



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

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### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: 18 September 2008  
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Meeting Date: October 28, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Director of Planning  
SUBJECT: 210 Abbott Street - Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program - Façade Grant - DB 428315

#### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve façade grants of up to \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of the two principal facades at 210 Abbott Street as contemplated by Development & Building Application Number DB 428315. The source of funding will be the 2007 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 210 Abbott Street to be registered in the Land Title Office as a Section 219 covenant, which agreement shall require the rehabilitation to be overseen by a qualified Heritage Consultant and will require the owner to maintain the 210 Abbott 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 Policies and Procedures for Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor & Victory Square.

## PURPOSE

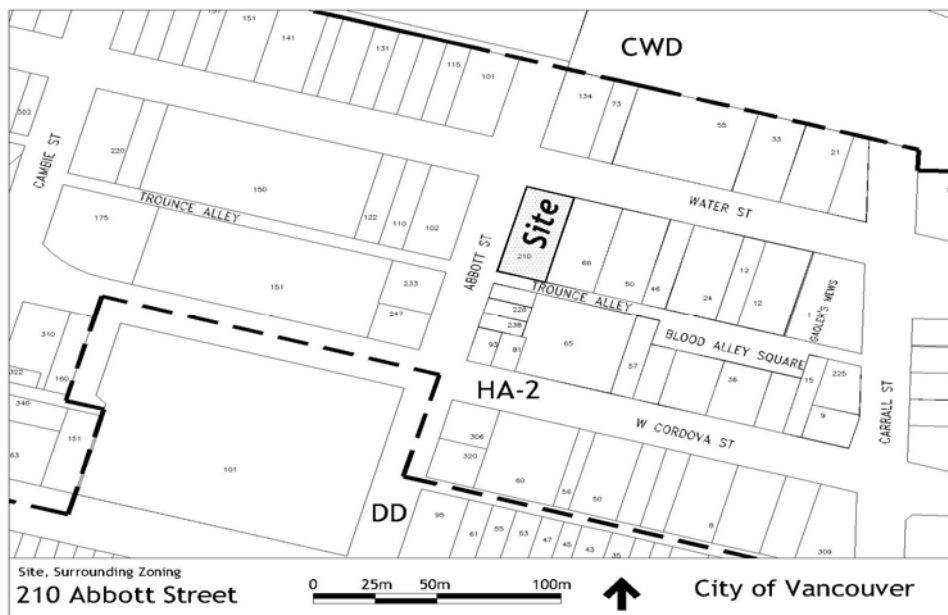
The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for a facade grant for the "B" listed, municipally designated building at 210 Abbott Street.

## 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. The City deems buildings on corner sites to have more than one principal façade, where the owner may apply for a grant for each principal façade.

## DISCUSSION

This historic site located at 210 Abbott Street is a three-storey masonry commercial building occupying the southeast corner of Abbott and Water Streets in Gastown. Also known as the Dominion Hotel / Sherdahl Block this building has commercial space on the ground floor and Single Room Accommodation on the two storeys above. The Dominion Hotel was constructed in 1900-1901, and designed by architect Emil Guenther.



The Site Plan

**Heritage value:**

The Dominion Hotel is valued for its architecture as a fine example of the late Victorian Italianate style. The exterior also exhibits characteristics of the emerging Romanesque Revival style, reflected in the repetitive use of the round-headed window openings. The parged pilasters and window arches set against the red brick walls create a commanding street presence. This building is also significant as a surviving design by architect Emil Guenter (born 1855), and constructed by prominent early Vancouver builders Theodore Horrobin and J.P. Halden.

The Dominion Hotel is valued as an early Gastown hotel, representative of the hotels which accommodated the area's seasonal population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as Vancouver emerged as western Canada's predominant commercial centre. The name of the hotel, in continuous use for over a century, is a demonstration of the significance of Gastown as the terminus of the CPR, which linked the provinces of the Dominion of Canada from the Atlantic to Pacific oceans.

**Rehabilitation approach:**

The conservation strategy for the Dominion Hotel is based on the preservation of the exterior in order to maximize the retention of the existing building and enhance the exterior appearance; the rehabilitation of the storefronts, by retaining evolutionary aspects of the facades and facilitating a contemporary use; and the restoration of the chamfered entrance on the corner of Water Street and Abbott Street.

The proposed Conservation Plan identifies the following conservation procedures: preservation and restoration of the original wood windows, preservation of the main building cornice, re-pointing of brickwork, repairing of the parged architectural elements, restoration of the chamfered corner entrance, rehabilitation of the storefronts fronting Abbott St. and restoration of the recessed entrance floors. The owner of the building completed some exterior rehabilitation work in 2007, which scope does not constitute any part of this application.

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 a grant of up to \$100,000 (up to \$50,000 for each of the two principal façades) to offset the cost for the restoration of the 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 \$200,000 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 \$50,000 for each of the two principal façades.

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) for each of the two façades. Once this has been confirmed, the grant of up to \$50,000 per principal façade 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, \$2.035 million has been approved as grants for 28 heritage rehabilitation projects, with most projects involving full building upgrades and other incentives.

Currently, there is a total of \$465,000 available for this term of the Program. Staff recommend an allocation of up to \$100,000 from the 2007 Capital Budget for rehabilitation of the principal façades at 210 Abbott 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 reviewed the proposed façade rehabilitation application on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2008 and unanimously supported it.

**CONCLUSION**

210 Abbott Street is a "B" listed building on the Vancouver Heritage Register and municipally designated site. The owner's proposal to rehabilitate the building façades will not only restore the historic character of the storefront, and will assist in the revitalization of historic Gastown. The Director of Planning recommends approval of up to \$100,000 for the façade rehabilitation work.

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