

# BUILDING A MEMORY

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Reactivating a Lineage of Community Life at Centretown's  
330 Gilmour Street

By Emily Jung Essex

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture

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# ABSTRACT

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Centretown, one of Ottawa's oldest residential neighbourhoods, has continuously been evolving since its establishment in the late 18th century. The 21st century pressure for densification in this now urban mixed-use neighbourhood is increasing the need for community resources, while at the same time pushing them out. Centretown's vacant and neglected 330 Gilmour Street, the former Ottawa Public School Board Administration Building, provides a place to establish the missing public space within the community. By adaptively reusing all three additions - 1922, 1956 & 1963 - along with new interventions in 2020, Centretown's newly established 'Meeting Place' binds itself to its lineage of intangible social histories as an expression of community memory characterizing each volume into four places - A Place to Be, Gather, Create and Grow. The four places under one roof assist in providing a burgeoning future for community life in Centretown through representing the historic lineage of community memory at the Meeting Place.

## Thesis Question \_

How can representing the lineage of community memory at 330 Gilmour Street provide means for reimagining the future of community life in Centretown?

# KEY WORDS & DEFINITIONS

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## Key Words \_

Ottawa, Centretown,

Interpretation, Adaptive Reuse

Community, Social Infrastructure

## Definitions \_

Lineage \_ A linear sequence of growth evolved from the predecessor.

Social Infrastructure \_ Services that go beyond basic economic and necessary utilities to enrich and support the quality of life of all citizens within the country, province/state, city, and neighbourhood they reside in.

Public Space \_ A place open and accessible to everyone.

Social Cohesion \_ A mixture of autonomy, making one's own decisions, and multiple people gathering under this understanding to create a collective based on the willingness of individuals to cooperate and work together.

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# INTRODUCTION

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Centretown's early growth was intricately linked to Ottawa's newfound role as the Capital of Canada. From 1890 to 1914, it served as an informal meeting ground for the politicians, business leaders and other influential characters that shaped the early years of Canadian confederation.<sup>1</sup> Centretown became a residential community for members of parliament, civil servants, administrative workers, and other wealthy merchants. These inhabitants and their everyday actions transformed Centretown into an informal meeting place for governmental and community groups, clubs, and organizations.<sup>2</sup>

In 1921 the Ottawa Public School Board purchased two residential properties in Centretown, 322 and 330 Gilmour Street at the corner of O'Connor, amalgamating them into 330 Gilmour, and built their first administration office completed in 1922.



Figure 0.1 \_ Centretown, Metcalfe Street 1965

“Historic buildings are material source through which information about things past can be gained.”<sup>3</sup>

Leo Schmidt



Figure 0.2 \_ 330 Gilmour Street, North Facade, October 2019

As Ottawa and Centretown grew and changed, so did the school system, creating a dynamic lineage of its history that expanded the building with two additions; first in 1956 and shortly afterwards in 1963. In 1970 the school board restructured and renamed itself the Ottawa Board of Education, staying at 330 Gilmour until 1998. 330 Gilmour was then sold to Ashcroft Homes in 2001. The property has since remained vacant with minimal short term uses.

## Measuring My Role in Reimagining \_

Embarking upon this thesis, there was an initial assumption that existing drawings of the former Ottawa Public School Board Administration Building, 330 Gilmour Street - exterior and interior in all its phases - would be accessible, which however was not the case. After speaking with the current owner of the building, the former owner (now named the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board), Centretown community members, the City of Ottawa, Heritage Ottawa, the City of Ottawa Archives, and the National Libraries and Archives, no group was identified who has drawings of the building. To gain access to the interior of the building was also impossible. The 'unsafe' interior conditions removed the opportunity for exploration and documentation, again leaving the interior conditions a mystery.

With these primary resources not available, research turned towards secondary resources that spoke to Ottawa, Centretown, the Ottawa Public School Board and System, as well as verbal conversations about the building and neighbourhood with community members. Visually studying and drawing the building and neighbourhood, allowed time to focus on a multifaceted and nuanced approach to understanding the building and its context. The following content is a synthesis of my findings and the results of my reimagining.

## Existing Conditions \_



### Legend \_

- 330 Gilmour - Site
- Centretown Buildings
- Centretown Boundary

Figure 0.3 \_ Centretown Map with 330 Gilmour Street Site Location

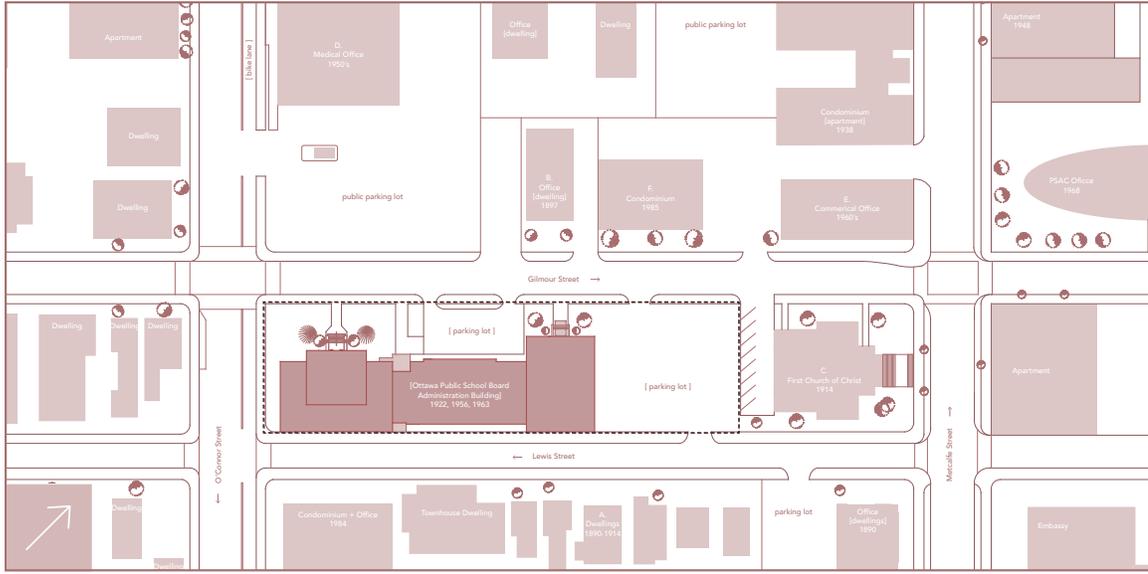


Figure 0.4 \_ 330 Gilmour Existing Site Plan

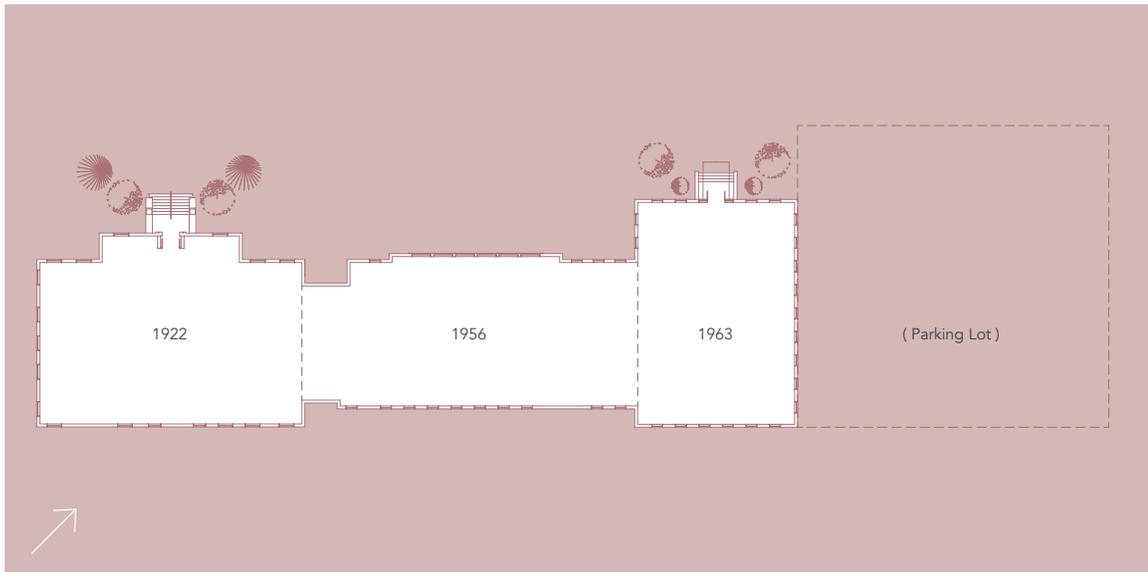


Figure 0.5 \_ 330 Gilmour Existing Plan Outline, Interior Unknown

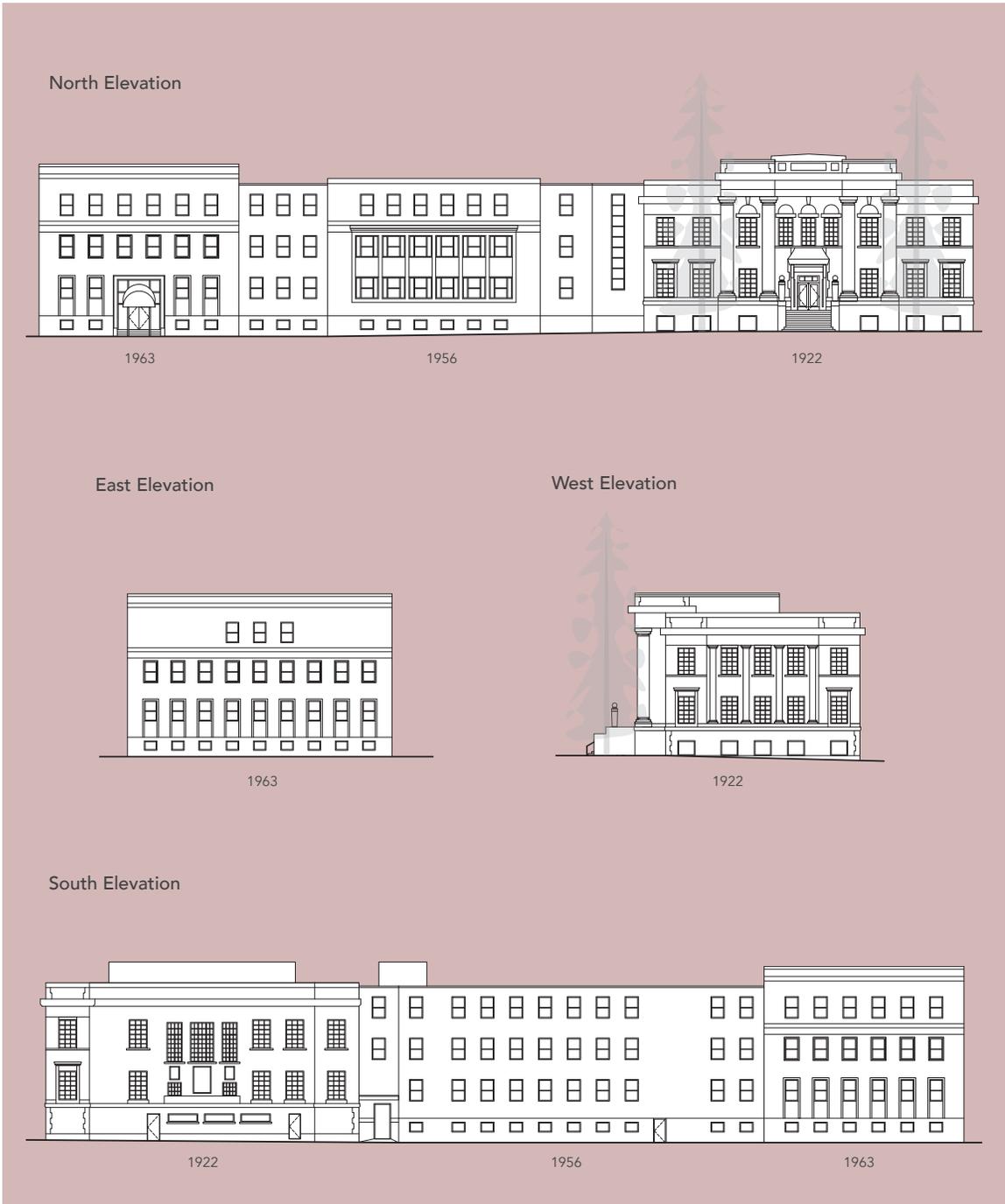


Figure 0.6 \_ 330 Gilmour Elevations as of 2020



PART 01

Lineage of Centretown's 330 Gilmour Street

## Centretown Development Pre 1875 - 1914 Phase No. 1 & 2

As Ottawa developed into Canada's Capital City, crown and other city workers sought dwellings near the downtown area. The neighbourhood of Centretown therefore started to develop organically. It became a burgeoning residential area composed of single family homes along with low rise apartment buildings. The nature of the architecture was substantial and reflected the taste of its conservative clientele.

330 Gilmour Surrounding Context \_



Figure 1.1 \_  
Lewis Street Between Metcalfe and O'Connor  
1890's Single Family Victorian Style Homes  
Now operating as single and multi-family homes

Figure 1.2 \_  
307 Gilmour Street  
1890 Spanish Colonial Home  
Now operating as an office for Swimming  
Natation Canada

period	general events	Effects on Centretown
pre 1875	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-initial settlement of Ottawa as capital</li> <li>-the capital was under construction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need for long-term accommodation near Parliament Hill</li> <li>- pressure to develop</li> <li>- creation of transportation &amp; commercial corridors (Bank &amp; canal)</li> </ul>
1875-1914	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- creation of an organized, permanent civil service</li> <li>- deliberate development of Ottawa as a capital city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- area completely filled in with residences - mostly single but also apartments.</li> <li>- nature of the architecture was substantial and tasteful, reflecting the tastes of conservative, well-to-do clientele</li> <li>- removal of industry on canal -</li> <li>- introduction of pleasant public spaces</li> </ul>

Figure 1.3 \_ Centretown Phases of Growth, 1 & 2



Figure 1.4 \_ 1876 Bird's Eye View of the City of Ottawa, 330 Gilmour Street Outlined

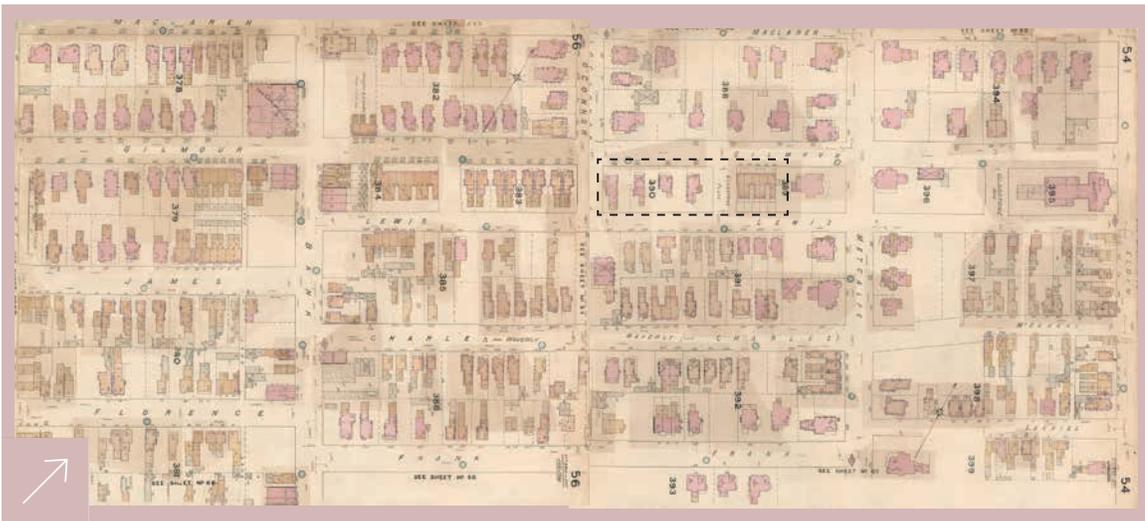


Figure 1.5 \_ Plot 389 & 390, Fire Insurance Plan, Last Revised 1901, 330 Gilmour Street Outlined

## Residents of 330 Gilmour Street and its Surrounding Properties

1909-1923 \_

308 Gilmour	330 Gilmour
1909 JUSTICES OF THE PEACE	1909 " Wm, h 330 Gilmour
1912 ARMSTRONG JOHN R, Clerk of the First Division Court, Office County Court House, Res 308 Gilmour	1912 " Norman M. rodman City Eng's Office, l 330 Gilmour
1915 Armstrong J R, 308 Gilmour	1915 " Wm (Wm Scott & Co), h 330 Gilmour
" Emily (wid John R), h 308 Gilmour	1923 [ Nothing in directory ]
1923 " Emily (wid John R), h 308 Gilmour	
1930 [ Nothing in directory ]	428 Lewis [once end of O'Connor Street]
316 Gilmour	1909 " Charles W. office 45a Elgin, h 428 Lewis
1912 " Frederick H, clk m c br P O Dept, h 316 Gilmour	1912 MITCHELL CHARLES W, 45A Elgin Res 428 Lewis
1914 " John A, l 330 Gilmour	" Miss Estelle, l 428 Lewis
1923 —Loring C, legal adviser Dept of External Affairs, h 316 Gilmour	1914 " Frederick J, clk reg br Dept Int, l 428 Lewis
1933 [ Building in Aerial Photo ]	" Miss Estelle, l 428 Lewis
	" Chas W, 45 Elgin, h 428 Lewis
	1923 [ Nothing in directory ]
322 Gilmour	288 Metcalfe
1909 Nicolas Francis, h 322 Gilmour	1909 " Henry J (S & H Borbridge), h 288 Metcalfe
1912 FISHER JOSEPH P. City Registrar. Albert, n w cor Canal w, Residence 322 Gilmour	" Percy J, clk, l 288 Metcalfe
1923 [ Nothing in directory ]	" Stanley, clk, l 288 Metcalfe
	BORBRIDGE S & H (Henry J Borbridge), Saddlery Hardware 88-90 Rideau
	1913 [ Nothing in directory ]
	1914 —Church of Christ (Scientist), 288 Metcalfe

Figure 1.6 \_ 330 Gilmour and Surrounding Residents, Ottawa Directory, All Images

## 1922 \_ Ottawa Public School Board Administration Building

In 1921, the Ottawa Public School Board purchased two residential properties within Centretown, 322 and 330 Gilmour Street at the corner of O'Connor, amalgamating them into 330 Gilmour and building a new administration office, which was completed in 1922.

Architect William Caven Beattie designed and overlooked the construction as the Superintendent of Buildings for the OPSB. Beattie held this position until 1924, when he resigned and opened up his own practice. He maintained his relationship with the OPSB and focused his work on schools and other work for the Ottawa Hydro Electric Commission. Some of his Ottawa works include the former head office of the OHEC at the corner of Bank and Albert, downtown, and York Street Public School, Lowertown; both are still in use today.



Figure 1.7 \_ 1922 North Elevation as of 2020

Built in 1922  
Architect \_ William Caven Beattie  
Style \_ Beaux-Arts  
Storeys \_ 2 + Basement  
Construction \_ Brick, Stone, Clay Tile & Concrete



Figure 1.8 \_ 330 Gilmour, Original 1922 Portion  
Photo c.1991

## The Beaux-Arts Style \_

330 Gilmour is composed of classical elements taught at l'École des Beaux-Arts. The style was fashionable in Europe and became the default style for buildings in North America when owners wanted to convey an image of wealth and grandeur.

The Beaux-Arts style was popular for many building programs such as banks, libraries, train stations, theatres, commercial buildings and civic programs such as schools. The style offered a historic precedent and image of opulent urban life that both looked back to classical principles but embraced new technology. The OPSB adopted this style as a statement of presence in Centretown and Ottawa.



Figure 1.9 \_ 1922 West Elevation as of 2020

### Beaux-Arts Characteristics of 330 Gilmour \_

Flat Roof

Raised First Story

Hierarchy of Space:

Noble vs. Utilitarian Space

Grand entrance and staircase

Front entrance facade vs. back service facade

Pedimented Doorways

Conservation Lines with Decorative Sculptures:

Often Over-scaled

Projecting Cornice

Classical Architectural Details:

Mix of classical styles

Eclecticism

Columns, Balustrades, Pilasters,

Cartouches

Acroterion, brackets, Consoles, etc.

Symmetrical Composition

### Stone Details \_

The architectural composition of a red brick background allowed the light limestone detailing to stand out with its smooth textures and intricate details throughout.

In the 1920's, typical milled stone technique would have been utilized for each decorative detail or sculpture. It is possible some finishing work was done by hand after the milling process for some of the components, such as the North facade cartouches and consoles above the second storey windows.



Figure 1.10 \_ 1922 Limestone and Brick Corner Detail



Figure 1.11 \_ 1922 First Storey Window Frame

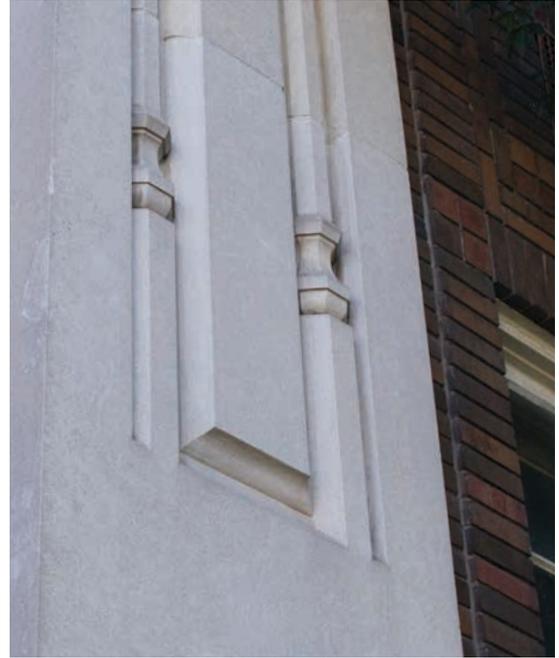


Figure 1.12 \_ 1922 Limestone Pilaster Detail



Figure 1.13 \_ 1922 North Entrance Console



Figure 1.14 \_ 1922 North Facade Second Level Window

## Metal Details \_

330 Gilmour is also articulated with two examples of intricate metal work. The first are two symmetrical filigree lamps on either side of the main entrance staircase, and the second are ventilation grilles on the North and East facade finished in a dusty rose colour.

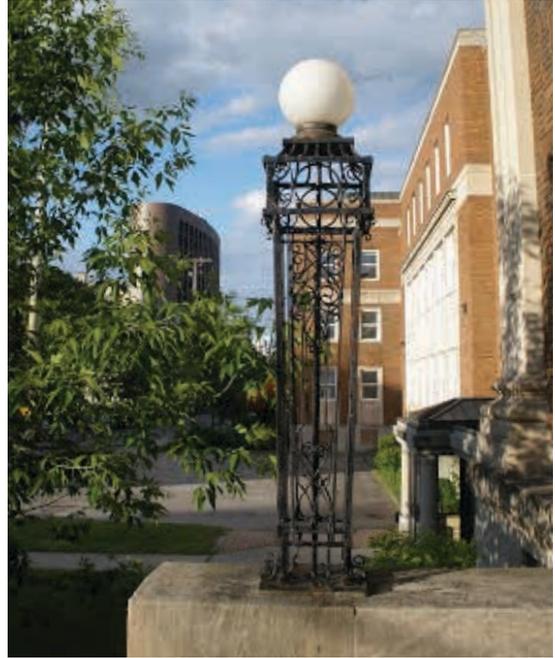


Figure 1.15\_ 1922 North Entrance Filigree Lamps (2)



Figure 1.16 \_ 1922 Exterior Metal Grill Vent, North Facade

### Board of Trustees Meeting Room \_

The interior of the 1922 building was further understood through conversations with Robert Smythe, an Ottawa Historian. The exterior main entrance staircase leads users to an expansive interior hall with a grand staircase ascending to the second floor. At the top of the staircase are three yellow tinted window on the south exterior wall creating a focus as you move up. The second floor contains the existing Board of Trustees Meeting Room located above the north entrance. Smythe describes it as 'spectacular', that pays 'tribute to Robert Adam'<sup>4</sup>; an 18th century Scottish Neoclassical architect that worked for the King of England.



Figure 1.17 \_ 1922 North Facade Board Room Windows



Figure 1.18 \_ 1922 South Windows at Central Staircase



Figure 1.19 \_ View through 1922 North Front Entrance Door, Grand Central Staircase



Figure 1.20 \_ View through 1922 South Entrance Door, Service Stair

Within the Neighbourhood \_

In the early 1900's, the grandeur of the OPSB building would have been slightly out of place in Centretown. The building's massing surpassed many of the surrounding single family homes, but the materials and detailing allowed it to be a fine addition to the neighbourhood. A similar example on the east end of the block is the Neoclassical First Church of Christ, built in 1914.



Figure 1.21 \_ 1914 First Church of Christ, photo c. 2019

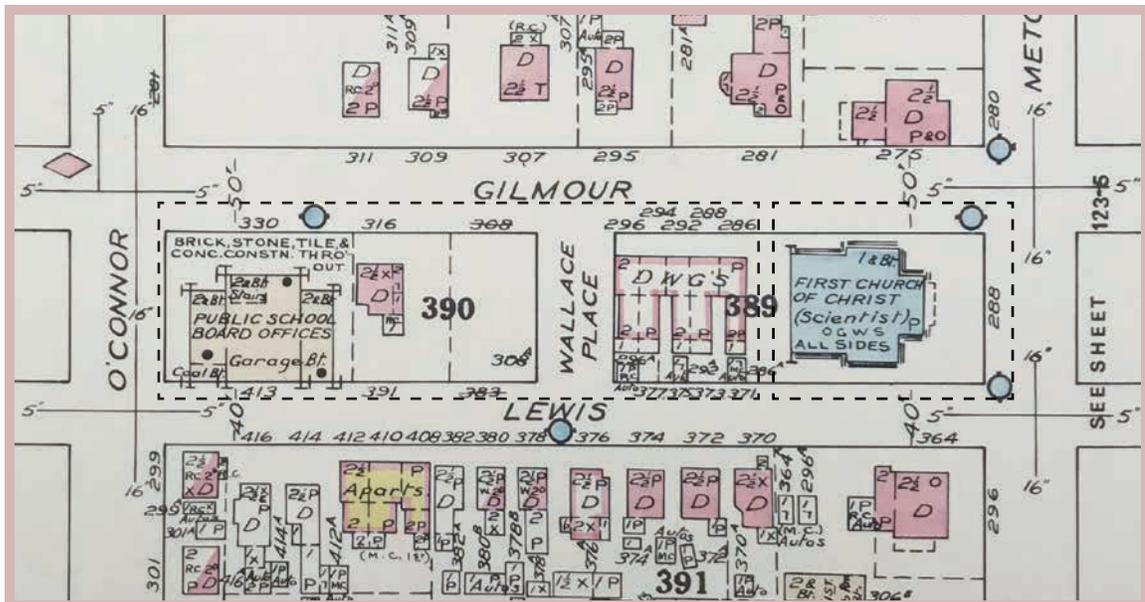


Figure 1.22 \_ 1956 First Insurance Plan, Partially Revised 1963, not updated to show the OPSB 1956 or 1963 addition

**1956 \_ Addition**  
**OPSB Administration Building**

The city of Ottawa’s population was growing rapidly at this time - increasing from 152,000 in 1921 to 358,400 by 1961.<sup>5</sup> With the population more than doubling, more schools and therefore more administrative staff and space was necessary to run them.

The OPSB purchased the east adjacent property, 316 Gilmour Street, and amalgamated it into 330 Gilmour to expand the headquarters.

Built in 1956  
 Architect \_ Burgess and McLean Architects  
 Style \_ Modern Historicist  
 Storeys \_ 3 + Basement  
 Construction \_ Brick, Stone, Clay Tile & Concrete



Figure 1.23 \_ 1956 North Facade as of 2020

1914-1950	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- World War I</li> <li>- the Great Depression</li> <li>- World War II</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rapid expansion and contraction of population requiring accommodation and services within the Centretown area</li> <li>- initiatives to secure and shape residential character of Centretown through formal and informal means</li> <li>- incursion of Upper Town commerce on northern edge</li> </ul>
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Figure 1.24 \_ Centretown Phases of Growth, 3

### Cecil Burgess and McLean Architects \_

Cecil Burgess was an English-born, well known Ottawa architect. Burgess moved to Ottawa in 1905, and started his own firm in 1910 along with multiple partners throughout his career. Burgess designed a number of other prominent buildings in Ottawa and Centretown such as St. Matthew's Anglican Church (217 First St.), The Duncannon Apartments (216 Metcalfe Street, 1931), and the Windsor Arms Apartments (150 Argyle Avenue, 1929).<sup>8</sup>

### Modern Historicist Approach \_

Burgess emphasizes the importance of the 1922 Beaux-Arts style by approaching the new addition in a modern historicist framework. He created a subordinate addition compatible and distinguishable by utilizing the materials of the historic place with contemporaneous details to transcend time and remain connected.

### Modern Historicism Characteristics OPSB Administration Building \_

#### Repetition of Materials Used

Red Brick  
Limestone

#### Clean Horizontal Lines

Lime Stone Banding  
Signifying a Third Floor Addition

#### Little Ornamentation

Clean simple lines with a proud floating limestone wall and a simple historically suggestive cornice

#### Designed for Flexibility

Interior Central Corridor

### 330 Gilmour Surrounding Context \_



Modern Mid-rise Commercial Buildings added to Centretown in 1950's and 1960's

Figure 1.25 \_ 267 O'Connor Street Medical Building – 1950's modern characteristics

Figure 1.26 \_ 280 Metcalfe Street Commercial Offices - 1960's Modern

### Stone Details \_

Using a similar brick pattern and colouring, the addition took on a utilitarian yet historicist approach. Using limestone on the north facade allowed the two halves to speak to each other, but remain distinguishable.

Centered in the 1956 addition appears to be a large assembly room, featuring a wall of windows that was detailed as a hanging limestone feature crowned with a historically suggestive cornice.



Figure 1.27 \_ 1956 Partial North Facade



Figure 1.28 \_ 1956 North Facade Limestone Details

## Central Corridor \_

Typical interior spatial organization of schools and administration buildings consist of a corridor lined on both sides with support spaces that aid the larger program by providing efficient paths of travel. Hunter McGill, a Heritage Ottawa Member and Centretown resident that had previously been inside the building around the mid 2000's, described the 1956 addition as 'organized by a central corridor lined with offices and meeting spaces on either side'.<sup>6</sup>

The spatial organization of the central corridor suggests that the 1956 addition was to serve as a transition piece between the original 1922 portion and the final addition that completed the ensemble in 1963.

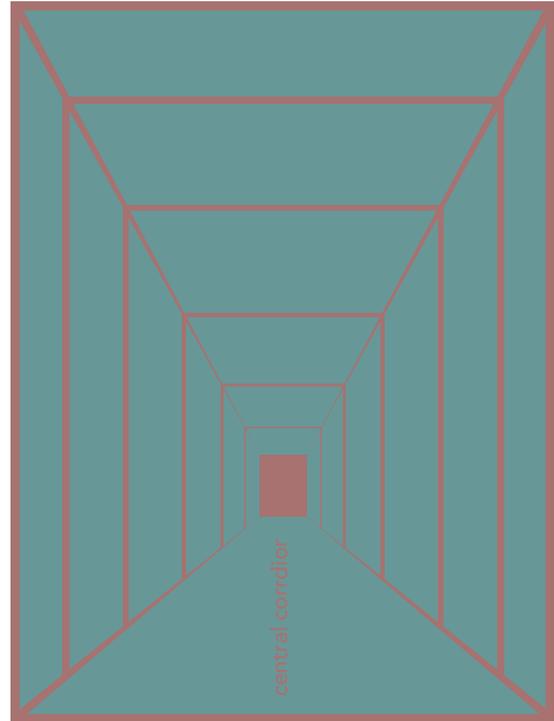


Figure 1.29 \_ 1956 Central Corridor Interior Organization Diagram



Figure 1.30 \_ View through 1956 'Back' South Entrance Door, service stair to the right, basement to the left



## 1963 \_ Addition

### OPSB Administration Building

Ottawa's population continued to grow rapidly until the mid 1970's, requiring another addition to completing the ensemble. This is the last major alteration to the exterior and how we see it today.

#### Modern Historicist Approach \_

The same approach was taken as the 1956 addition, but with a greater degree of modern streamlining through simplification of details speaking to ornamentation of the 1922 Beaux-Arts facades.

Built in 1963  
Architect \_ Burgess, McLean & MacPhadyen  
Style \_ Modern Historicist  
Storey \_ 3 + Basement  
Construction \_ Brick, Stone, Clay Tile, Concrete

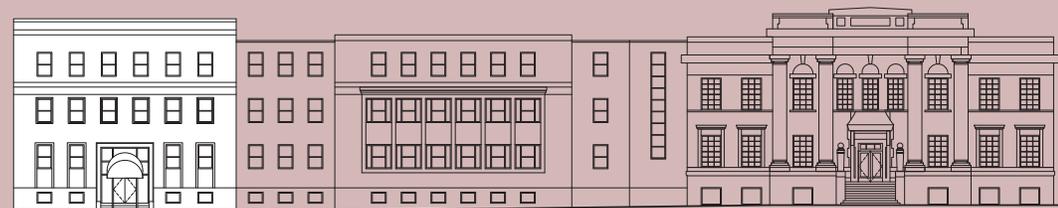


Figure 1.32 \_ North Elevation, Facade shown as of 2020

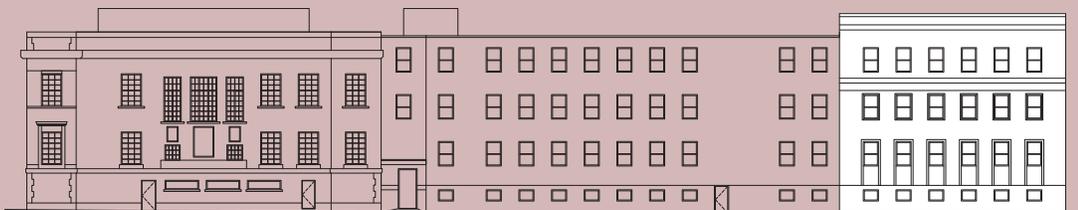


Figure 1.33 \_ South Elevation, Facade shown as of 2020

## OPSB Administration Building In all its Parts \_ 1963 to Present

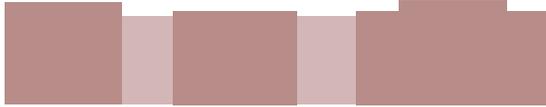


Figure 1.34 \_ 330 Gilmour North Elevation Diagram

A level of symmetry \_

Although the 1963 addition stands proud of the 1956 addition, in line with the historic place of the original 1922 volume, the choice of style and detailing allows the original 1922 portion to be the main focus. The 1963 addition stands as an opponent, never winning, but part of the game to complete the ensemble. The two evolutions distinguish themselves through their limestone detailing.

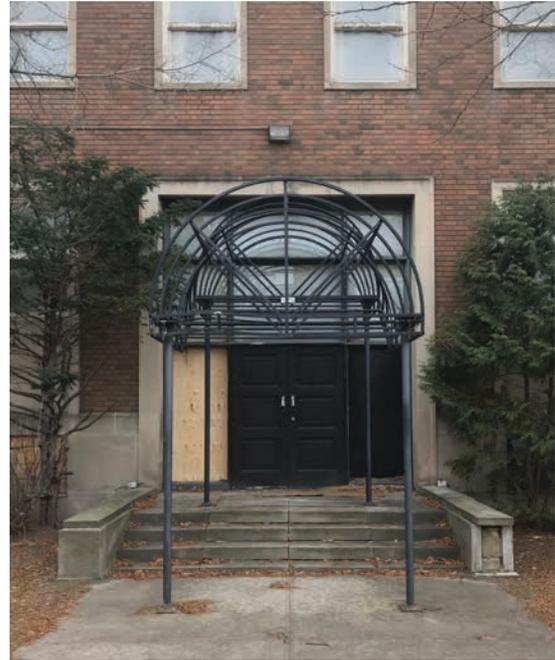


Figure 1.35 \_ 1963 North Entrance Facade



Figure 1.36 \_ 1922 North Entrance Facade

## Horizontal Banding \_

The horizontal banding highlights similarities and differences by establishing visual datums along the facades to showcase the three time periods of growth.

The horizontal datums focus on articulating the location of the floor levels within each volume. The 1922 facade's expresses its first level and roof location, while the 1956 and 1963 volumes articulating the addition of a third floor that does not reciprocally exist in the 1922 volume, shifting the datums between the two highlighting their differences.

The only horizontal datum that is not expressed on any of the three volumes is the location of the second floor.

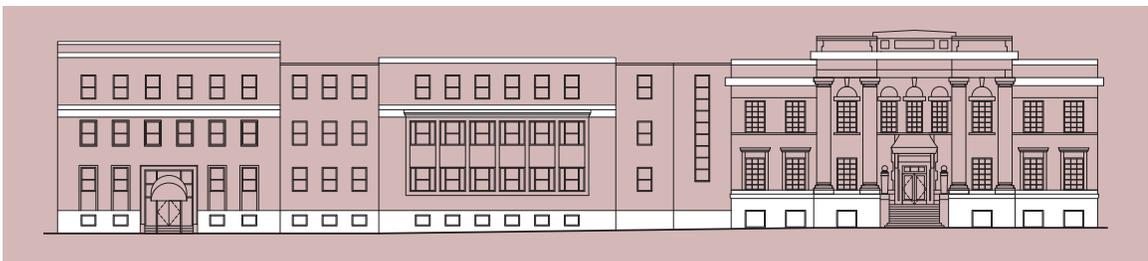


Figure 1.37 \_ 330 Gilmour North Facade, Horizontal Banding Diagram

### Windows Surrounds \_

A variety of decorative limestone window surrounds are used on all three portions of the building and progressively become more detailed as you move down the building. Each level is framed by a different limestone surround from absent on the top level to a very decorative frame and/or spandrels panel at the first level.

### Windows \_

#### 1922 Windows

Wood Frame  
Single Pane  
Middle Meeting Rail  
Mutins on top and bottom - Total of Twelve Panes  
Operable

#### 1956 & 1963 Windows

Wood Frame  
Single Pane  
Meeting Rail - Total of Two Panes  
Operable

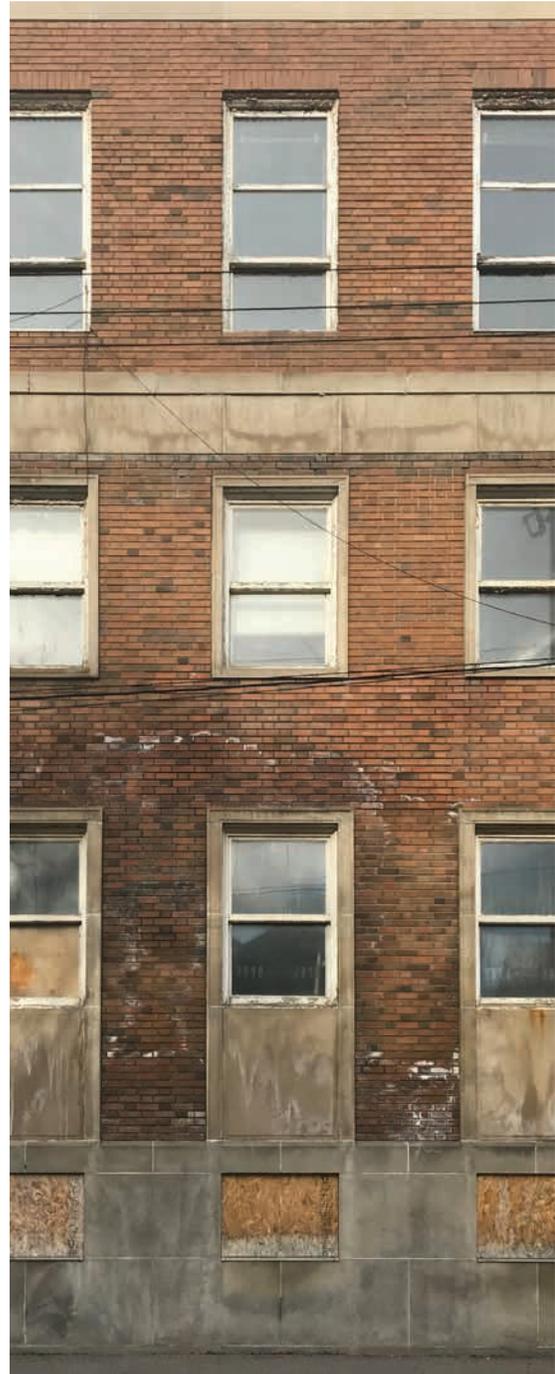


Figure 1.38\_ 1963 South Facade Window Configuration



Figure 1.39 \_ 1956 Typical South Facade Windows



Figure 1.40 \_ 1922 Typical Second Level Window



Figure 1.41 \_ 1922 North Facade Second Level Window



Figure 1.42 \_ 1922 Typical First Level Window

### South Facade \_

The south facade is significantly less considered in all three parts due to the narrow conditions of Lewis Street and the building's placement along the property line. Though facing a series of well intact Victorian-style homes, a more utilitarian approach was taken to accommodate services such as exterior basement access, garbage disposal and pick-up, deliveries, etc.



Figure 1.43 \_ South Facade, Lewis Street View Looking East

## 1968 \_ Provincial Dennis-Hall Report Living and Learning

The *Living and Learning Report* written by Emmett Hall and Lloyd Dennis proposed experimental methods of teaching for the Ontario education system. It sang to the public with phrases like “the truth shall set us free”<sup>8</sup> alongside images of smiling children as seen on the cover (figure 1.46).

The goal of the report was to include parents in decision-making, introduce casual teacher-student relationships, and move teaching into the professional sphere away from governmental bodies. The general public quickly criticized the report’s goals with complaints centered around functional illiteracy, lack of readiness for post secondary education, and discipline in the workplace.<sup>9</sup>

The report was never formally endorsed by the Ontario government, but stood to inspire later education policy-makers.

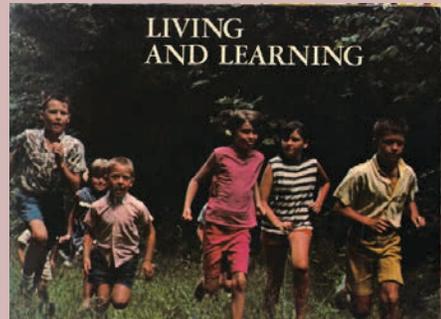


Figure 1.44 \_ Living and Learning Document Cover

“The school system it envisions would abolish all the multiplicity of rigidities that now dominate the child, and set him free to search, with assistance, for the truth....What the report does is to set a goal – creative, conscience of (sic), human – away out ahead of the solemn strivers in the present educational prisons. It may frighten and infuriate, but by degrees, it will also force, by its sheer rightness, the changes that we all know must be made.”<sup>7</sup>

*The Globe and Mail, 1968*

## Centretown Development 1950-95

### Phase No. 4

#### 1970 A Plan for the Future \_

The citizens of Centretown became more deeply invested in the development of their neighbourhood, and in 1974 created an outline for a future vision of Centretown. Shortly after, the City of Ottawa published an official guide known as the Centretown Neighbourhood Secondary Plan. The goal of the plan was to secure and shape the residential character of Centretown through formal and informal means by providing "guide[lines for] further growth and change in Centretown."<sup>10</sup>

330 Gilmour Surrounding Context \_



Figure 1.45 \_  
295 Gilmour, 1985 Condominium, photo c. 2019



Figure 1.46 \_  
Centretown Citizens Planning Committee 1975

<p>1950-1995</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- change of Canada to Dominion status produces a corresponding ambition to have a well-integrated, beautiful capital</li> <li>- planned siting of government facilities outside the centre of town</li> <li>- resulting turn over of Uppertown to private property developers with commercial (rather than primarily government-related) development intent</li> <li>- changes in composition, role and size of the civil service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased pressure on residential space as Uppertown commercializes</li> <li>- probable change in central strip property ownership (civil service/Hill to business investment) undercuts unity</li> <li>- lack of clarity about role (traditional federal residential/ meeting or commercial city- centre)</li> </ul>
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Figure 1.47 \_ Centretown Phases Document, Four

## 1970 \_ A Change to the System Recognition of Public Education at the Provincial Level

The Ottawa Board of Education was created as part of a provincialwide overhaul of the public education system. Previously, the elementary schools were supervised by the Ottawa Public Board of Education, and the secondary schools by the Ottawa Collegiate Board. Both were merged with Rockcliffe Park and Vanier to create the Ottawa Board of Education which oversaw kindergarten to grade 12. The newly integrated board continued to operate out of 330 Gilmour Street.



Figure 1.48 \_ Ottawa Board of Education Logo



Figure 1.49 \_ 330 Gilmour Street, Ottawa Board of Education Administration Building, photo c. 1985-90's

Centretown 1997 Heritage Conservation District \_



Legend \_

- |   |                             |  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| — Centretown Boundary                       | ■ Group 1 Heritage          | ■ Group 3 Contributing Compatibility         |
| ■ 330 Gilmour - Site                        | ■ Group 2 Heritage Interest | □ Group 4 Little or No Heritage Significance |
| — Centretown Heritage Conservation District |                             |  |

Figure 1.50 \_ Centretown Heritage Conservation District Map 1997, 2019 Context

#### **CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS**

Character defining elements that contribute to the heritage value of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District include:

- the heritage residential character of the district, featuring low to medium scale development
- the original grid block layout and plan
- relatively intact residential streetscapes
- predominant use of Rideau red clay decorative brick veneer with trim details in stone, wood and pressed metal
- its varied building types and styles due to the diverse populations of the area
- its single family homes executed in a vernacular Queen Anne style, with substantial wood verandas and elaborate trim, varying in size
- its low rise apartment buildings with similar detailing to single family dwellings but featuring horizontal layering and flat roofs
- its commercial corridor on Bank Street, consisting of low-rise commercial and mixed use buildings set close to the street.
- its development during a significant period in the growth of Ottawa as the government centre of Canada.
- its connection with Uppertown and the governmental activities which occur there.
- its associations with many people and institutions of national prominence who have played an important role in shaping Canada.
- its historical role as a meeting place for governmental and community groups, clubs and organizations

Figure 1.51 \_ Centretown 1997 Heritage Conservation District, Character Defining Elements

The designation was established to ensure the continuity of character in the area following 1970's guides to growth and change. The character defining elements (Figure 1.53) have helped maintain the continuity of the neighbourhood since, but largely speak to tangible characteristics. The last two character defining elements speak to broad intangible social and cultural histories struggle to remain relevant.

The 1922 portion of the OPSB administration building is designated as a Group 2, meaning it is of 'Heritage Interest', but has no specific value to the neighbourhood of Centretown. The 1956 and 1963 additions have no status. The entire building itself speaks more to the intangible social and cultural components of Ottawa and Centretown community life.

## Changes at the turn of the 21st Century \_

### Fewer School Boards Act: Bill 104 \_ 1997

As plainly stated in the bill's title the provincial government set out to reduce the number of school boards to streamline and standardize the Ontario education system. The bill also amended the Education Act, moving the authority from the residential tax base and put the control into the hands of the provincial government as part of the streamlining process.

### The City of Ottawa Act \_ 1999

In 1999 the former regions of Ottawa-Carleton, the former cities of Ottawa, Nepean, Kanata, Gloucester, Vanier and Cumberland, the former townships of West Carleton, Goulbourn, Rideau, and Osgoode, and the former village of Rockcliffe Park amalgamated into the new City of Ottawa. This transition was finalized in 2001.

## Sale of 330 Gilmour Street \_

Shortly after the Fewer School Boards Act was introduced and the Ottawa amalgamate, the number of school boards went down to four; public English, public French, catholic English, and catholic French. As a result of the provincial changes and amalgamation of the City of Ottawa, 'The Ottawa Board of Education' in 1998 changed to the 'Ottawa-Carleton District School Board'. The board still operates under this name today.

Due to the amalgamation of schools boards and Bill 104, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board put the property up for sale and relocated to a larger administration building in Nepean. In 2001, Ashcroft Homes purchased 330 Gilmour Street for around one million dollars.<sup>11</sup>



Figure 1.52 \_ Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Logo



Figure 1.53 \_ 330 Gilmour, 2001 City of Ottawa Heritage Survey, photo c. Fall 1995

# The City of Ottawa Public Schools : a Brief History<sup>12</sup>, Synopsis Timeline

Figure 1.54



## 330 Gilmour Existing Development Proposals \_ Ashcroft Homes

### 2002 \_ Residential Apartments with Commercial and Retail

Ashcroft Homes' original proposal was to demolish the entire existing building: they then proposed to demolish only the 1956 and 1963 volumes with both approaches to make way for a brand new 20-storey residential tower.

The City of Ottawa rejected this 20 storey building proposal for many reasons; demolition of original 1922 'heritage interest' portion, non-conformance with city's zoning and by-law provisions, and community dismissal, although accepting of the proposed mixed-use programming.<sup>13</sup>

The city eventually granted them 15 storeys even though the site is within a 'medium use' lot, which should only accept six to nine storeys.



Figure 1.55 \_ C of O 2002 Application Rendering

**T**wo recent development proposals from Ashcroft Homes have elicited opposition from the Centretown Citizens Community Association, many Centretown residents and from Heritage Ottawa. The first proposal is for a 20-storey apartment building to be built at 330 Gilmour Street, former headquarters of the Ottawa Board of Education. The initial proposal was to incorporate the oldest portion of the structure (a municipally designated Heritage building), in the proposed development; however the developer has since applied under the Ontario Heritage Act for a demolition permit for the entire building to make way for the new development which would also include four stories of retail and commercial space.

Figure 1.56 \_ Heritage Ottawa 2002 Vol.29 No.1 Newsletter

The city and community backlash regarding the multiple schemes of this proposal are largely due to scale and overshadowing of existing heritage properties both on site and surrounding the site. The already large-scale existing building, due to its length, does not set grounds for allowing it to be lengthened more (into the undeveloped parking lot) and stretched 60 meters into the sky while the surrounding buildings are typically ten to twenty meters high.

What is not mentioned in the proposal or the consultation comments is how this site and new building will enhance or engage the rest of the neighbourhood and community. The lack of public engagement with the site that could otherwise fulfill missing community resources even within the commercial and retail spaces is not communicated.

In my view, the proposed development is not in compliance with the following requirements of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District Guidelines for New Construction in the Heritage District.

"Ensure that new development is compatible with the low-scale high-density pattern that has marked the area over time."

"The form of new infill should reflect the character of existing buildings on adjoining or facing properties. The building should be three or four storeys in height, with massing and setbacks matching earlier patterns still evident in the immediate area."<sup>14</sup>

Councillor Elizabeth Holmes, Somerset Ward  
Local Architectural Conservation  
Advisory Committee, October 2007

## 2007 \_ Seniors Residence with Commercial and Retail

This new scheme proposed to retain and rehabilitate the 1922 portion as a stand-alone building (commercial use), demolish the 1956 and 1963 portions (accepted by city) and replace with a detached 9-storey seniors residence. First level would be retail and commercial space, with remaining eight storeys residential.

The developer, their architectural team, and Centretown community members worked together to agree on a proposal.

The City of Ottawa was in full agreement with the proposal after consultation and approved it for construction. The community patiently waited years for Ashcroft to put into action their plans but for 'financial reasons' the project was never



Figure 1.57 \_ C of O Application Rendering 2007

“The proposed building will have the longest unbroken footprint in Centretown. It overwhelms a block of outstanding two and one half storey houses on Lewis (a very narrow street) and the two important landmark heritage buildings at either end of the subject block - the [1914] First Church of Christ Scientist, and the [1922] OBE Headquarters.”<sup>17</sup>

Local Architectural Conservation  
Advisory Committee, October 2007

completed.<sup>15</sup> The community believes this building would have been valuable addition as it incorporated densification of housing, and commercial/retail space.

Although this is a smaller scale vision of the 2002 proposal, the lack of respect and consideration for adjacent properties in scale and heritage value would, as City Councillor Elizabeth Holmes said, "...result in an over development of this very confined site with a bulky and overwhelming tower that will dominate each of its street frontages, [and] overpower the adjacent heritage buildings."<sup>16</sup> Not only does this reject the surrounding physical context but would exacerbate the existing class divide within Centretown by adding another new, expensive, and large-scale development that inherently gentrifies the area. Increasing the middle-upper class community through this development pushes out the more vulnerable populations, and the potential of public engagement by virtue of the proposed program.



Figure 1.58 \_ City of Ottawa 2007 application rendering of South elevation. Existing South elevation overlay.



suggestions but was nonetheless granted the permit regardless for a period of three years. In 2018 they tried to renew the permit, but were denied due to their lack of progression in developing the site into the seniors residence or anything else.

The city's reaction is appropriate here given that Ashcroft had promised to develop the property since they purchased it in 2001. By allowing them to continue to gain profits off of the land as parking further deters them from keeping the building in an habitable state, though this is still happening. The parking permit rejection has since caused them to neglect the green space on site, again becoming an eye sore and underutilized parcel of land for the community in all respects.



Figure 1.62 \_ City of Ottawa Application, Parking & Landscaping Plan 2014

2017 \_ The Conseil des écoles catholiques  
du Centre-Est Catholic School Board  
French Catholic Elementary School

The last known proposal is to adaptively reuse the building as a school involving a rezoning of the property to accept an educational institution and renovations to all three parts including a rooftop schoolyard. The school would accommodate 250 students from junior kindergarten to grade six<sup>20</sup>, and the 1922 portion would be used as a daycare<sup>21</sup>.

The French Catholic school wanted to adopt a Finnish teaching philosophy that would have spatial implications of open, flexible and multipurpose teaching spaces. The renovations were estimated to take one year.



Figure 1.63 \_ Public Advertising on Site  
2017-2018



Figure 1.64\_ Don Schultz, senior urban planner  
at Ashcroft Homes, stands in front of the planned  
new French school location at 330 Gilmour

No formal plans were ever issued regarding this proposal, but the expression of adaptively reusing the entire building is a positive and more appropriate development compared to the previous proposals.

Retention of the facade, with little manipulation due to the existing abundance of windows, probably would have meant the outward-facing components of the building would remain within the community and depict their original intent. Incorporation of new interventions to serve the school function would express its new use, communicating to Centretown a new life for the building.

It is unclear why this promising proposal never came to fruition, but likely stems from client disagreements, City permitting issues, or an unrealistic renovation timeline.

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“Over the longer term, this modern urban building will cater to an active community that cares about the environment and sustainable development. Students will enjoy safe access to a rooftop schoolyard and green spaces.”<sup>22</sup>

David Choo, President of Ashcroft Homes  
In reference to Adaptive Reuse of 330 Gilmour



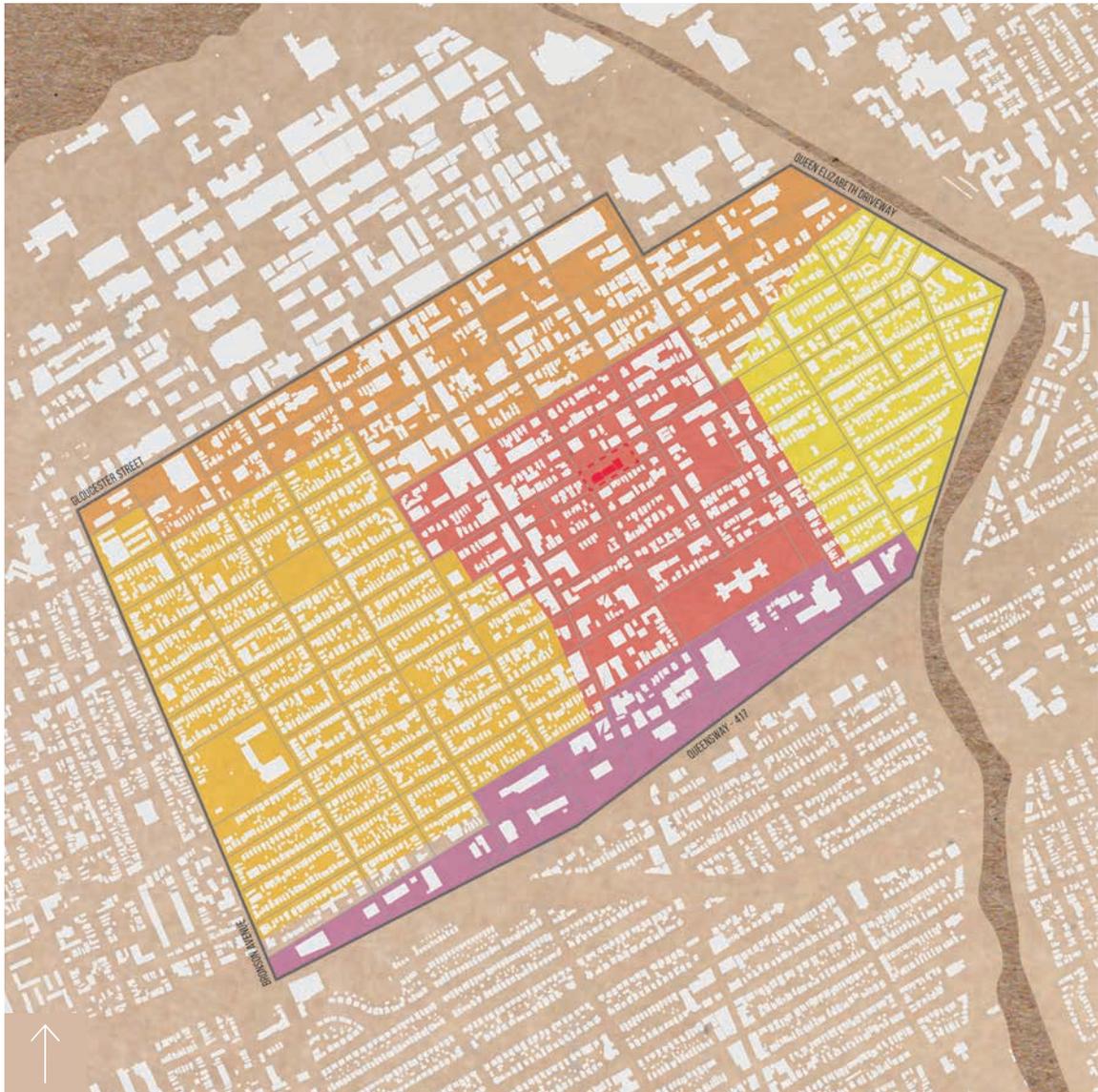
## PART 02

Contemporary Study of Centretown

## 02 Introduction \_

To achieve a greater understanding of the current conditions of Centretown, 330 Gilmour's surroundings, a contemporary study was undertaken to be able to appropriately intervene within the place and site. This study took on a more tangible approach of spatial zones and their programming and typological relationships, and material usage, along with population demographics and projections, present and missing resources and amenities, and personal experiences within Centretown.

## Centretown Zones \_



### Legend \_

— Centretown Boundary	North Area	East Area
330 Gilmour - Site	South Area	West Area
Central Area		

Figure 2.1 \_ Centretown Zones, 2019 Context

### North Zone \_

Larger, taller, high-rise buildings (9+ storey), including residential, commercial, and retail acting as a transition from Downtown to the smaller scales of Centretown.



Figure 2.2 \_ Centretown North Zone

### South Zone \_

Serves as a gateway to the Queensway (Highway 417) which changed Ottawa in the 1960's into a car-centric city. More mid to high-rise residential and commercial properties are being developed here currently.



Figure 2.3 \_ Centretown South Zone

## West Zone \_

The residential streetscape is more intact than any other areas, containing single family homes, multi-family homes and some row houses. Some low-mid rise commercial and retail properties are present along main streets of Somerset, Gladstone, Kent and Bronson Avenue.



Figure 2.4 \_ Centretown West Zone, Mid-rise Commercial



Figure 2.5 \_ Centretown West Zone, Single Family and Row House Residential

### East Zone, Golden Triangle \_

A strongly residential area with a mix of typologies; single family homes (original single family homes present, as well with a number of new infill), multi-family dwellings, and apartment buildings of mid but more predominantly high rise from the 1960's.



Figure 2.6 \_ Centretown East Zone, Mid rise Apartments



Figure 2.7 \_ Centretown East Zone, High rise Apartments

## Central Zone \_ Study Site



This zone celebrates Centretown's long lineage through its variety of typologies, architectural styles and material uses, standing as Centretown's most diverse zone.

Sides streets typically contain single family homes, multi-family homes, and varying sizes of apartment and condo buildings. Commercial and retail programs are located throughout as well, but are typically clustered along the main streets of Elgin, Metcalfe, Bank and Somerset.

330 Gilmour is located within the Central Zone. See the next two page for its context representing Centretown's long lineage.



Figure 2.8 \_ Centretown Central Zone, Corner of Gilmour and Metcalfe

Surrounding Context \_ 330 Gilmour Street  
Material Use Over Time



Legend \_

- A. Lewis Street Victorian Homes – 1880-1930's Victorian residential (brick + wood siding)
- B. National Swimming Building – 1897 (dwelling), Spanish Colonial (masonry + stone)
- C. First Church of Christ – 1914, Neoclassical (stone)
- D. Medical Building – 1950's modern characteristics (masonry)
- E. Mid-rise Commercial Office - 1960's Modern (masonry)
- F. Gilmour Place Condo's – 1985, postmodern historicism (masonry)

See next page for existing context site plan.

Figure 2.9 \_ 330 Gilmour Surrounding Building Context



## Centretown Material Cohesion \_Contemporaneous Detailing

### Visual Lineage

Centretown has experienced over 140 years of growth exhibiting a wide variety of architectural styles and programming. What allows the neighbourhood to aesthetically stand as a cohesive entity is the consistent choice of heavy materials; masonry, stone and concrete solidly unite and showcase the longevity and future of the neighbourhood. The difference lies in how each building is assembled and detailed. Originating in different time periods and for different programmatic reasons, the contemporaneous detailing of each building showcases part of its tangible history though physical form contributing to its story. As Centretown has had a long and continuous use, properties and buildings within it often get re-purposed or added to, providing a sign that people live here and are constantly re-imagining the built environment as part of its future lineage.



Figure 2.11 \_ 330 Gilmour, 1922 Level 1 Window Surround



Figure 2.12 \_ 330 Gilmour, 1963 Level 1 Window Surround

## Centretown Community Resources \_



### Legend \_

— Centretown Boundary	■ Education + Child Care	■ Public Exterior Space
■ 330 Gilmour - Site	■ Public Interior Space [Soon to be moving out of the downtown core]	■ Recreation + Health Services
■ Exterior Parking Space		■ Community Support

Figure 2.13 \_ Centretown Resources, 2019 Context

## Future of Centretown & 330 Gilmour Street \_ Resources + Mandate for Densification

Though Centretown exists as a strong resourceful urban neighbourhood, the City of Ottawa's mandate for the densification of Centretown aims to increase the population by 10,000 people by the year 2031. As stated in 2013, Centretown resources were already at their capacity<sup>23</sup>, meaning by 2031 they will be over-flowing.

### Demographic \_

73% of the populations range from 20-60 years of age, though all age ranges are present.

Male and female populations are roughly equal.

83% of people live in apartment buildings.

Diverse range of family types.

English is the most spoken language.

52% of the population hold a post secondary certificate or above.

73% of the population is in the labour force  
54% of people employed are Federal Public Administrators.

40% of the population walks to work..  
25% takes public transit.

\*Information retrieved from the 2011 Census and National Household Survey for Ward 14 - Somerset  
Ward 14 contains space outside the Centretown boundary with additional area to the West.

As seen in figure 2.13, Centretown Resources Map, a large number of public exterior spaces are present in the neighbourhood, with over ten parks including the iconic Rideau Canal, but...

**Where does public space exist when the exterior environment is unsuitable?**

**Interior public space is missing from the community.**

As someone who lives within the neighbourhood, inadvertently observing the flow of people, and experiencing the space for myself, this lack of shared space is preventing community understanding.

### **Centretown Personal Anecdotes \_**

#### **Centretown Coffee Shop Experience**

On a windy and rainy day this past year, I met a friend for coffee at a local Centretown coffee shop. A vulnerable person walked in before us to buy a coffee, but was short by ten cents. They were refused service and told to leave. My friend offered to buy the coffee for them so they could escape the weather and seek refuge inside for a little while, but was told he was not allowed by the employee. My friend bought two coffees anyway and offered it to the vulnerable person. They stayed until they were finished and then left.

If contemporary shared spaces like coffee shops are dismissive of vulnerable people, only accepting a specific clientele, they are not public. The aspect of commerce affects the way 'public space' is treated and shifts it out of the public realm.

#### Library Workshop Discussion

The Ottawa Main Branch Downtown Public Library, just north of Centretown, is planning to close its doors in 2024 to relocate within a brand new building in LeBreton Flats. During a public workshop for the new building, young people sitting around me aggressively expressed their frustration towards libraries (many years ago) shifting their function from reading rooms and loaning transactions, to social infrastructures that provide social services for their respective community.

Libraries serve as one of the primary public spaces for any community, presenting a purely public space welcome to everyone. Though I know everyone will be welcome at the new library as they are now at the existing, where will Centretown residents go?

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As properties and buildings are poached for new development within the pressures of densification, they are often demolished, neglected, or inconsiderately renovated to serve their new purpose. In the case of 330 Gilmour Street, the owner over the last twenty years has proposed to completely demolish, partially demolish and/or add to the site in ways that are not representative of the neighbourhood. Currently sitting neglected with no future plans, the building and site is moving into a state of disrepair.

This thesis is a proposal to adaptively reuse in order to continue the use of the site and the building as part of Centretown's lineage, establish public space for the community, and provide a beacon within the neighbourhood to continue the intangible characteristic and social histories of Centretown being a meeting place for its citizens.

**330 Gilmour stands as an opportunity to provide public shared space for everyone who identifies with Centretown.**

## A Former Crest, A Future Mission \_

A report card from 1959 revealed the crest of the Ottawa Public School Board that represents the grand entrance landscape of their original 1922 Administration Building at 330 Gilmour street. The crest is topped with a banner reading 'City of Ottawa / Public School Board' floating above a shield that contains the entrance steps with symmetrical filigree lamps on either side, and vegetation and trophies that crest the cornice over the double doors. Standing tall on both sides, two blue spruce trees frame the entrance as they do still to this day.

The crest was artistically enhanced in some respects, but remain speaking to the general aesthetics and poise the school board wanted to exude throughout its time. The most telling component of the crest is the motto contained within the scribe running along the bottom.



Figure 2.14 \_ 1922 North Entrance Facade

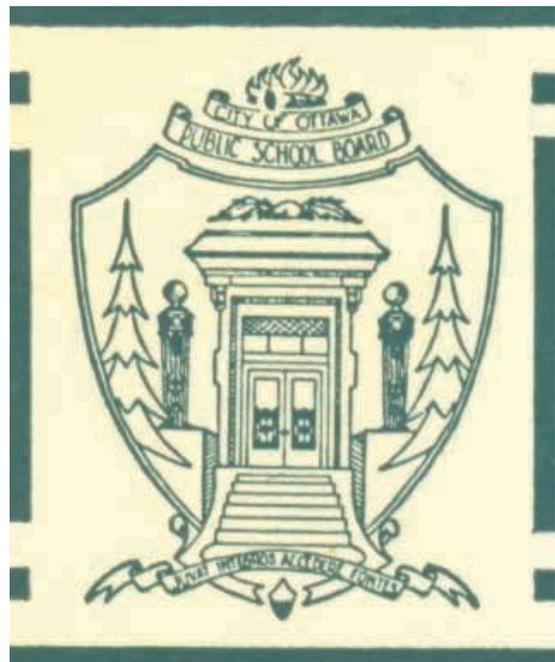


Figure 2.15 \_ OPSB Former Crest

The motto in Latin reads “juvat integros accedere fontes”<sup>24</sup> loosely translating to ‘The integrity of teaching, contains a fountain of sources’.

The Ottawa Public School Board Administration Building once stood as a place that facilitated one of the most important social infrastructures for the city of Ottawa, schools and education. Speaking to the ideas of teaching, information, gathering and community, how can these aspects speak to the values of understanding the Centretown community and provide grounds for it, just like learning in a classroom would. Centretown, not unlike the school board, has stood as a meeting place of gathering and information since its formation. Its intangible...

**historical role as a meeting place for governmental and community groups, clubs and organizations**

Figure 2.16 \_ 1997 Centretown HCD, Intangible Character-defining Element, Parks Canada

... has tried to remain present, but a lack of truly public space that is open to share, engage, and encounter with issues and interests of the community is absent.

**330 Gilmour will be reimagined into a Meeting Place for Centretown.**

### 330 Gilmour Adaptive Reuse Programming \_ Centretown's Meeting Place

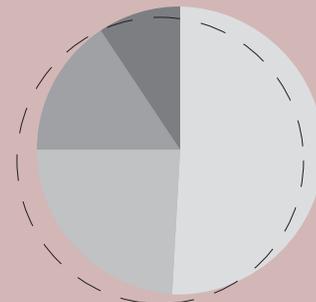
#### Relational Library \_

Centretown does not have rephrase public library, but a few blocks outside of Centretown's boundary, the Ottawa Public Libraries Main Branch downtown provides a variety of resources; traditional transactions of books and periodicals for loan, and relational resource transactions of education and social concerns. Libraries now serve as spaces for community groups, friends, strangers and individuals to escape from social isolation and participate within a physical social setting.

As the Downtown Main Branch will be moving its doors out of the downtown core by 2024 and farther away from Centretown, where will these missing resources be served? A satellite branch at 330 Gilmour would provide a compromise for moving the main branch farther away from Centretown.

"The founding principles behind the library – that all people deserve free, open access to our shared culture and heritage, which they can use to any end they see fit – is out of sync with the market logic that dominates our time."<sup>25</sup>

Figure 2.17 \_ Centretown Age Population Diagram



#### Population Age

9.4% = 0-19  
53.9% = 20-44  
24.4% = 45-64  
12.2% = 65-100

Total Population  
35,110

## Gathering Space \_

Part of public space within urban areas, like Centretown, is provided by coffee shops. Coffee shops are profit-driven which discourages vulnerable people from participating. Public spaces are supposed to provide the “key element[s] of individual and social well-being, the places of a community’s collective life, expressions of the diversity of their common, natural and cultural richness and a foundation of their identity”<sup>26</sup>. Coffee shops do not provide this.

Instead, 330 Gilmour will be recognized by the community as public space that pursues social and spatial qualities that welcome everyone.

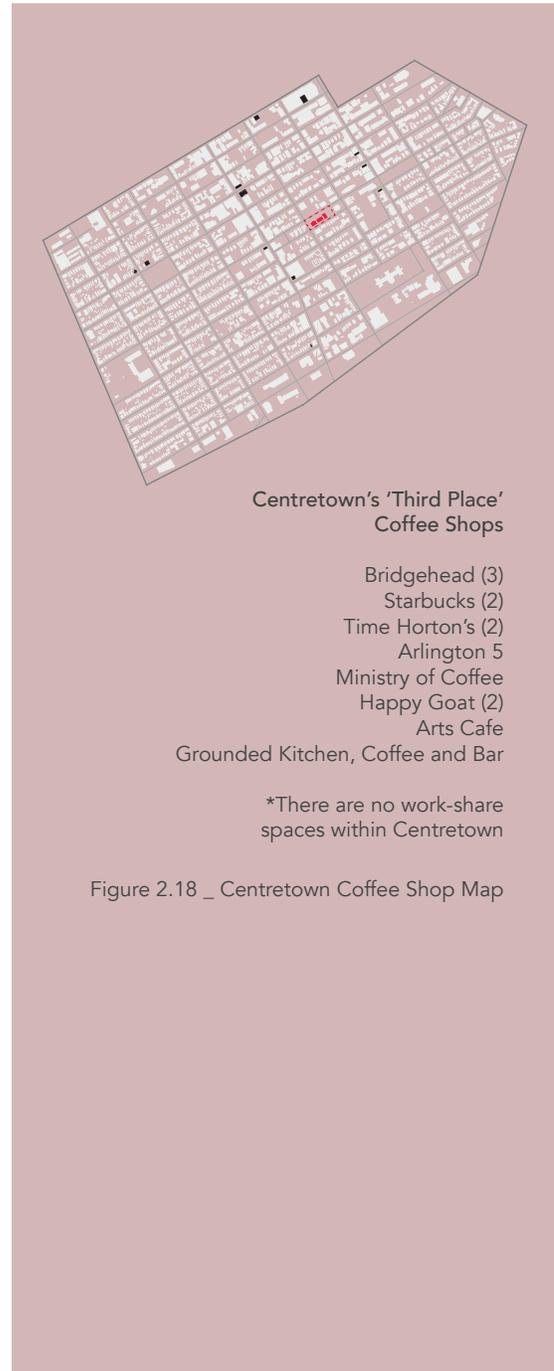
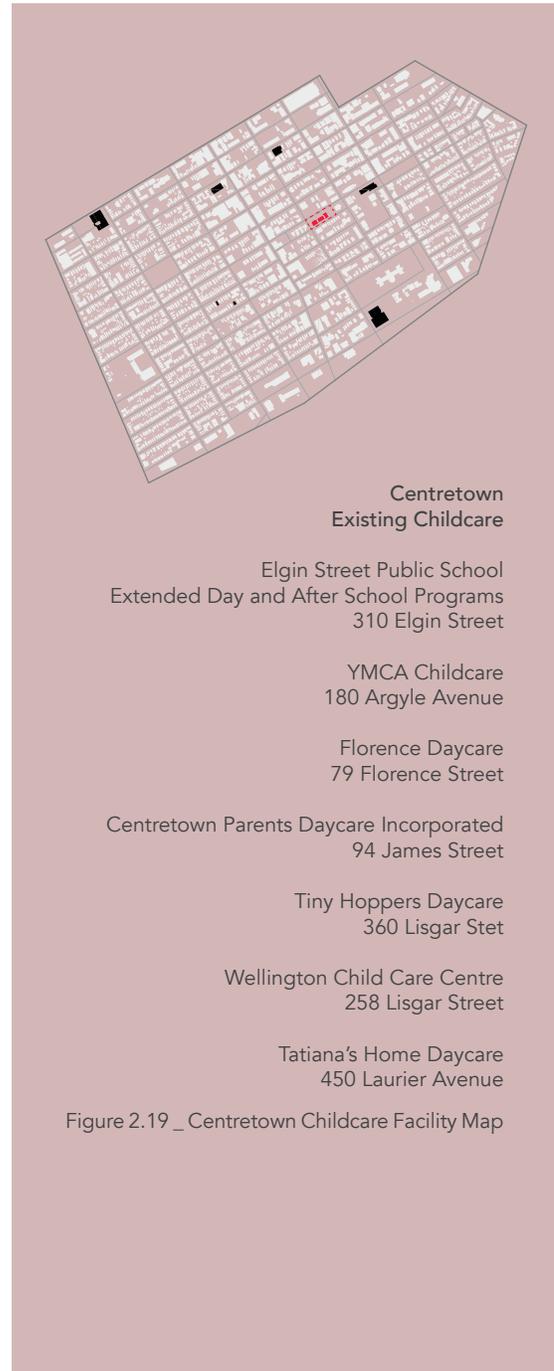


Figure 2.18 \_ Centretown Coffee Shop Map

## Childcare Facility \_

Centretown is in need of more pre-school childcare facilities.<sup>27</sup> Not only will this aid the citizens of Centretown, but also the Ottawa citizens that work downtown as a close and convenient location for childcare.

330 Gilmour aims to build a healthier community that is rooted in “understanding differences, evaluating evidence, and engaging in reasoned dialogue with people who don’t always share [similar] perspectives and values.”<sup>28</sup> Proposing a childcare facility within public spaces is “believe[d] [to aid] social dynamics among children, chang[ing] when and how they explore new places and encounter different people and groups.”<sup>29</sup> By placing the daycare within a lively and active community place, the children will experience greater exposure to different social conditions than their own.



## Centretown Community Groups \_

Centretown is home to many community specific organizations that aim to foster a cohesive and connected community through different goals and interests.

As part of 330 Gilmour's lineage, the building once offered rentable multi-use space for organizations such as Volunteer Canada and Heritage Ottawa during Ashcroft's years of ownership to gain some revenue. This minimal secondary history of the building tried to incorporate life within after the Ottawa Public School Board left. By allowing for a permanent presence of these community organizations within one place, a physical and centralized location within Centretown, 330 Gilmour has the opportunity to stand as a monument to represent many important aims for the neighbourhood and Ottawa.

### Centretown Present Organizations

#### Centretown Resources

Centretown Citizens  
Centretown Emergency Food Services  
Centre 507  
Centretown Buzz  
Centretown Parent Club  
Centretown Citizens Community Association  
Centretown Community Garden Project  
etc.

#### Ottawa Resource

Kind Space  
MAX - GBT2Q Men's Health  
Social Planning Council of Ottawa  
Capital Heritage Connexion  
Catholic Centre for Immigrants  
Immigrant Women Services Canada  
Cycle Salvation  
BEING - Studio Supporting Artists with Developmental Disabilities  
etc.

## Theatre and Event Space \_

Currently within Centretown, theatre space is occupied by private musical performance venues with little room for additional programming. Diversification of these spaces could provide a chance for other missing programming to take place within Centretown, such as a local movie theatre or small-scale performances.

Though there are facilities just outside Centretown's border, their large scale does not give smaller organizations a chance to afford and plans events where auditorium-like accommodations are preferred. A smaller scale theatre would allow more localized performance arts and educational forums in both experiential and visual practices.

This proposed theatre will have a capacity of 100 people.

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### Centretown's Lack of Theatres & Small Scale Event Space

From 1931-55, Centretown's Bank Street had four operating theatres. All but the Barrymores Theatre have been demolished, but the latter repurposed to be a nightclub and concert venue that is still operating today.

The last operating theatre was located at 341 Bank street known as The Phoenix. It was operated by Cineplex until 1991 when it closed was subsequently demolished. The property currently serves as a parking lot.

### Current Large Scale Theatre Resources Outside of Centretown

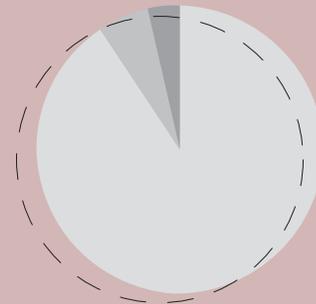
National Arts Centre  
3000+ guests

Ottawa Public Library  
Downtown Main Branch Auditorium  
189 guests - Soon to be Closing

Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre  
800+ guests

### Workshop / Art Studio \_

The majority of Centretown's residents rent apartments, making adequate spaces for creative projects hard to come by. An open workshop and studio space will provide a place for community members to 'make a mess' within an appropriate environment. The closest location to Centretown that provides this amenity right now is in Hintonburg or Westboro. Though these neighbourhoods are relatively close, having a location within Centretown would allow ease of proximity in terms of daily or weekly use, and accessibility in terms of taking material and supplies back and forth.



#### Dwelling Types

87% Apartments

4.7% Single Detached Homes

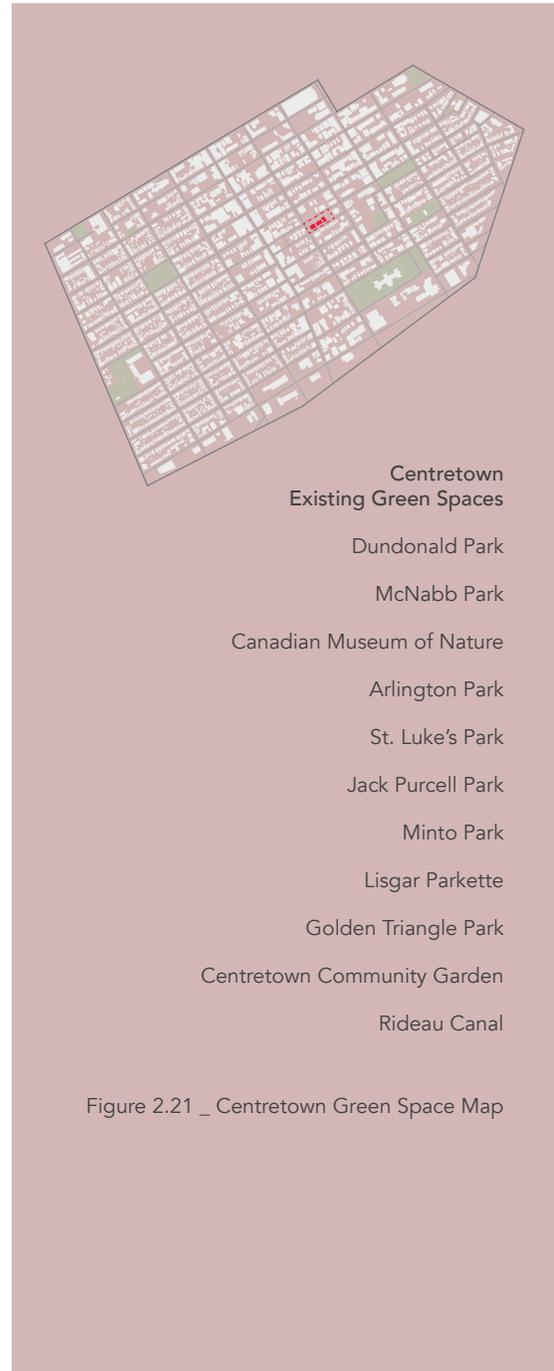
6.3% Semi-detached House

Figure 2.20 \_ Centretown Dwelling Typology Diagram

## Open Air \_

In 2020, Centretown should be reserving and adding to the sphere of public dynamic life with both inside and outside resources. Public outdoor space provides a cohesive exterior place for people to meet, often encouraging civic pride and participation and therefore community attachment.

Though there are a large number of well-loved parks throughout Centretown, an activation of the space surrounding the building of 330 Gilmour including the east parking lot will remove some of the lifeless asphalt, create green space and provide cleaner air, shade, and play and relaxation spaces.





# PART 03

Social Infrastructure for Centretown

## Social Infrastructure \_

Society has become individualistic, broadening the physical realms of privacy and autonomy. Known as the 'first place', homes have become the main place distancing themselves from community life through small physical shifts like moving front yard porches to backyard patios, and car-barns to inside the house itself. As Richard Thomas said in his 1970 article *From Porch to Patio*, "The tension between the need for privacy and the desire to belong to a community is still with us. The resolution of this seemingly ever-present conflict in needs and values is, and will be, mirrored in the design of whatever is called a house."<sup>30</sup>

In saying this, Thomas speaks to the idea of physical neighbourhoods where we visit, stay briefly or extendedly, and then return to our own private place. There is no shortage of first places these days, and ultimately necessary, but the current state and future of densification within predominantly residential communities, like Centretown, has created and increased the decline of civic life and its associated resources. Centretown as a micro-urban area lacks moments that allow inhabitants to play with their neighbourhood, occupy space, and express themselves while within a protected environment that encourages the formation of a robust sense of place.

Social infrastructure is comprised of services that support the quality of life for the country, province, city and neighbourhood. These go beyond basic economic and necessary services to create enriched places to live. Public space is part of social infrastructure as it aids to reserve space for anyone that wants to enjoy nature, sports, recreation/leisure, social activities, and personal reflection.

What is vital for spaces like this to work are its participants, to create an atmosphere of social cohesion. Gathering many people doing individual actions constructs an environment that encourages individual understanding of the collective based on the willingness of individuals to cooperate and work together.

Within neighbourhoods this is especially important. Providing physical public space with the hope for its citizens to develop personal empathy, understanding, and respect for fellow citizens without spatial ownership so it is every-person's land but no-person's land at the same time.<sup>31</sup>

330 Gilmour will be transformed into Centretown's Meeting Place to continuously form and reform place identity for the community by allowing the neighbourhood to come together within a physical

place that combines multiple programs under one roof. Reinforcing communities like Centretown through social infrastructure physically brings the community closer together by direct or indirect support for its citizens “with different backgrounds, passions, [and] interests... [coming together to participate] in a living democratic culture.”<sup>32</sup>

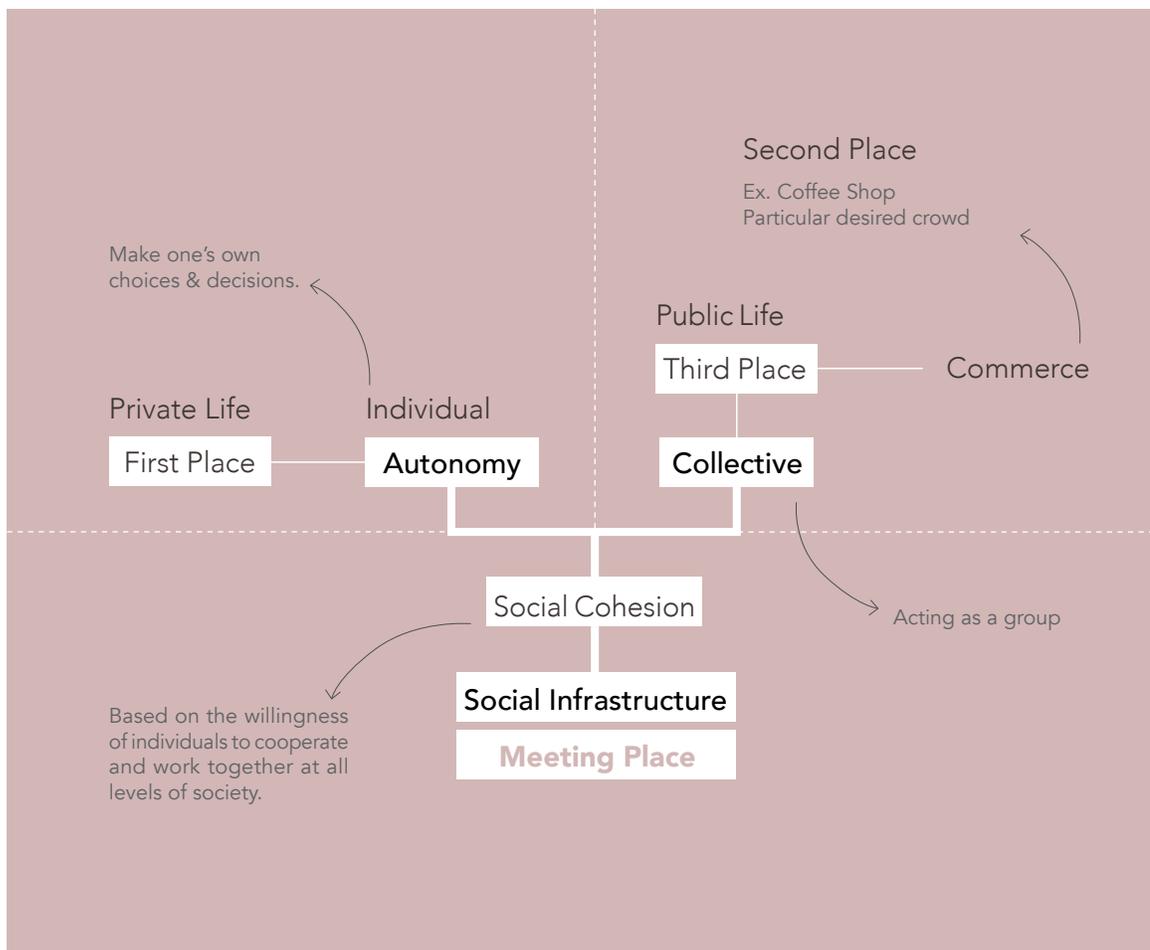


Figure 3.1 \_ Societal Spheres Diagram

## Social Infrastructure Case Studies \_

Idea Exchange \_ Book-less Library  
Cambridge, Ontario  
Galt Post Office \_ 1885 Thomas Fuller  
RDHA \_ 2018

Canada's first 'book-less' library is dedicated to a makers space that Cambridge residents can access for free. There is an array of spaces dedicated to learning and creativity that facilitate a different kind of library focused on social relations. Anchored within and around the former Galt Post Office that was in serious disrepair, the library adopted it as an emblem of civic pride that transforms the old post method of communication into a public digital hub of creativity and innovation for the community.



Figure 3.2 \_ 2018 Idea Exchange, View From Grande River

Libraries are moving from transactional resources to relational spaces.<sup>33</sup> They are no longer defined by the number of books on their shelves to lend, but how they facilitate relationships and have become a meeting place. Their physical location and fully public openness is what allows them to be a powerful player in any city and provide important resources for education, culture and leisure.



Figure 3.3 \_ 2018 Idea Exchange, STEAM Learning Room



Figure 3.4 \_ 2018 Idea Exchange, Attic Makers Space

Though Cambridge libraries Idea Exchange sets out to facilitate public engagement and moments of leisure, creative and innovative play, and socialization, the spaces presented lack warmth and feel like a corporate office. Each space seems to present itself with appropriate functional needs but public space require particular material approach that was not used here. Stark white gypsum board and linear lighting, though used in a fairly elegant way, are elements that are missing a certain personal quality and ownership when used in public space.

The next two case studies will examine how material choices affect public space.



Figure 3.5 \_ 2018 Idea Exchange, Social Space

Saynatsalo Town Hall  
Saynatsalo, Finland  
1945 \_ Alvar Aalto

Within a small farming town in Finland, Saynatsalo's Town Hall is a reserved yet monumental public place for the community that blends modernity with a sense of intimacy of the place. The quaint complex contains the city's council chamber, local government offices, community library, staff apartments and retail space. To this day it stands as an civic centre lasting generations.

Part of Saynatsalo's success is that it serves the town's functional requirements through administrative and public programming, but also facilitates public gathering through un-programmed spaces. Areas like the central courtyard, moments of pause throughout, and the library contribute to its sense of public welcoming benefiting

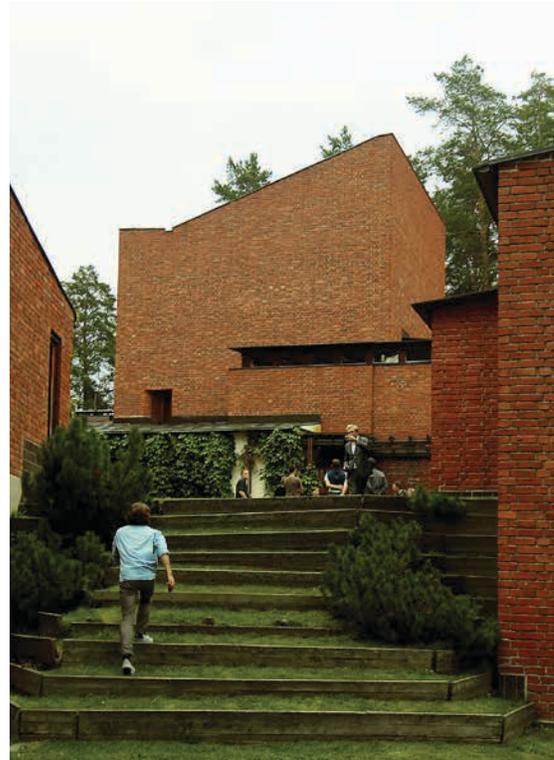


Figure 3.6 \_ Saynatsalo Town Hall, Courtyard Entrance

the entire town. The town's welcoming sense and ownership to the building is characterized by the material choices Aalto made. The difference lies with something that is hardy, yet warm and allows for use over time without significant wear. Moments of wood and brick play a contributing role to the complex's longevity.



Figure 3.7 \_ Saynatsalo Town Hall, Hallway



Figure 3.8 \_ Saynatsalo Town Hall, Library

Aalto achieves something profoundly human in his spaces. Possibly attributed to tactile material qualities, introduction of light, and warmth of this space that reflects the silver birch tree-filled town just outside its doors.

Attention to the location contributed to the final design that critically looked at the town as a place and reflected it into their civic centre that still stands proudly today.



Figure 3.9 \_ Saynatsalo Town Hall, Anti-chamber



Figure 3.10 \_ Saynatsalo Town Hall, Door Handle Detail

SESC Pompeia Leisure Centre  
Sao Paulo, Brazil  
1945 \_ Barrel Factory  
1977-86 \_ Lina Bo Bardi

An existing coopeage within the neighbourhood of Vila Pompeia of Sao Paulo, once providing jobs for the middle class community, now serves as a public cultural and community centre. Lina called it a 'leisure center' as she believed the words culture and sport had too many weighted and competing definitions. The word leisure provided the opportunity for users to play with space as though they are in a town; exploring, occupying, and expressing one's self within a protected environment.<sup>34</sup>

Serving as a micro-urban space and providing a variety of programming, the architectural language of the adapted buildings and interventions reinforces

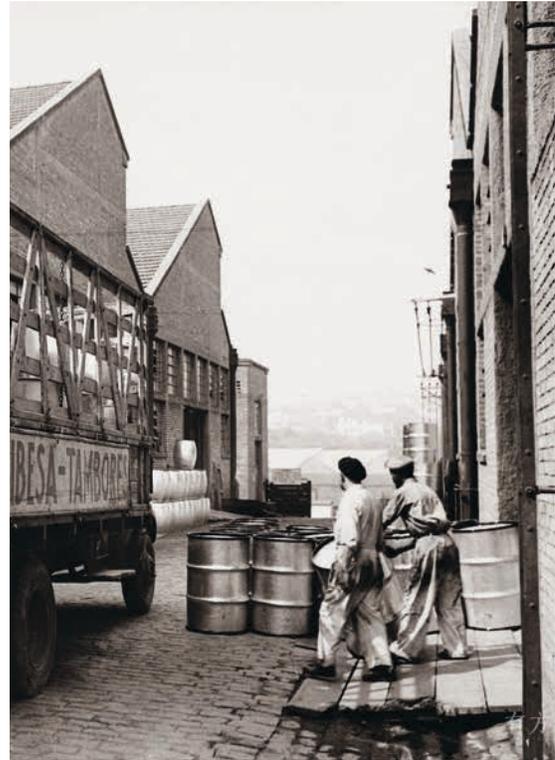


Figure 3.11 \_ SESC Pompeia, Existing Coopeage Facility that makes barrels and casks.

the industrial heritage of the site while creating a robust community place. A light-handed approach was taken to keep intact and visible elements of the past; it was a way for Lina to provide life, warmth and animation to the brand new place.<sup>35</sup> This materiality provides a robust yet warm environment that has withstood wear over time as it continues to be thoroughly used by the community.



Figure 3.12 \_ SESC Pompeia, Pre-construction

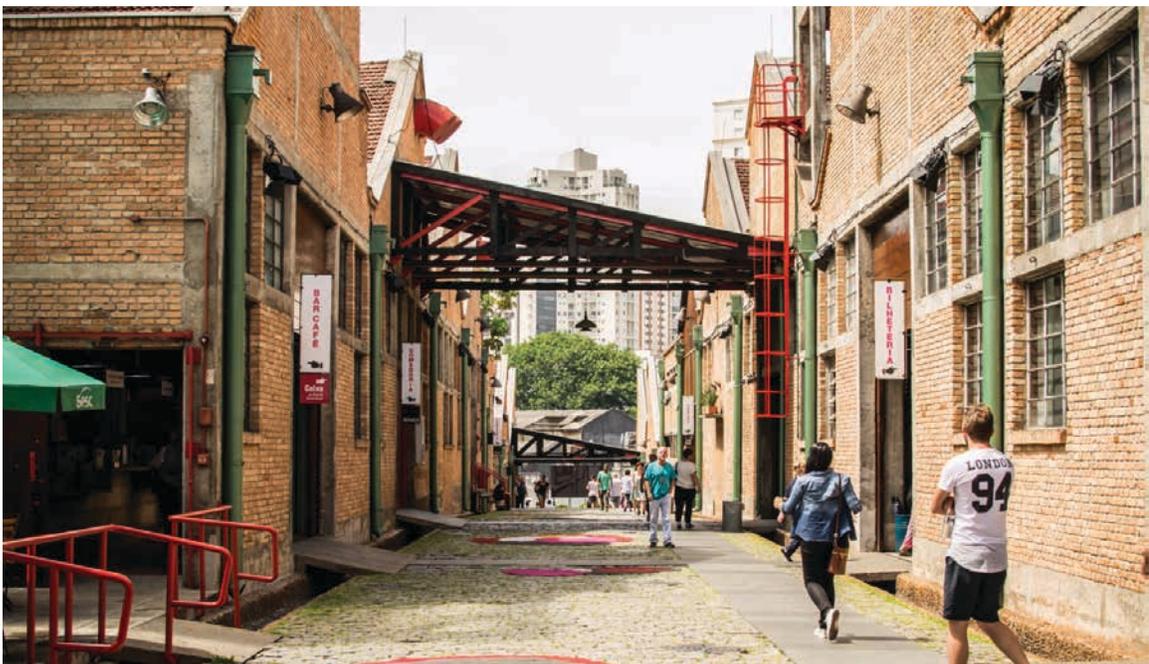


Figure 3.13 \_ SESC Pompeia, Continuing the Industrial Heritage Character of the Place

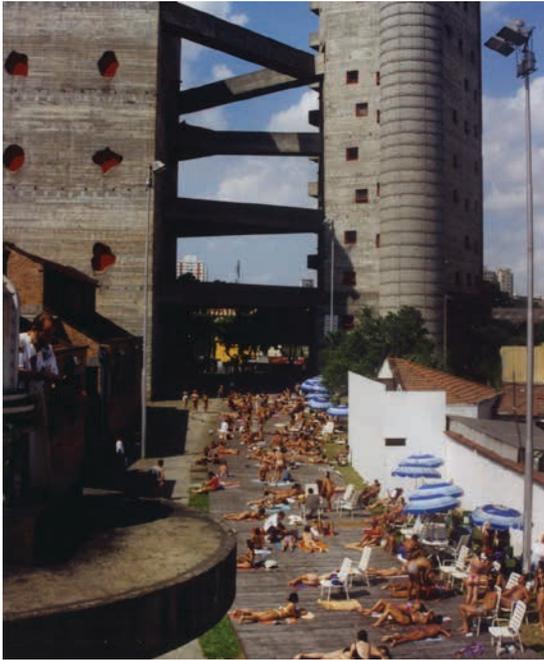


Figure 3.14 \_ SESC Pompeia, 'The Street'



Figure 3.15 \_ SESC Pompeia, Theatre

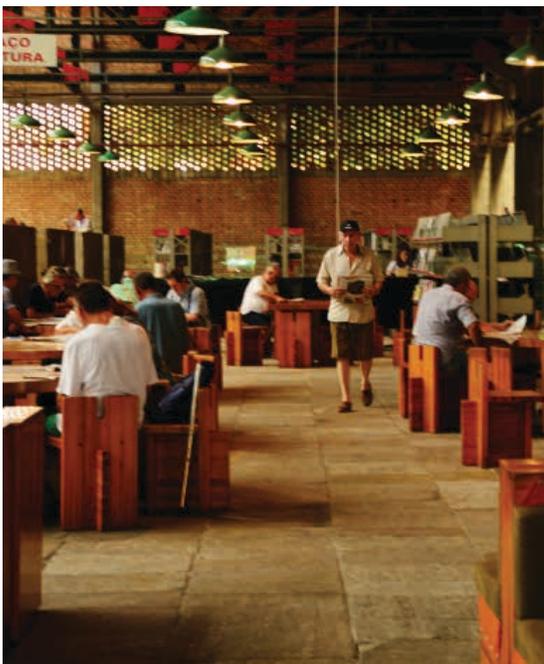


Figure 3.16 \_ SESC Pompeia, Library

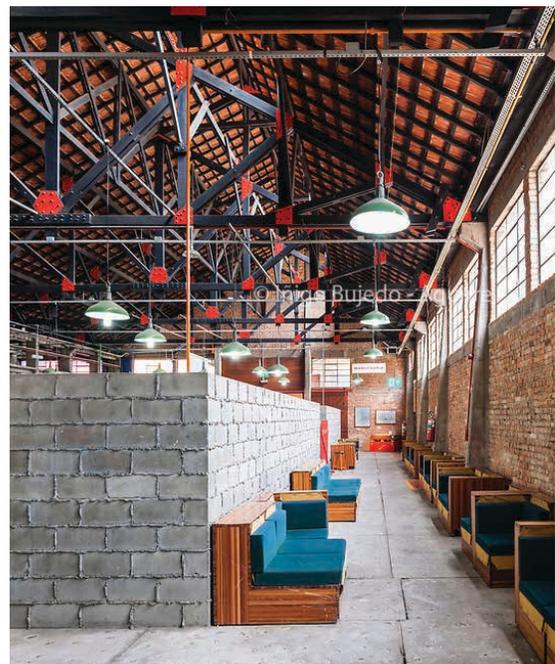


Figure 3.17 \_ SESC Pompeia, Art Studio

## Meeting Place \_ Types of 'Places'

### A Place to Be

Physical place where everyone is welcome.

### A Place to Gather

A place to meet formally or informally.

### A Place to Create

A safe place to explore.

### A Place to Grow

A flexible space open to adaptation.

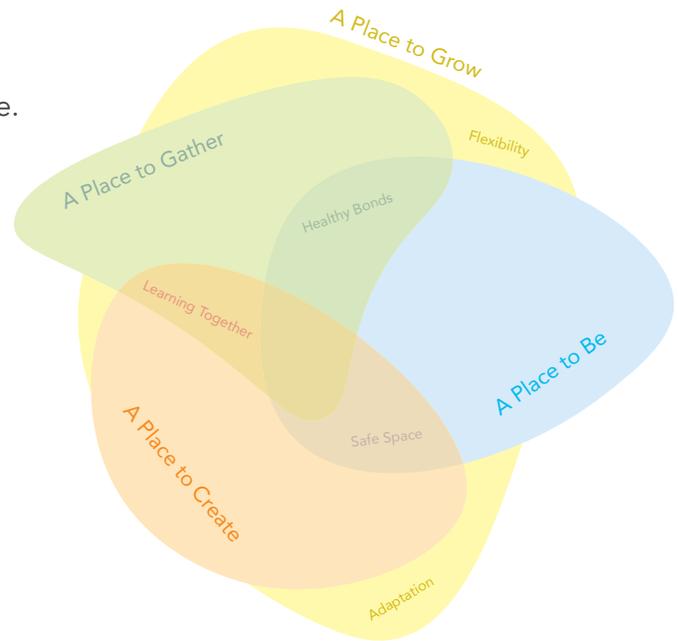


Figure 3.18 \_ Social Infrastructure Diagram, based on Klinenberg's parameters of space

Eric Klinenberg's book *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*, is a pragmatic study in how physical spaces have the power to bind people together. Klinenberg speaks to how "community resilience correlates strongly with the robustness of its social infrastructure"<sup>36</sup> and "given the world's diversity... there is great variety in the kinds

of social infrastructure that people find essential."<sup>37</sup> Working off the established parameters Klinenberg provides, and considering what Centretown needs, four types of 'Places' were characterized to help define groups of like programming; A Place to Be, A Place to Gather, A Place to Create, and A Place to Grow.

## A Place to Be \_ Individuality

Physical place where everyone is welcome.

Programming \_

Workspace / Individual / Contemplative

Relational Library

1922 Social History \_ Individuality

The new 1922 administration building was the first established place for the administrative staff that was completely their own. This institutional building located within a part of Centretown that was solely residential at the time was slightly out of place, but contributed to the movement of 'other' programming, slowly diversifying the area.

The school system's focus was on lectures and individual time for study, creating a more individual atmosphere of learning and feeling of solitude for the students.

Safe Space<sup>38</sup> \_

As in Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, and Ray Oldenburg's *The Great Good Place*, both famously argue that a variety of programming throughout neighbourhoods draws people out of their homes and into the public realm. This creates a degree of cultural vitality and contributes to the passive surveillance of shared public space.<sup>39</sup>

## A Place to Gather \_ Shared Experience

A place to gather formally or informally.

"Not burdened by the task of host or guest"<sup>40</sup>; relational space.

Programming \_

Living Room

Cafe

Community Group Headquarters

Offices / Meeting Rooms

Childcare Facility

## 1956 Social History \_ Shared Experience

After the war, an increase in population and immigrants created a boom of pupils entering the school system. Schools became pockets within the community uniting people through everyday proximity and shared experience. The education system became a community-building mechanism.

Gathering<sup>41</sup> \_

Society is growing more and more individualistic. Gathering reinforces our physical community by doing the "most human - and humanizing - thing we do... it's where we develop capacity for empathy."<sup>42</sup>

Healthy Bonds<sup>43</sup> \_

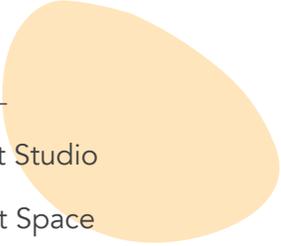
Supporting fellow citizens with "different backgrounds, passions, and interests... [participating] in a living democratic culture."<sup>44</sup>

### A Place to Create \_ Innovation

A safe place to explore.

Learning together in order to explore innovative solutions for the community.

Programming \_  
Workshop / Art Studio  
Theatre / Event Space



### 1963 Social History \_ Innovation

Though the 1963 addition happened so quickly after the first 1956 addition, a shift in the school system for alternative ways of learning and a sense of casualness was tested. A more human approach away from the rigidity of traditional learning techniques allowed teachers to explore engaging and innovative ways to teach the necessary subject matters. Many of these desired shifts are recorded within the Hall-Dennis Living and Learning Report of 1968.

### Learning Together<sup>45</sup> \_

Whether directly working together, or being autonomous within a public space, coming together under the same roof engaging in shared/similar activities and space encourages respect, interaction and togetherness.

### Common Ground<sup>46</sup> \_

Similar interests have the strength to bring people together intentionally or unintentionally. Later they have the power to explore and create together.

## A Place to Grow \_ Flexibility

A flexible space open to adaptation.

Programming \_

Open Air

2020 Social Climate \_ Flexibility

The opportunity for a future building addition within the site is there, but not necessary at this time. The already established interior space provides public and sheltered real estate to house Centretown's proposed interior programming. Reserving the remainder of the site to exterior public space establishing an exterior environment for citizens to engage with the neighbourhood beyond.<sup>47</sup> The underutilized existing east parking lot and surrounds will provide places to be, gather, create and grow through open air additions expanding the Meeting Place beyond its built walls.

Open Air \_

An unenclosed space outdoors.

Flexibility \_

Susceptible to modifications and alterations.<sup>48</sup>

Adaptation \_

The act or process of adapting one thing to fit another, or suit specified conditions; a new or changed environment.<sup>49</sup>

## Meeting Place \_ Spatial Approach

By relating the four places back to the three linear evolutions of 330 Gilmour, and the last remaining undeveloped portion of the site, they offer a way to spatially position the new proposed programming within the 'Meeting Place' as a connection to the intangible social histories of each portion of the site. The philosophical premises of operational activities in place during each addition's original period of construction characterized the volumes into the four places - A Place to Be, Gather, Create and Grow.

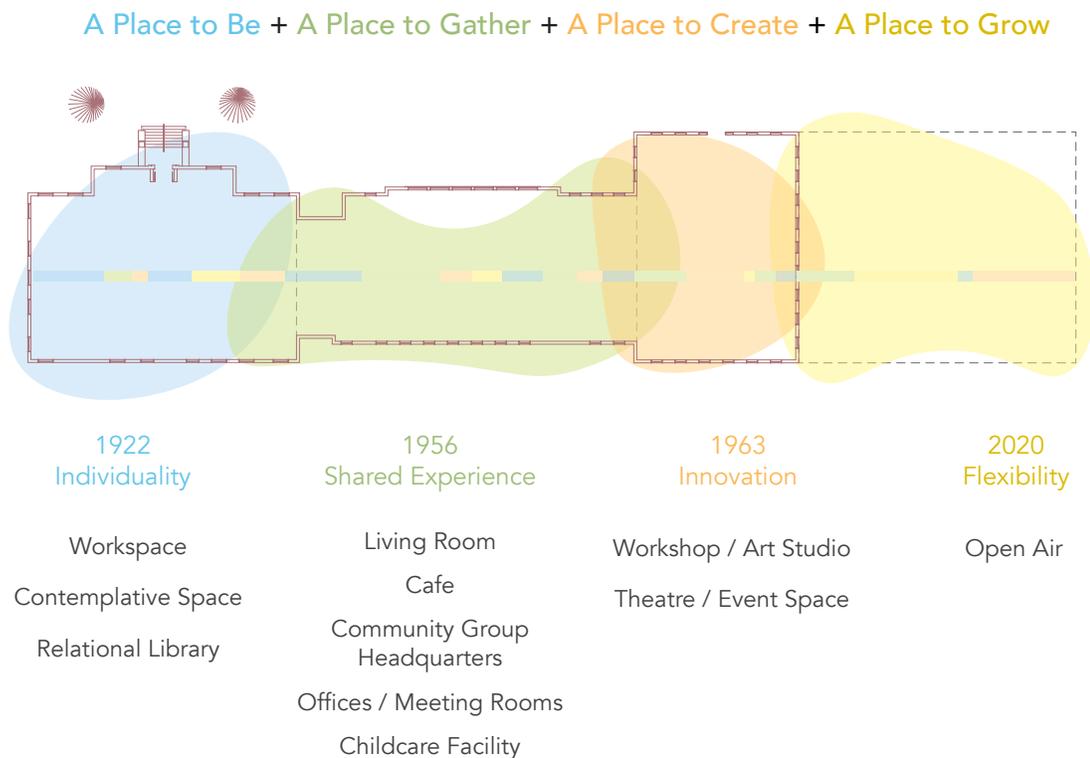
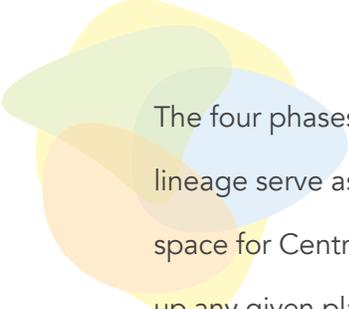


Figure 3.19 \_ Spatial Programming, Floor Plan Diagram

## Meeting Place

A Place to Be + A Place to Gather + A Place to Create + A Place to Grow



The four phases and their associated points along 330 Gilmour's lineage serve as a collective approach and aim to provide public space for Centretown under one roof. As a single program takes up any given place, all four 'Places' have the opportunity to move in and out of it to continuously adapt to what the community needs in any given moment. Providing a variety of programming that speaks to different people's needs and desires under one roof reinforces the Meeting Place as a place for everyone, anything, and therefore the entire community.



# PART 04

Adaptive Reuse \_ Centretown's Meeting Place

## Mission Statement \_

In an ever-growing and insulated city,  
a sliver of light may suddenly shine.  
Centretown's Meeting Place here today,  
with its visitors, provides...

A Place to Be,  
A Place to Gather,  
A Place to Create,  
and A Place to Grow,



spotlighting a little cohesion within  
the shade of an unconnected  
neighbourhood.

## Heritage Approach \_ Lineage

Pierre Hadot (1992-2010), a French historian, noted that time is a crucial element of mapping out heritage. As Hadot stated “le présent seul est notre bonheur” meaning ‘the present alone is our happiness’, expressing the notion of looking at history as a continuum,<sup>50</sup> a lineage.

The notion of heritage and temporality discusses not merely the gathering of ‘significant artifacts’ or ‘character defining elements’ that society designated significant at their created time, but rather that they embody society’s relationships within its current time. This reality highlights the importance of thinking about creating for the future; we should be looking and acting within the built environment as physical beings of future heritage.

In the instance of 330 Gilmour Street’s 1956 and 1963 additions, their unestablished heritage status within Centretown is connected to this - not being considered heritage within the time of the designation due to their minimal age value. Not unlike the original 1922 building, they hold merit in the fact that they tell a part of the school board history of growth which is connected to the growth of Ottawa as a city, and Canada as a country. The ‘issue’ with these additions most likely stems from their appearance moving the style continuity

away from the more ornate and complex Beaux-Arts, towards more timely authentic additions. The subsequent additions forge a similar spirit by utilizing modern principles in a historically sensitive manner. This approach allowed the 1956 and 1963 additions to coordinate with their predecessors, while at the same time stand on their own, indicating a social change and physically depicting a lineage.

With 330 Gilmour's interiors largely unknown and its large outward facade facing the community, this project proposes to keep intact all three facade portions and continue to celebrate them within their own moments of time as a linear progression. Maintaining and expressing the importance of all three parts of 330 Gilmour within the existing fragments, new interventions, and adaptive programming, so it evokes beliefs of each past, establishes rules for each section, celebrates the passage of time, and affirms continuity, as Maristella Casciato expresses heritage should in *The Historicity of Modern Heritage*.<sup>51</sup>

These new interventions, both exterior and interior, will speak to the existing framework and its associated era by critically determining what elements embody society's relationships today and reinterpret them to take part within present and future time.

## Design Approach \_ Critical Regionalism

330 Gilmour Building Phases \_

1922 Beaux-Arts - *A Place to Be - Individuality*

1956 Modern - *A Place to Gather - Shared Experience*

1963 Modern - *A Place to Create - Innovation*

2020 Contemporary - *A Place to Grow - Flexibility*

## Critical Regionalism \_

Is the post-modern era's way of addressing the modern era's issues of internationalism and placeless design. Kenneth Frampton, a key figure in Critical Regionalism commentary, recalls Paul Ricoeur's saying

"how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization"<sup>52</sup>

Both figures speak to the idea of critically looking at contemporary styles, materials and technologies to remain progressive, while also relating to the region, place and site at which the intervention is appearing. A consideration of both manifests itself into an architecture that is rooted in the contemporary world, but tied to the cultural context.

## **Design Guidelines \_ For Centretown's Meeting Place**

Principles that guided the design of the interventions are outlined below. The guidelines provide a language for the new architectural interventions to speak to the existing fabric, while establishing their own contributions to the neighbourhood of Centretown aiming to foster public space and community life.

### **Exterior Environment**

330 Gilmour's facades will be maintained and preserved as needed to keep intact the visual lineage of the site.

### **Associated Era**

Each portion of 330 Gilmour represents the philosophical premises or theories of teachings, operational activities or community development in place during each of their original period of construction. New interventions should speak to their associated era's philosophies through contemporary architectural interventions, adaptive reuse programming and overall essence of the place.

### **Site Approachability**

The existing exterior conditions of 330 Gilmour present as unapproachable to the human scale and void of passing-by interactions. The new interventions should engage with all the

exterior undeveloped portions of the site to provide places to be, gather, create and grow outside the building footprint, especially including the south side of the building (Lewis Street) and the undeveloped parking lot at the east end of the site.

#### Beaux-Arts Level

The raised first story set forth by the Beaux-Arts style of the original 1922 building was carried throughout both additions (1956 and 1963). This is an important character-defining element of the building that allowed it and its past program of the OPSB to present itself with grandeur, but constructed an inaccessible and isolating point of entry for some. The proposal must maintain the raised first story but provide a new vision for the building through spatial inclusion starting with each point of entry; accessibility.

#### Massing

330 Gilmour and Centretown's architectural language largely exist as orthogonal and rectilinear massing. New interventions must be compatible with the neighbourhoods orthogonal and rectilinear massing but should look to contemporary architecture styles, material and detailing to represent present time. New intervention massing should be compatible, yet distinguishable and subordinate.

### Symmetry

The original 1922 building, and the 1956 and 1963 addition were composed in a symmetrical manner as individual volumes and as an overall building. New interventions should respect the already established proportions.

### Horizontal Banding

All three volumes of the building exhibit various long horizontal banding existing as a motif that unites all three, but also highlights their differences. New interventions must contribute to the long horizontal nature of the existing built fabric but look to contemporary architecture styles, materials and details to represent present time. If the new intervention expresses horizontal elements, it should be compatible, yet distinguishable and subordinate.

### Material

330 Gilmour and Centretown's material language consists of masonry, stone and concrete. New interventions must speak to the existing heavy material language of the neighbourhood and site, but look to contemporary materials and details to represent present time. 330 Gilmour also exhibits some architectural moments of metal work. New uses of metal should be reserved for small elements of utility

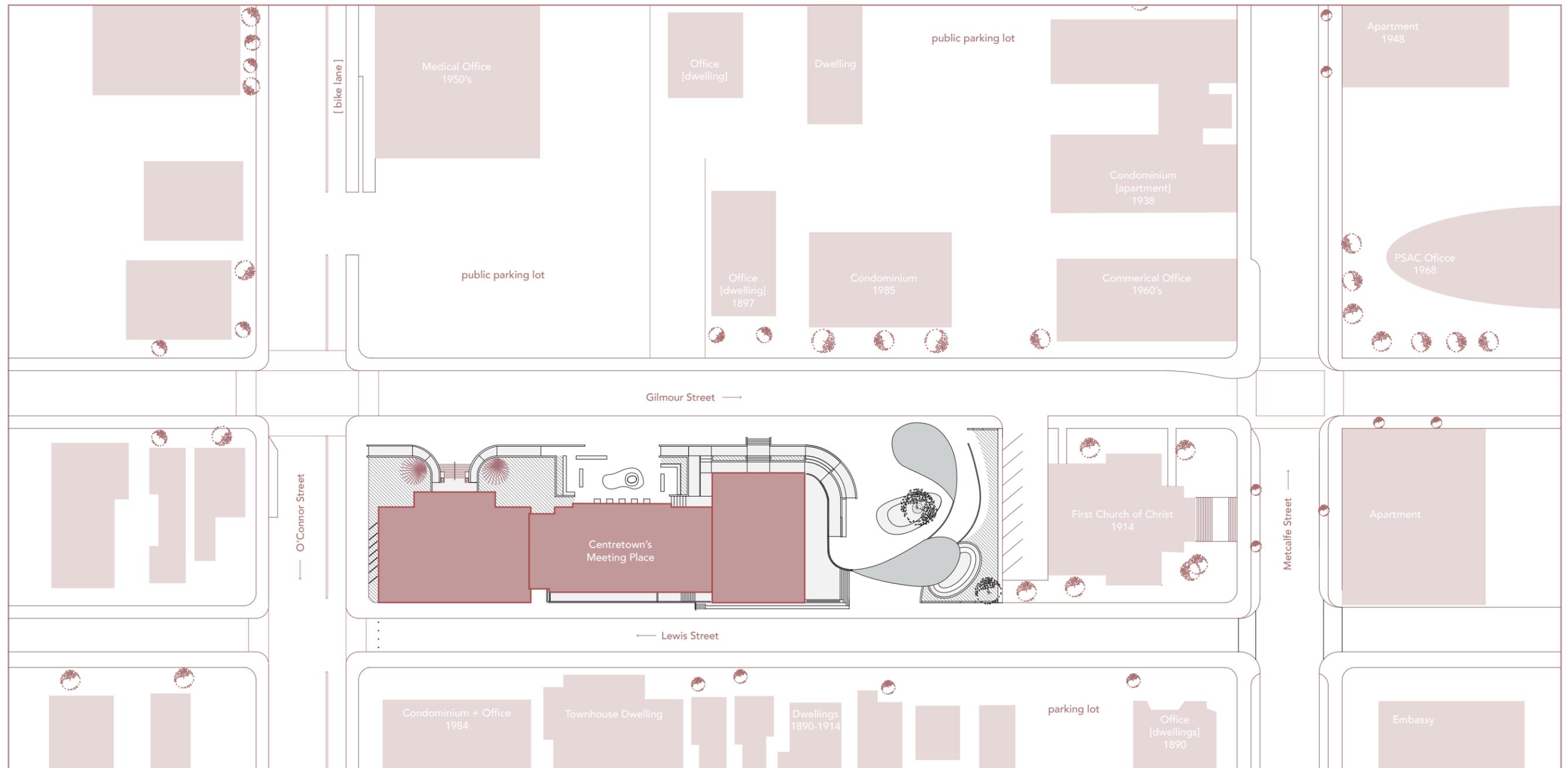
or large-scale interventions that bring a new vision to the site. When using any materials similar to existing ones, ensure material colour, pattern, and finishes are compatible, yet distinguishable.

### **Interior Environment**

With little known about the interior of the building, other than small glimpses seen from the outside and what community members remember, the building footprint was maintained and filled in with interpretations of these 'known' fragments; the 1922 grand central staircase and Board of Trustees Meeting Room, the 1956 Central Corridor, and the general placement of service stairs. These elements provided spatial parameters to start with, but the remaining adaptive reuse programming was spatially approached through ties to the social history of each addition as described in the previous chapters. New interventions should speak to their associated era's philosophies through contemporary interventions/adaptations, adaptive reuse programming, and overall essence of the place.

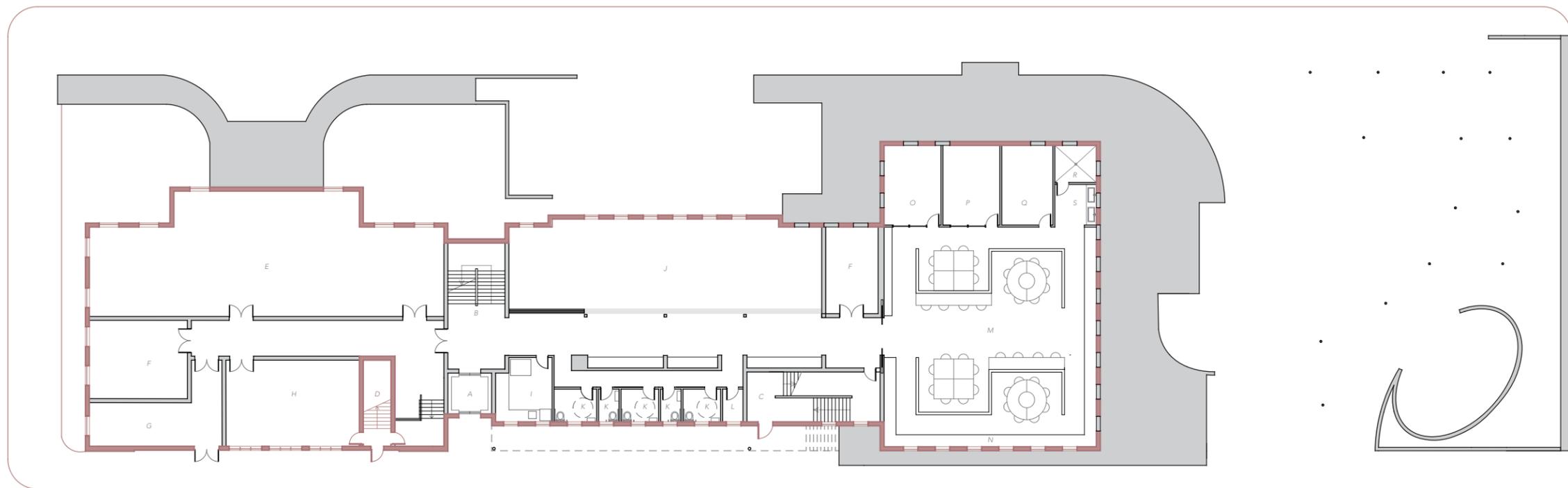
Other considerations are attributed to exterior reflections, and utility or function.

Design \_ Centretown's Meeting Place



**Site Plan \_**  
**Scale 1/64" = 1'-0"**  
 Figure 4.1

- Existing
- Proposed
- Proposed Vegetation



**Level 0, Basement** \_  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**

Figure 4.2

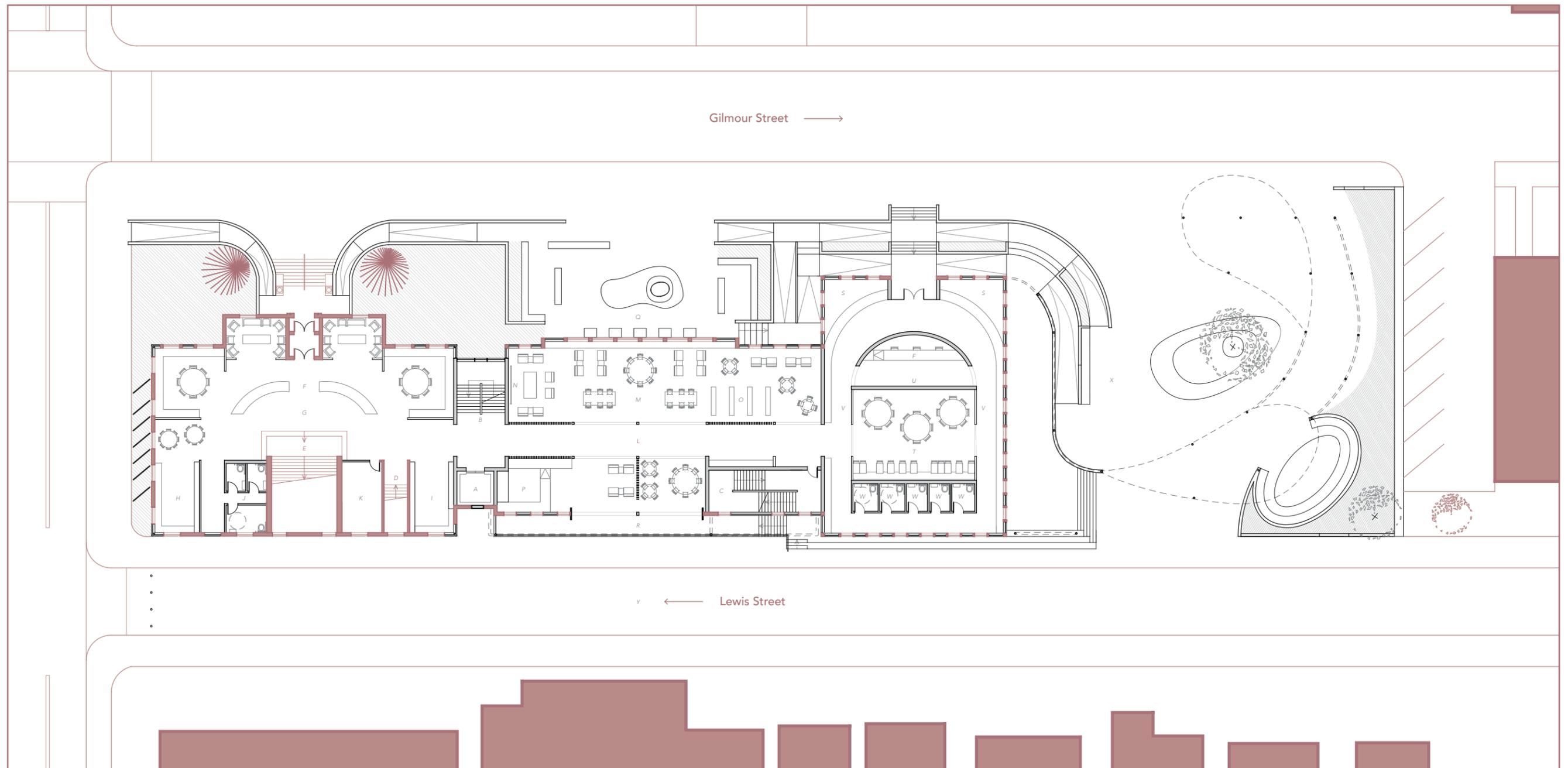
- Existing
- Proposed
- Proposed Vegetation

**Room Legend** \_  
 A. Elevator  
 B. Stairwell 1  
 C. Stairwell 2  
 D. Stair 3

E. Facility Storage  
 F. Mechanical Room  
 G. Garbage Room  
 H. Facility Management Office  
 I. Community Kitchen

J. Multipurpose Space  
 K. Public - Washroom  
 L. Storage  
 M. Workshop / Art Studio  
 N. Perimeter Storage Cabinets

O. Vented Room  
 P. Tech. Room  
 Q. Photoroom  
 R. Shower Room  
 S. Wet/Washing Room




**Level 1, Main Floor** \_  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**  
 Figure 4.3

-  Existing
-  Proposed
-  Proposed Vegetation

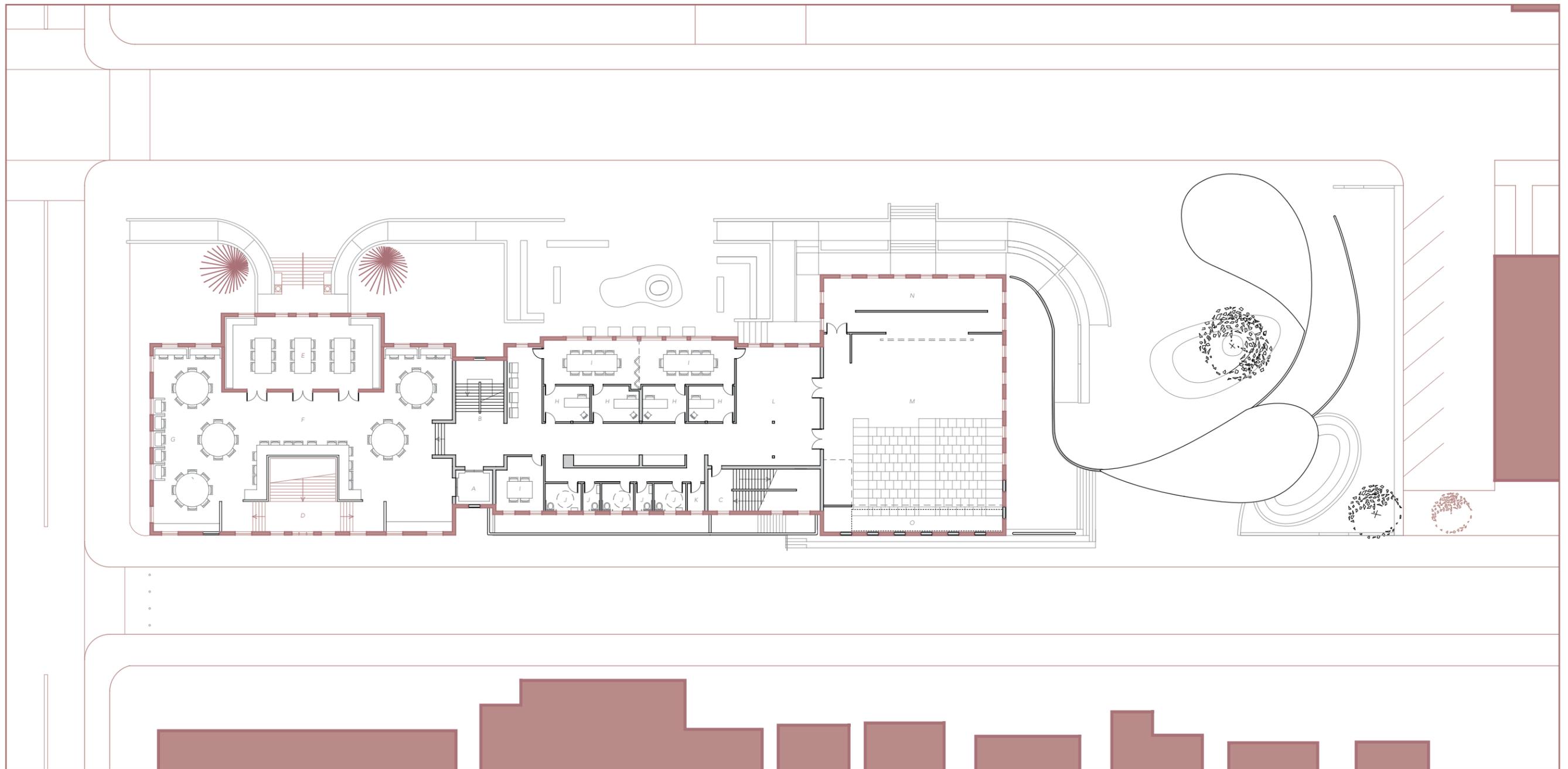
- Room Legend \_
- A. Elevator
  - B. Stairwell 1
  - C. Stairwell 2
  - D. Stair 3
  - E. Central Staircase

- F. Facility Help Desk
- G. Library - Relational Space
- H. Library - Children's Reading Corner
- I. Library - Adult's Reading Corner
- J. Public - Washrooms

- K. Administration Office
- L. Central Corridor
- M. Gathering Space - Multipurpose
- N. Gathering Space - Media Wall
- O. Community Reading Material

- P. Cafe
- Q. Front Porch
- R. Balcony
- S. Creative Space - Multipurpose
- T. Creative Space - Art Space

- U. Community Posting Wall
- V. Local Art 'Gallery'
- W. Public - Washroom
- X. A Place to Grow - Open Air
- Y. Pedestrian Friendly Lewis Street



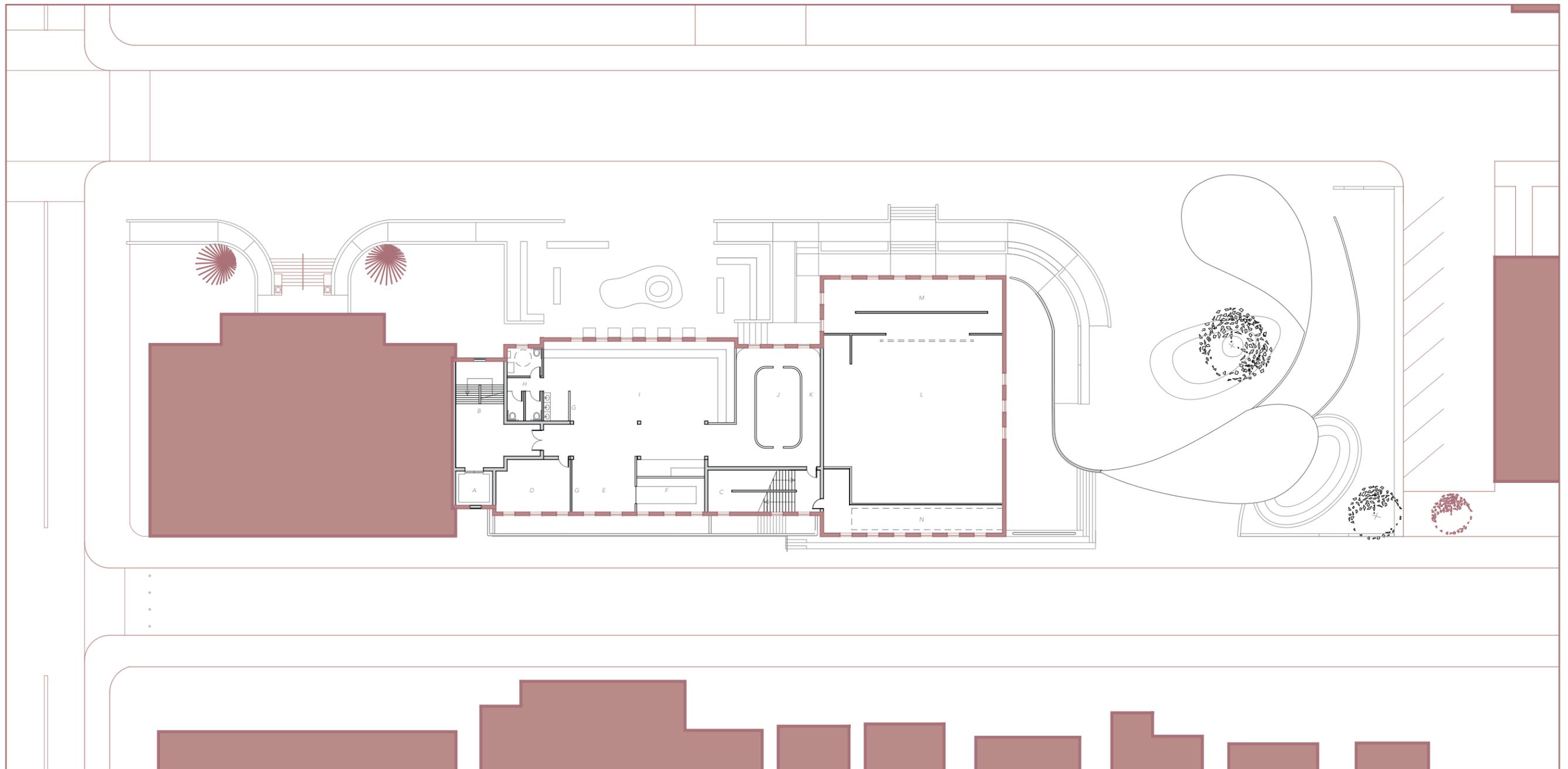

**Level 2** \_  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**  
 Figure 4.4

-  Existing
-  Proposed
-  Proposed Vegetation

- Room Legend \_
- A. Elevator
  - B. Stairwell 1
  - C. Stairwell 2
  - D. Central Staircase

- E. 'Board of Trustee's' Public Meeting Room
- F. Library - Relational Space
- G. Library - Public Computers
- H. Community Headquarters - Office
- I. Public - Meeting Room
- J. Public - Washrooms
- K. Storage Closet
- L. Theatre/Event Space - Lobby
- M. Theatre/Event Space - Multipurpose

- N. Theatre/Event Space - Backstage
- O. Theatre/Event Space - Fold Away




**Level 3** \_  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**  
 Figure 4.5

-  Existing
-  Proposed
-  Proposed Vegetation

- Room Legend \_
- A. Elevator
  - B. Stairwell 1
  - C. Stairwell 2
  - D. Daycare - Office

- E. Daycare - Reading Corner
- F. Daycare - Kitchen
- G. Daycare - Coat Hooks
- H. Daycare - Washroom
- I. Daycare - Multipurpose Space

- J. Daycare - Active Play Space
- K. Daycare - Running Track
- L. Theatre/Event Space - Multipurpose
- M. Theatre/Event Space - Backstage
- N. Theatre/Event Space - Control Room



North Elevation \_  
Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"

Figure 4.6



South Elevation \_  
Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"

Figure 4.7

- Existing
- Proposed



**East Elevation \_**  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**

Figure 4.8



**West Elevation \_**  
**Scale 1/32" = 1'-0"**

Figure 4.9

- Existing
- Proposed

Maintaining the existing facades as a tangible elements, allowed 330 Gilmour's lineage to continue its expression to the neighbourhood. New interventions were added to the exterior to bring a more engaging and human scale approach to the newly established Meeting Place to represent and fulfill today's social values.

#### Horizontal Banding \_

New interventions that speak to the horizontal language of the existing fabric include;

1. Accessible entries along the north facade through the ramp interventions.
2. A continuous band of windows wrapping around the first level to open up the building to the public in a metaphysical sense, but also visually exists as a unifying action to all three additions - A symbol of change of use for the building.
3. Place to Grow contains a series of columns projecting out of the ground and strung together with a horizontal pipe adding to the three previous volumes motif but in a new way, signifying a change of use for the building.
4. 1956 South balcony adding a horizontal element to the previously modest service facade to create a more desirable place to be.

#### Layering of Time \_

The East and West elevations previous depicted a layering of time through small reveals of the volumes behind them. The new exterior interventions aim to do the same by adding to the layering of the visual lineage with the interventions of the Place to Grow. The idea is expressed in the North and South elevations as well.



Beaux Arts First Level \_

'Beaux-Arts Level' of the raised first story was maintained, but mitigated through small incremental upward movement through ramps, platforms and stairs. These interventions provide the public with outdoor places to be, gather, create and grow on their way up to the first level, and into the building.

The interior floor-to-floor conditions were maintained, except for the removal of the third floor within the 1963 portion to make way for the double height theatre space (see in figures 4.10 and 4.11).

1956 North South Section \_

Scale 1/32" - 1'-0"

Figure 4.10



East West Section \_

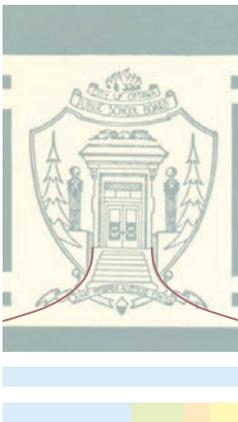
Scale 1/32" - 1'-0"

Figure 4.11

- Existing
- Proposed



Figure 4.12 \_ 1922 North Main Entrance Perspective

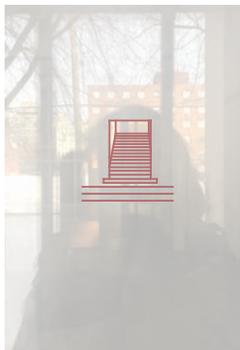


### 1922 \_ Main Entrance

The ideals of the former Ottawa Public School Board represented within its crest lends itself to the values of the proposed Meeting Place – teaching, information, gathering and community. By adding to the promenade of the entrance to include an accessible option allows all users to engage with the original entrance of the building. The new sweeping action of the proposed access ramps on either side of the original staircase are appropriated from the crests artistic interpretation of the entrance, and manifesting into a physical form that aims to draw passersby into the building through its ornate Beaux-Arts spirit. The action of reaching out to the public space of the sidewalk with little other places to linger outside suggests a more individual and quiet place within - A Place to Be.



Figure 4.13 \_ Central Staircase, 1922 East West Building Section



### 1922 \_ Central Staircase

The existing grand central staircase establishes a distinct line of symmetry for the 1922 volume as a typical element of the Beaux-Arts style. The placement creates a focal point that provides a means to circulation and spatially places the library programming along the exterior walls to increase spatial solitude and individuality for its users while still within a public space.

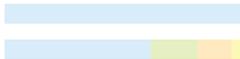




Figure 4.14 \_ 1922 'Board of Trustees' Meeting Room Perspective



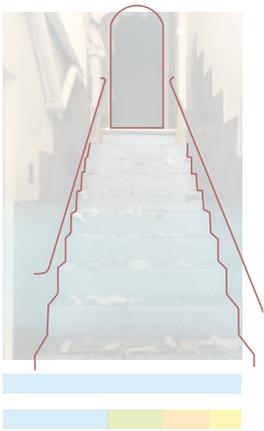
### 1922 \_ 'Board of Trustees' Meeting Room

What used to be an important space of decision-making for the OPSB's trustees, now serves as a community meeting room. When not reserved for a meeting, it serves the community as a quiet contemplative space for reading, studying, or just a place to be with ones self in a shared space. The extended ceiling height, compared to the rest of the building, creates an airy atmosphere within a more secluded room that takes contemporary cues from the decorative Beaux-Arts exterior north facade, and yellow tinted windows directly opposite on the south facade, to frame and ground the space.





Figure 4.15 \_ 1922 South Service Back Entrance Perspective



### 1922 \_ Back Entrance

Used as a service or back entrance, the south face of the building along Lewis Street has always been treated as secondary due to its narrow conditions. This entrance still serves to be secondary but imagines it as a more often used transition space into the Place to Be. Similar to before, the space utilizes protective wall material along the staircase that leads to a new wood arched opening. The existing arched threshold inspired an interior motif that was used throughout the building to signify public spatial transitions within and between the four different volumes of the Meeting Place.



Figure 4.16 \_ 1956 South Facade Lewis Street Balcony Perspective



### 1956 \_ Lewis Street Balcony

The previously static south service facade of 330 Gilmour standing lifelessly on Lewis Street faces a series of well-intact Victorian residential homes. The small number of residents, and therefore local traffic, inspired the decision to create a dead end at the West corner to establish a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The addition of a balcony off of the first level gathering space animates the facade and street through established new horizontal datums to creating opportunities for community members to gather, create, play and ultimately establishing a more desirable place to be. The material choice of red metal indicated to the community a new intervention that altered the previous vision of the site to incorporate the social values of 2020 as part of reimagining 330 Gilmour as Centretown's Meeting Place.



Figure 4.17 \_ 1956 Level One Living Room Perspective

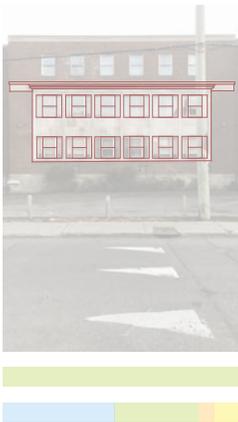


### 1956 \_ Living Room

The 1956 portion of the building is organized by a central corridor dividing the rectangular volume into two long linear halves and acting as a transition piece between the 1922 and 1963 portions of the building. The entirety of the 1956 main floor is known as the Living Room with a pattern of existing and new windows that lines each exterior wall-opening the space to the outdoors and extenuating the long horizontal nature of the corridor. Though it divides the space in two, it was designed with its modern era's open plan in mind to keep the physical and visual flow of people together. Through small physical changes like furniture and the implementations of screens, the space was designed for gathering of formal community assembly and informal shared experience.



Figure 4.18 \_ 1956 North Exterior Front Porch Perspective



### 1956 \_ Front Porch

The North space in front of the 1956 addition was previously used as a parking lot, but now presents the opportunity for a Place to Gather outdoors. Acting as a front porch nestled between the new 1922 and 1963 entrance ramps, and centered under the 1956 limestone window wall, a low horizontal plan is created with a series of seating interventions that invite a more static outdoor presence within the community. Having people rest within, and people passing by on Gilmour Street, establishes an opportunity of dynamic relations that are not typically seen within Centretown; through establishing places to observing the neighbourhood, social interaction are generated and radiate relationships beyond the Meeting Place.



Figure 4.19 \_ 1963 North Main Entrance Perspective



### 1963 \_ Main Entrance

The 1963 entrance was modified to articulate the raised 'Beaux-Arts' first level by moving the ascend to the outdoors to stand the ornate original 1922 entrance but in its own modern era's way. The new interventions establish accessible modes of entry into the building, and reimagines the limestone door frame to make a connection to the previously used canopy and new motif of arched thresholds. A combination of ramps, platforms and stairs generate active and accessible Places to Be, Gather, Create and Grow around the 1963 volume expressing strong orthogonal massing similar to the existing fabric, but introduce moments of contrast through curved extrusions that guide users to other areas of the site.



Figure 4.20 \_ 2020 Open Air Space Perspective



### 2020 \_ Open Air

The former parking lot presents itself as an opportunity for growth as part of the evolution of the site. The reservation of this portion of the site to public outdoor space ensures it remains a part of Centretown's future community life and memory. A series of columns projecting out of the ground are strung together with red horizontal metal pipes starting at the second floor level. Not previously articulated, this new datum stands to communicate and signify a new vision for this previously underutilized space. The pipes are pieces for the community to play as markers for activity in between; some hold up permanent shade canopies, while others swings and monkey bars. The creative minds of the community will employ them for what they imagine establishing a flexible space filled with Places to Be, Gather, Create and Grow in open air.



Figure 4.21 \_ 2020 Open Air Space Perspective, Looking West

## Part 04 Conclusion \_

The memory of 330 Gilmour was not revealed through existing architectural drawings or exploration of the interior of the building, but through the communities intangible social memories. The three additions - 1922, 1956 & 1963 - present three temporal volumes within the existing building expressing an essence of their conceived time on to their portions of the structure; **A Place to Be**, **A Place to Gather** and **A Place to Create**. These impressions formulated a spatial methodology as part of adaptively reusing the building as a public community place which then imprinted a fourth essence; 2020's intangible social forces aiming to create **A Place to Grow** public space and community life. Working with the existing fabric to maintain the strong lineage of growth, and intervening with todays social values, 330 Gilmour stands to express the community's memories, but also its burgeoning future of community life the moment 330 Gilmour turned into Centretown's Meeting Place.



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# APPENDICES

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- A. Abbreviations
- B. 330 Gilmour Street Statement of Significance
- C. Thesis Defence Information

**Appendix A \_**  
**Abbreviations**

C of O	City of Ottawa
HCD	Heritage Conservation District
OBE	Ottawa Board of Education
OHEC	Ottawa Hydro Electric Commission
OPSB	Ottawa Public School Board

**Appendix B \_**  
**Statement of Significance \_ 330 Gilmour Street**

The 1922 portion of 330 Gilmour Street is recognized under the Centretown Heritage Conservation District as having ‘heritage value’ because of its historical association with the neighbourhood and Ottawa, and its architectural and social values.

The former Ottawa Public School Board Administration Building at the corner of Gilmour and O’Connor within Centretown was built in 1922 presenting in a classical Beaux-Arts style. The Superintendent of Buildings for the OPSB, William Caven Beattie, designed and looked over the construction; composed of a brick and stone facade, with clay tile and concrete construction. Within North America this style depicted a character of urban grandeur, wealth, and power that the school board wanted to exude. Features including a raised first storey, pedimented doorways, conservative lines with decorative classical architectural elements such as pilasters, cartouches, acroterion, brackets and consoles all composed in milled limestone.

As the city of Ottawa grew the school board did as well, expanding 330 Gilmour within the East portion of the block; first in 1956 and shortly following in 1963. The architect, Cecil Burgess (along with his multiple partners within this time frame), designed two utilitarian modern additions with a surprising deal of sensitive historicism for

the early 1960's. Again limestone detailing connected the three portions with moments of horizontal banding, decorative window surrounds, and other odes to classical components. This was the last major addition to the exterior of the building and how it present itself today.

In 1970 the OPSB changed to the Ottawa Board of Education as part of the provincial wide recognition of the public education system. The board existed there until 1998 as a result of the Ottawa amalgamation and The Fewer School Boards Act - Bill 104. In 2001 the newly amalgamated board known as the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board sold the property to a private developer.

The OPSB administration building is an excellent example of an early 20th century institutional design within an urban residential neighbourhood. For 80 years it served Ottawa as a conductor of one of the worlds most important social infrastructures, education and schools for young people.

As part of Centretown it distinguished itself from the surroundings through its grand architectural style but seamlessly fitting in through its similar use of materials; red brick and limestone.

### 330 Gilmour Exterior Character Defining Elements \_

All elements related to the OPSB or OBE:

1922 north entrance is represented in the OPSB Crest including:  
Two Blue Spruce trees and two filigree lamps on either side of the limestone staircase (raised first storey), pedimented doorway opening reading 'Public School Board' & 'Administration Building' carved in stone, surrounding decorative limestone sculptures and surround, and central wood and wrought iron double doors.

All elements related to the construction and Beaux-Arts or Historicist/ Modern Additions of the building:

1. Flat Roof: Overall
2. Symmetry: Overall and within each portion.
3. Conservative Lines: Classical & Modern, Overall with horizontal banding and visual vertical divides
3. Pedimented Doorway: 1922 North Facade
5. Classical Architectural Details, 1922: Pilasters, cartouches, acroterion, brackets, consoles, etc.
6. Historicist detailing: 1956 North facade decorative limestone cornice, and more simplified banding
7. Decorative Limestone Window Surrounds: On all portions within their own style/time period
8. Small applications of filigree metal work: 1922 North entrance staircase holds two black filigree lamps and all facade articulate dusty rose/ burnt orange filigree metal vent covers.

### 330 Gilmour Interior Character Defining Elements \_

The interior of the building is inaccessible; spatial relationships, architectural features and finishes are largely unknown. Information below was gained through interviews and what can be seen from the ground level.

All elements related to the construction and Beaux-Arts or Historicist/Modern Additions of the building:

1. 1922 Central Staircase: Beaux-Arts

Location: Central, first floor leading to second floor moving towards the south facade

Description: (Appears to be over painted)

2. 1922 Board of Trustees Meeting Room

Location: Second Floor, again north wall above entrance

Description: 'Quite spectacular' and 'tribute to Robert Adam'

3. 1956 Central Corridor

Location: On all floors

Description: Used to organize this volume of the building by placing support space on either side and acting as a connection point between the 1922 and 1963 portions.

Appendix C \_  
Thesis Defense Information

Date \_ Thursday April 16th 2020, 9:55-10:45 am  
Location \_ Zoom: Virtual HUB Gallery, Hosted By Manuel Baez  
Advisor \_ Mariana Esponda

Defense Committee \_

Chair \_ Sheryl Boyle  
Departmental \_ Susan Ross  
External \_ Titania Truesdale  
Guest \_ Federica Goffi



Figure A.1 \_ Emily Essex, Virtual Defence Screenshot April 16th 2020