



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: July 30, 2008  
Author: Zlatan Jankovic  
Phone No.: 604.871.6448  
RTS No.: 07616  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: September 16, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Planning

SUBJECT: 118 Alexander Street - Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program - Façade Grant

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT Council approve a façade grant of up to \$50,000 for the rehabilitation of the principal facade at 118 Alexander Street in association with Development Application Number DB 428550. The source of funding is the 2006 Capital Budget for the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program.

The *Vancouver Charter* requires that a minimum of two-thirds of the votes cast be affirmative for the resolution to pass.

- B. AND THAT the Owner shall grant to the City a Section 219 covenant by which professional oversight of the rehabilitation will be required and by which the Owner will be required to maintain the 118 Water Street façade in good appearance and good repair for a minimum period of up to fifteen years. The covenant shall be to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Legal Services and registered in the Land Title Office in priority over all financial charges.

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of A and B.

## COUNCIL POLICY

Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program Policies and Procedures for Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor & Victory Square.

The *Vancouver Charter* requires that a minimum of two-thirds of the votes cast be affirmative for the resolution to pass.

## PURPOSE

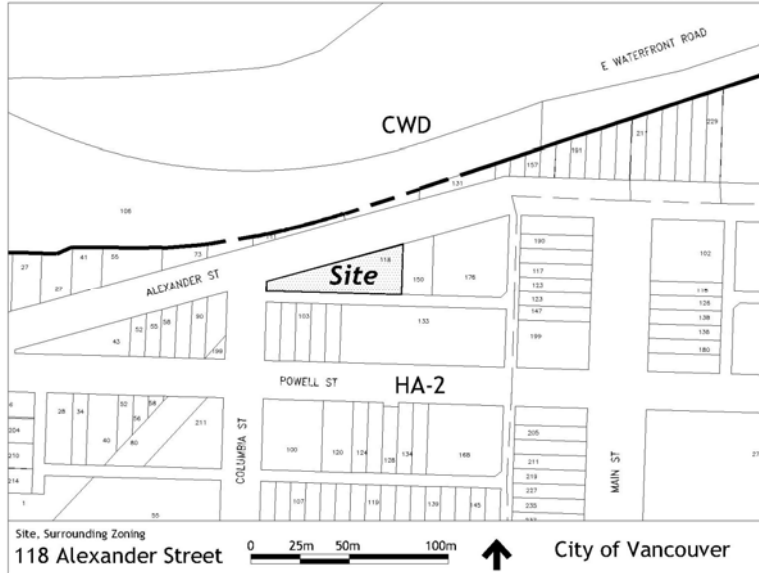
The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for a facade grant for the rehabilitation and preservation of the principle façade on the "C" listed, municipally designated heritage building at 118 Alexander Street.

## BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

In July 2003, City Council approved a program of incentives to facilitate the conservation and rehabilitation of buildings in Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor & Victory Square. The program will be available for a five year period (2003 - 2008) to stimulate economic activity in these important historic areas through work on individual heritage buildings. The Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program is available to assist owners and tenants with 50% of the costs of rehabilitating heritage building façades up to a maximum of \$50,000 per principal façade.

## DISCUSSION

This historic site is located at 118 Alexander Street in Vancouver's Gastown and consists of two-storey freestanding façade wall built in 1912-1913, and landscaped grounds behind it. The site is a part of the Four Sisters Housing Co-operative, one of the largest building masses in Gastown, and an important social facility developed by the Downtown Eastside Residents Association. At the beginning of 2008, due to deterioration of the courtyard façade, protective scaffolding was installed and an engineering review of the physical integrity of the wall was conducted. The report recommended extensive rehabilitation of the façade including brick and mortar, window lintels, reinforced concrete, cornice, and flashing.



### Heritage value:

The historic place has heritage value for its architectural quality, for the value shown by the community in preserving the façade, and for its association with a number of the City's manufacturing and retail businesses. The original attractive two-storey building designed by architects Braunton and Liebert was constructed with a heavy timber frame and fire-resistant "millwork" floors. The ground floor was entirely altered in 1961 and again subsequent to that. The elevation detail is particularly fine, seen in the surviving brickwork between the windows and the cornice. Although the building itself was lost in the past, the principal façade was saved and still remains in place, braced by metal shoring behind it.

### Rehabilitation approach:

An engineering review of the courtyard heritage façade was conducted by RJC Ltd. It was determined that the seismic restraint of the brick is adequate, but that the brick masonry and mortar is in severe deterioration due to moisture intrusion. The Conservation Plan proposes the following conservation procedures:

- Repair, replacement, and repointing and sealing of brick in upper façade;
- Removal and replacement of existing metal cornice to match existing;
- Cleaning and painting of lintels,
- Cleaning and painting of concrete on lower façade.

The proposed conservation approach is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

### Estimates for proposed rehabilitation work:

This proposal is developed under the provisions of the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program, and is seeking financial incentive of up to \$50,000 to offset the cost for the restoration of the principal façade. As per procedural requirements, the provision of three

competitive cost estimates is required. Three quotes, all exceeding \$100,000.00 were provided by the applicant for the proposed scope of work.

Staff conducted an independent cost analysis and determined that the cost of rehabilitation work as presented is realistic and related to the scope established by the Conservation Plan. In conclusion, staff determined that the applicant is eligible for the incentive of up to \$50,000 for the principal façade.

After the work has been completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning, the Owner must demonstrate that costs incurred are consistent with the scope of work outlined in the submitted Conservation Plan, and provide proof of payment (receipts). Under this proposal, once this has been confirmed, the grant of up to \$50,000 would be paid to the owner by the City.

**Financial implications:**

Council approved a total of \$2.5 million for the funding of façade grants over the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program's five year term (2003-2008). To date, \$1.935 million has been approved as grants for 26 heritage rehabilitation projects, with most projects involving full building upgrades and other incentives.

Currently, there is a total of \$565,000 available for this term of the Program. Staff recommend an allocation of up to \$50,000 from the 2006 Capital Budget for rehabilitation of the principal façade at 118 Alexander Street. The grant funds will be available to the applicant in accordance with the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program Policies and Procedures.

**Public consultation:**

The members of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee were notified of this application, and no objections were received.

**CONCLUSION**

118 Alexander Street is a "C" listed building (façade wall) on the Vancouver Heritage Register and the owner's proposal to rehabilitate the building façade will not only restore the historic character of the facade, but also will assist in the revitalization of historic Gastown. The Director of Planning recommends approval of up to \$50,000 for the façade rehabilitation work.

\* \* \* \* \*