



**Grand Trunk Railway
(GTR) Shops**

HERITAGE ASPECTS



National Heritage Trust

R. RITZ ARCHITECT INC.



HERITAGE ASPECTS:

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“Even the best architect cannot design historical significance into a new building.”

The National Trust’s 2014 Top Ten Most Endangered Places List

Heritage Canada The National Trust released its 10th annual Top Ten Most Endangered Places List on July 17, 2014.

The selection—presented here from the North to the West to the East coasts—was compiled from the results of the National Trust’s call for nominations as well as those stories and news items followed throughout the year.

Former GTR Locomotive Repair Shops (also known as the Cooper Site) – 350 Downie Street, Stratford, ON – RAILWAY LEGACY OR LOOMING LANDFILL?

This massive industrial structure may be sent to landfill despite creative suggestions for adaptive reuse.

Why it matters



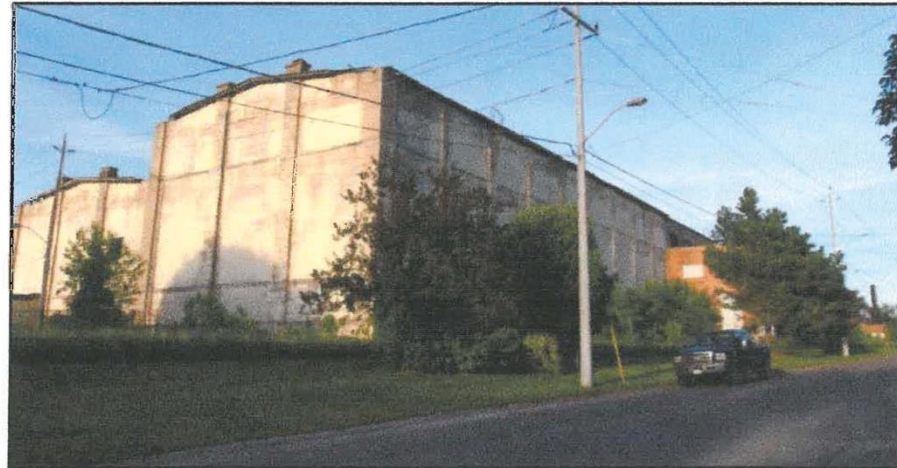


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Built in 1909, Stratford, Ontario's GTR (later CNR) locomotive repair shops building is a massive steel and concrete facility that is an exceptional example of its kind in Canada. A prominent structure adjacent to Stratford's downtown, the vacant two-storey building covers close to five of the original 11.4 acres of railway lands, acquired by the City in 2009. An extraordinary industrial site and important cultural heritage asset, it offers a range of development opportunities. And at close to 16,800 sq m (182,000 sq ft) it would be an environmental travesty to send it all to landfill.



Credit: Dean Robinson

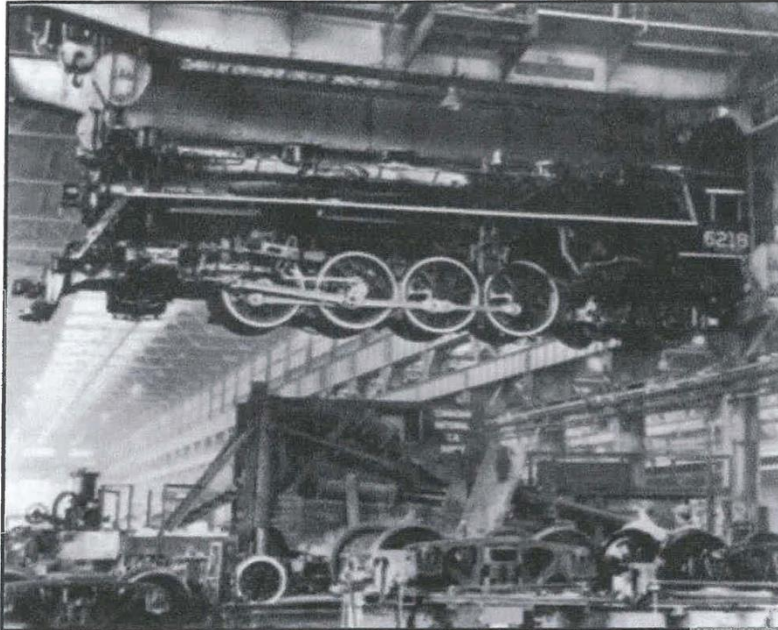
In February 2014, the City's Finance and Labour Relations Committee (FLRC) heard a number of presentations, which included revenue-generating uses that would see at least part of the building retained and reused. Creative options for reuse included a steam locomotive museum, ground or multi-storey parking; bus terminal; library or YMCA expansion; sports facility; and university campus expansion (a University of Waterloo satellite campus has been built on part of the railway lands).





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Credit: Stratford Perth Heritage Foundation

Why it's endangered

Although structurally sound, the building appears dilapidated due to the loss of window glass and the deteriorated condition of the more recently added sheet steel cladding.

A report dated October 2013, commissioned by the City to assess options for the future of the site, concluded that demolition and commemoration—rather than adaptive reuse or partial retention—should form the basis of future consideration by city council.

Where things stand

In May, the FLRC stated that city staff would consider additional public proposals, with or without the building being retained.

City council has deferred a decision on demolition until after a Master Plan for the city's facilities has been completed.

