



UNION BANK OF CANADA BUILDING 10053 - JASPER AVENUE

Description of Historic Place

The Union Bank Building is a three storey rectangular brick and limestone faced building with an ornate street façade. It is located on the south side of Jasper Avenue facing 100A Street in the heart of downtown Edmonton.

Heritage Value

The Union Bank Building is significant for the role it played in the banking and investment history of Edmonton for over 69 years. As the only remaining bank building of seven built before WWI, it demonstrates the presence of eastern Canadian banks on Jasper Avenue at that time. Its construction in 1910 reflected the expanding needs of the Union Bank's Edmonton branch, during the period of Edmonton's economic boom. The Union Bank Building has shown a remarkable continuity of ownership and occupancy by financial institutions. Purchased in 1928 by Winnipeg's James Richardson and Sons Ltd., it served as an Edmonton base for their grain trading and stockbroking business, and was then occupied from 1969 by the North-West Trust Company, which owned the building from 1979 to 1982. The Union Bank Building is significant as the location of a variety of businesses that occupied offices in the building over several decades, including the Cunnard Steamship Co. Ltd.

Character Defining Elements

The Union Bank Building demonstrates the sophisticated vision



of its architect, the British-trained Roland Lines (1876–1916) who designed several other distinctive Edmonton buildings, including the Alex Taylor School (1908), Strathcona Collegiate Institute (1909), and the nearby Canadian Permanent Building (1910) on Jasper Avenue. The Union Bank Building is significant for its solid imposing street façade with classical elements inspired by the Italian Renaissance, most notably, the rusticated ground floor, giant order pilasters and open pediments with oversize keystones above the second floor windows. The central entrance represented an innovation in functional design at the time, whereby the bank entrance also served upstairs offices and third floor living quarters for bank employees.

The Union Bank Building has acquired landmark value due to its position at the south end of 100A Street and because of the high visibility of its exposed party wall above a pedestrian plaza on the east side as one travels west on Jasper Avenue.

