



# A11

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 29, 2009  
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Meeting Date: June 2, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Director of Planning  
SUBJECT: 309 Carrall Street - Facade Grant

### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

- A. THAT Council approve a façade grant of up to \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of the principal façades at 309 Carrall Street as contemplated by Development Building Application Number DB 429876. The source of funding is the 2008 Capital Budget for the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program.

The Vancouver Charter requires a two-thirds majority of votes cast for this recommendation to pass.

- B. THAT Council authorize the City to enter into an agreement with the owner of 309 Carrall Street to be registered in the Land Title Office as a section 219 covenant, which agreement shall require the rehabilitation to be overseen by qualified Heritage Consultant and will require the owner to maintain the 309 Carrall Street façades in good appearance and good repair for a minimum of fifteen years.
- C. AND THAT the agreement described above shall be prepared, registered and given priority to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Planning.

### *GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS*

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

## ***COUNCIL POLICY***

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

## ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for a façade grant for the Vancouver Heritage Register "C" listed and municipally designated building at 309 Carrall Street.

## ***BACKGROUND***

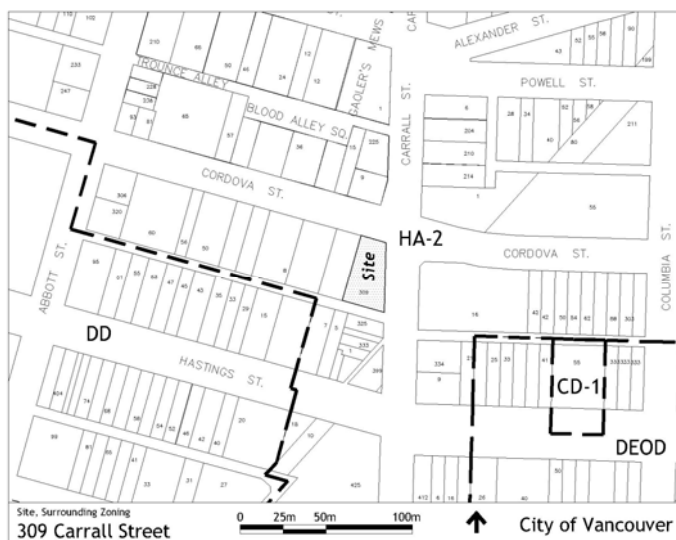
In July 2003, City Council approved a program of incentives to facilitate the conservation and rehabilitation of heritage buildings in Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor and Victory Square. The program was initially established for a five year period (2003-2008) to stimulate economic activity 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 cost of rehabilitating heritage building facades up to a maximum of \$50,000 per principal façade.

This application was initially discussed in 2008 and is therefore being considered under the funds remaining from the 2008 Capital Budget for the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program.

Staff is currently conducting the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program and Transfer of Density Review including the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program component. The review will be presented to Council in 2009.

## ***DISCUSSION***

The Rainer Hotel was built in 1907 by architect Emil Gouenther and replaced the earlier Balmoral Hotel on this site. This structure is a three-storey building, representative of Classical Revival architectural style, located at the intersection of Carrall and West Cordova Streets in Gastown. The building exemplifies multiple uses of early Gastown buildings and the evolution of the area.



Site Plan

### **Heritage Value**

The heritage value of this building is in its historic relationship to the changing nature of the economy of the early Vancouver. Residential use on upper floors and the commercial use on the ground floor were generally maintained historically. Accommodation of various related uses like inexpensive housing for seasonal workers or accommodation for travellers and business people as well as various accompanying commercial uses like saloons, restaurants, billiard rooms, taxi-cab office, barber shop and café were reflective of changing economic circumstances. Unlike many hotels in the area, the Rainer continued to house the same type of business until the 1970s, when the main floor was turned into a night club. Currently, this building is owned by the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation and provides SRO units on upper floors and commercial use on the ground floor.

There is also value in architectural design which reflects the change in public taste from the highly ornate facades of Victorian period to the more refined decoration of the Edwardian era.

### **Conservation plan**

The Conservation plan for the rehabilitation of the principal facades of this building proposes the following scope of work:

- restore the brick masonry;
- rehabilitate the upper cornice;
- paint window trims;
- restore the lower cornice; and
- reconstruct the storefronts.

The proposed conservation approach is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada as well as with the HA-2 District Schedule and Gastown HA-2 Design Guidelines.

### **Estimates for proposed rehabilitation work**

The proposal is developed under the provisions of the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program, and is seeking a grant of up to \$100,000 to offset the cost for the restoration of two principal façades. As per procedural requirements, the provision of three competitive cost estimates for the proposed scope of work is required. Three quotes, all exceeding \$1,000,000 were provided by the applicant.

Staff conducted an independent cost analysis and determined that the cost of rehabilitation work as presented is realistic and reflective of the scope of work established by the Conservation Plan. In conclusion, staff determined that the applicant is eligible for the incentive of up to \$100,000.

After the work is 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/invoices). Once this has been confirmed, the grant of up to \$100,000 would be paid to the owner by the City.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS** Council approved a total of \$2.5 million for funding of façade grants over the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program's five year term (2003-2008). To date, \$2.085 million has been approved as grants for 29 heritage rehabilitation projects, with most projects involving full building upgrades and other incentives. The total grant amount approved has been adjusted to reflect the two HFRP projects which were initially approved for facade rehabilitation grants of \$100,000 each but subsequently failed to meet legal requirements (375 Main Street and 210 Abbott Street).

Currently, there is a total of \$415,000 available, not including this application. Staff recommend an allocation of up to \$100,000 from the 2008 Capital Budget for the rehabilitation of the principal façades at 309 Carrall Street. The grant funds will be available to the applicant in accordance with the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program Policies and Procedures.

#### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee (GHAPC) reviewed this application on April 15, 2009 and supported it. At the same time GHAPC expressed concerns regarding City's preferential approach to decommissioning areaways, encouraging efforts to preserve rather than remove these historic underground structures.

#### **CONCLUSION**

309 Carrall Street is a "C" listed building on the Vancouver Heritage Register and is a municipally designated building. The owner's proposal to rehabilitate the building façades will not only restore the historic character of the heritage building, but will also improve the liveability of existing SRO units and the ground floor commercial space, further contributing to the revitalization of the Vancouver's historic core. The Director of Planning recommends approval of up to \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of two principal facades.

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