

# **NORTH SIDE STATION DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**2418 Washington Avenue North**



**Prepared for the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission**

**City of Minneapolis  
Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

## Scope

These Landmark guidelines are meant to be used in conjunction with the latest version of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These Landmark guidelines identify the period of significance; indicate historic uses; state character-defining features; identify historic materials, features, and spaces; and note alterations, including missing and modified elements of the Landmark that, ideally, will be restored. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* provide specific treatment standards and guidelines based upon these aspects of the Landmark.

This document also specifies additional guidelines for exterior changes specifically suited to this property. At the present time, beyond basic paving and landscaping the only other building on the current parcel is a non-contributing addition built in 1953 and 1954 as a bus garage. These guidelines apply only to the exterior of the 1914 building to include those portions partially enveloped by the 1953-54 additions' walls.

## Period of Significance

The resource's period of significance is 1914-1953. This period begins with the construction of the 1914 streetcar facility and ends when the Twin City Rapid Transit Company (TCRT) ceased operating streetcars and fully converted the system over to busses.

## Historic Uses

During its period of significance (1914-1953) this property was used primarily as a facility for electric streetcar maintenance and storage. It was also used as an office and trainmen's facility and included spaces for employee storage lockers, shoe shining, a barber, reading and relaxation areas as well as overnight sleeping rooms. While it was designed for and associated with the streetcar system, this facility also stored buses, and did this increasingly as the system moved closer towards a complete dismantling of the streetcar system and conversion over to busses. During this period the owner and user of the building was the TCRT Company.

## Character Defining Features

Character defining features are the form and detailing of those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building's historic character and which must be retained in order to preserve that character. The North Side Station's character defining features are its exterior materials and features, designed by W.J. Smith who was employed as the Master Mechanic for the TCRT which are visible from the public right-of-way and serve as reminders of the legacy of the TCRT Company. These features include:

- The building's brick walls and fenestration pattern (Figures 1, 2, 3)
- The building's metal cornice (Figures 1, 2, 3)
- The building's flat roof (Figures 1, 2, 3)
- The main entry and foreman's office bay window (partly enclosed by the 1953-54 addition) (Figures 4-8)

## Historic Materials, Features, and Spaces

City permits that require only general descriptions of work and no long-term retention of plans, cannot generally be used to confirm or deny the presence of original features, but visual evidence and historic photographs indicate extensive sections of features dating back to the building's period of significance. These remaining historic materials and features include:

- Brown brick exterior walls
- Five-part bay window
- Rock faced stone window sills
- Metal cornice
- Concrete foundation
- Concrete and slant-back clay tile coping at parapet
- Former main entry
- Some original transom windows above shed bay doors

## Major Alterations

After the construction of the 1914 building there is a record for one alteration in 1946 for the construction of internal partitions for a partial conversion from streetcar to bus use. Since the construction of the bus garage addition in 1953-54 there are over thirty non-specific permits for maintenance and alterations. City of Minneapolis Building Permit records indicate the following major work:

### *Work Completed Within the Period of Significance*

- **1946** - Alterations to car barn to maintain and store busses

### *Work Completed Outside of the Period of Significance*

- **1953** - 592' x 100' x 14'5" storage garage addition
- **1954** - 592' x 100' x 15'5" concrete block and brick veneer addition to repair garage
- **1988** - Install replacement windows on second floor
- **1998** - Alterations to skylights

### *Visual evidence indicates additional non-historic exterior alterations, including the following:*

- The majority of windows and doors replaced
- Wood panel infilling historic window openings
- Installation of a billboard on top of the 1914 building
- Rock faced window sills painted black

Despite these changes, the building retains its ability to communicate its historical significance.

As a resource for any future changes, a comprehensive set of plans from the original construction of the 1914 streetcar station is stored at the Northwest Architectural Archives at the University of Minnesota. These documents, along with historic photographs contained in the designation study and available online through Minnesota Streetcar Museum and the Minnesota Historical Society, can suffice as a starting point for documentary evidence.

# GUIDELINES FOR CHANGES

Beyond the standards and guidelines stated in The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, changes to the North Side Station must meet these standards:

- The entire exterior of the 1914 building, including those portions partially enveloped by the 1953-1954 addition’s walls, shall be protected as a contributing resource.
- The 1953-1954 addition is noncontributing. Requests to demolish all or some of the noncontributing addition shall be reviewed by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.
- The north, south and west elevations shall be considered primary elevations.
- The entry on the south elevation shall remain the primary entry point for any first floor use of the structure in the event of any rehabilitation.
- Any future partial or complete demolition of the 1954 addition that would expose the south side of the 1914 building should cause that entrance to be reestablished as the main entrance to the building. The south façade that contains the entry should be restored to resemble the appearance of the original 1914 streetcar station. Should the streetcar storage sheds on the south facade also be exposed as the result of any future demolition of the 1954 addition, the historic transom windows and shed door openings should remain visible.

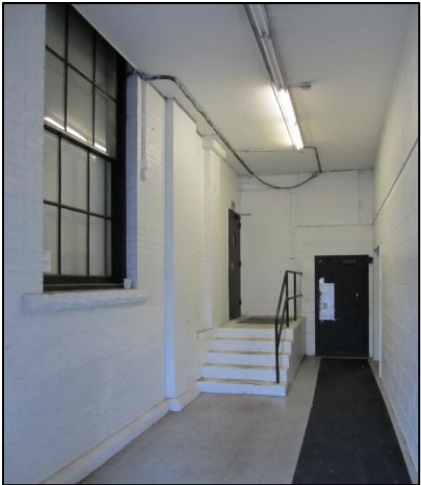
## Main Entry

A. This language specifically refers to the historic main entry (Figures 3 - 7). At present, the entry is composed of a wide entry hall that was constructed adjacent to the 1954 addition. The 1914 building comprises the north side of the hall; the 1954 addition comprises the present entry door, the south enclosure of the hall and the eastern most enclosure to the entry hall. All surfaces, including the historic brick exterior of the 1914 building have been painted over in white paint. The 1914 portion is evident as painted over brick and the 1954 addition is evident as painted over concrete blocks. The former main entry and primary facade of the 1914 building consists of a former doorway opening that has been severely modified by the addition (Figures 4,5, 7). Although the full extent of how this addition affected the 1914 building is unknown, there is some visual evidence of intact historic building materials.

B. In any future changes that remove the nonhistoric addition covering the south facade, this area should become the main entry of the building and should be restored to the appearance of the entry from 1914 – 1953 (Figure 3).



*Historic Main Entry*



*Enclosed Historic Main Entry*

- C. Historic building materials should be preserved, repaired, and replaced only as a last resort.
- D. Replacement of any missing historic features - replacement doors, lighting, stairs, etc. - shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- E. Any paint should be removed using the gentlest means possible.
- F. A false sense of history should not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.

## Bay Window

- A. The five-sided bay window of the former foreman’s office on the southwest corner of the 1914 building’s office wing is an important part of this primary historic façade that has been partially enclosed by the 1954 bus garage addition (Figure 4-6). The windows are presently in a deteriorated condition, in the event of any restoration; these features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the original in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.



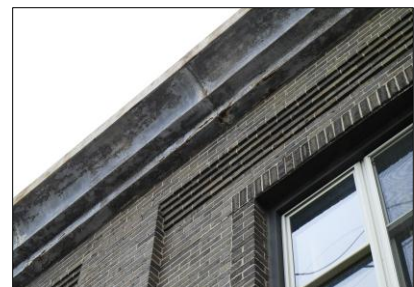
*Enclosed portion of the bay window located in the interior by the main entry.*

## South and North Sides

- A. The open space to the North Side Station that was formerly occupied by the yard allows the primary facades of 1914 building to be experienced with an unobstructed view from the public right-of-way from the north. This open space shall be maintained. The 1954 addition obscures the south side of the 1914 building; in the event of any demolition of the 1954 addition or any new construction, this space should remain devoid of buildings and structures to restore this view shed. In the event of any future development on this lot, adequate open space in front of the former entrance to the 1914 building on the south side shall be incorporated to restore this view shed. These areas on the north and south sides of the 1914 building were historically used for surface parking, and reestablishment of these parking areas is appropriate.

## Metal Cornice

- A. The metal cornice is likely original and is in a deteriorated condition (Figure 1, 2). It should be preserved, repaired and only as a last resort be replaced in kind if none of the other options are viable.



*Metal cornice at the roofline*

## Roof

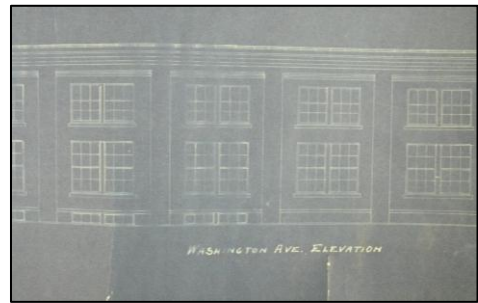
- A. The flat roof is an important feature of the design. Any future mechanical equipment, solar panels, green roof, patios, etc. shall be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way.

## Windows

- A. The primary façade along Washington Avenue North contains modern vinyl replacement windows and infill wood panels in all of the window openings (See Figure 9 and image at right). Any replacement of these windows or panels should move towards the historic appearance and features of the building.
- B. As seen in historic photographs and in the original building elevation drawings, the majority of the windows were wooden, six-over-six, and three-over-six double hung sashes with four over four double hung sashes in the foreman's office bay window. Transom windows over the bay doors were fixed windows with six divisions of lights (See figure 3 and image at right). Many of these transom windows are presumably original, yet in a deteriorated condition. These shall be preserved, repaired or replaced in kind, with replacement as a last resort. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.



*Infill panels and replacement windows.*



*Original 6-over-6, double-hung divided light windows.*

- C. Wood with a painted finish is the preferred material for replacement window sashes. Aluminum, fiberglass and other composite materials are acceptable as long as they present an appearance of painted wood that is similar to the historic appearance of the windows. Glass is the preferred replacement material for window panes. However, polycarbonate or other composite materials that present an appearance of glass may be considered appropriate replacement materials.
- D. Installation of storm windows is permitted if they are painted to complement the surrounding trim and provide a flush appearance that minimizes shadow lines. A raw metal finish is not allowed.
- E. Inserting new furred-down ceilings which cut across the glazed areas of windows so that the exterior form and appearance of the windows are changed is also not permitted.

## Streetcar Maintenance Sheds

- A. The maintenance shed portion of the building along 2nd Street North is shown as a windowless façade constructed of common brick in the original drawings. In the event of any demolition of the 1954 portion, the historic exterior brick wall should be carefully preserved and any repair should

move towards its historic appearance (Figure 3). This is an exterior wall protected by the designation that is presently enveloped by the 1954 addition.

- B.** As the 2nd Street North façade of the car sheds is not considered a primary façade and this building must be allowed to evolve over time and conform to building code for future use, cutting window or door openings into this wall may be allowed so long as the new windows and doors are compatible with the overall design of the building's fenestration.
- C.** The streetcar storage sheds employed skylights to provide natural light into the maintenance sheds of the 1914 building (Figure 10). These openings have since been altered and are now covered. Any future rehabilitation or use of this space should consider a restoration of these skylights as a primary way to bring natural light into this space. This feature does not in any way restrict the addition of artificial lights.
- D.** When skylights alone are insufficient to provide for future daylighting requirements and if required for a new use, new windows shall be double hung sashes that are made of wood with a painted finish or of some material that provides a close resemblance to this. They shall complement the historic appearance of the windows as shown in the original 1914 drawings. The sills and the expression of the lintel shall be compatible with the existing historic fenestration openings. They should have a similar size and setback into the wall. Divided lights are appropriate if they complement any future window renovation or any existing windows on the 2nd Avenue North façade. New door openings may be allowed if needed to meet building code for a new use, especially on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street North facade. Any new doors should not mimic historic styles; they should be differentiated and compatible with the 2nd Street façade.

## **Billboard**

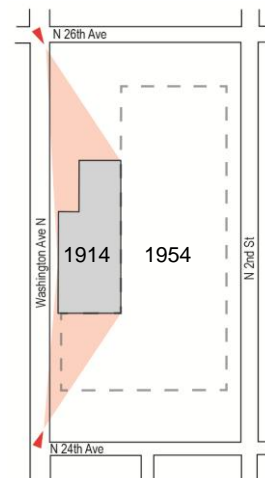
- A.** The billboard installed on the roof of the office wing portion of the building is not an historic feature (Figure 1). While its removal is not mandated, it is assumed that someday it will no longer be in use. Maintenance and removal of this billboard shall take care not to harm any historic building materials.



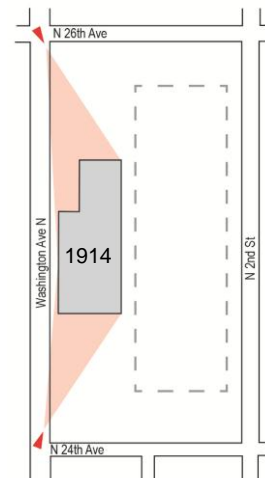
## Division of Lot

These guidelines are being written at a time when Lock and Dam No. 1 has just ceased operations. This event will have a significant effect on the upper harbor area and the industrial activities that take place in the area surrounding the North Side Station. While it is impossible to project into the future what this area will become, plans adopted by the Park Board such as the RiverFIRST *master plan* envision this area to be a part of the larger city parks network with supporting recreational and mixed-use community assets that connect North Minneapolis to the Mississippi River. The North Side Station and the block that it is situated on may be assets to the future implementation of these larger goals. In the RiverFIRST *master plan*, the block where the North Side Station is situated is directly adjacent to a proposed land bridge spanning Interstate-94 and also adjacent to an area referred to in the plan as the Farview Creative Industry Core. North 2nd Street is projected to be a major bicycle corridor that connects to a system of trails to the river and a park system. *The Above the Falls Master Plan Update* does not mention the North Side Station specifically, but this plan, adopted by City Council may be used as land use guidance for this area.

- A. In the event of future development on this block, dividing the existing lot into smaller parcels is acceptable.
- B. Future development should allow for enough open space on the northwest and southwest portions of the parcel currently used for street parking that allow for the public to experience the main facades of the 1914 building and its historic features.
- C. Retention of the once open character of the rail yards east of the 1914 building, which has been subsumed by the 1953-54 addition, is not required.
- D. Future construction on this property that is directly adjacent to the secondary façade shall not destroy historic materials and shall be compatible with the materials, features, size, scale, proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the 1914 building. Any adjacent new construction will be undertaken in a manner that, if removed at some point in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
- E. Future redevelopment of the block should consider retaining some open space behind the North 2nd Street façade. The 1914 portion of the building occupies a small portion of the site. A north / south alley cut through the block could provide for new uses and accessibility to future occupants of any new construction on this site. In this scenario, North 2nd Street could be redeveloped using either portions of the 1953-54 bus garage addition or entirely new construction. Portions of North 24th and North 26th Avenues could also be redeveloped for future uses.



*Important view sheds of 1914 building, south façade blocked by the addition*



*Retaining view sheds and open space. Area for future development shown in dashed box.*

## Interior Historic Materials Not Protected by Designation

Within the sheds, historic streetcar tracks are faintly visible. While the designation does not mandate the preservation of this material, it is an important feature of this property. Within any future changes, the preservation of this particular feature is encouraged. In addition to the tracks, within the 1914 portion of the building there are various other materials and features that date to the building's period of significance. Materials such as the exposed hollow core fireproof bricks and the steel trusses in the streetcar sheds are unique features that tell the story of this building. Old fire doors and other materials dating to the period of significance are likely hidden by layers of non-historic alterations. This may present both opportunities and challenges to designers and craft persons in the future who perform maintenance and rehabilitation work. While alterations over time have resulted in a loss of interior integrity that does not make the building suitable for interior designation, retention of any existing historic materials on the interior will likely add to the uniqueness of this building. The retention of materials and elements found in the interior that date from the period of significance is **encouraged**, but is not mandated.



*Fire door dating to the period of significance*



*Exposed streetcar tracks in the former car sheds*



*Figure 1. North Side Station, Washington Avenue North frontage, view from the southwest. Note the billboard on top of the 1914 building, the deteriorated cornice, the 1954 addition in light tan brick adjacent to the protruding bay window. Note also the replacement windows and wood panel infill. Source: CPED files.*



*Figure 2. North Side Station, Washington Avenue frontage, view from the northwest. Note the chimney, the parapet, the metal cornice, the wood infill panels and replacement windows and shed bay doors. Source: CPED files.*



*Figure 3. North Side Station 1922. Note the five-part bay window, the main entry, the shed car bays, the divided light windows and the open space in front of this part of the building. Any changes to the exterior of the 1914 building and any partial or complete demolition of the 1954 addition should move to restore the building back to this form. Source: Minnesota Streetcar Museum.*

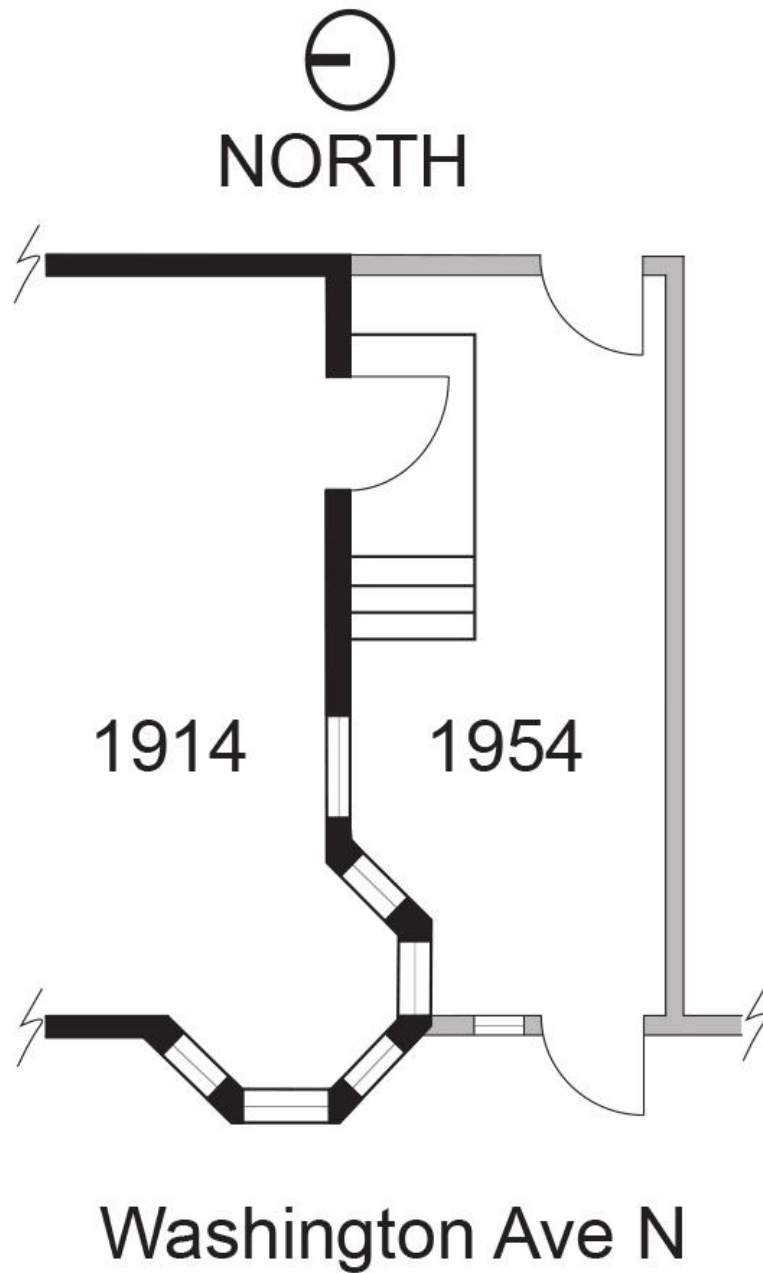


Figure 4. North Side Station – main entry condition at present. The main entry of the 1914 building is enclosed by the 1954 addition as shown by this diagram in plan view. Historic walls are shown in black, walls of the 1954 addition are shown in grey.



*Figure 5. Main entry off of Washington Avenue. Note the use of tan brick in the bay window; the addition envelops the south exterior wall of the 1914 building. Source: CPED files.*



*Figure 6. Portion of the five-part bay window that protrudes outside of the present entry. Source: CPED files.*





*Figure 7. Interior portion of the five-part bay window enveloped by the addition into the present main entry. Source: CPED files*



*Figure 8. Present main entry, interior. The 1914 exterior wall including former main entry is to the left. The ceiling, the far wall and wall to the right are from the 1954 addition. Source: CPED files.*



Figure 9. Infill panels and replacement vinyl windows on 1914 building. Source: CPED files.

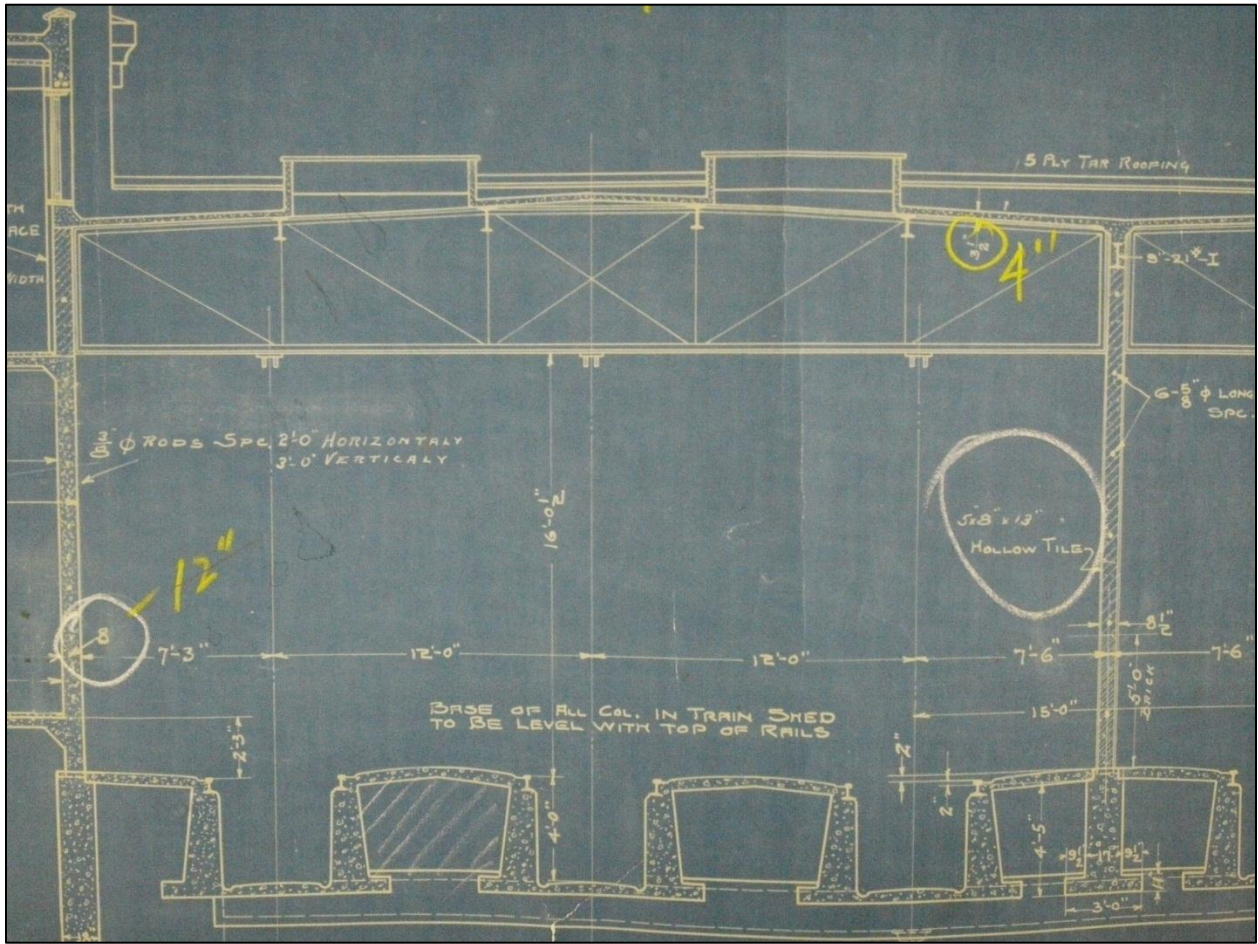


Figure 10. Section drawing - detail of streetcar maintenance sheds, note skylights, trusses, and tracks. Source: Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota.