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# AIA New York Chapter

The Founding Chapter of  
The American Institute of Architects



16 May 1997

## Zoning and Urban Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter

### Resolution Concerning Columbus Circle:

**WHEREAS**, Columbus Circle, by virtue of its location at the meeting point of Midtown, Clinton, the Upper West Side and Central Park has the potential of joining or dividing these areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the continuing growth of the area, including the redevelopment of the Coliseum, is increasing the need for civic facilities providing pedestrian circulation and public transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, the disposition of the Coliseum by the State and the City through the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and of 2 Columbus Circle by the City through the Economic Development Corporation is expected to realize between two and three hundred million dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, after carefully considering a large number of alternative configurations for the vehicle and pedestrian areas within Columbus Circle, the Department of City Planning continues to recommend a configuration that resembles a traditional traffic circle but includes a large area for pedestrians at the center and wider sidewalks at the perimeter; and

**WHEREAS**, if Columbus Circle is to serve as a hub for access among Midtown, Clinton, the Upper West Side and Central Park, the spokes, particularly Central Park South and Broadway, need to be improved, including wider sidewalks, as promenades connecting Grand Army Plaza, Lincoln Square and Times Square; and

**WHEREAS**, the lack of an express stop on the IRT as Columbus Circle requires passengers to transfer between local and express trains, which increases congestion at 72 Street and 42 Street, increases crowding on the IRT local, and costs passengers time, comfort and conveniences; and

**WHEREAS**, circulation within the Columbus Circle subway station is indirect and disorienting, circulation between the station and street level is difficult, obscure and poorly related to many people's desired routes, and the station is not accessible to persons with disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the planned reconfiguration of Columbus Circle, the extension of those improvements along Broadway and Central Park South, and the improvement of the Columbus Circle subway station would ameliorate existing deficiencies of the area's civic facilities, support the continuing increase of population and activity in the vicinity and increase the value for redevelopment of the Coliseum and 2 Columbus Circle; now

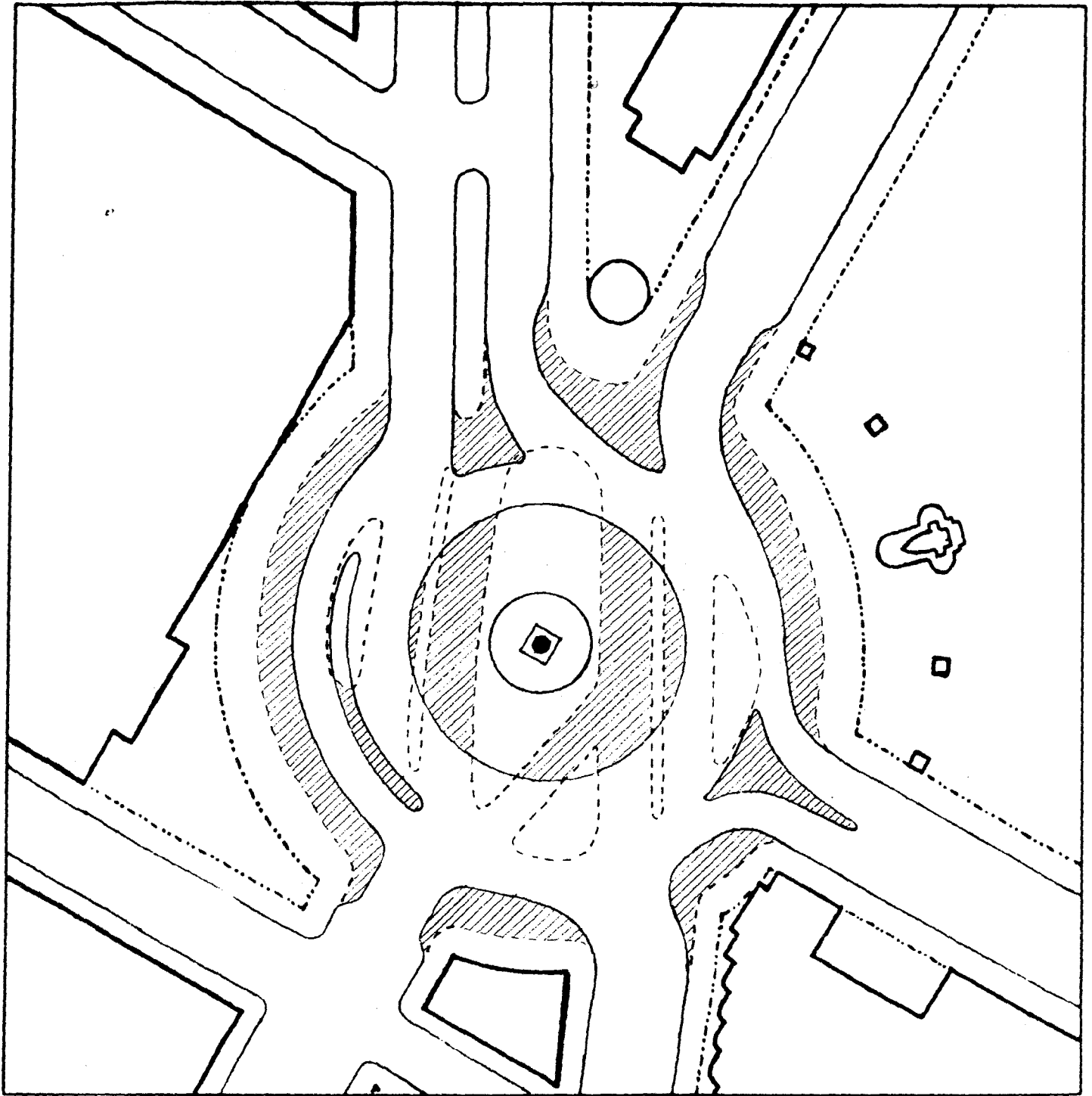
**THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED**, that the roadways at Columbus Circle should be reconfigured, as recommended by the Department of City Planning, to resemble a traditional traffic circle, including a large and accessible central area around the Columbus monument and wider, tree-planted sidewalks at the perimeter and using first-class, well-designed materials, equipment and furniture, including appropriate illumination of the Columbus monument and the surrounding street wall; and be it further


**RESOLVED**, that the renovation of Columbus Circle should include Central Park South to Grand Army Plaza and Broadway to Lincoln Square and to Times Square, providing wider, tree-planted sidewalks and using first-class, well-designed materials, equipment and furniture; and be it further

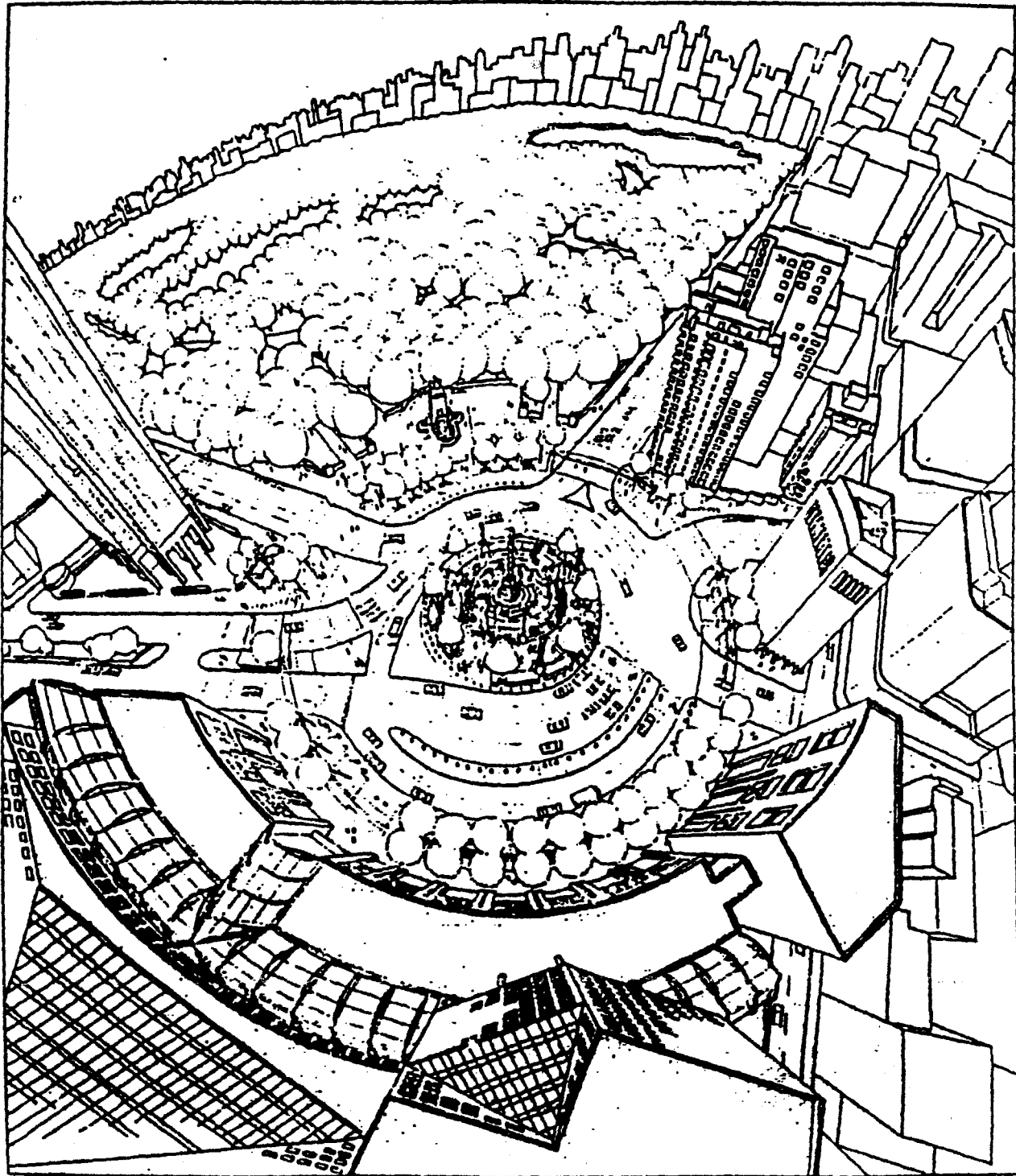
**RESOLVED**, that the Columbus Circle subway station should be modified to add an express stop on the IRT and to provide convenient circulation and clear orientation within the station and between the station and street level; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that these civic improvements are so necessary to the area and of such benefit to the City as to justify the investment of the proceeds of the disposition of the Coliseum and 2 Columbus Circle, unless other funds are substituted.



**Roadways - Compared**

10 Jan 53 0' 100' 



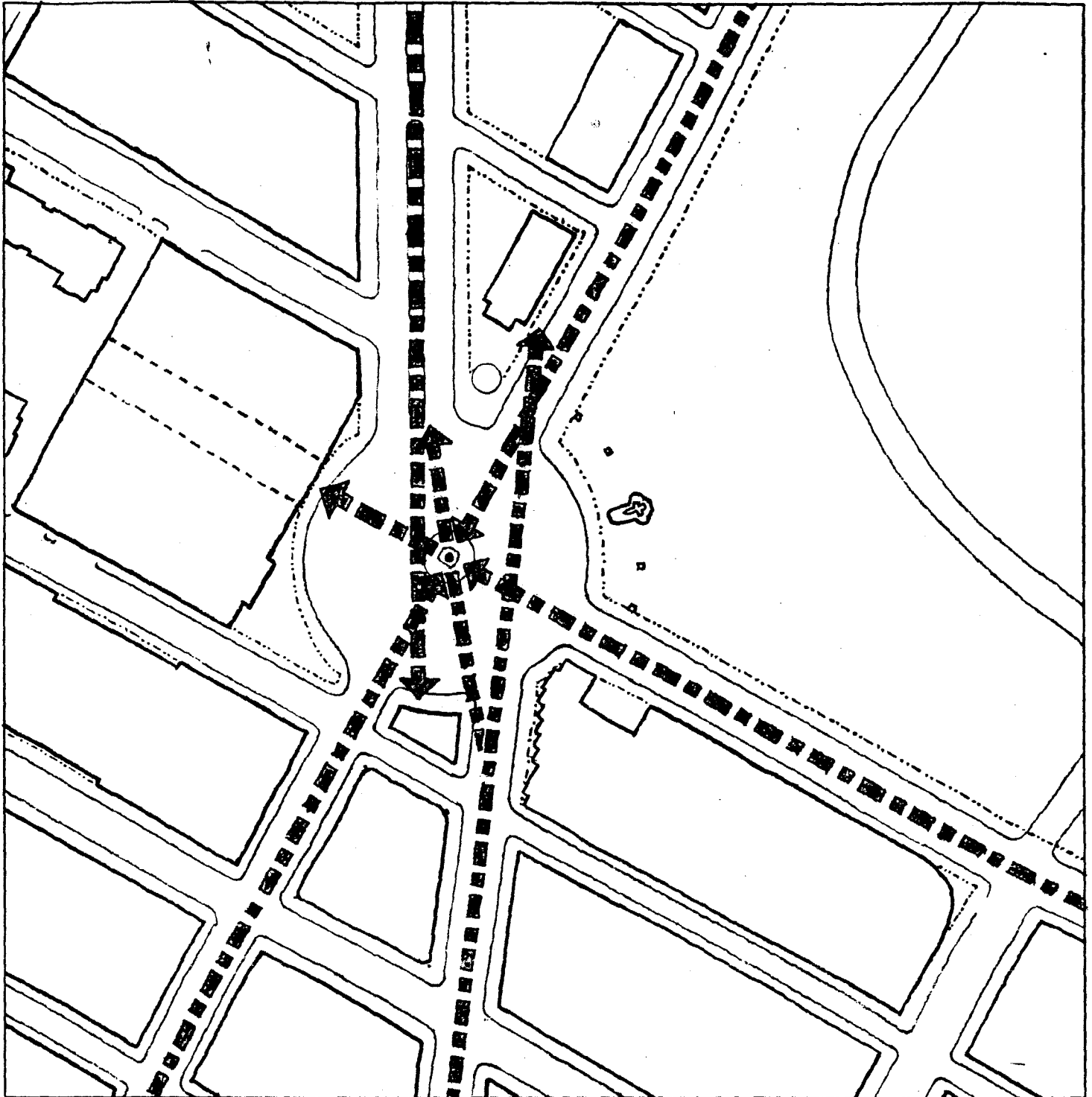
Columbus Circle



**Axes**



**Columbus Circle**

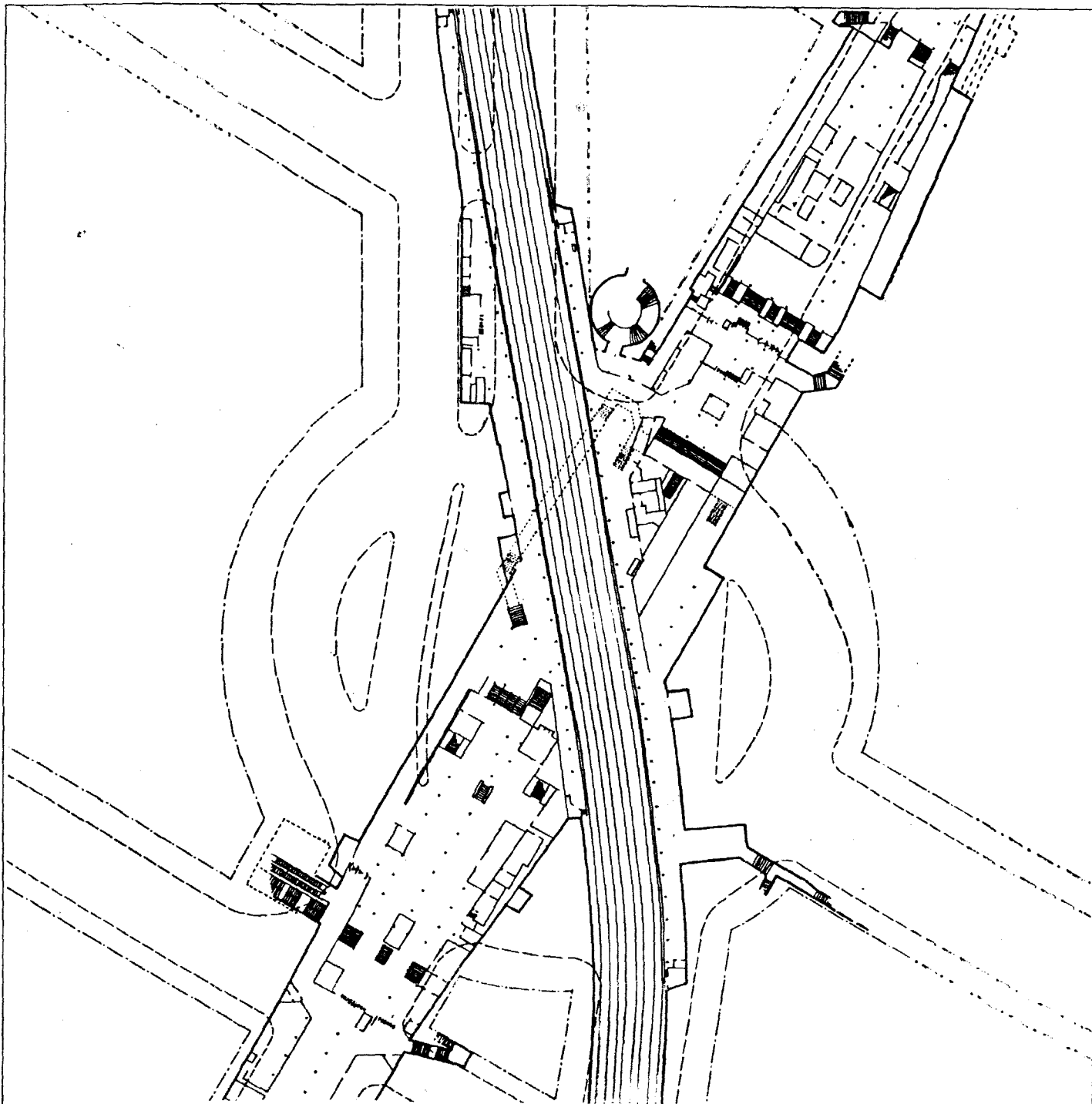


**Axes**

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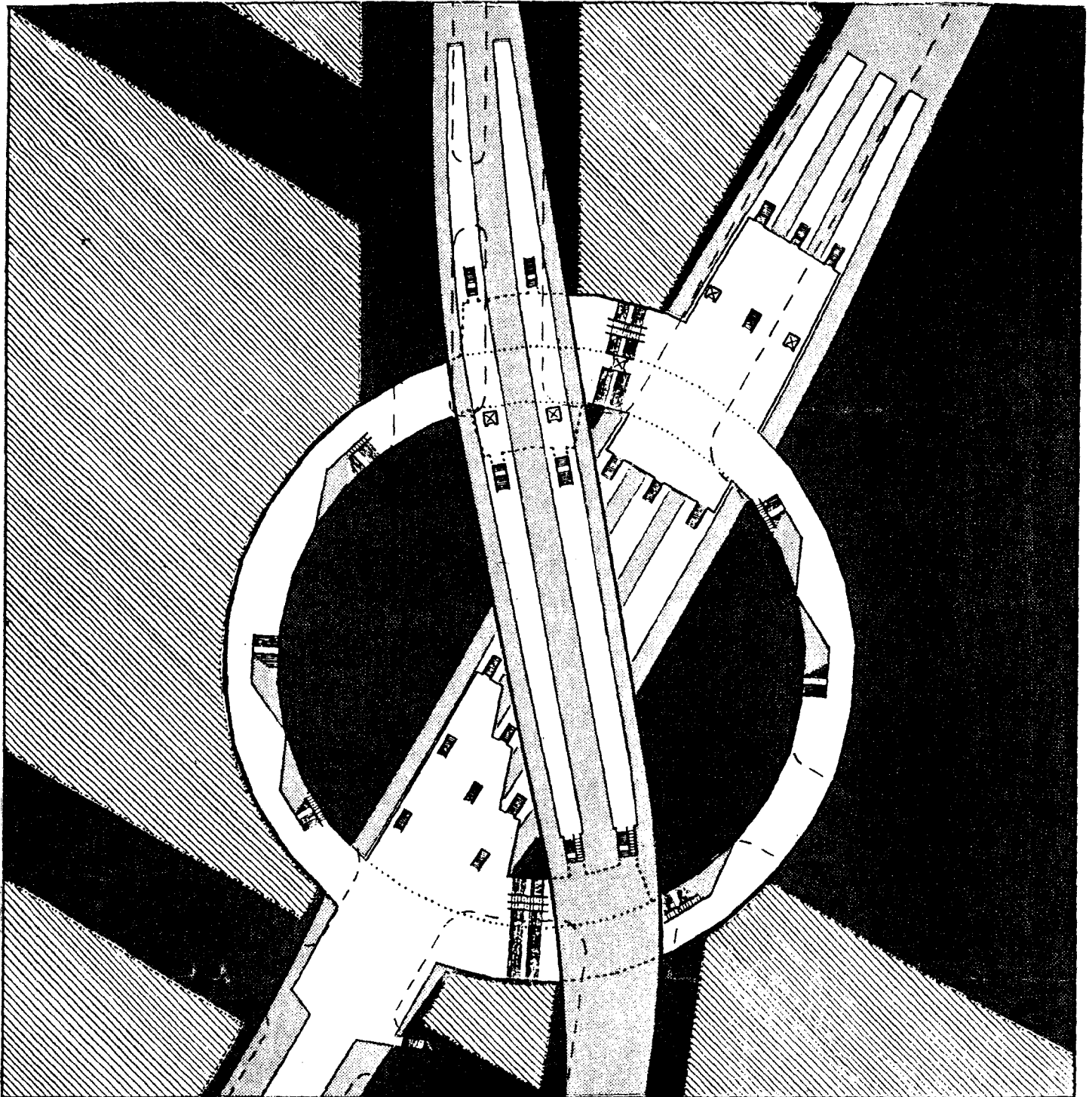
**Columbus Circle**



**Subway Station - Existing**

May '97 0' 100' 

**Columbus Circle**



## Subway Station - Reconfigured

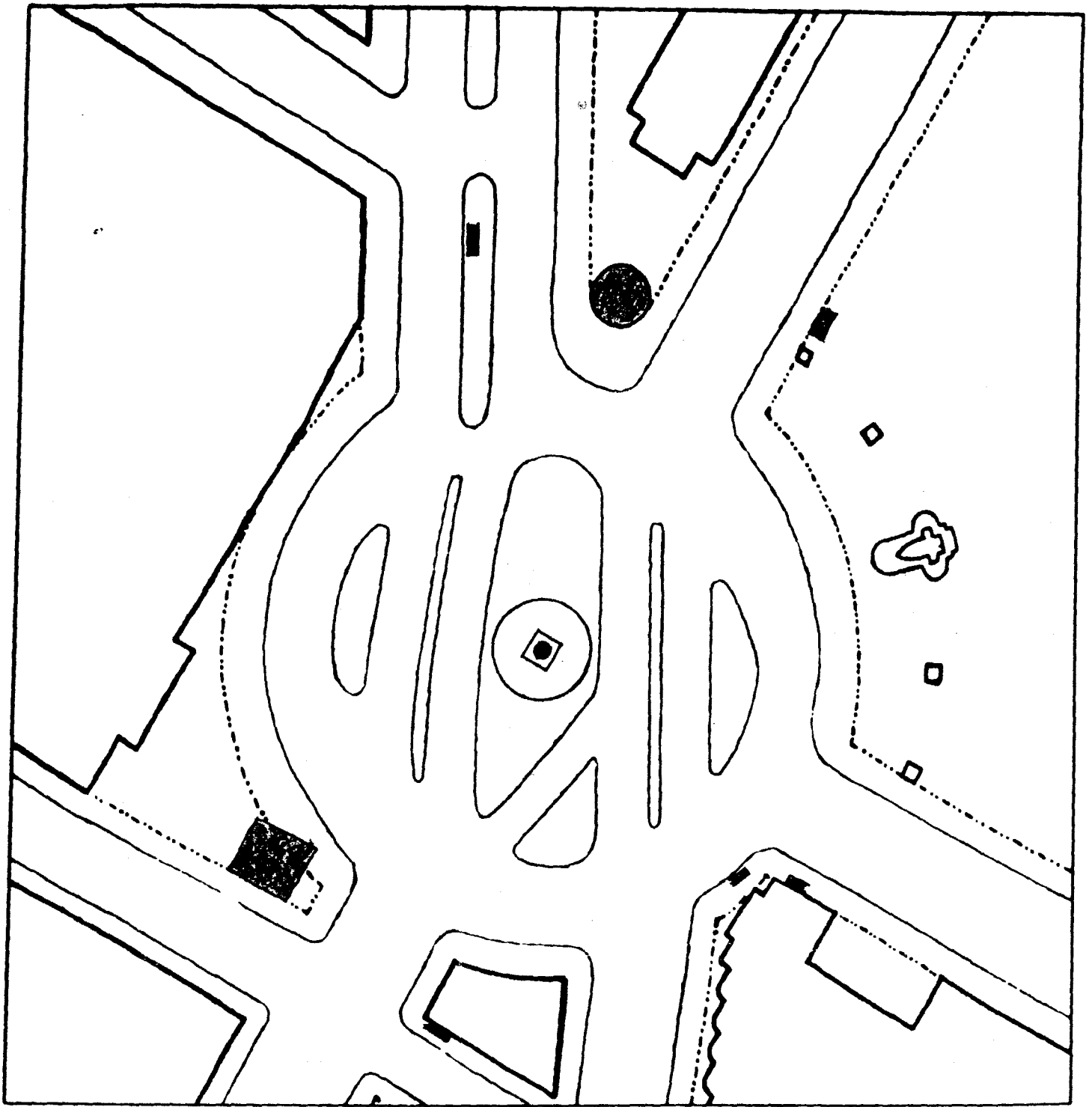
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0' 100'



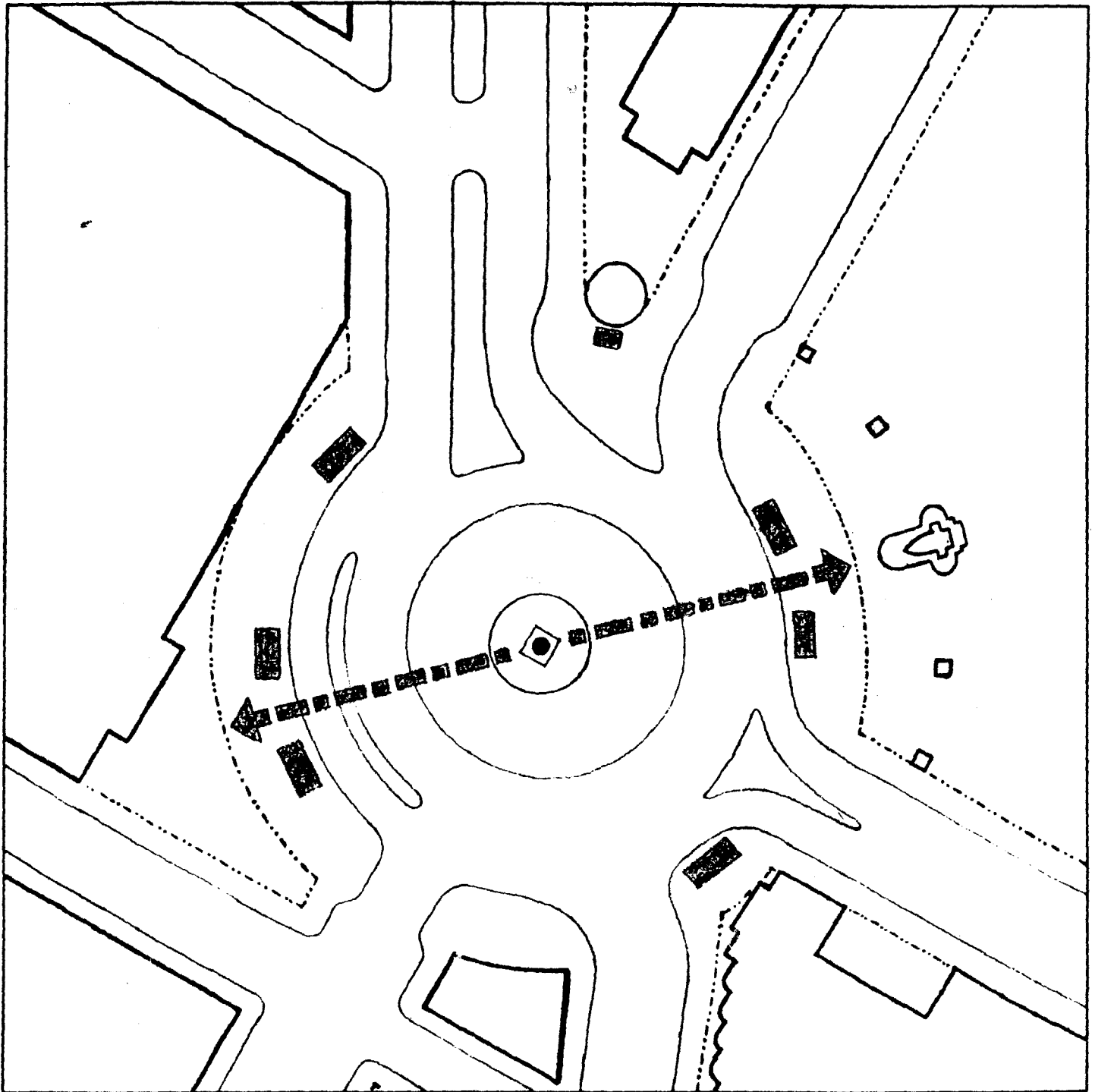
This alteration of the Columbus Circle subway station adds a stop for the Broadway IRT express and it provides convenient and logical access between the station and the street. The ring concourse under the sidewalk around Columbus Circle contains stairs and escalators to kiosks at the sidewalk and connects the existing mezzanines above the IND platforms with new mezzanines below the IRT platforms. The concourse is widened at the north and south to provide transfers between the IND and the IRT. Five elevators at the north end of the station connect the sidewalk with the mezzanines and the mezzanines with the platforms.

Columbus Circle



**Subway Entrances - Existing**





**Subway Entrances - Reconfigured**

10 Jan 58 0' 100' 

**Columbus Circle**