

Heritage Designation - 2125 11th Avenue

Date	December 9, 2020
To	Regina Planning Commission
From	City Planning & Community Development
Service Area	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Item No.	RPC20-37

RECOMMENDATION

Regina Planning Commission recommends that City Council:

1. Approve the application for designation of the Darke Block located at 2125 11th Avenue (as shown in Appendix A-1 and A-2), being Lot 56, Block 307, Plan 00RA12095, as a Municipal Heritage Property.
2. Instruct the City Solicitor to issue and serve notice of Council's intention to consider a bylaw to designate the Darke Block as Municipal Heritage Property in accordance with *The Heritage Property Act*.
3. Instruct the City Solicitor to prepare the necessary Municipal Heritage Property bylaw to be considered by Council at its first meeting following the statutory notice period to:
 - a. designate the subject property as Municipal Heritage Property;
 - b. identify the reasons for designation and character-defining elements as stated in Appendix B, attached to this report;
 - c. provide that any subsequent alterations to the property be consistent with the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada."
4. Upon adoption of a bylaw designating the subject property as Municipal Heritage Property, remove the property from the Heritage Inventory and add it to the register of designated property in Regina.
5. Approve these recommendations at its meeting on December 16, 2020.

ISSUE

The applicant, Eric Mueller on behalf of the owner Mertz (MJ) Holdings Inc., has applied to designate 2125 11th Avenue (the Darke Block) as a Municipal Heritage Property.

Applications for designation as Municipal Heritage Property are considered in accordance with Section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act* (The Act) and The Heritage Inventory Policy (2019-1-CPD) adopted by City Council on March 25, 2019 which provides guidance on evaluation of heritage properties and how recommendations on designation or removal from the Inventory be brought forward to Council.

IMPACTS

Financial Implications

The property owner intends to submit a corresponding request for financial assistance under the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program. The financial implications of that application will be addressed in a separate report to the Finance and Administration Committee if designation of the property is approved.

Environmental Implications

Conservation of the building contributes to the City of Regina's (City) broader objective under the Official Community Plan (OCP) of promoting environmentally sustainable development by conserving the built environment and optimising the use of existing infrastructure.

Policy/Strategic Implications

The proposal to designate is consistent with the policies contained within Part A of the OCP with respect to:

Section D8: Culture

Goal 1 – Support Cultural Development and Cultural Heritage: Enhance quality of life and strengthen community identity and cohesion through supporting cultural development and cultural heritage.

- 10.3. Identify, evaluate, conserve and protect Cultural Heritage, Historic Places, and cultural resources, including but not limited to Public Arts.
- 10.5. Encourage owners to protect historic places through good stewardship and voluntarily designating their property for listing on Historic Property Register.

Heritage designation of the subject property, as well as its conservation, will enhance the building's long-term economic viability and protect its character-defining elements. Designation will also ensure the building's continued contribution to the historical and architectural character of Regina's downtown.

Other Implications

The Heritage Property Act defines heritage property to include “any property that is of interest for its architectural, historical, cultural, environmental, archaeological, palaeontological, aesthetic or scientific value” but leaves it to the municipality to make rules with respect to the criteria and procedures for the designation of property. Council adopted the Heritage Inventory Policy (2019-1-CPD) on March 25, 2019 which provides guidance on evaluation of heritage properties and how recommendations on designation or removal from the Inventory be brought forward to Council.

Accessibility Implications

None with respect to this report.

OTHER OPTIONS

If Council determines that the property does not have sufficient heritage significance to warrant designation, Council may reject the application and direct that the property be removed from the Heritage Inventory.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Administration provided information on this application to Heritage Regina, the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan, Regina Downtown Business Improvement District and Saskatchewan Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Heritage Regina and Saskatchewan Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport indicated in writing that they are supportive of the designation.

No comments were received from the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan and the Regina Downtown Business Improvement District.

DISCUSSION

The subject property is currently listed on the City's Heritage Inventory. City Council adopted the Heritage Inventory Policy on March 25, 2019. The policy sets out expectations for evaluation of properties on the Heritage Inventory and determining alignment to the Thematic Framework. Properties that retain heritage significance may be recommended to Council for designation with the agreement of the property owner. In cases where the level of unique heritage significance of a property is very high, a recommendation may be made to Council to designate even without the owner's consent.

Designation as a municipal heritage property means that an owner is required to conserve the property and can access financial supports through the City's Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program.

The owner of 2125 11th Avenue applied for designation of the property in July of 2020. This property was evaluated by Donald Luxton & Associates in January of 2018 as part of the pilot project leading to the approval of the Inventory Policy. The result of the evaluation is Grade 2, recognizing the Darke Block's connection to Francis Nicholson Darke who became

the youngest Mayor of Regina in 1898, served nine times as a city alderman and was elected as a Member of Parliament in 1925. Darke's community involvement and financial contribution ensured the construction of Darke Hall and contributed significantly to the evolution of the College Avenue Campus.

Darke Block was reputed to be the largest office building in the province when it was built in 1907. Built in Chicago style, the Darke Block is the first known building in Saskatchewan to employ the 'mushroom-head' reinforced columns and flat-slab concrete design patented in 1906 by Claude A. P. Turner. The economic advantages of the Turner system included minimal formwork, reduced floor-framing depths, and simplified finishing. To evaluate the property, a consultant prepared a Statement of Significance, supplemented by additional City records, site visits, and visual inspections. The completed evaluation is attached as Appendix B.

The recommendation for designation of this property is consistent with the approach directed by the Policy – that Grade Two properties be designated only with consent of the owner. In this case, the owner has initiated this process through an application for designation.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council's approval to designate the property is required pursuant to Section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act*.

The *Heritage Inventory Policy* (CR19-20) attached as Appendix C of this report was adopted by the City Council on March 25, 2019. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that properties with heritage value are identified on the Inventory of Heritage Properties in Regina (Heritage Inventory), which is organized according to a framework of themes for the City of Regina titled "Thematic Framework & Historic Context Statement."

The *Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program* (CR 14-100) attached as Appendix D of this report was adopted by City Council on August 25, 2014. The *Heritage Incentive Policy* approved through this program, allows City to provide tax exemption for eligible conservation work performed for the maintenance of a Municipal Heritage Designated Property. The conservation work must be performed in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

Respectfully submitted,



Executive Director, City Planning & Community Development

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A-1 Map

Appendix A-2 Context Map

Appendix B REG Evaluation Form

Appendix C CR19-20

Appendix D CR14-100