



# EDMONTON BREWING AND MALTING COMPANY LTD. BUILDING

## CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

11904 – 104 AVENUE NW

### DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building is located on an industrial site consisting of the brewery building itself and an associated administration building. The brewery building, built in 1913, consists of contiguous brick structures ranging in height from two to four floors. Through its monumental massing, arches and ornamental details, it exhibits a castle-like appearance. The brewery is situated on a large urban lot located at the corner of 121 Street NW and Stony Plain Road/104 Avenue NW. The designation applies only to the footprint of the two extant portions of the historic structures.

### HERITAGE VALUE

The Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building is significant as an industrial site and association with the brewing industry, for its functional, yet artistic design and style, and for its association with architect Bernard Barthel.

Located in a former industrial area west of Edmonton's downtown, the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building was a significant, early industrial site. It was ideally located adjacent to railways and a major roadway, allowing for efficient shipping and receiving, and the nearby residential neighbourhoods and historic streetcar lines made it accessible for workers. The presence of the small, more subdued Administrative Office Building, distinguishable both physically and stylistically from the main brewery structure, demonstrates the trend to separate administrative and manufacturing functions in early twentieth-century industrial sites.

Built by the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company to replace their smaller brewery in Rosedale, the facility went through numerous owners, ending its active days under the banner of Molson Canada. Through remaining Edmonton Brewing and Malting Co. signage and a tile mosaic of a Molson logo on the exterior, the brewery provides structural evidence of the evolution of Alberta's brewing industry from a local or regional enterprise to a nationally oriented business.

The brewery's function, the efficient production of mass quantities of beer for sale across the province, is expressed through its fanciful Revivalist styling, general factory-like appearance, its substantial scale, wide entries, and large, multi-paned factory-style windows and the variable interior floor plates, which were set to accommodate brewery functions and processes. The site exhibits classical revival elements popular on many industrial buildings of its period. These elements include brick pilasters, window arches, dentils and modillions and are found throughout the brewery, but particularly on the more subtle office building. The main brewery building, particularly the tower, is enhanced by a different stylistic flare. Architectural details, such as simulated battlements and turrets, a barbican or gatehouse as well as the numerous semi-circular arches over entries and windows, combined with the monumental massing and vertical orientation of the brewery, effectively communicate a medieval, Germanic or Bavarian, castle-like aesthetic common to many North American breweries of the period.





The brewery's combination of practical design with artistic styling is a hallmark of its Chicago-based architect, Bernard Barthel. Specializing in industrial buildings, particularly breweries, Barthel's designs deliberately contradict their practical and functional purpose through the use of elegant, if rather fanciful, Revivalist details. 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, such as the Anheuser-Busch brewery in St. Louis and the Pabst Brewery in Milwaukee. Barthel 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.

## CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The heritage value of the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company Ltd. Building is expressed through such character-defining elements as:

- + monumental massing and overall vertical orientation;
- + red brick construction with concrete and/or stone highlights (cornices, quoins, arches, sills and lintels);
- + castle-like stylistic elements, most notable on the tower and west-facing elevation, such as: the brick parapets; simulated turrets and/or torch sconces; cornices; quoins; tall, narrow windows and recesses; and the presence of semi-circular and flat arches;
- + large, multi-paned windows, wide doorways and openings;
- + carved stone signage on the brewery tower reading "EDMONTON BRG. & MLTG Co.";

- + Classical Revival design elements throughout the brewery, such as the simulated brick parapets and the pattern of raised and recessed areas;
- + evidence of previous alterations made to accommodate changing brewery requirements, demonstrated mainly through bricked over openings;
- + tile mosaic of the Molson corporate logo in a recessed panel over a west-facing doorway;
- + large revolving sign and a three-faced digital clock on the roof of the tower; and
- + unique interior floorplates with variable elevations conducive to brewery functions and processes.

*Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 17507 in February 2016. The associated administration building is under Bylaw 17508.*

*Designated as a Provincial Historic Resource in December 2015.*

