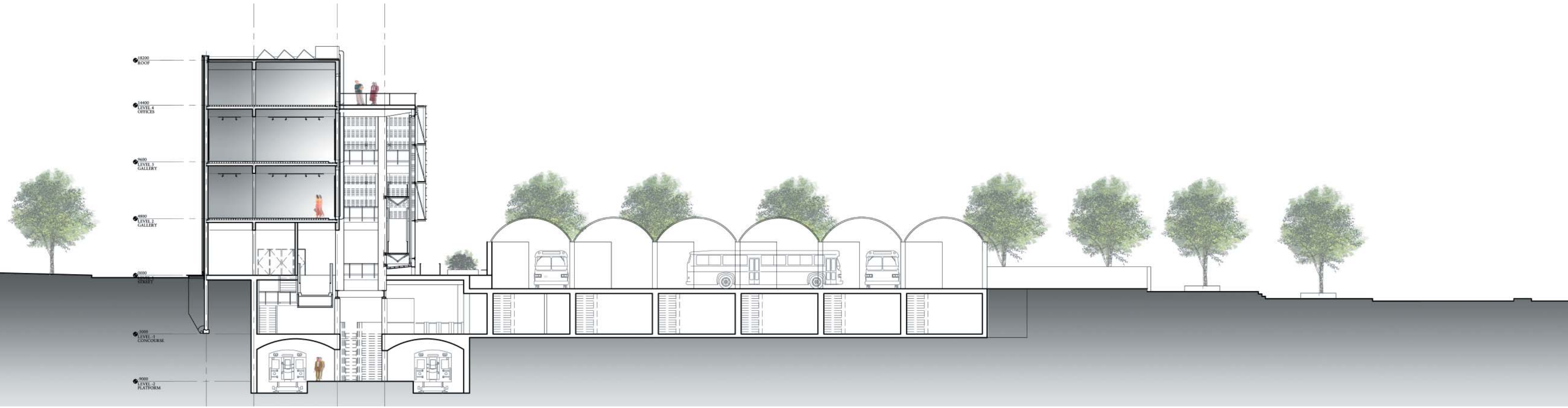
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0 3m CROSS SECTION BB  
Scale 1:250



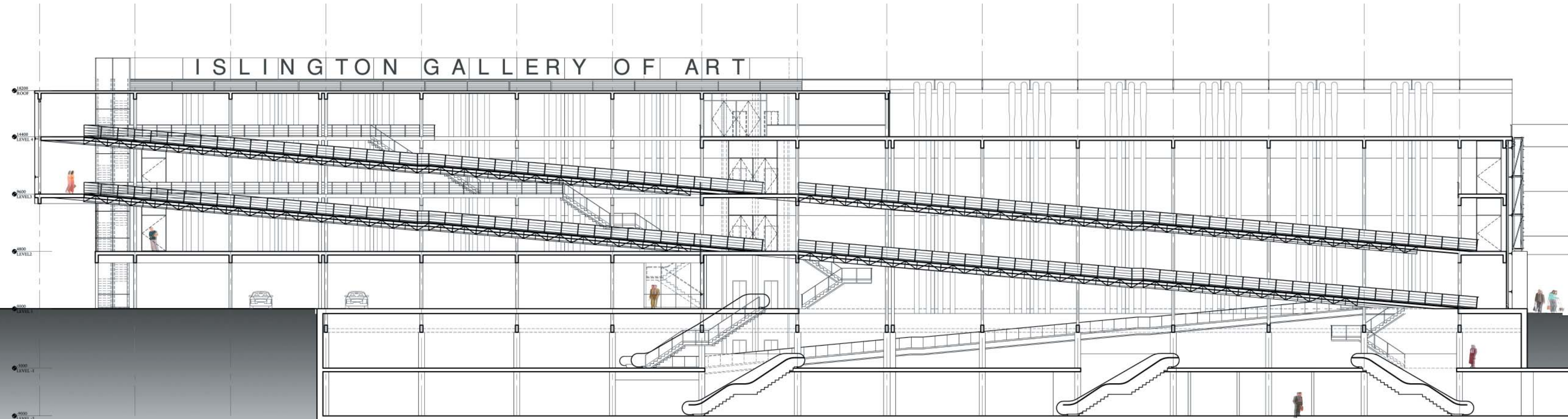


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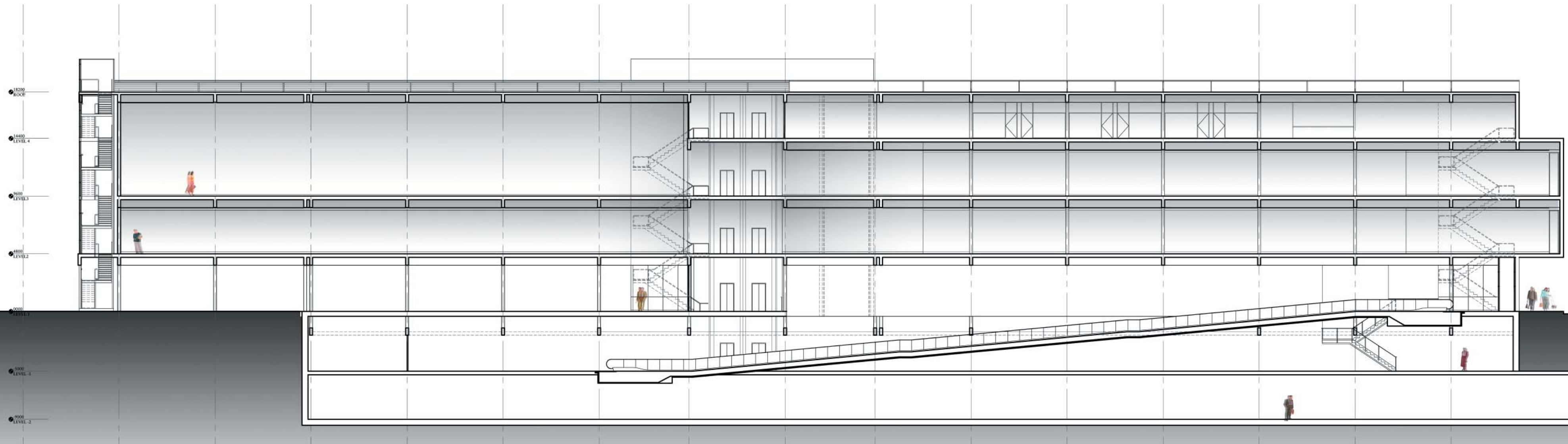


# ISLINGTON GALLERY OF ART



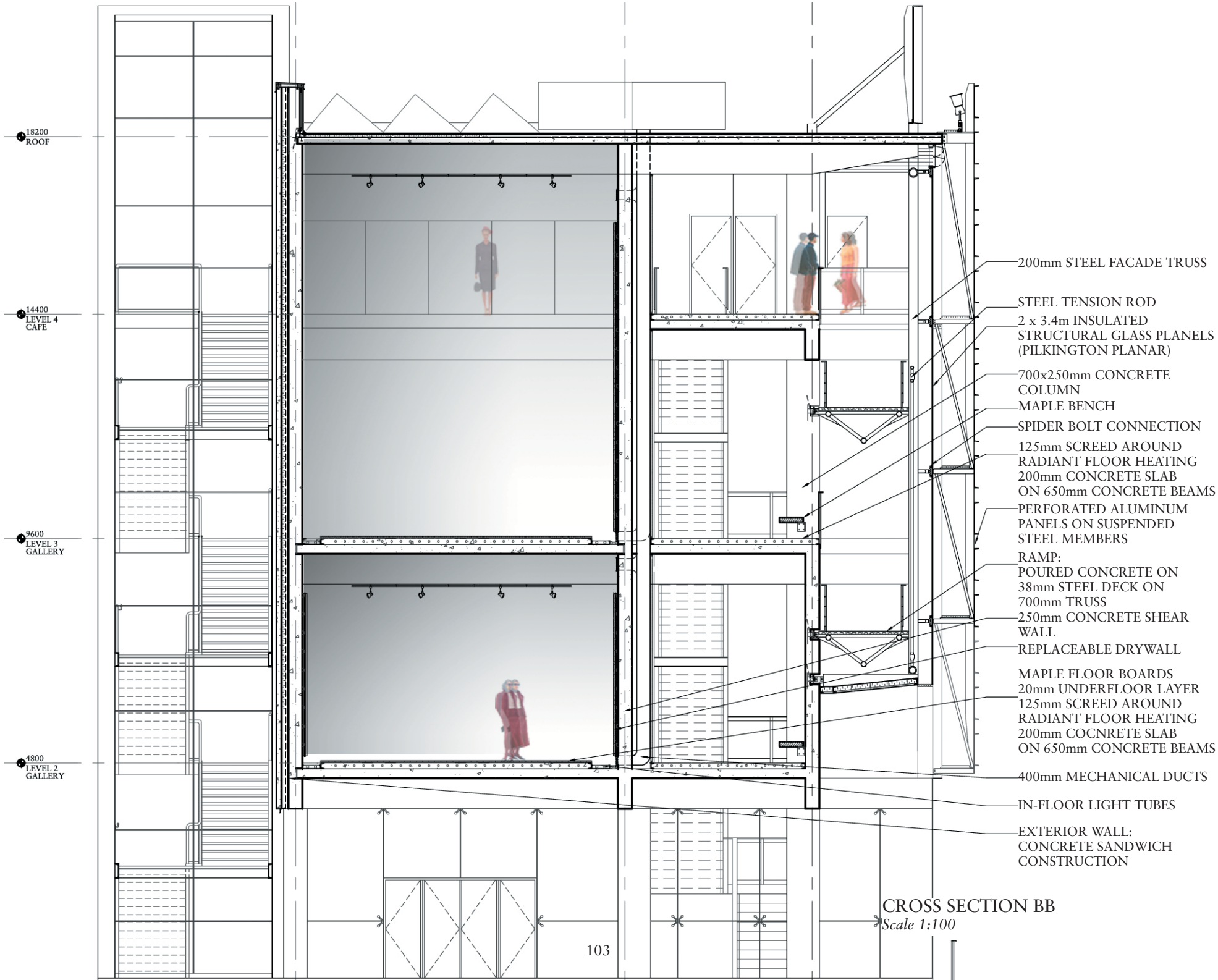
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Scale 1:250





0 3m CROSS SECTION EE  
Scale 1:250





18200  
ROOF

14400  
LEVEL 4  
CAFE

9600  
LEVEL 3  
GALLERY

4800  
LEVEL 2  
GALLERY

200mm STEEL FACADE TRUSS

STEEL TENSION ROD  
2 x 3.4m INSULATED  
STRUCTURAL GLASS PANELS  
(PILKINGTON PLANAR)

700x250mm CONCRETE  
COLUMN

MAPLE BENCH

SPIDER BOLT CONNECTION

125mm SCREED AROUND  
RADIANT FLOOR HEATING  
200mm CONCRETE SLAB  
ON 650mm CONCRETE BEAMS

PERFORATED ALUMINUM  
PANELS ON SUSPENDED  
STEEL MEMBERS

RAMP:  
POURED CONCRETE ON  
38mm STEEL DECK ON  
700mm TRUSS

250mm CONCRETE SHEAR  
WALL

REPLACEABLE DRYWALL

MAPLE FLOOR BOARDS  
20mm UNDERFLOOR LAYER  
125mm SCREED AROUND  
RADIANT FLOOR HEATING  
200mm CONCRETE SLAB  
ON 650mm CONCRETE BEAMS

400mm MECHANICAL DUCTS

IN-FLOOR LIGHT TUBES

EXTERIOR WALL:  
CONCRETE SANDWICH  
CONSTRUCTION

CROSS SECTION BB

Scale 1:100



# APPENDICES

## **A1 – Islington Village Today**

Photomontage elevation of the north and south sides of Dundas Street West, the main street strip of Islington Village.

*Photographs by author*

**A2 – The Subway** section describes the important role of this transit infrastructure in the City of Toronto, by tracking the evolution of the TTC, Toronto’s backbone, from the ‘better way’ to the ‘lesser way’ and its prospects for the future. This section concludes by describing the passage through the subway station as part of one’s daily ritual, where one naturally encounters others in this shared public space in the city.

## **A3 – Subway Platform as Gallery**

Photomontage of the St. George subway station platform elevation.

*Photographs by author*

**A4 – The Art Gallery** section describes how the role of the art gallery has changed throughout the centuries, from the time when art collections were available only for the elite, to the time when they became institutions of mass culture, to the late 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century incarnation, the kunsthalle: a local arts centre that also functions as a community gathering place. The Islington Gallery of Art aspires to exemplify the characteristics of this type of community centre that celebrates culture.

**A5 – The Islington Gallery of Art inspires Etobicoke’s Future Vision**, describes the future program that the Islington community might need based on population projections from the Etobicoke Secondary Plan, and Toronto’s Official Plan. This section concludes with a schematic proposal illustrating how a program might be implemented to meet the needs of this population within the future Etobicoke Centre.



## A1 - Islington Village Today

fig. a1.1 Today, Islington Village, maintains its historical identity and remains the main street strip for the Islington neighbourhood. The pedestrian scale of this area of Dundas Street West enables public interaction to occur in the traditional sense of the third place. The top elevation is the north side of the street, with the south side underneath.

The presentation of these photographs is inspired by photographer Ed Ruscha's 1966 'Every Building on the Sunset Strip' which offers a true typology of every single building along the Sunset Strip. This systematic art form representing wordless narratives of California became a staple of conceptualism. In 1967, Sol LeWitt published his manifesto "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" and used Ruscha's Sunset Strip among other works, to illustrate his points on the movement of the same name that was emerging. This essay provided a pretext to open up and renew the possibilities of art.



arst Rd

Carter R H Architects  
Inc

Dr John E Kennedy



5040



5020



4994-96  
4994A-96A



4990A-92A  
4990B-92B



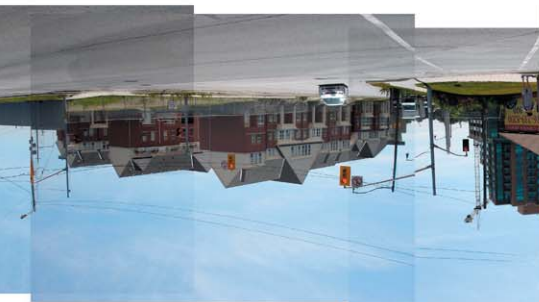
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4988

Cabot Crt

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Theatre Design & Events  
Grant Puppets



Camp Couchiching

Caron Hair Salon

Butler Chapel Turner & Porter Funeral Directors Ltd

Village Dental

Elias Bros Constrn Co Ltd

E.nopi - Math, English, Korean Centre  
Olive Fashion  
Sampson Academy Learning Centre  
Manna Restaurant  
Cafe N Joy

Shamrock & Thistle Pub

Shoppers Convenient & Flowers

Burnhamthorpe Road



4946

4916-4944  
4916A-4944A

4944

4942

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4937B

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4925  
4927  
4925A-4927A

4923

4917

Fox & Fiddle Precinct

Interpreters' Group Inc

Munroe's Fashion Shoppe

Toku Gawa Japanese Restaurant

Morning Flowers & Plants

Islington Animal Clinic

Double Double Pizza

Village The Salon

Hasty Market

Lamona Foods

Islington Village Chiropractic Clinic  
Anthony D'Avella Law Office

Dundee Private Investors  
Schneider Manfred S

True North Hockey Canada Inc

Schneider Manfred S

Thomas Peter J

Kim Peter Dr

Islington Dental

Anthony D'Avella Law Office

Decma Philip Dr

Balance

Canada Post

Academy of Learning

Coffee Time

Burnhamthorpe Road



2 4 1 Pizza

Lucky Buck Plus Dollar Shop

Bob's Produce

Village Trattoria

Shoe Repair

Martin's Cleaners Ltd

Dr. Pam McRoberts - Psychologist

Cutco Cutlery  
Village Yarns  
Positive Changes Hypnosis

The Comeback  
The Jeweller

Mak Sultan, Barrister,  
Solicitor & Notary Public

Global Video Lab Inc  
Active Journeys Inc.

Joan Burrell, Therapist

Nancy Violo, M.Ed.;  
Counselling &  
Psychotherapy

Thomas W.G. Pratt,  
Lawyer

Dr. Maryann R. Seefuss &  
Dr. Natalie S. Kos,  
Dentists

Aldert Chemicals Ltd.  
Maxemum Property  
Management / Emimax  
Holdings Inc.

Mavaacs Consulting and  
Paralegal Services  
Edward Jones Investments

Marshall & Woodwork  
Insurance Brokers Ltd.

Uniglobe  
Custom-Kingsway Travel

Victor & Roberto Hair  
Design Salon

First Nail Salon

Aircorn Murals

Joseph Alexander  
Day Spa

Joseph, Alexander Health  
Spa & Laser Clinic

Rabba Fine Food Stores

Sun Splash International  
Tanning Spas

Kingston Ave

4809

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4914

4906

4900

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4894

4890

4886

4884

CIBC Banking Centre

Beauty Supply

Money Bankers

RC Tax Financial  
Services

Custo Cafe

Oregano Grill

Immigration Partners  
International Inc

Chameleon & Papillon  
Esthetics & Makeup Art  
Inc

McGowan Brian  
Insurance Brokers Inc

Kirkby Home Hardware

K & K International  
Consultants

Pharma Plus

Diva Hair and Aesthetics

Village Spa & Nail  
Blue Sky Financial

Alkins Real Estate Ltd.

Dr. I. Puryj

Salon Ricci  
GG Aesthetics

The Golden Comb

Tidy House Center

Royal Bank

Second Cup Coffee Co.



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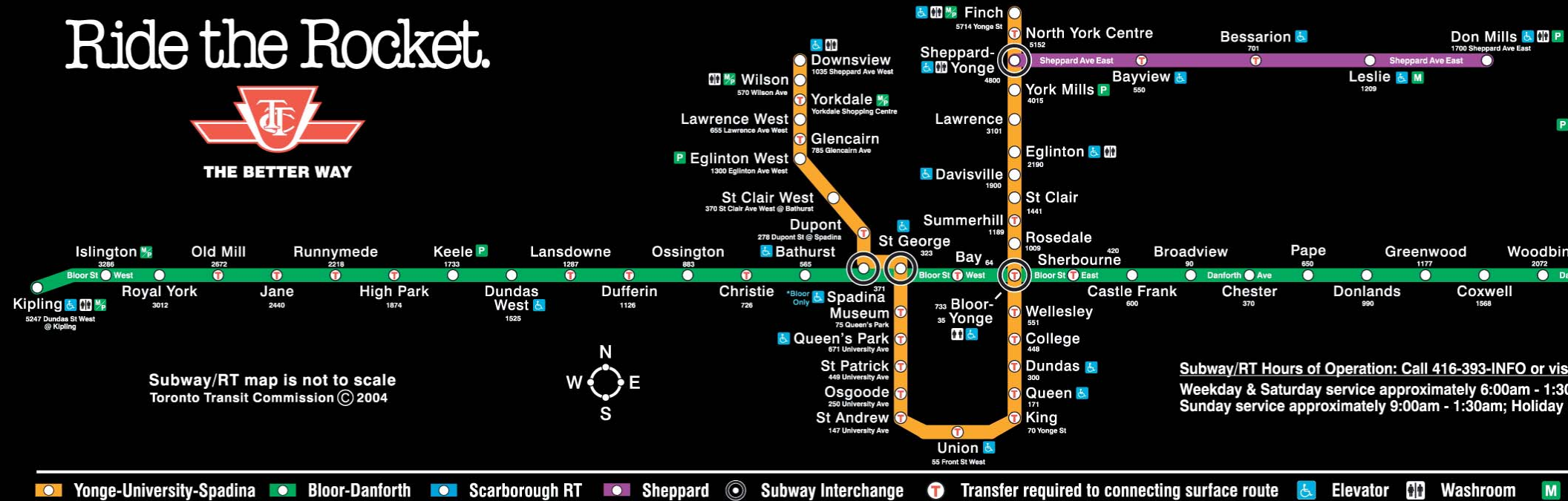


4704

# Ride the Rocket.



THE BETTER WAY



*“Subways do the heavy lifting that city-building requires, moving people to determine where healthy, pedestrian-friendly communities will spring up”.*

Gabe Gonda, “Finding a future in the route not taken,”  
Toronto Star, A11, Apr.16, 2006.

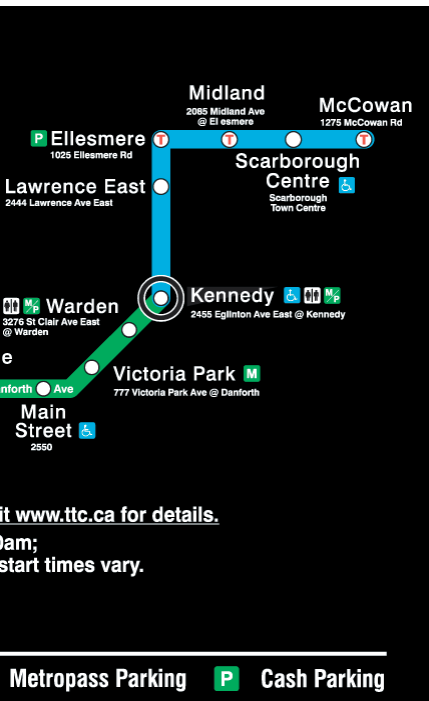


fig. a2.1 TTC route map, 2006

## A2 - The Subway

An aspect of the site that hasn't been discussed is the role of the subway. Transporting people to and from the Etobicoke Centre is essential for establishing a third place at the Islington Gallery of Art. Today, the subway is greater Toronto's lifeline. A trip downtown by car is an urban nightmare. It takes longer and is more expensive in terms of gas and parking than using the subway. More than 122,000 extra automobiles would be needed to carry the same number of riders as using the subway, on an additional 35 lanes of highway.<sup>1</sup> The cluster pattern of development along the TTC's rapid transit corridors is a success story of transit-generated urban growth. The availability of rapid transit has led to the development of the different centres throughout the City of Toronto, encouraging cross-commuting and easing congestion during rush hours.



*fig. a2.2 Tuesday, December 24, 1935: Looking south on Yonge St, opposite Trinity Square (Traffic Study Department). SOURCE: City of Toronto Archives; Alfred Pearson, photographer.*

## History

Generally speaking, the subway gave rise to the Modern City. The subway was built to respond to the critical problems of rapid urban growth and awkward geography, while aiming to unify the city and to spur growth in undeveloped districts. Mass transit stimulated settlement in what was called the outskirts of the city. This outskirts later grew to become today's suburb. In nineteenth century Manhattan, "the subway remade the face of the city" by unleashing the largest housing boom in city history.<sup>2</sup> By introducing the idea of the subway to Toronto in 1910, city officials hoped for the same result. The 1910 subway network proposal started at Union Station then moved west to Spadina Avenue, north to College Street, west to Dovercourt Avenue, north to Bloor Street, and along Bloor to Dundas Street West and St. Clair Avenue. This proposal is now regarded as a better scheme than the one that was eventually implemented.<sup>3</sup> However, the idea was ridiculed by the press and defeated in a municipal vote.

In 1942, TTC planners proposed an underground streetcar line on Yonge Street and Queen Street, which residents also rejected. Toronto entered a boom period at the end of WWII that strained the operating capacity of the TTC streetcar system. The time was right for a subway, especially along Yonge Street, where streetcars were being smothered by increased automobile use. On January 1, 1946, a public referendum settled the question: 79,935 in favour, 8,630 opposed.<sup>4</sup> In 1949, ground was broken on a 7.4 km Yonge subway line from Union Station to Eglinton Avenue. The official opening of the subway occurred at the Davisville Station on March 30, 1954, when a quarter of a million people began to ride the subway daily.

The expanding subway became the backbone to the TTC system, with buses and streetcars acting as feeder lines. In 1963, the University line from Union Station to Bloor Street began operation,



followed three years later by the Bloor-Danforth line from Keele Street to Woodbine Avenue. The Yonge line underwent two extensions in 1973 and 1974, pushing from Eglinton Avenue to Finch Avenue. The Spadina line opened in 1978, extending the University line north and west. Meanwhile, the Bloor-Danforth line extended east to Warden Avenue and west to Islington Avenue in 1968, and in 1980, Kipling became the final westbound stop.

In 1985, the Scarborough Rapid Transit (SRT) line began operation. The SRT helped to encourage development of Scarborough City Centre, which included municipal offices and a shopping complex. Usually transit is built to follow demand, but the SRT was built to facilitate and accelerate development in Scarborough, which soon became Scarborough City Centre.

Likewise, North York Centre recently exploded in growth, also becoming a new community sub-centre that developed as a result of the availability of rapid transit. With the recently opened Sheppard Line, suburban dwellers can easily commute to North York Centre. The consistent expansion of the TTC won the commission various awards during the 1980s. Awards for being the safest subway system in North America underpin its claim as “the better way”.

Public transit attracts new development and new business, increases property values and tax revenues, boosts retail sales, generates jobs and helps improve the quality of life in the city. Since the opening of the Yonge subway in 1954, more than half of all new apartments and 90% of all new offices have been built within walking distance of rapid transit. More than half of the 95 million square feet of office space built in the 1980s was built next to the Yonge subway line.<sup>5</sup>



*fig. a2.3 May 10, 1968: The Bloor-Danforth subway extends west to Islington Station and east to Warden Station. Etobicoke Mayor Edward Horton officially opened Islington Station.*

SOURCE: TTC Archives



# TTC SYSTEM MAP • TORONTO

Ride the Rocket.



THE WAY BETTER WAY

### Connecting GTA Transit Service

- GO Transit
- Ajax-Pickering Transit
- Brampton Transit
- Mississauga Transit
- Toronto Bus Terminal
- Via Rail
- York Region Transit

- Yonge-York Line
- Bloor-Danforth Line
- Scarborough Line
- Sheppard Line
- Queen Line
- Humber Line
- Zoo Line
- Eglinton Line
- Subway Interchange
- Transfer Required
- Surface Route
- Community Bus Route
- Local Trains Only
- Metropass Parking
- Cash Parking
- Elevator Accessible
- Public Washroom

Zoo and Humber Lines both have parallel bicycle paths. For more info contact artist Leif Harmen at www.harmen.net

MAP IS NOT TO SCALE January 2004

Map CONTINUED

## Future

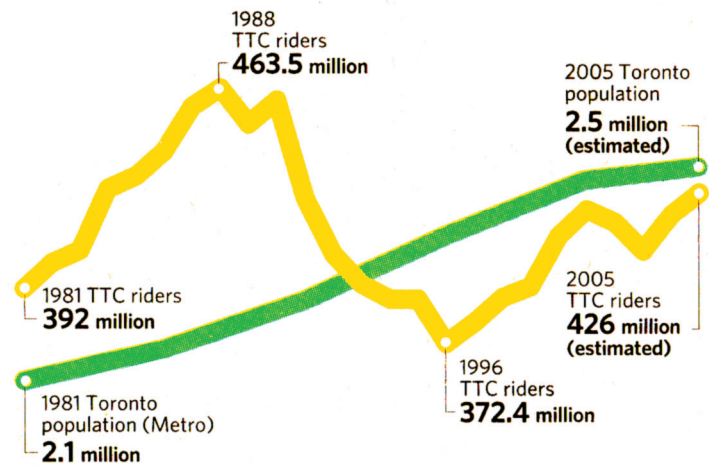
A reinvented Toronto starts with a reinvented transit system, a dream of where the subway could or might go. The vision for a comprehensive subway system network, like those in New York or London, would transform city life in Toronto, “allowing real neighbourhoods to take root where now only subdivisions are possible.”<sup>6</sup> Numerous subway lines were proposed but never built, including those along busy corridors such as Eglinton Avenue or Queen Street. These lines would have met transit needs while encouraging growth in less built-up areas, turning suburbs into “hubs of independent community activity.”<sup>7</sup>

Ed Levy, a respected Toronto transportation consultant, said that instead of wasting \$1 billion on the “line to nowhere” – the Sheppard subway line – the City should have gone ahead with a line along Eglinton Avenue. Eglinton is the only road that travels through all the former amalgamated Toronto municipalities. Today it has an inefficient patchwork of bus routes. Levy sees an LRT traveling underground from Eglinton Avenue to Keele Street, above ground from Eglinton Avenue to Scarborough City Centre, and above ground as well from Keele Street to Pearson International Airport. He proposes an advanced light rail vehicle system partially underground and partially above that could be expanded into a full subway when necessary.<sup>8</sup> This fantasy Eglinton line is popular among artists and cartographers who envision a future TTC system.

Today’s Toronto does not have the density required to support Levy’s, or Harmsmen’s (see map on facing page), elaborate proposals since subways need densities of between 10,000 and 15,000 people per square kilometer.<sup>9</sup> However, if city officials used the kind of thinking that led them to build the Scarborough Rapid Transit extension — designed to facilitate and accelerate growth — construction would be underway. Not only does the TTC need to maintain its ridership, it needs to attract new riders through expansion of its services.

*OPPOSITE: fig. a2.4 Artist Leif Harmsmen drew his own version of a TTC map over the existing ride-guide portable document format (PDF) that is on the TTC’s website. This map, along with other fictional Toronto subway maps have been appearing online, in galleries, or in books, featuring an Eglinton Avenue line, a Queen Street line, an extended westerly Bloor Street line going to Square One in Mississauga, and going east to the Toronto Zoo. The map also illustrates a rail link connecting the City of Toronto with Pearson Airport and it shows express lines along the existing Bloor and University-Yonge lines.*

*SOURCE: <http://www.harmsen.net>*



After squashing the Spadina Expressway in 1971, Bill Davis, Ontario's Premier at the time exclaimed that cities were for people, not for cars. As a result, he provided subsidies for TTC operation and expansion. Mr. Davis' pro-transit efforts were killed by Mike Harris' government in the 1990's. During that decade, TTC ridership and operation plummeted to an all time low. Furthermore, in August 1995, three women died in the subway system's first ever fatal crash, as a result of funding cutbacks which lead to maintenance deficiencies. In addition to jeopardizing the TTC's 'State of Good Repair', bus and streetcar services were also cut and the TTC became the 'lesser way'. Since then it has been trying to pull itself out of this quagmire.

Its financial future, in terms of provincial and federal funding arrangements is starting to look promising. The TTC is counting on \$7.5 billion from federal, provincial, and local governments for the next 10 years.<sup>10</sup>

Before stepping down from Chief General Manager of the TTC in September 2006, Rick Ducharme had hoped to dedicate \$4.7 billion to the 'State of Good Repair', purchasing 1300 buses, 232 subway cars, and an unspecified number of light rail cars, as well as refurbishing 100 aging streetcars; \$1.3 billion to a 'Ridership Growth Strategy', creating transit-priority roads, expanded bus service to the suburbs, and offering subsidies to reduce fares; and \$1.5 billion to a Spadina subway expansion to York University.

Implementing these measures for future expansion will increase ridership, putting the TTC back on track to 'the better way'.



fig. a2.6 Interior of front end of Train 35, Car 5721 taken from doors 3 and 4.  
 SOURCE: Toronto Transit Commission. Russell Hill Subway Train Accident. August 11, 1995. Final Report: December, 1995.

## As public space and ritual

The subway station absorbs street life from the city and brings it underground to the platform. The platform, like the street, is a familiar part of one's daily routine. It is a public space for a certain kind of ritual, however transitory it might be. The environment of the station can accommodate both temporal and spontaneous interactions, as one waits for his train, or transfers to another platform, or waits outside to meet someone, or picks up a paper from the newsstand beside the street exit. These actions create a memory of the station and the possibilities that one could encounter there, part of the ritual of urban polity. In Toronto today, subway infrastructure could be the driving force behind the creation of interesting new public spaces.

The subway platform exists as a public space because it satisfies the four needs of the public space: "the one to remember, but also to use, and inhabit, and convene."<sup>11</sup> According to Marc Auge, author of *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, the subway platform functions as a specific social space with codes, rules, and habits because of the everyday routines that subway passengers perform there. The transit system makes people feel like they are a part of the metropolis and it provides them with a sense of place.<sup>12</sup> In this way, the common experience of using the subway emphasizes people's togetherness in the city.

Citizens create social and cultural spaces by moving from one place to another. People gather for a moment on the concourse or platform, then go their separate ways. The public space of the station engages and connects the commuter to the community. As a shared experience, transit space begins to function as a theatre where people move at different speeds, in different directions, or assemble. For example, in 1962 in the Grand Hall of Grand Central Station in New York:

OPPOSITE ABOVE: *fig. a2.5 Despite the steady growth in population, TTC ridership reaches an all time low during the 90's. Ridership plummets again following 9/11 and SARS, but is currently recovering.*

SOURCE: *Toronto Star Graphic, 'Getting back to a better way'. Saturday June 4, 2005, credit to TTC Statistics.*



5:55:46



5:55:50



5:55:53



5:55:57



5:56:02



5:56:04



5:56:05



5:56:06



5:56:07



5:56:08



5:56:10



5:56:12



5:56:36



5:56:40



5:56:46

Marine Corps Maj. John H. Glenn's Friendship 7 spacecraft was launched into orbit on the morning of 20 February 1962[.] Life magazine later reported, 4,000 commuters crowded into New York City's Grand Central Station and remained there for hours to watch the event on a giant CBS-TV television screen mounted in the main concourse. 'It's a fine feeling to walk into this place and be emotional about something other than a late train,' one commuter told Life.<sup>13</sup>

Public space encourages community, tolerance, inclusiveness, and acceptance.<sup>14</sup> Twenty-first century public space, motivated by subway infrastructure, is a connected framework transporting people anywhere in the city. The physical structure of the city is determined and conditioned by movement. One can participate in this action or stand back and observe. Just as in the city above ground, the life of the subway offers infinite possibilities for encounter and interaction.

OPPOSITE: *fig. a2.7* These still images were shot between 5:55pm and 5:56pm on Tuesday April 4, 2006 on the Union station subway platform. They represent a record of the arrival and departure of one train on both the University and Yonge lines, capturing one minute of the intense system of flow on the TTC subway line during rush hour, showing the relationship between time and ritual: "Time is the measure by which we compose the 'mental map' of the City." (Meurs, *In Transit*, 106.)

*fig. a2.8* Grand Central Station, New York. The launching of John H. Glenn's Friendship 7 into orbit on February 20, 1962.



*“Ambiguous like all in-between spaces, the everyday represents a zone of social transition and possibility with the potential for new social arrangements and forms of imagination.”*

Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 95.



*fig. a2.9 TTC subway platform.*



The city's constant urban infrastructure endures through its changing collective culture. Subway infrastructure is a mechanized microcosm of the city, where the ritual of daily routine binds urban dwellers together. In the City of Toronto, the TTC is a vital part of urban life, providing a way to escape and travel throughout the city. Just as the subway unifies the city, the station unifies the community. The subway station is a central, and familiar, meeting spot around which residents organize their comings and goings. The continuous circulation of people that the subway system creates is extended into the Islington Gallery of Art.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Toronto Transit Commission, *Transit in Toronto*, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ward, *The Landscape of Modernity*, 192.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Hume, "The error of our subways," *Toronto Star*, D11, May 7, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Toronto Transit Commission, *Transit in Toronto*, 13

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>6</sup> Gabe Gonda, "Finding a future in the route not taken," *Toronto Star*, A11, Apr.16, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Hume, "The error of our subways," *Toronto Star*, D11, May 7, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Kevin McGran, "Getting back to a better way," *Toronto Star*, E5, June 4, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Gastil, *Open: new designs for public space*, 19.

<sup>12</sup> Meurs, *In Transit*, 87

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.navyleague.org/seapower/john.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Gastil, *Open: new designs for public space*, 23.



### A3 - Subway Platform as Gallery

*fig. a3.1 The elevation of the platform walls of the St. George subway station represents the experience of the length of the platform being used for display. This was the inspiration for the gallery spaces in the Islington Gallery of Art.*

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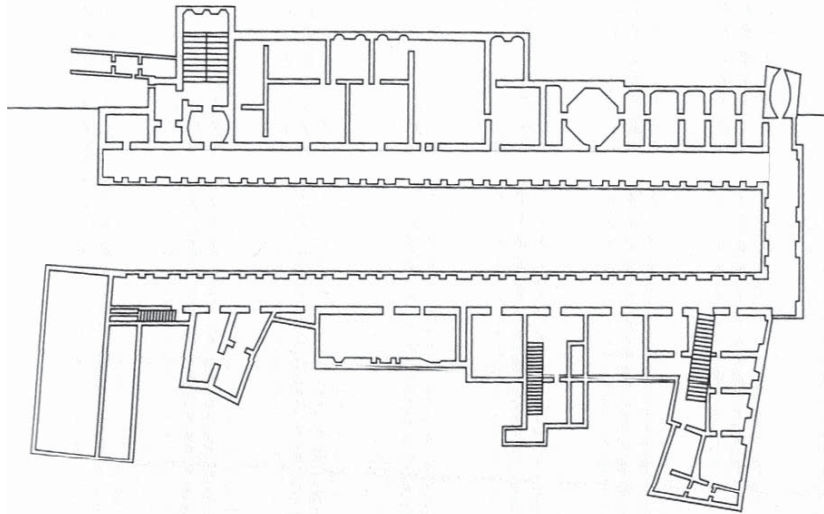
cul·ture (kŭl'chər), n. *The act of developing the intellectual and moral faculties esp. by education; enlightenment and excellence of taste acquired by intellectual and aesthetic training; acquaintance with and taste in fine arts, humanities, and broad aspects of science as distinguished from vocational and technical skills.*<sup>1</sup>



#### A4 - The Art Gallery

Over the centuries, museums, and art galleries have been centrepieces of culture. Their function has endured but their place in society has changed; once only for the elite, they are now objects of urban regeneration attracting the general public to a destination within the local community. A progression of art gallery types is described here. The Islington Gallery of Art takes precedent from these types.

According to Michel Foucault's 1967 *Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias*, the "other" is the public realm that links the spaces of the street, the house, and work. It is a realm where imagination takes flight and where new experiences can be found. The heterotopia is a space of appearance, where something never before wholly perceived in reality can flourish, such as art. Heterotopias are essential in life, maintaining the virtual space – the space for the imagination – and the space for culture.



ABOVE: *fig. a4.1 Uffizi Gallery plan.*

BELOW: *fig. a4.2 View of the first corridor in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.*

SOURCE: *Fossi, The Official Guide: Uffizi Gallery*



## Uffizi Gallery

One of the great examples of the art gallery is the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The Uffizi Gallery was one of the first galleries in Europe to emerge in accordance with the modern idea of a museum, being a systematically organized exhibition space designed for public viewing. At the request of the Medici duke Cosimo in 1560, Giorgio Vasari designed a grand palazzo with two wings, “along the river, almost floating in the air.”<sup>2</sup> In 1581, the Duke transformed the top floor of the Uffizi into a gallery, a place for “walking with paintings, statues and other precious things.” The gallery opened to the public in 1765, and is still an internationally renowned destination for tourists and locals alike.

In the nineteenth century, North American and European cities saw a boom in the building of art galleries alongside museums and libraries, as the municipal drive for literacy and public education took hold. At the turn of the century, the crucial role of museums came to impress on society a secular notion of culture.<sup>3</sup> By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, museums were built as indicators of national economic wealth and prosperity, and as a way of positioning a country or city in the context of the wider world.<sup>4</sup>

Raymond Williams, one of Britain’s greatest post-war cultural historians, theorists, and polemicists, attributed ‘*culture*’ to “a group of words together with ‘*class*’, ‘*industry*’, ‘*democracy*’ and ‘*art*’ which were either invented or given new meanings after the industrial revolution.”<sup>5</sup>

## Pompidou Centre

Although the modern state feels some responsibility for the development of culture, the varying traditions of each individual country are responsible for how it is implemented. In France, the abstractness of the word, for instance, invests it with a tradition of ‘irresistible authority’, which along with state patronages and academies is how the concept for the Beaubourg Cultural Centre was determined.<sup>6</sup> In their 1971 competition brief, architects Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano interpreted the Centre Beaubourg, or the Pompidou Centre, as it is known in North America, as a ‘supermarket of culture’, a vast self-sufficient block that represented the assimilation of culture in the market place. Symbolically, it is a neutral building type with box rooms, where “one could put the whole of that vague, unclassifiable baggage called ‘culture’”.<sup>7</sup> The building imitates a self-service store, where the products of the world are displayed and where ‘culture’ is equated with ‘information’. The entire building was proposed as a series of flexible superimposed uniform loft spaces, with the structure, circulation and service elements pulled to the outside. Completed in 1977, the Pompidou Centre represents an architecture that has nothing to say about the various activities that might occur in the building. It shows itself instead as a great mechanized machine of culture.<sup>8</sup>

Almost thirty years have passed since the opening of the Pompidou Centre. Among other successes, it turned out to be a catalyst for the regeneration of the Marais district in Paris, the first gallery to have such an effect on its surroundings.<sup>9</sup>

*fig. a4.3 The principal facade of the Georges Pompidou National Arts and Cultural Centre, Paris, viewed from the piazza.*





## Tate Modern

Opened on May 12, 2000, The Tate Modern in London represents a twenty-first century gallery that encompasses community and is inclusive to all. It stimulates both artistic activity and urban regeneration, and reinforces the idea of art being integral to people's existence. Whatever their background or income, people can come to the Tate Modern, especially because most galleries are free of charge.

The architects of the Tate, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron created spaces where the visitor can choose how he wants to move about: the building represents a city on a reduced scale, a heterotopian place in which a variety of experiences are on offer. The Turbine Hall, at the entrance to the gallery, is the grand piazza where art receives the visitors. It is used as a framing device that intensifies the social theatre of day to day life.<sup>10</sup> One can enter the Turbine Hall and spend time there without ever having to venture into the rest of the building's gallery spaces. Jacques Herzog said:

Architecture that builds spaces for this art should stimulate people to come to terms with it. It should help them to perceive this art in the best possible way. It should create important places where people like to linger, and that can mean a lot of people... I wanted people to be able to see things in such a way that they can make discoveries and enjoy surprises – so that they carry an experience that will live on in their everyday lives away from the museum with them.<sup>11</sup>

The Tate Modern is an example of a twenty-first century museum aiming to engage citizens within and *beyond* the space of the gallery. Herzog and de Meuron have interpreted the museum space as open and transparent, through an attempt to create galleries that express a “sense of assembly with an atmosphere of contemplation.”<sup>12</sup>

Contemporary artist Simon Martin documented everyday museum experiences in a 12 minute film, *Wednesday Afternoon* (2005). His days spent wandering through London's museums is depicted by an anonymous narrator. The film shows the ease of consuming whole afternoons looking at things. This film highlights the chance encounters between people. It also focuses on what provokes our compulsion to look and be fascinated with objects we don't readily understand. The narrator states that since there is so much stuff in the museum, it is hard to actually care about any one thing. Therefore, the most important aspect of the museum is the experience of drifting through:

What I want to do is capture the magic of looking at people and things. I want to do this without disrupting what is there or altering anything that might happen... suspending conclusions and resolutions, keeping things open, somehow remaining critical.<sup>13</sup>

In presenting the theatre and abundance of the museum, Simon Martin explores the act of looking, thinking and passing time, and how we can value that experience.

OPPOSITE: *fig. a4.3 The Tate Modern, London. The Turbine Hall is an eight-storey atrium dedicated to large contemporary art installations featuring one artist's work for months at a time.*

BELOW: *fig. a4.4 Simon Martin, 'Wednesday Afternoon', 2005. Still from DVD projection. SOURCE: Power Plant Gallery, Spring 2006 exhibition catalogue.*



**Kunsthalle**, German term for an arts centre with no permanent exhibition. An arts centre, is a functional community centre that provides facilities to encourage and promote arts practice.

## Kunsthal in Rotterdam, Rem Koolhaas

The idea for the Kunsthal in Rotterdam arose from the logistical problems of holding temporary exhibitions that drew building-choking crowds at the Museum Boymans van Beuningen. In order to make way for the temporary exhibitions, many pieces from the permanent collection had to be hidden and stored away in depots for months at a time, which distracted the staff from their normal duties. The Kunsthal was proposed as an exhibition-only venue, to alleviate these inconveniences. This building was designed to host a busy program of 20 to 30 alternating shows a year. It does not have a permanent exhibition nor does it have a budget to purchase one. The staff concentrates on temporary shows, with touring exhibitions brought from abroad as well as locally sponsored shows. In this way, it seems that the building relates more closely to a theatre or trade-fair building than a museum.<sup>14</sup>

Rem Koolhaas designed the 4000 square metre building with variable light and climate conditions and a restaurant. Koolhaas projected a ramp directly through the building, developing an indoor street that connects the park below with the road above. The ramp opens directly into the auditorium that doubles as the institution's foyer. The ramp as street element breaks down the physical barriers that typically separate high culture from sidewalk culture. The design is "the first public building of its kind without an identifiable front, back or sides. It has an outward orientation, literally from the inside to the outside."<sup>15</sup> Incorporating the city of daily life into built work, the Kunsthal is a transparent architecture that reveals the social. The traditional front door is replaced by a ramp, which draws people from the outside in to experience what the building has to offer, and the Kunsthal's popularity remains as high today as it was a decade ago.

*fig. a4.5 Rem Koolhaas/ O.M.A., Kunsthal, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 1992*  
SOURCE: Koolhaas, S,M,L,XL, 467.



*fig. a4.6 The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto. Artist work shown is by Joëlle Tuerlinckx. NO'W' (no Rest. no Room. no Things. no Title), 2005*  
PHOTO CREDIT: Rafael Goldchain



## Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery

Toronto's functioning kunsthalle is the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, associated with Harbourfront Centre. It is a locus for a wide variety of activities and resources related to contemporary art. The Power Plant was adapted by Lett/Smith Architects<sup>16</sup> from a former ice-house and boiler room and opened in 1987. It is Canada's leading public non-collecting gallery devoted exclusively to contemporary art.

The programs offered by the gallery includes GalleryKids, a program providing children with the opportunity to respond physically, intellectually, and creatively to contemporary art, while involving the whole family on a weekly basis. On Wednesday nights, various events such as a curator's tour or an artist's talk are offered at no cost. Youth programs and lectures are also offered seasonally.<sup>17</sup>

The Power Plant prides itself on a strong international profile. Commissioning internationally acclaimed artists from world art fairs, such as the Basel Documenta, the Power Plant puts Toronto on the world culture map. The Power Plant has three major exhibition galleries and smaller indoor and outdoor sites. The gallery spaces are designed for maximum flexibility, considering the wide range of contemporary art. The galleries have nine metre high ceilings and an adjustable grid lighting system.<sup>18</sup> The Power Plant is a registered Canadian charitable organization sponsored by its members, sponsors, donors, and funding bodies at all levels of government.



Over the centuries the form of the museum has evolved, from the Uffizi Palazzo to the Pompidou Centre to the Power Plant to the Kunsthal to the Tate Modern. The museum's function has changed from a monument conveying also a tradition to a social role in the community. Along the way, society has accepted art as part of everyday life instead of being only for vacations or weekends.

The kunsthalle building typology introduces a functional museum without collecting or storing pieces. Open to all, this type of museum is a new kind of space for the imagination. The arts centre is a part of the public space and cultural framework in the city. It is a condenser of social space and social activities.

As a local community arts centre, the Islington Gallery of Art will encourage neighbourhood residents to broaden their perceptions of society by having immediate access to contemporary art from their subway station. This gives art the opportunity to have a greater presence in daily life and public space.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 314.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Nicola Turner, "Spirit of the age: museums," *World Architecture*, July-August 1999, no. 78, 96, quoting Mark Pachter, chief counselor to the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 97.

<sup>5</sup> 20 Centre Georges Pompidou, *Centre Pompidou*, 96

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>9</sup> Eleanor Robbins, "Museums for the People," *The Art Book*, January 2001, Volume 8, Issue 1, 10-12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Mack, *Art Museums into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 37.

<sup>12</sup> William Curtis, "Herzog & de Meuron's architecture of luminosity and transparency transforms an old power station on the Thames into the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art," *Architectural Record*, June 2000, 102-109.

<sup>13</sup> Simon Martin, *Wednesday Afternoon*, The Power Plant, Spring 2006 (Exhibition Pamphlet).

<sup>14</sup> Wim Pijbes, "New Kunsthal opened in Rotterdam," *World Of Museums: Museum Management and Curatorship*, Volume 11, Issue 4, December, 1992, 421-424

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> "Harbourfront Arts Centre, Toronto: Lett, Smith Architects," *Canadian Architect*, March 1988, 20-25.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.thepowerplant.org/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.thepowerplant.org/>

*“Under the seeming disorder of the old city, where the old city is working successfully, is a marvelous order for maintaining the safety in the streets and the freedom of the city... This order is all composed of movement and change... we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance... to an intricate ballet in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole.”*

Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 50.

### **A5 – The Islington Gallery of Art inspires Etobicoke’s Future Vision**

The official plan for the Greater Toronto Area anticipates it will grow by over 2.6 million, to a total population of 7.45 million, by 2031.<sup>1</sup> The City of Toronto has established a ‘nodal’ concept for the growth of urban structure. Current nodes in the City of Toronto include the Downtown core, Scarborough City Centre, Yonge-and-Eglinton Centre, and North York Centre. The ‘spread’ concept, where development continues along historical patterns, and the ‘central’ concept have been considered undesirable for the city. The nodal concept was chosen because it minimized the impact on existing community fabric and provided a greater diversity in housing types, ownership and population densities, and a mix of residential and job activity.<sup>2</sup> The nodal growth concept concentrates urban density in existing communities and expands based on transportation accessibility.

By 2030, the Kipling-Islington corridor has the potential to become a centre or 'node' comparable to what the Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood is today. The empty available land along the Kipling-Islington corridor could be further developed to stimulate a continuation of Toronto's urban fabric to the western city limits.

Urbanist, antimodernist and author, Jane Jacobs advocates incremental, human-scale city construction and the importance of an urban context. Good urbanism, to her, is when the small scale of daily life is prioritized, when ritual, surprise and social life guide the plan. She pointed to such traditional elements as the city block, the co-existence of old and new buildings, mixed uses, fragmented parcelization, desirable congestion, and the efficiency of inefficiency as stimulating a high quality of urban life.<sup>3</sup> What Jacobs supports, could sustain a vibrant neighbourhood at Islington Avenue and Bloor Street West.

The land immediately surrounding the Islington TTC station, between Islington Avenue, Bloor Street West, and Dundas Street West, could follow an incremental approach to city design, by taking full consideration of its urban context. New community facilities could be built one building at a time according to the needs of the neighbourhood. From their participation in the development of new public spaces to new architecture, the community will most likely contribute in creating a vital city life. In this way, the community's NEEDS,\* become the design's PROGRAM. What follows is a general proposal for the site surrounding the Islington TTC station describing the possibilities that the Islington Gallery of Art might bring.

*\*The community's needs were derived from the Etobicoke Secondary Plan and Appendix Reports, and are based on future population projections.*

## NEEDS:

School space to educate a growing population of young children, mainly from an influx of immigrant families.

A **Community Centre** that offers social and recreational programs for children, youth, adults, and seniors: ESL, after school programs, and counseling and job training programs for new immigrants.

Moving **Brentwood District Library** to this site, since it is quickly outgrowing its current site at Bloor Street West and Royal York Road.

A **Market** for ethnic goods.

A relocation of the **West District City Hall** to the Westwood Theatre site, near the Six Points Interchange.

A **Western Rapid Transit Extension** extending the Bloor-Danforth TTC line to Mississauga Square One. The Mississauga Bus Terminal located at Islington would be moved to a new station along this line, freeing up the land where the bus terminal is currently located, on the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue.

## PROGRAM:

**Elementary School** – 8,000 m<sup>2</sup>

JK-Grade 8, for maximum 800 students.

**Community Centre** - 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>

Meeting Rooms, pool, gym, athletic facilities: fitness studios, weight room, running track, etc.

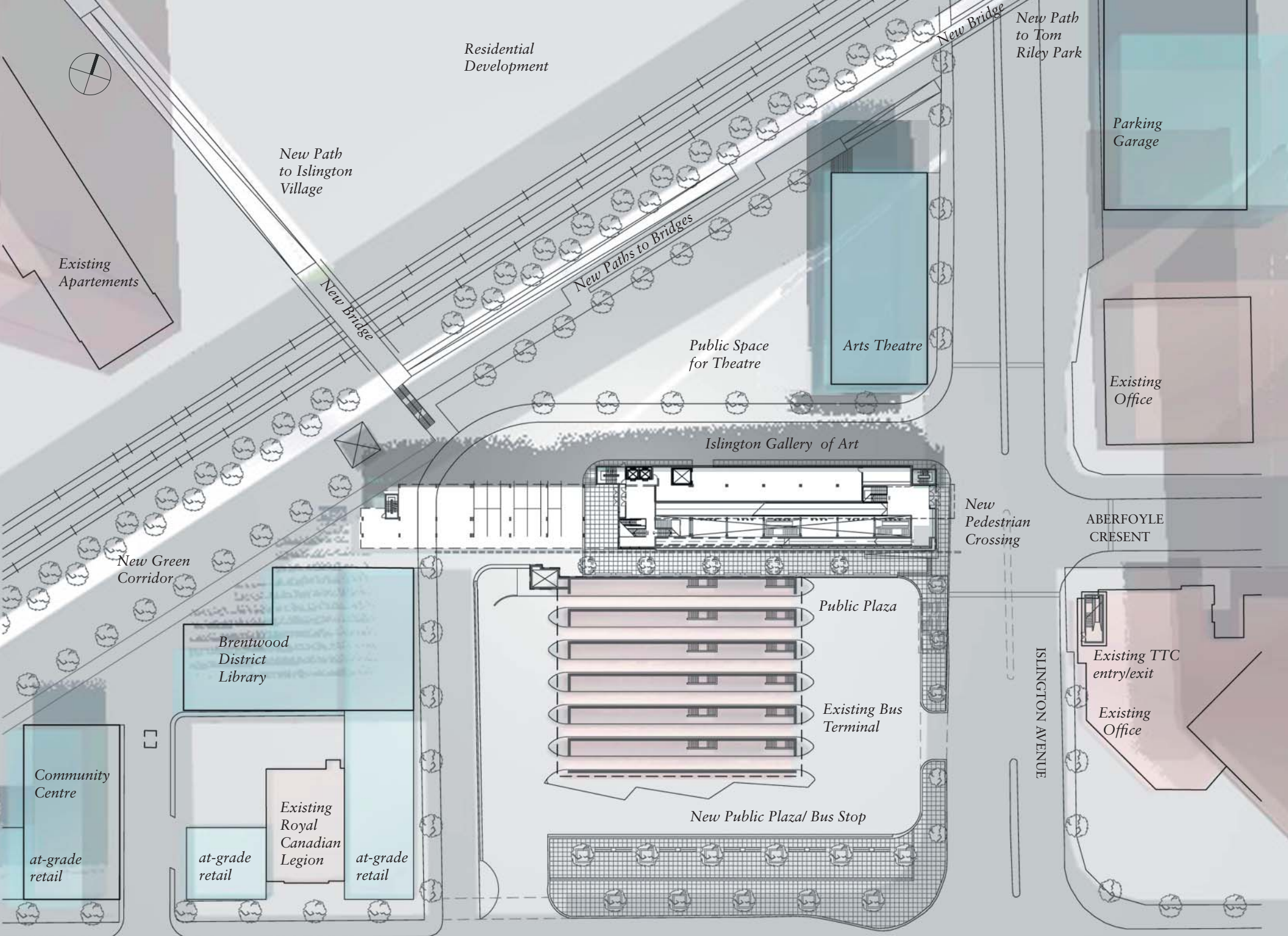
**Senior Centre** – 3,700 m<sup>2</sup>

**Brentwood District Library** – 3,500 m<sup>2</sup> (Currently 1266 m<sup>2</sup>)

**Arts Theatre** – 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>

Multiple performance venues, education facilities, workshops, exhibition display, etc.

**Offices** – 50,000 – 75,000 m<sup>2</sup>



The implementation of this program, which is subject to change with time or the spontaneity of urban happening, could occur in six increments, with new housing continually being added between phases as the public realm increases in diversity and complexity. One would expect this program to take shape based on the success of the other nodes in the city, where local office and service functions have grown to support residential development.

1. Islington subway station, with its contemporary art gallery, becomes the Islington Gallery of Art, the beginnings of a cultural hub and public community space, with an outdoor plaza and connections to Islington Village and Tom Riley Park.
2. Government offices move, as planned, to the former Westwood Theatre site.
3. Offices constructed near government buildings (similar in height and floor space to the Clarica Centre) could create a commercial hub, and attract businesses to move here. To alleviate future traffic congestion, the Western Rapid Transit Extension seems to be an attractive alternative for commuters.
4. Possible completion of a community centre and a new elementary school to meet the demands of the growing population.
5. Potential relocation of West District Branch Library to a site near Islington Station.
6. West District Centre for the Performing Arts could become another cultural centre at this hub.

OPPOSITE: *fig. a5.1 Site plan of the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue with the realization of the Islington Gallery of Art, and the notional program for the cultural node that could develop within the next few decades. Scale 1:1000.*

*A new 2000 car parking structure is planned to be built on the existing Lomond lot freeing up the current commuter parking lots for development. People can access the station either from the east side of Islington Avenue or from the new pedestrian bridge crossing Islington Avenue. The TTC Cordova lot will be dedicated to future residential development. The main street strip on Bloor Street will continue past the station, extending west on both sides of Bloor Street with grade level retail and housing units above. On the corner of Islington Avenue and Bloor Street West, the existing vaulted bus terminal depot will remain untouched. The original 1968 bus traffic pattern will be implemented, with buses turning into the station from Islington Avenue, and exiting onto Bloor Street. Currently, the buses both turn in from and exit onto Bloor Street. This adjustment allows more space on the corner for a pedestrian plaza and additional bus stops. A new pedestrian crossing in front of the art gallery will slow down traffic on Islington Avenue and a green corridor containing community gardens and planting beds will be zoned beside the new bike path to offer moments for contemplation from the extension of Tom Riley Park to the station side of the street.*





In order to achieve higher density here, empty tracts of land would be filled-in incrementally. Applying Calthorpe's theory of the Transit Oriented Development, the site's prime location, currently occupied by TTC commuter lots, would be used for community facilities. The Dundas Street West, Bloor Street West, and Islington Avenue triangle is currently zoned for high density residential use, as are the areas around Islington and Kipling stations for office use. The adjacent low density residential neighbourhoods would remain protected. By setting up conditions for growth alongside expected residential and office development, Etobicoke Centre has the potential to meet the needs of the expanding community. As the third place in the community, the Islington Gallery of Art will anchor this growth at the corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue and plant the seeds for this vision.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> City of Toronto, "Flash forward: Projecting population and Employment to 2031 in a mature Urban Area," *Toronto Official Plan*, 24-27, [www.toronto.ca/torontoplan/pdf/flash\\_sec5tabl.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/torontoplan/pdf/flash_sec5tabl.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Chase, *Everyday Urbanism*, 94.

OPPOSITE: *fig. a5.2 Looking towards the Islington Gallery of Art on the north-west corner of Bloor Street West and Islington Avenue.*



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