



CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



ADMINISTRATION OFFICE BUILDING EDMONTON BREWING AND MALTING CO. LTD.

11904 – 104 AVENUE NW

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The Administration Office Building of the former Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. is located on a large formerly Industrial site consisting of the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building (built in 1913) and the associated Administration Office Building. The smaller Administration Office Building, built in 1924 or 1925 and expanded in 1955, is constructed of brick and exhibits simpler, but complementary, Classical Revival styling to the main brewery building.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Administration Office Building is significant as an industrial site, for its association with the brewing industry and for its functional and subdued design and style.

The land that Edmonton was developed on was used by Indigenous peoples for millennia, as the North Saskatchewan River Valley and ravine systems were a source of shelter, travel, trade, materials and food. In the fur trading era, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) established a fort on the north side of the river. When the HBC sold its vast Rupert’s Land territory to the Dominion of Canada in 1870, it retained reserve lands around its various trading properties, including a 3,000 acre reserve around Fort Edmonton that became known as the Hudson’s Bay Reserve. In 1876, the Canadian government signed Treaty 6 with Indigenous leaders in what is now Saskatchewan, and the following year, Indigenous chiefs in the Edmonton region signed adhesions to the treaty. Edmonton is also part of the Métis homeland.

In 1882, the HBC began parcelling off the southern portion of its reserve as Edmonton began to grow in the early years of the 20th century. The HBC subdivided the area north of Jasper Avenue and west of 109 Street to form what was initially called the West End. In 1934, the West End Community League changed its name to Oliver in honour of the colonist and politician Frank Oliver. In 2024, the City renamed the neighbourhood Wîhkwêntôwin, which means “circle of friends” in Cree.

Most of the area was developed as residential, however the area along 104 Avenue began to take on an industrial and commercial character as a result of the Canadian Pacific Railway yard (CPR) that was established in conjunction with the opening of the High Level Bridge in 1913.

Located in a former industrial area west of Edmonton’s downtown, the Administration Office Building was part of





a significant early industrial site, the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. The site was ideally located adjacent to railways and a major roadway, allowing for efficient shipping and receiving. The nearby residential neighbourhoods and historic streetcar lines made the workplace easily accessible for workers. The separation of administrative functions in the small detached, more stylistically-subdued Administration Office Building is typical of 20th century industrial sites in Alberta.

Built by the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company to replace their smaller brewery in Rosedale, the overall facility went through numerous owners and ended its active days under the banner of Molson Canada. The brewery provides structural evidence of brewing in Alberta and the corporate evolution of the industry from a local or regional enterprise to a nationally-oriented business.

Other elements that speak to the site's role as a prominent brewery are its combination of practical design with fanciful Revivalist styling and the presence of prominent signage. Similar to the main brewery building, the Administration Office Building exhibits Classical Revival elements popular on many industrial buildings of its period. These elements include simulated brick cornices, window arches, dentils and modillions, and are found throughout both buildings.

The overall brewery site's combination of practical design with artistic styling is a hallmark of its Chicago-based architect, Bernard Barthel. Specializing in industrial buildings and particularly breweries, Barthel's designs deliberately hide their practical and functional purpose through the use of elegant, if rather fanciful, Revivalist details. Barthel was likely inspired by the strong Germanic brewing tradition of the United States and the popularity of Germanic architectural motifs in earlier and contemporaneous American breweries. This included the Anheuser-Busch brewery in St. Louis and the Pabst Brewery in Milwaukee, as well as his upbringing and training in his native Germany. Barthel's breweries exhibit an appearance

described as "castle-like" or "feudalistic." He designed industrial facilities and breweries across North America; however, little remains of his work. The Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building, which bears a striking resemblance to his Schmidt Brewery in St. Paul, Minnesota, is an excellent example of his style. Barthel is not believed to have designed the Administration Office Building, but its design complements that of the main brewery building itself.

CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The heritage value of the Administration Office Building is expressed through such character-defining elements as:

- + Scaled-down design, less ornate style and subordinate stature relative to the nearby brewery building;
- + Red brick construction of exterior walls;
- + Simple sandstone or concrete cornice;
- + Classical Revival design elements, such as the simulated brick cornices, dentils, modillions and parapets; and
- + Fenestration pattern and extant historic windows with simple flat sandstone or concrete lintels and brick sills.

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 17508 in February 2016.

The associated Edmonton Brewing and Malting Co. Ltd. Building was designated under Bylaw 17507, also in February 2016.

Designated as a Provincial Historic Resource in December 2015.

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