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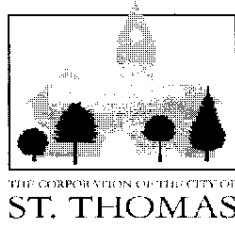


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This document was retrieved from the Ontario Heritage Act Register, which is accessible through the website of the Ontario Heritage Trust at **www.heritagetrust.on.ca**.

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Wendell Graves
Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk



P.O. Box 520, City Hall
St. Thomas, ON N5P 3V7
Telephone: (519) 631-1680
Ext. 4120
Fax: (519) 633-9019
wgraves@stthomas.ca

October 17, 2014

Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3

Dear Sir/Madame,

**SUBJECT: CASO STATION
750 TALBOT STREET - ST. THOMAS
INTENT TO DESIGNATE - ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT**

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that, as a result of information provided by the City's Municipal Heritage Committee, City Council has initiated the "Intent to Designate" process for 750 Talbot Street, CASO Station, as found within the Ontario Heritage Act. Please find enclosed a document outlining the reasons for the proposed designation.

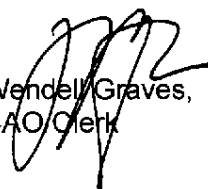
A notice of Intent to Designate will be published in the local newspaper on Wednesday, October 22, 2014. After a 30 day period, should no objection be received about this matter, Council will consider a by-law to designate the property.

As required under the Ontario Heritage Act, this letter is being forwarded to you.

I would ask that should you have any comments regarding this proposed designation and or any objections please advise the municipality accordingly within the 30 day period.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact this office.

Yours truly,


Wendell Graves,
CAO/Clerk

c/c St. Thomas Municipal Heritage Committee

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS
INTENT TO DESIGNATE A PROPERTY AS A HERITAGE PROPERTY**

PROPERTY: Canada Southern Railway Station (CASO Station)

MUNICIPAL ADDRESS: 750 Talbot Street

Analysis for reasons for designation as provided by the Municipal Heritage Committee:

Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act* as it relates to the Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value of Interest. Under this regulation, a property may be designated under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* if it meets one or more of three criteria.

In applying these criteria to the facts relating to the property it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
 - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
 - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
 - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

The St. Thomas CASO station was built between June 1871 and April 1873. Designed by the Canadian architect Edgar Berryman (1839-1905), the building was the largest of 31 Canada Southern Railway stations built in the 1870's. The station housed the corporate headquarters of the CSR as well as being the town's passenger station. The CASO Station meets the criteria of design and physical value as a unique example of the Italianate style of architecture. It is an unusually large station, especially when related to the size of the town of St. Thomas, and its architectural design was one not commonly used on major Canadian railway stations.

The most striking feature of the structure is the extreme length and regularity of its two main facades. The two-storey building is 354 feet (108 metres) long and a mere 36 feet (11 metres) wide. It was constructed using 400,000 buff coloured bricks that were manufactured at brickyards in nearby Yarmouth Township. These bricks were later tinted red using a rouging technique. The Italianate style of its architecture is most evident on the exterior of the station. The front (north) and rear (south) facades are divided into 44 regular bays, each defined with a shallow grid of pilasters. The roof has wide eaves and a heavy cornice, supported by ornate large scaled paired brackets at the top of each pilaster. Large dentils fill the spaces between the brackets. Each bay contains a tall, narrow four-over-four double-hung window, though on the first storey some of the bays contain panelled doorways instead of windows. The first storey windows are topped with segmental arches and the second storey windows are articulated with round headed arches surmounted with brick hood-mouldings and keystones. A line of dentils articulates the first and second storey line of each bay. Two broad passageways provide access from the north side of the building through the station to the platform on the south side, and these are embellished with brick basket arches.

The east and west gable ends continue the decorative rhythm of the facades. Each gable end is divided into three bays by pilasters and each bay contains a tall, narrow arched window (segmental arches on the first storey and round headed arches surmounted with brick hood mouldings and keystones on the second storey). Wood panelled doors replace the windows in the central bays of the first storey. Each gable end features detailed pediments with an oculus surmounted with an ornamental keystone and brick hood moulding. The pediments are heavily dentilated and are supported with the same ornate large scale paired brackets as the rest of the building.

The interior was as impressive as the exterior. It features exceptionally high ceilings, 18 feet/5.5 metres on the ground floor and 16 feet/5 metres on the second floor, which are supported on columns with decorative capitals, wooden floors (some later covered with terrazzo), excellent millwork, plaster work, heavy wooden trim all around the windows and interior doors, wooden wainscoting and tongue and groove panelling in some areas. The ground floor rooms were embellished with plaster crown moulding and panelled soffits on the ceiling. Other significant features included wooden chair rails, baseboards, newel posts, staircases, and balustrades. The entire building was planned to accommodate its function. Every major room on the ground floor was accessible through doors on both the track and town sides of the building and all the main floor rooms opened directly onto one another, creating an ease of circulation.

2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
 - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
 - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
 - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

The station was built to be the headquarters of the Canada Southern Railway, a company that brought with it an enormous boom to the town of St. Thomas and contributed greatly to its being known as the "Railway City". Unfortunately the company declared bankruptcy not long after the completion of the station however it remained in use through the next hundred years and multiple changes in ownership as both passenger and freight trains continued to pass through.

The public ground floor of the building contained at one time separate men's and ladies' waiting rooms, a barbershop, washrooms, refreshment room, dining room, kitchen, and baggage room. The spacious gentleman's waiting room also functioned as a library and a smoking and reading room. The ladies' waiting room was supervised by an attendant of the Station Master's staff in order to preserve the respectable and genteel environment that women expected of railway travel. Both waiting rooms had their high ceilings supported with cast iron pillars on plinths with capitals. The decorative capitals of the columns consisted of female Greco-Romans heads, lead acanthus leaves and lead and wood jack-in-the-pulpits. The original plan also provided an office for the railway detective. Shortly after 1914 a small holding cage was constructed out of a portion of the gentleman's waiting room to serve as a jail for unruly passengers or lawbreakers.

The second storey of the building housed the Canada Southern Railway Company corporate offices. It was also carefully planned to accommodate its function. Access was only granted to senior railway officials and the female dining room staff and their matron. A wide (8 feet/2.4 metres) corridor ran along most of the south side of the building providing access to the offices and living quarters. Exterior windows ran along the north side of the building and interior windows ran the south side which allowed light to enter the offices. The décor was luxurious in the heyday of the CSR, reflecting the status of the company.

One of the most celebrated features of the station was its spacious formal dining room, which was staffed by young women who both lived and worked there. They boarded at sleeping quarters upstairs and were closely chaperoned. Passengers could order from the train and their meals would be ready when they arrived. Meals were served through a hidden hatchway that connected to the kitchen. The dining room hosted dinners for visiting dignitaries and celebrities as well as being used for local church and service club meetings. Over the years dining cars replaced the demand for dining in the stations and the CASO dining room became a lunch room. It has since been restored to a formal dining and entertaining space.

3. The property has contextual value because it,
 - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
 - ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings, or
 - iii. is a landmark.

The CASO Station is absolutely a landmark on Talbot Street. Set back off the main street, it is easily the largest and most visually striking building in the downtown core. Many generations of residents can remember working at and/or using the station during St. Thomas' "Railway City" heyday. Now that it has been restored it is owned and operated by the North American Railway Hall of Fame, showing itself and its contents to be a jewel of Canadian railway history. It is located near the MCR shops, now the Elgin County Railway Museum, and this section of tracks and buildings forms the hub of the city's rich railway past and its present and future commemoration of that.