



REPORT

Report Date: November 17, 2021
Contact: Jason Olinek
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RTS No.: 14973
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-25
Meeting Date: March 3, 2022

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability in consultation with the Director of Legal Services

SUBJECT: Heritage Designation – 510 West Hastings Street, Standard Building

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the classification of the building known as the Standard Building, located at 510 West Hastings Street (PID: 009-180-109, Lot 8 Block 24 District Lot 541 Plan 210; PID: 009-180-117, Lot 9 Block 24 District Lot 541 Plan 210; PID: 009-180-133, Lot 10 Block 24 District Lot 541 Plan 210 (together, the “site”)) in the Vancouver Heritage Register be amended from the ‘B’ evaluation category to the ‘A’ evaluation category.
- B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward for enactment, pursuant to Sections 593 and 594 of the *Vancouver Charter*, a by-law to designate the structure and exterior of the building known as the Standard Building (the “heritage building”) as protected heritage property.
- C. THAT Recommendations A and B be adopted on the following conditions:
 - i. THAT the passage of the above resolution creates no legal rights for the applicant or any other person, or obligation on the part of the City and any expenditure of funds or incurring of costs in relation thereto is at the risk of the person making the expenditure or incurring the cost; and
 - ii. THAT the City and all its officials shall not in any way be limited or restricted in the exercise of their authority or discretion, regardless of when they are called upon to exercise such authority or discretion.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to amend the classification of the heritage building located at 510 West Hastings Street, known as the Standard Building, in the Vancouver Heritage Register from the 'B' evaluation category to the 'A' evaluation category, and to designate its structure and exterior as protected heritage property. The owner is seeking voluntary heritage designation to ensure long-term protection of the heritage building and meet eligibility criteria for the Heritage Incentive Program (HIP) as outlined in a separate Council report entitled "Heritage Incentive Program 2021 Update and Grant Recommendations" (RTS 14895).

COUNCIL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Section 582 of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council may, by resolution, establish a heritage register identifying real property that Council considers to be heritage property and may, by resolution, add real property to the register from time to time.

Pursuant to Section 593 and 594 of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council may, by by-law, on terms and conditions as it considers appropriate, designate real property in whole or in part as protected heritage property. The proposed heritage designation of the heritage building requires Council approval at public hearing and by-law enactment.

Pursuant to Section 595 of the *Vancouver Charter*, if sought, Council is required to compensate an owner of property being designated as a protected heritage property for any reduction in the market value of the property caused by the designation. Given this is a voluntary designation, the owner has waived their entitlement to compensation for the heritage designation, as described on page 4 of this report.

The following Council policies are applicable to this proposal:

- Vancouver Heritage Program (March 2020)
- Heritage Incentive Program Policies and Procedures (September 2020)

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Strategic Analysis

Site and Context - The site consists of 3 parcels located in an area zoned Downtown District (DD) (see Figure 1), addressed as 510 West Hastings Street. The site is located at the south-west corner of the intersection of West Hastings Street and Richards Street. The heritage building is characterized by a commanding 15-storey height in tripartite hierarchy, articulated by its engaged pilasters, regular fenestration pattern, and dominating highly ornate, faience-clad crown and unobstructed views on all sides.

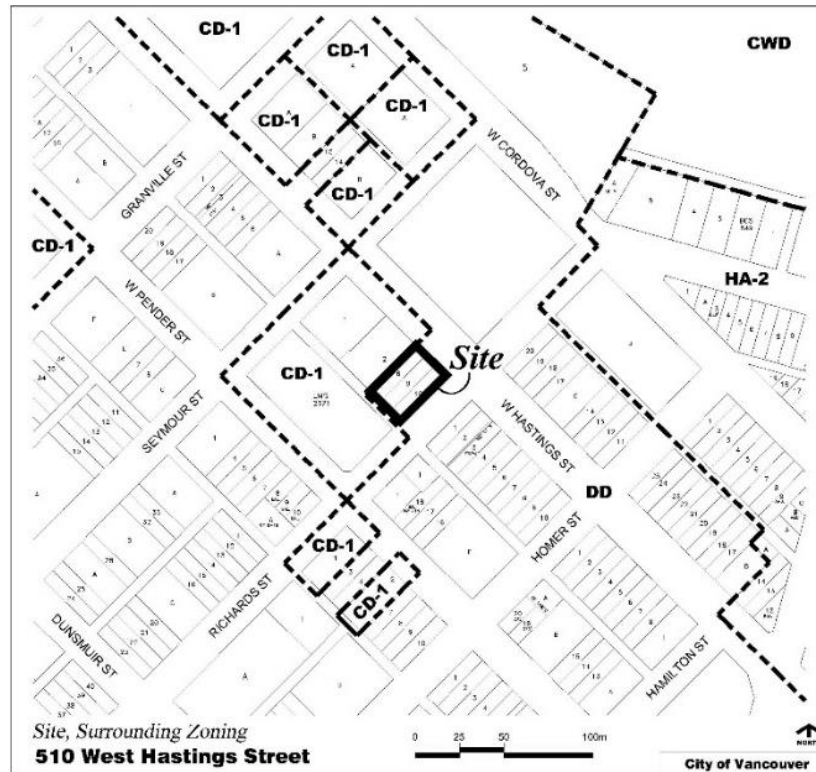


Figure 1 (left): Site and surrounding zoning.

Heritage Value

The heritage building is a landmark Edwardian-era Beaux-Arts structure designed by architects Russell, Babcock & Rice. It is valued as one of the earliest high-rise office structures in Downtown Vancouver, and as a representation of the Edwardian-era economic boom and the westward shift of the business district.

The soaring verticality of the heritage building is articulated by its engaged pilasters, its repetitive fenestration, and its tripartite hierarchy in “Francis I Style”, with highly ornate projecting cornices where one section transitions to another. Of utmost significance is the high degree of embellishments of its five upper levels, along with the use of faience cladding on all elevations.

The deliberate ornamentation of building’s base, shaft, and capital was attributed to the fact that its permit was taken out just before the passing of a by-law restricting the height of the buildings in the neighbourhood to ten storeys. At the time of its construction, the heritage building was deemed one of the tallest commercial buildings in the British Empire, featuring steel-frame and concrete construction, and finished with unreinforced masonry cladding (granite, buff brick, and faience or glazed terra cotta).

The heritage values are outlined in the Statement of Significance that was prepared by Donald Luxton & Associates. The report was based on new research sources, including a historic context that justifies the re-evaluation of its classification in the Vancouver Heritage Register from the ‘B’ category to the ‘A’ category (**Appendix B**).

Condition of the Heritage Building and Conservation Approach

A series of condition assessment reports were included as part of the applicant's Heritage Incentive Program grant application, including a subsequent development permit application (DP-2021-00941) for proposed rehabilitation of the heritage building and the seismic upgrading of the exterior masonry elements. The reports describe the existing condition of the heritage building's historic materials and method of construction, as well as verifiable upgrade recommendations. These are described in a separate Council report entitled "Heritage Incentive Program 2021 Update and Grant Recommendations" (RTS 14895).

In general, the heritage building's character-defining elements are highly intact, retaining most of its original design and materials. Alterations over the years include the removal of some of the original parapet elements (balustrade and pinnacles), and interior and exterior rehabilitation to accommodate changing tenancy requirements. Select original interior elements also remain intact and in good condition, particularly at the entrance and elevator lobbies, 15th floor apartment, and exit stairs. However, none of the interior elements, materials and finishes are part of the proposed heritage designation at this point in time.

Compatibility with Existing Zoning and Land Use Regulations and Community Plans

Staff conclude that the proposed designation is consistent with the Council-adopted Vancouver Heritage Program and the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. It is consistent with the intent of the *Vancouver Heritage Program* (VHP) to encourage the conservation and long-term protection of Vancouver's built heritage resources and to promote good heritage stewardship citywide.

Comments of the Vancouver Heritage Commission

On November 22, 2021, the Vancouver Heritage Commission recommended that the classification of the heritage building in the Vancouver Heritage Register be amended from the 'B' evaluation category to the 'A' evaluation category, and also supported the proposal to designate the structure and exterior of the heritage building as protected heritage property (**Appendix C**).

Financial Analysis

The owner is seeking the heritage designation to meet eligibility criteria for the Heritage Incentive Program. The owner has waived its entitlement to financial compensation for the heritage designation. Therefore, there are no financial implications arising from this proposal.

Legal

Section 595 of the *Vancouver Charter* requires that, if sought, Council must compensate an owner for any reduction in the market value caused by a heritage designation. In this case, the heritage designation is voluntarily sought by the owner in order to ensure long-term protection of the heritage building and meet eligibility criteria for the HIP grant. The owner has signed an agreement explicitly waiving any claim to future compensation as a result of the heritage designation of the heritage building, and that agreement will be registered on title to the site.

CONCLUSION

The approval of the proposed designation of the structure and exterior of the heritage building known as the Standard Building at 510 West Hastings Street, and the amendment of its classification in the Vancouver Heritage Register from the 'B' evaluation category to the 'A' evaluation category, will ensure that the heritage building is protected from unsympathetic exterior alterations that would diminish its heritage value, and from demolition. Therefore, it is recommended that Council approve the amendment of the heritage building's classification on the Vancouver Heritage Register from the 'B' evaluation category to the 'A' evaluation category, and to approve the heritage designation of the structure and exterior of the heritage building.

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Photographs



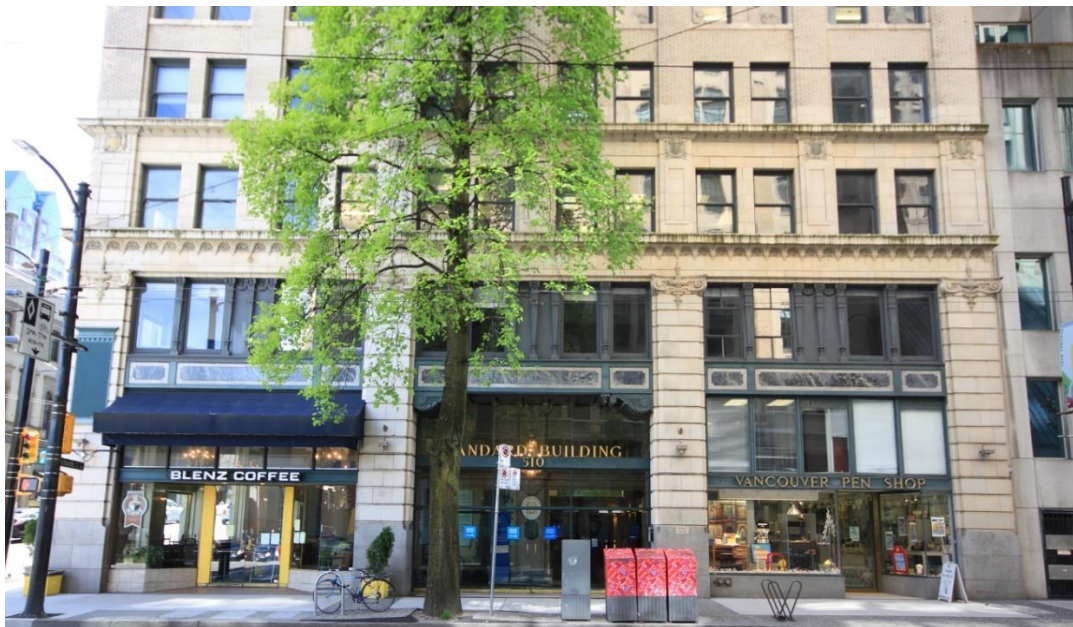
Left: Artist Rendering published in the Daily Province (Vancouver, October 18, 1912, p1)
Right: Standard Building, 1921 (VPL 10740)



Standard Building (2021)



Detail photo showing brick and terra cotta elements at upper level.



Storefront along West Hastings Street.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE



STANDARD BANK BUILDING

DESCRIPTION OF THE HISTORIC PLACE

The Standard Bank Building is located at the southeast corner of West Hastings and Richards Streets, in Downtown Vancouver. Fifteen storeys in height, it is a landmark building in the neighbourhood. Designed in a Beaux-Arts style, this prominent Edwardian-era skyscraper displays tripartite articulation, and is clad in glazed terra cotta and pressed brick, with repetitive banks of fenestration. Interior features include an ornate vestibule and lobby, and cast plaster ceilings in the original banking hall.

OTHER NAMES	Weart Building; Standard Building
ADDRESS	510 West Hastings Street
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan VAP210, Block 24, Lots 8-10
YEAR BUILT	1913-1914
ORIGINAL OWNER	Investors' Guarantee Corp.
BUILDER	Canadian Ferro-Concrete Co.
ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	Russell, Babcock & Rice
BUILDING CATEGORY	B - Significant

HERITAGE VALUE OF THE HISTORIC PLACE

The Standard Bank Building is significant as one of the earliest high-rise office structures in Downtown Vancouver; as a representation of the Edwardian-era economic boom and the westward shift of the

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE | STANDARD BANK BUILDING | 510 WEST HASTINGS STREET

business district; for its association with John W. Weart and the Investors Guarantee Corporation Limited; and for its sophisticated Edwardian-era Beaux-Arts architecture, as designed by architects Russell, Babcock & Rice.

The Standard Bank Building also illustrates Vancouver's reputation for the construction of the tallest commercial buildings in the British Empire during the Edwardian era; rushed to the permit stage to avoid a 10-storey height limit that was being enacted, it was the second tallest building in the city when it was built. As its top five stories were expected to always be visible, they were richly embellished, even on the alley side of the building. It was designed and constructed in 1912-14, at the tail end of a massive wave of development that had been occurring across the region, which saw the addition of countless new commercial structures throughout Vancouver. The strategic location of the building reflected the western shift of the financial district at the time, as it migrated west along Hastings toward Granville. The building is named after its initial major tenant, the Standard Bank of Canada. It exists as a testament to the prestige and success of this eastern Canadian bank and the strength of the booming pre-World War One local economy. The Standard Bank Building is also valued for its association with John W. Weart, a prominent land developer who developed other early Vancouver highrise buildings and managed the Investors Guarantee Corporation Limited that built the Standard Bank Building; he was also a barrister and politician who lived in the Standard Bank Building's lavish penthouse until the late 1920s.

The Standard Bank Building is further valued for its exceptional Edwardian-era Beaux-Arts architecture, as designed by architects Russell, Babcock & Rice. Described by the architects as being in the 'Francis I style' it was conceived as a blend of Gothic and Renaissance architecture typical of the training and influence of the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, which Ambrose J. Russell attended as a student. It lacks the typical projecting cornice of Edwardian-era buildings, which emphasizes its strong verticality, recalling the Gothic Revival style of the Woolworth Building in New York, the tallest structure in the world that was then under construction. The soaring vertical expression of the Standard Bank Building marks a progression toward the vertical Gothic of the 1920s and the transition to the great Art Deco skyscrapers of the 1920s and 1930s. Regular fenestration on all facades demonstrates the rational space planning that maximized the efficiency of the office floor plates. The use of terra cotta cladding reflects the industrialization of pre-World War One construction methods and the drive for fireproof buildings, and the lavish use of imported materials from American sources reflects both the drive for opulence and the origins of the architects.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

The elements that define the heritage character of the Standard Bank Building are its:

EXTERIOR:

- prominent location at the corner of West Hastings and Richards Street, in Downtown Vancouver;
- continuous commercial use since 1914;
- commercial form, scale and massing as expressed by its narrow, rectangular, shallow C-shaped plan, fifteen-storey height with full basement, flat roof, and tall open storefronts;
- steel-frame and concrete construction, with a polished granite base, glazed terra cotta and pressed brick cladding; and concrete sills on rear façade;
- Elements of the Edwardian era Beaux-Arts style, including: tripartite division into a base, shaft, and capital; hierarchies of projecting cornices; strong vertical emphasis; elaborate detailing along the articulated base including rustication, cast metal mullions with tapered

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE | STANDARD BANK BUILDING | 510 WEST HASTINGS STREET

engaged pilasters, inset marble panels; intricate terra cotta ornamentation featuring coloured shields, French Renaissance capitals, and bands of running classical motifs;

- regular and rhythmic fenestration pattern with 1-over-1 double-hung wooden sash windows with upper sash horns on the street and alley facades; 2-over-2 metal-sash windows on the east side wall and in the lightwell; and tall storefront windows with metal sash pivot windows above.

INTERIOR:

- double-height entry vestibule, laid in Cedar Tennessee marble, alternating in pattern with Belgium Black with a Verdi antique base with inlaid Verdi persil strips; a coffered ceiling of Cedar Tennessee marble and bronze; upper level cast metal mullions with downward tapered pilasters; and inlaid shields of Sienna and St. Anne;
- double height lobby space with panelling of Cedar Tennessee marble with contrasting marble trim; descending staircase on west side of vestibule with terrazzo risers and treads and marble panelled walls and ceiling; upper level cast metal mullions with downward tapered pilasters; a richly decorated ceiling of intricately-carved oak beams with running bands of egg & dart and shell mouldings; engraved brass elevator doors; and a Cutler Mail Chute Co. brass mailbox;
- former banking hall with high beamed plaster columns and coffered ceilings throughout the east side of the building, with ornate French Renaissance capitals supported by an Italian Renaissance volute that curves into an acanthus leaf, crowned by a series of Imperial Roman acanthus leaves that decorate the underside of the cornice; and
- top-floor penthouse with double height, skylit reception room with encircling mezzanine, stone fireplace, oak woodwork and cast plaster ceilings.

Vancouver Heritage Commission (November 22, 2021)

**1. 510 W Hastings Street – Standard Building
VHR-B, Designation and Heritage Incentive Program Grant Application
DP-2021-00941**

MOVED by Commissioner Giles
SECONDED by Commissioner Massie

WHEREAS the Standard Building is a historic office 1914 building listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Vancouver Heritage Commission supports the Development Permit and Building Permit applications to seismically upgrade and rehabilitate the exterior and interior of the building which is listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register as a “B”;
2. The Vancouver Heritage Commission supports the Heritage Conservation Plan prepared by Donald Luxton and Associates outlined in the project brief dated November 16, 2021;
3. The Vancouver Heritage Commission recommends that the project receive a grant under the Heritage Incentive Program (HIP) because it demonstrates a high level of retention and conservation, verifiable seismic upgrades, and life-safety upgrades;
4. The Vancouver Heritage Commission recommends that a condition of the issuance of a Development Permit for the project be the heritage designation of the structure and exterior of the building;
5. The Vancouver Heritage Commission urges the applicants to consider designating the lobby and penthouse as part of heritage designation of the building;
6. The Vancouver Heritage Commission urges staff to re-evaluate the building’s “B” listing in light of new research and material indicating additional heritage value that has been provided by the applicants.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Draft Designation By-Law – 510 West Hastings Street

DRAFT

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

**A By-law to designate certain real property as protected heritage property
(510 West Hastings Street (Standard Building))**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. Council considers that the real property described as:

Structure and exterior envelope
and exterior building materials of
the heritage building
(Standard Building)

510 West
Hastings Street,
Vancouver, B.C.

PID: 009-180-109
Lot 8 Block 24
District Lot 541 Plan 210

PID: 009-180-117
Lot 9 Block 24
District Lot 541 Plan 210

PID: 009-180-133
Lot 10 Block 24
District Lot 541 Plan 210

has heritage value or heritage character, and that its designation as protected heritage property is necessary or desirable for its conservation.

2. Council designates the real property described in section 1 of this By-law as protected heritage property under Section 593 of the *Vancouver Charter*.
