



**Grand Trunk Railway
(GTR) Shops**

THE BUILDING IS THE SOLUTION, NOT THE PROBLEM



The Requests of Council

R. RITZ ARCHITECT INC.

The building is the solution, not the problem

RR

What Council Must Consider to Advance the GTR Renewal Project

a. The Site

- i. The cost of remediation is uncertain.
- ii. The cost to make it attractive to a developer is more than twice the cost of comparable properties.
- iii. If the site is sold, the loss is real.

b. The Building

- i. The engineer's estimate to rehabilitate the building is \$12 million, including the section damaged by fire.
- ii. The value of the structure when rehabilitation is complete is \$52 million.
- iii. The environmental engineer confirmed that, other than soil removed for construction, there are no ecological issues when renovating the building because it exists.
- iv. It is understood that since the building exists, the rail easement is not applicable within the structure.

Making it the City's Bicentennial Project – with construction starting in 2027 and finishing by 2032.



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Request of Council to Advance the GTR Renewal Project

1. Initiate and encourage the City's collaboration and partnership with the YMCA, the Stratford Public Library and the Stratford Arts and Cultural Collective as tenants in the GTR Building.
2. Commit funds to develop the new 42,000 SF Library in the GTR Building.
3. Conduct the same analysis for the existing YMCA as the SBDC for the development of the new SPS HQ, considering that the purchase price of the YMCA will be used to develop the GTR Building, and the property taxes generated by the SBDC property be used to amortize additional funding for the new SPS HQ at the existing YMCA.
4. Retain RJC Engineers to review and update their 2013 structural analysis of the building to determine the structural integrity of the existing building and its ability to support the proposed loads required to develop this plan.
5. Conduct a comprehensive comparison between demolition and rehabilitation at the necessary detail level to confirm that repurposing the building outweighs its demolition, including verification of the floor slab thickness and the location of under slab structures by drilling at each of the proposed column locations for a more accurate cost to
 - a. remove it, if all or part of the building is taken down or,
 - b. developed with the installation of new interior columns to support the mid-span of the proposed floor loads.
6. Retain an environmental engineer to perform an RSC for the west end of the building and the area where the pool is proposed, so remediation costs can be determined more accurately than the \$1.2 million allowance used.
7. Conduct a soil investigation using core samples in the GTR Building at
 - a. each proposed entrance
 - b. the area of the proposed Y change rooms/offices
 - c. each bay within the parking garage
 - d. in the area of the new pool and apartment building to determine:
 - i. the compressive strength of the soil to support the proposed interior floors or new buildings and,



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Request of Council to Advance the GTR Renewal Project (cont'd)

- ii. the degree of contamination to better understand how the proposed floor system over these areas manages the contamination so it does not affect users of the building and determine the degree of removal should a new building be built on the site, should the existing building be demolished.
8. Retain a traffic consultant to review the proposed changes to off-site streets, interior streets and pedestrian paths.
9. Analyze and endorse the proposed concept for parking and building design, including an east-west concourse extending along the length of the building, two north-south streets running through it, to enhance the public realm, street network and open space provision.
10. If there is a delay, rehabilitate the entire existing building and develop the parking garage to finance the cost of the rehabilitation.
11. Create a separate not-for-profit corporate entity, similar to Festival Hydro, to facilitate the development of the building and site to:
 - a. Engage a project manager to retain an architect and engineers to design, tender and administer the construction of the project.
 - b. To address the railway's concerns, retain an acoustical engineer to determine the noise impact of the railways on the proposed development and options for mitigation.
 - c. Continue conversations started with GEXR for street and pedestrian crossings through the site from downtown to the neighbourhood south of St. David Street.
 - d. Pursue the acquisition of CNR Locomotive 6218 and its tender and develop a funding strategy to transport it to Stratford and place it in the GTR Building.
12. Declare that the renewal of the GTR Shops is the City's Bicentennial Project that begins in 2027 and is completed in 2032.

If you want something to happen, you have to shift the mindset from “We can't afford it,” to “How can we afford it” to make it happen.

As an architect, I have completed due diligence in consultation with engineers, contractors and in conformance with the OBC to the professional ethics as set out by the Ontario Association of Architects, to ensure this concept can be developed as proposed.

Robert John Ritz, B. Arch., O.A.A.



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Request of Council to Advance the GTR Renewal Project - Immediate Action

To advance the GTR project as per the 2018 Masterplan and Ad-hoc Committee recommendations, Council should:

1. Conduct a comprehensive comparison between demolition and rehabilitation with the necessary detail to confirm that repurposing the building outweighs its demolition.
2. Allocate property tax revenue and the funds required to purchase the SBDC and purchase and repurpose the existing YMCA into SPS HQ, so these funds can be used by the YMCA to build at the GTR Site.

This advances the project, is a Win-Win for the YMCA and SPS that will benefit taxpayers.

