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**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR**

**FILE NUMBER: MBA/14768**

**IN THE MATTER OF *THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT*  
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES KNOWN AS  
1958-1998 WYANDOTTE STREET EAST IN THE CITY OF WINDSOR  
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE**

**VIA ELECTRONIC WEBFORM**

**ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST  
1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR, 10 ADELAIDE STREET EAST  
TORONTO, ONTARIO  
M5C 1J3**

**RECEIVED**  
2024/08/12  
(YYYY/MM/DD)  
Ontario Heritage Trust

**TAKE NOTICE THAT** the Council of the Corporation of the City of Windsor intends to designate the property, including lands and buildings known as the Strathcona Building at 1958-1998 Wyandotte Street East as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of *The Ontario Heritage Act*:

**Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Interest  
Strathcona Building  
1958-1998 Wyandotte Street East**

**Description of Historic Place:**

The Strathcona Building is a two-storey commercial building located at 1958-1998 Wyandotte Street East, on the prominent corner of Devonshire Road and Wyandotte Street East. It was constructed in 1907 for Hiram Walker & Sons and was designed by Detroit architect Albert Kahn during the Edwardian Period. The Strathcona Building features red brick facades with purple undertones, an articulated parapet, ornate cornices, pronounced window projections, decorative stone surrounds, and storefronts.

**Design/Physical value:**

The Strathcona Building is a two-storey commercial building designed during the Edwardian Period. The building features a balanced design, with an articulated stone parapet raised at corners. The pediment at Wyandotte Street includes a stone plate etched with the work "Strathcona", while the arched parapet portions feature shield-



shaped stone accents. A single row of rowlock brick beneath the stone capping reinforced the parapet design. The second-floor ornate cornice stretches across the street-facing elevation. Four bay windows with brackets, interspaced with double and triple sets of sash windows with pronounced projections, provide texture and variety to the facade. The cornice pattern repeats above the storefront system, and together with soldier brick course on the sides, delineates between floors.

Two entrances with arched cut stone voussoirs, keystone, and surrounds were constructed and retained on the Wyandotte elevation. The original 1906 drawings show the storefront system wrapping around the corner of Devonshire Road, truncated below the first bay window of the corner, some recessed ground floor entrances with ornate doors, and decorative brick pattern on the east façade. These features were either not constructed per drawing or later modified.

One of the greatest impacts from the redevelopment is the removal of paint from the brick façade, which revealed the stretcher red brick façade with purple undertones. The parapet was flashed over. Bay windows are reintroduced as aluminum glazing systems without the vertical muntin's. As with the main-street appropriate storefront systems, transoms were returned. The new black insulated aluminum panel storefront system is compatible to the original wood glass storefront (long-gone). The openings on the ground floor west elevations still feature stone sills. Awnings and new compatible signage have been proposed on the property. The rear north elevation had a variety of openings of irregular rhythm and are replaced with some new glazing or painted black metal pan. Due to the porous nature of the brick on the rear elevation on the west side, the Owners commissioned a wall mural limited to that location.

### **Historical/Associative Value**

The subject property is located in the former Town of Walkerville, founded by Hiram Walker (1816-1899), the industrial entrepreneur from the United States. What is now Southwestern Ontario was inhabited by First Nations peoples, including the Ottawas. Following unsuccessful attempts to resist the French newcomers (who had settled earlier than the British), the Ottawa leader Pontiac granted lands to the settlers in the vicinity of what became Walkerville. By the mid 1850's, Hiram Walker had bought several farm parcels. Walkerville was a planned community, almost entirely owned by the Walker family until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As Hiram Walker's distillery business prospered, he developed the first five north-south streets of Walkerville starting from the First Street (now Kildare Road) and east-west streets starting from Sandwich Street (now Riverside Drive). Development generally occurred systematically on north-south streets from Walker Road on the east to streets further west, and southward. Ferry services, rail lines, and street railways introduced by



Walker spurred the growth of the distillery village further into a town with diversified businesses.

By 1890, Walkerville had obtained town status and was a self-sufficient model town. The Walker family separated the distillery and other industrial uses from commercial and residential uses and engaged distinguished architects to design the early development in the community.

The subject property is located within Registered Plan 211, one of the earliest subdivision plans registered in 1879, creating lots from First (Kildare Road) to Fifth Streets (Walker Road) and from the Greatest Western Railway to Cataraqui Street. The subject building is located on Lot 10 of Block F, and like many of the vacant lots during the early 1900's, the property was originally owned by Hiram Walker and was transferred to the Walkerville Land & Building Co. (W. L. & B. Co.) with Edward Chandler Walker, Hiram Walker's oldest son, as president. After Hiram Walker's death in 1899, the remaining Walkers & associated companies led the second phase of development of the former Town of Walkerville. Devonshire Road was the main north-south street in Walkerville, while Wyandotte Street was the commercial "main street" lined with a mixture of residential dwellings, commercial block buildings, and prominent banks.

### **Early Tenants and Uses**

The Strathcona Building was designed in 1906 and constructed in 1907 as "Stores for Walker Sons" (Strathcona Original Drawings). In a newspaper clipping from the Windsor Evening Record dated March 20, 1907, the building was referred to as the "new Walker block" and was anticipated to be "one of the handsomest business blocks in the town" when finished. The original architectural drawings show four commercial storefront units on the main floor and offices and a library on the second floor. The building finished construction c. April 1907. Upon completion, two established businesses moved in - F.J. Miller (druggist) and R.A. Holland (dry goods). Both businesses had moved from the Crown Inn on Devonshire Road. In July 1907, it was publicly announced in the Windsor Evening Record that the new building will be called "Strathcona Block".

Early tenants of the Strathcona Building include Walkerville Hardware Co., Nairn & Co. Grocers, and F.J. White (jeweler and dry goods) on the main floor and the Walkerville Public Library on the second floor. The Walkerville Public Library occupied the second floor of the Strathcona Building from its completion in 1907 until 1922, when the library moved to the main floor of Willistead Manor which had then become the property of the Town. After the library vacated the second floor space of the Strathcona Building, it was commonly used as a community gathering and event space for various local organizations' chapters, such as the Sons of England, the Women of Mooseheart, and the Walkerville Football Club.



Another notable tenant during the building's early years was longtime tenant Lanspeary's Ltd. (druggist), and the offices of architects Stahl and Kinsey (construction supervisors of the Bank of Montreal building, 1799 Wyandotte).

### **Later Tenants and Uses**

Through the decades after, the primary uses of the building largely remained a mix of commercial and offices. Some of the uses included: communications/telegraph offices, real estate offices, and printing and stationary services. Post mid-century, the uses changed to become more manufacturing in nature, including a cutting tools machine specialist and an industrial safety supply store. The Strathcona Building remains a valued commercial office building within Walkerville.

### **Architect Albert Kahn**

The design of the Strathcona Building is attributed to the internationally recognized architect Albert Kahn. Although he was most famous for being a leading industrial architect, Kahn's portfolio of works includes a variety of office, commercial, public, and residential buildings. His elaborate designs and details are based in the use of historical period architectural styles, and he was best remembered for bringing natural light into industrial buildings during the auto manufacturing boom.

Kahn was a significant architect in the design of the former Town of Walkerville. While employed with Detroit firm Mason & Rice Architects, Kahn designed the beautiful interior of the Hiram Walker & Sons Office Building, which was instrumental in showcasing his talent and elevating his career. He started up his own firm "Kahn and Associates" in 1895 and was based in Detroit. The Walker family and company were major patrons of his services, and he was their choice architect commissioned to design notable properties for them. Properties designed by Kahn and Associates for the Walkers include the Willistead Manor (1899 Niagara Street), the Harrington Walker Manor (1948 St Mary's Gate), Walkerville Town Hall, and the Canadian Bank of Commerce. Kahn was responsible for the design of several listed or designated properties on Windsor's Municipal Heritage Register.

Throughout his career, he was credited with over 1000 buildings. Some of his most celebrated works in the United States are the Fisher Building, the Conservatory on Belle Isle, the Edsel and Eleanor Ford House, and the Detroit Athletic Club.

### **CONTEXTUAL VALUE**

The Strathcona Building is a long-standing landmark and is highly visible from its location on the corner of Devonshire Road and Wyandotte Street East. It is evocative of the early "main street" streetscape of the former Town of Walkerville and supports the heritage main street character of Wyandotte Street East. The Strathcona Building was strategically

located a short distance away from the historic Detroit-Walkerville Ferry Terminal docks and the Pere Marquette train station. It also reflects the supremacy of Wyandotte Street East as the commercial area for the Town since the early twentieth century, where the Strathcona Building was located along with several other banks and heritage buildings. The subject property is a notable example of early commercial buildings constructed within the core areas of Walkerville and reflects the early economic prosperity of the former Town of Walkerville and the growing commercial needs of residents.



## **Heritage Attributes:**

### **Exterior attributes that contribute to the design/physical value of the Strathcona Building:**

- Built in 1907
- Two-storey building of stretcher red brick with purple undertones.
- Edwardian period commercial building, featuring:
  - o Articulated stone parapet raised at corners, with single course rowlock brick beneath reinforcing parapet design.
  - o Pediment at Wyandotte Street includes stone plate with "Strathcona" etching.
  - o Arched parapet features shield-shaped stone accents; two on Wyandotte St. E. elevation and one on Devonshire Rd. elevation.
  - o Second floor ornate cornice which stretched across the street facing elevations above openings.
  - o Four bay windows with brackets, interspaced with double and triple sets of sash windows with pronounced projections.
  - o Originally wood sash windows with vertical muntins.
  - o Ornate cornice above the storefront system.
  - o Soldier brick course delineating between floors.
  - o Two of the entrances with arched cut stone voussoirs, keystone, and surround.
  - o Storefront glazing with transom glass.
  - o Stone sills at west elevation ground floor openings and north elevation.

### **Attributes that contribute to the historical or associative value of the Strathcona Building:**

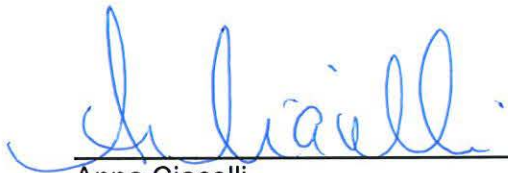
- Developed during a time of early economic prosperity and rapid growth for the former Town of Walkerville to accommodate the growing commercial and community needs of residents.
- Owned by the Walkerville Land & Building Company, the real estate arm of the Walker Enterprise and main developer and landholder of the former Town of Walkerville.
- Designed by internationally renowned and locally significant architect Alber Kahn.

### **Attributes that contribute to the contextual value of the Strathcona Building:**

- Landmark building located at the highly visible corner on the northwest of Devonshire Road and Wyandotte Street East, two historic "main streets".
- Supports the continuous commercial street frontage, physically, visually, and historically linked to many heritage buildings along the Wyandotte Street East Main Street, forming a major part of the former Town of Walkerville streetscape.

Any person may, within thirty days of the publication of this notice, send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the City of Windsor notice of his or her objection to the proposed designation together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. If such a Notice of Objection is received, the Council of the Corporation of the City of Windsor shall consider the objection and make a decision whether or not to withdraw the notice of intention to designate the property within 90 days after the end of the 30-day period of publication of this notice.

**DATED** at Windsor, Ontario this 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2024  
Anna Ciacelli, Deputy City Clerk

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Ciacelli', is written over a horizontal line.

Anna Ciacelli  
Deputy City Clerk

AC/jl