

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- Where is the complete list of the Toronto Community Foundation's donors for this project? How much money will they be writing off?
- Why wasn't the station made wheelchair-accessible or a second exit installed?
- Why weren't the outside entrances or mezzanine level also renovated?
- Why isn't the ceiling finished?
- Why is the so-called jail cell still there?
- Why isn't the TTC typeface used more? Why is the word MUSEUM spaced too tightly and set too low to be seen from a subway car?

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

joelclark.org/museum

REFERENCES

- MOSCOE "JAIL CELL"; THORSELL "MIASMA": David Nickle, "Toronto Community Foundation hopes to give subway stations an ancient motif," *The Villager*, 2005.12.02
- TRANSIT-FAN DISSATISFACTION: icanhaz.com/ttcreno
- ARTICLES: Christopher Hume, Peter Kuitenbrouwer, David Nickle, John Lorinc, Royson James, and Alex Bozikovic all have praised the Museum project (they're Googable)
- ARCHITECTS: Virtually the only architect to articulate an objection is Michael McClelland of ERA Architects (in Bozikovic, "The once and future Museum station," *Globe and Mail*, 2007.08.04)

– JOE CLARK · joelclark@joelclark.org
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The new Museum station:

HOT



...OR **NOT?**

The new columns are cute, and the word **MUSEUM** sure is big on the walls. But the only people outside the TTC who wanted a new and improved Museum station stood to benefit from it financially.

These elites don't actually ride the subway, but they managed to persuade the TTC to spend scarce dollars on a cosmetic retrofit that won't even make Museum station wheelchair-accessible or install a second fire exit.

Museum is just the beginning of the TTC's plans to destroy its own subway heritage – a heritage admired by legions of transit fans in Toronto and around the world.

When it comes to the condition and design of the Toronto subway, all the following are going on right now:

- **OLD, CRUMBLING STATIONS NEED URGENT REPAIR.** Tiles are cracked, dirty, corroded, and peeling off the walls. There are water leaks everywhere but the brand-new Sheppard line.
- **MANY STATIONS ARE USELESS TO PEOPLE IN WHEELCHAIRS AND DON'T MEET FIRE CODE.** Several stations need second fire exits.
- **TRANSIT FANS AROUND THE WORLD RECOGNIZE THE TTC'S UNIQUE TYPEFACE AND TILE HERITAGE.** *Spacing* magazine didn't sell 100,000 lapel buttons – showing the type and tile designs of subway stations – for nothing.
- **TTC IGNORES ITS OWN SUBWAY HERITAGE – AND HAS APPROVED PLANS TO DESTROY IT.** Led by ostensible benefactors like the Toronto Community Foundation and by starchitects like Diamond & Schmitt, TTC chair Adam Giambrone selectively ignores his archaeology training and has pushed for all-out gutting of heritage stations. In March 2008, TTC commissioners voted to approve “individual” station renovations, signalling the end of the signature TTC design (most apparent on the Bloor line).

MUSEUM STATION DID NOT NEED FIXING

...except in the eyes of Toronto's cultural elite, who rarely even ride the subway. Former TTC chair Howard Moscoe called Museum “an early-Canadian-style 1960s washroom with a jail cell at one end of it.” William Thorsell of the ROM chastened Torontonians for not being “angrier about the quality of public space. I think this project shows we are stepping out of the miasma.”

Museum station was a generally intact example of the Yonge subway line's type and tile aesthetic. The tiles weren't original, but they were in good shape. The TTC's unique subway font was used consistently for that era.

ENTER THE TORONTO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

It was TCF's idea to renovate Museum station (and, if they get their way, two others – St. Patrick and Osgoode). It's a tax write-off for its corporate donors, and for another sponsor, the Budd Sugarman Foundation.

The Museum redesign didn't happen because the station needed to be redesigned. It happened because rich benefactors wanted a tax deduction.

ELITES LOVE THE RENO. FANS... NOT SO MUCH

With his endorsement of the Museum retrofit, the ROM's Thorsell continues his quest for world-class megaprojects. He's supported by newspaper columnists, who tirelessly defend Toronto modernism when it's above ground but think it's shabby and expendable underground. In fact, journalists engaged in a full-on campaign to talk up an expensive renovation that nobody in the riding public wanted.

Opinion among transit fans is decidedly mixed, leaning toward preservation or at least a better allocation of money. Even architects have not rushed to support the project; some have criticized the renovation on preservation grounds.