



TELEPHONE EXCHANGE BUILDING (OLD CITY ARCHIVES)

10105 - 112 AVENUE NW

CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The former Telephone Exchange Building is an Edwardian-era two-storey rectangular masonry structure on a prominent corner lot in a primarily residential neighbourhood north of downtown Edmonton.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Telephone Exchange derives historical importance from its close association with the rapid growth of Edmonton prior to WWI and its long use as a civic building. A marker of Edmonton's booming economic situation, the structure is significant as evidence of the optimism of the time and growing demand for telephone service outside of the downtown, in particular, the residential market prior to WWI. The building remained in its original use until 1958.

The Telephone Exchange is also valued for its association with prominent Alberta architect Allen Merrick Jeffers. Jeffers had designed several public buildings as Alberta's Provincial Architect from 1907 to 1912 and is particularly significant for designing the Alberta Legislature.

The Edwardian-era neo-classical styling of the building is modest as befits an industrial structure, yet massed and scaled to be prominent in the growing neighbourhood.

Its strong symmetry and regular fenestration convey a sense of strength and permanence while its emphasis on verticality with horizontal banding further add to the sophistication as a carefully styled building. The Telephone Exchange's open interior layout and upper loading dock enabled the city to further expand telephone operations from this building. Large double-hung wooden windows allows natural light to enter and provided ventilation for operators and equipment.

The Telephone Exchange is significant as a landmark among its mainly working-class residential neighbourhood. Its imposing appearance and location make it stand out among the surrounding single-family residences of the area.





CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The building's Edwardian-era style, historical function and context are exemplified by the following elements:

EXTERIOR:

- + form, scale, and massing;
- + prominent corner location and minimal setback;
- + overall symmetry of the building;
- + red brick construction;
- + tall, symmetrical fenestration six-over-one windows around both storeys;
- + distinctive raised parapets at the east and west gable ends;
- + distinctive multi-panel semicircular attic windows;
- + projecting wraparound cornices and belt courses;
- + upper floor loading door and transom window on the west gable end; and
- + projecting lifting beam at the loading door.

INTERIOR:

- + open floor plate on upper storey; and
- + intact lifting beam.

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 10498 in September 1993.

Visit edmonton.ca/historicresources to learn more

