BRITISH COLUMBIA POWER COMMISSION BUILDING

780 BLANSHARD STREET, VICTORIA,

COMMUNITY DESIGN STRATEGIES

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

REVISED OCTOBER 2023

Summary

Reliance Properties Ltd. retained the office of mcfarlane biggar Architects + Designers Inc. (omb) to design a multi-story tower addition to the heritage building known as the British Columbia Power Commission located at 780 Blanshard Street, Victoria BC. As part of the City of Victoria's planning process and review, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required in accordance with the *Local Government Act, Heritage Conservation, Division 3 – Heritage Review S.602*:

1. *If, in the opinion of the local government or its delegate, an approval may affect protected heritage property, the local government or delegate may require the applicant for the approval, before the approval is issued,*

   a) to provide the local government or delegate, at the expense of the applicant, with information regarding the possible effects that the activity or action enabled by the approval may have on the heritage property, or

   b) to permit the local government or delegate to undertake, at the expense of the local government, studies regarding the matters referred to in paragraph (a) provided that those studies are undertaken promptly.

The July 19, 2022, City of Victoria Application Review Summary requested **"a heritage impact assessment that details the impact on the heritage building of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction"** to inform its decision-making process.

Reliance Properties Ltd. retained Community Design Strategies Inc. (CDS) to complete the HIA. The HIA is a study and assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the existing heritage resource. It has been prepared in accordance with the BC Heritage Branch *Heritage Impact Assessments in British Columbia - Terms of Reference*.

The BC Power Commission Building is situated on an irregular-shaped site in the Downtown Neighbourhood of Victoria and is listed on Victoria's Heritage Register but is not designated. The proposed development consists of a 16-storey addition placed in a confined footprint centrally located between the north and south entrances to ensure retention of all exterior facades and preservation and reuse of several interior features.

This study assessed the proposed new structural elements for the tower and during construction in terms of direct and indirect impacts, as well as the potential beneficial impacts. Conservation strategies to mitigate impacts are also provided.

The study was initially completed in March 2023 and was updated in October 2023 to reflect a revised SoS and September 7th, 2023, revisions to City of Victoria's Official Community Plan.

Assessment Team

office of mcfarlane biggar Architects + Designers Inc. (omb)
Prime Consultant, Architect
301 – 1825 Quebec Street Vancouver BC V5T 2Z3
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Matthew Beall, Architect AIBC

Read Jones Christoffersen Ltd. (RJC)
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- British Columbia Archives
- British Columbia Power Commission Building Conservation Plan, CDS Inc. May 2022.
- Biographical Dictionary of ARCHITECTS IN CANADA 1800 - 1950. *Whittaker, Henry*. www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.or/node/375
- Building Permits and Plan Archives, City of Victoria
- City of Victoria Downtown Core Area Plan
- City of Victoria Official Community Plan
- Daily Colonist, June 16, 1949, page 3
- Daily Colonist, September 7, 1949
- Daily Colonist, February 22, 1950, page 3
- Daily Colonist, July 23, 1950, page 42
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- Luxton, Donald (Editor). 2007. *Building the West: The Early Architects of British Columbia*. Revised Second Edition. Vancouver B.C.: Talonbooks.
- Minister of Public Works. Report for the Fiscal Year 1950-51. https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/bcsessional/items/1.0343150
- Pitchin File: 243985.000, Baseline Property Condition Assessment with Specialist Review of the Elevator System, July 16, 2019.
- Province of British Columbia. Sixth Annual Report of the British Columbia Power Commission for the Year Ended March 31st, 1951. http://www.llbc.leg.bc.ca/public/pubdocs/bcdocs2016/272602/1951.pd
- RJC Engineers Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment, 780 Blanshard Street, Victoria, BC., February 28, 2023.
- Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Properties in Canada, Second Edition, Parks Canada.
- Summary of Research & Revised Statement of Significance, CDS Inc., October 2, 2020.
- Thomas, Rick. 2013. *WILDLIFE DIVERSITY MURAL 780 Blanshard St., Victoria BC.* [Blog]. June 23, 2013. http://rickthomasart.blogspot.com/
- 780 Blanshard Street Condition Assessment Report, Northstar 2000 Ltd. General Contracting, Investigation and photography by Geoff Purdon, Operations Manager. Report prepared by Anna Quinn, Project Assistant.

HISTORIC PLACE

HISTORIC NAMES:

- British Columbia Power Commission

OTHER NAMES:

- BC Power Commission Building

CIVIC ADDRESS:

- 780 Blanshard Street, Victoria, BC

ORIGINAL OWNER:

- Government of British Columbia

CURRENT OWNER:

- Reliance Properties Inc.

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:

- 1949-1950

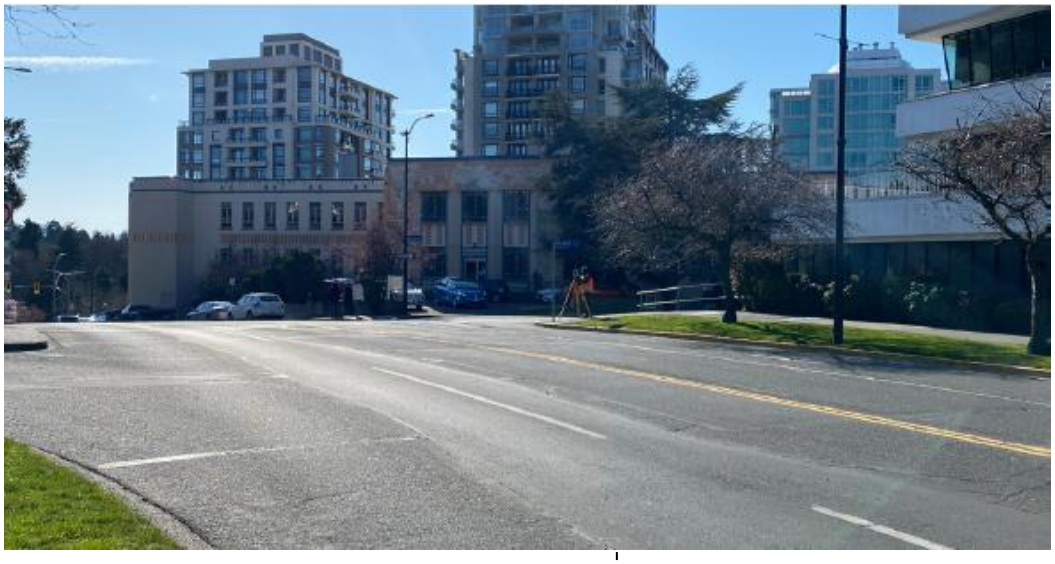
ARCHITECT:

- Henry Whittaker

HERITAGE STATUS:

- Heritage-Registered

Figure 2: View of north entrance of the British Columbia Power Commission building from Burdett Avenue, May 6, 2017.



1. Introduction

1.1 Study Purpose

Community Design Strategies In. (CDS) was contracted by Reliance Properties Ltd. to complete a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed development of the British Columbia Power Commission (BCPC) Building located at 780 Blanshard Street in Victoria, BC. The Assessment Team also includes the office of mcfarlane biggar architects + designers inc. and Read Jones Christoffersen Ltd.

The BCPC Building is located within the Downtown Neighbourhood and in Heritage Conservation Area DPA 2 (HC): Core Business. The proposed development envisions the BCPC Building operating as a hotel with a residential multi-storey tower confined to a much smaller central footprint that aligns and rises from the central entrances on the north and south elevations. Given the new structural components, the City of Victoria requested in the July 19, 2022, Application Review Summary **"a heritage impact assessment that details the impact on the heritage building of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction"** to inform its decision-making process.

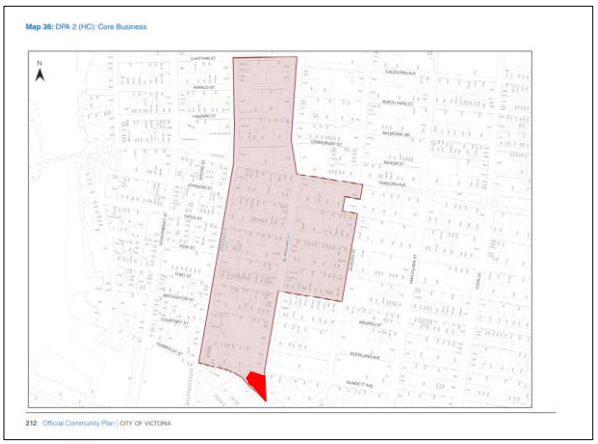


Figure 1: City of Victoria Official Community Plan, Map 36: DPA 2 (HC) Core Business.

The purpose of this study is to respond to the provincial and municipal requirements for a HIA in the conservation of cultural heritage resources. Where a change or an addition to a registered heritage property is proposed, consideration must be given to the conservation of heritage value and character-defining elements. The objectives of this HIA are to assess the potential impacts that the proposed development may have on the heritage-registered resource.

Figure 3: View of south facade of the BCPC Building from Fairfield Road, May 6, 2017.

1.2 Study Objectives

The objectives of the HIA are to address the conservation of the BCPC Building and identify and evaluate the heritage value and significance of the property within the proposed development, identify potential direct and indirect impacts on the character-defining elements, and identify mitigation measures to avoid negative impacts to heritage value and character-defining elements.

1.3 Study Methodology and Scope

The City of Victoria does not have specified Terms of Reference for the preparation of HIAs. As a result, the general process identified in the BC Heritage Branch *Heritage Impact Assessments in British Columbia - Terms of Reference*, the HeritageBC *Heritage Impact Assessment: A Resource Guide*, as well as sample HIAs undertaken throughout Canada, were referred to in the preparation of this report. To meet the HIA objectives, the scope of the study will consist of the following:

- brief description of the proposed project
- methodology used to undertake the impact assessment
- description of the historic site
- review of policy framework
- developmental timeline of the evolution of the building
- evaluation of the building's heritage values and significance
- list of character-defining elements
- statement of impacts related to the proposed project
- assessment of its level of effect on the heritage values and character-defining elements
- list of strategies designed to mitigate the force of impacts
- recommendations for amending the proposed project to integrate conservation strategies and mitigate negative impacts on heritage values and character-defining elements.

This study will utilize the Parks Canada ***Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*** as a guiding document and will

take into consideration the desired outcomes of both the applicant and the City of Victoria, and balance development with conservation goals.

1.4 Description of the Historic Resource

The British Columbia Power Commission, currently known as the BC Power Commission Building (BCPC), is listed on the City of Victoria's Heritage Register but is not designated.

The 1949-50 building is a fairly late expression of the Art Deco style. Due to the sloping nature of the site, the bottom two storeys are partially below grade on the north side while all four storeys are exposed on the south side.

Based on a 2019 condition assessment by Pitchin Ltd., the structure has an approximate footprint area of 11,550 square feet and a total building area of 46,200 square feet. The substructure of the building is constructed with a partial basement/ground level cast-in-place concrete slab-on-grade, with cast-in-place concrete foundation walls. The superstructure is constructed of reinforced concrete (i.e. beams, columns, and slabs) and a concrete roof deck. The exterior walls of the building consist of painted cast-in-place concrete on all elevations, with areas of metal cladding around the projecting cast-in-place concrete canopies over the west entrance.

Figure 4: View of north entrance of the BCPC Building from Burdett Avenue, May 6, 2017.

1.5 Site Location

The BC Power Commision Building is situated at 780 Blanshard Street on the edge of the Humboldt Valley, which is considered a character-defining element. The building is positioned on an irregular triangular sloping 2,272 m² site that is bound on the north by Burdett Avenue, Fairfield Road along its south edge, and Blanshard Street to the east. The site's location abuts the east boundary of the Downtown Neighbourhood that separates it from the residential neighbourhood of Fairfield and the parkland of Beacon Hill Park, and is northeast of the Provincial Parliament Buildings and the Royal BC Museum. Immediately west of the building is Penwill Green Park, a small municipal park that adjoins with the site's landscape.

Figure 5: Google Maps aerial view of 780 Blanshard Street.

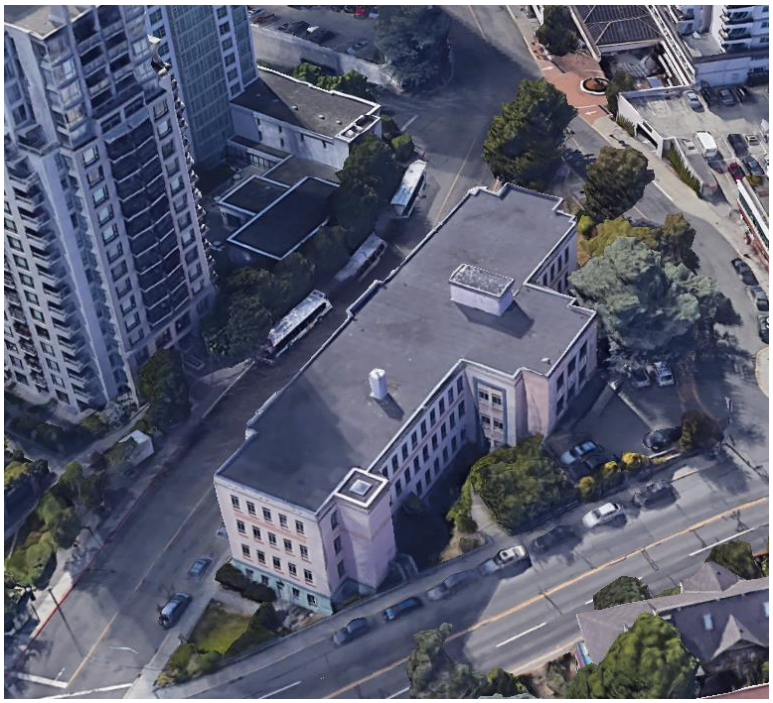


Figure 6: Google Maps aerial view looking southwest.

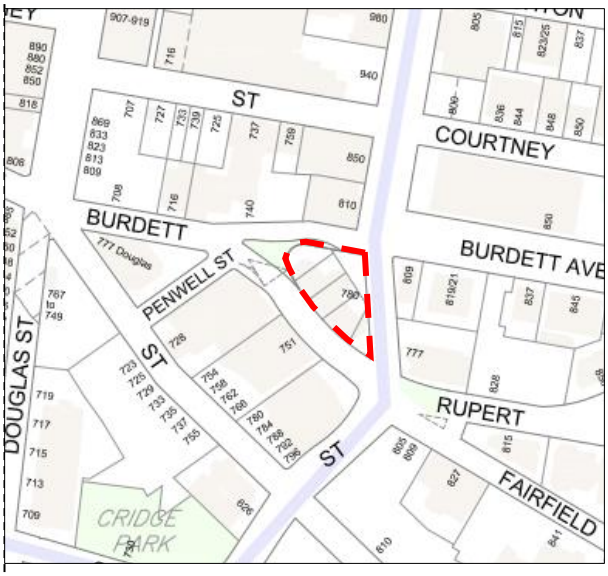


Figure 7: City of Victoria Downtown Address Map, December 2015.

Figure 8: View looking west along Fairfield Road.

Figure 9: Site location map. Source: omb

Figure 10: (Below) – Aerial view of 780 Blanshard Street.

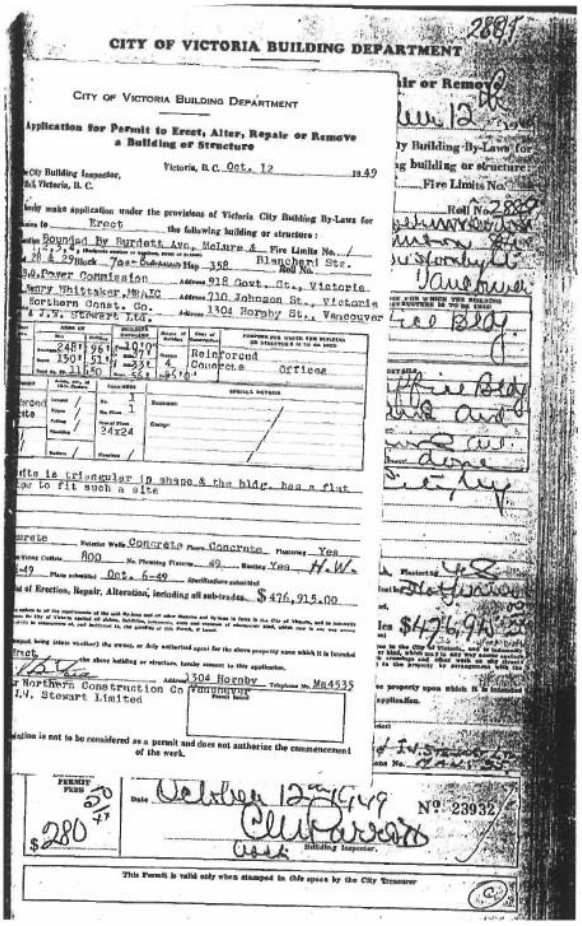
2. Historical Context

2.1 Historical Overview

The BC Power Commission was created by the Electric Power Act of 1945. The mandate of the Commission was to stimulate population growth and industrialization by merging generation and distribution facilities into one system and deliver electricity to many communities that were without power. The utility was publicly owned until its amalgamation with BC Electric in 1962 to form what is now known as BC Hydro.

The BCPC Building was constructed as the administrative headquarters for the Commission. Some sources state the building was constructed in 1939-40 and was initially to function as a hospital. However, there is no evidence to validate such use and the Building Permit issued on October 12, 1949, confirms the period of construction. The 6th Annual Report of the British Columbia Power Commission for the Year Ended March 31st, 1951, states:

"The administration building in Victoria was completed before the close of the fiscal year, the staff moving into the new quarters at the end of January 1951. This centralization brought about a reorganization between head office and power district staff, producing greater efficiency and economy by eliminating the need for regional offices at Nanaimo and Vernon."



CITY OF VICTORIA BUILDING DEPARTMENT

CITY OF VICTORIA BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Application for Permit to Erect, Alter, Repair or Remove a Building or Structure

Victoria, B.C. Oct. 12 1949

Erect

Bounded By Burdett Ave., McClure & Blanchard Sts.

B.C. Power Commission — 918 Govt. St., Victoria

Henry Whittaker, MRAIC — 710 Johnson St., Victoria

Northern Const. Co. — 1304 Hornby St., Vancouver

J.V. Stewart Ltd.

Reinforced Concrete — Offices

24x24

Concrete — Concrete — Yes

Oct. 6-49

$476,915.00

304 Hornby — Mu4535

Northern Construction Co

J.V. Stewart Limited

PERMIT FEES $280.50

October 12th 1949

No. 23932

Figure 11: Building Permit, City of Victoria, October 12, 1949.

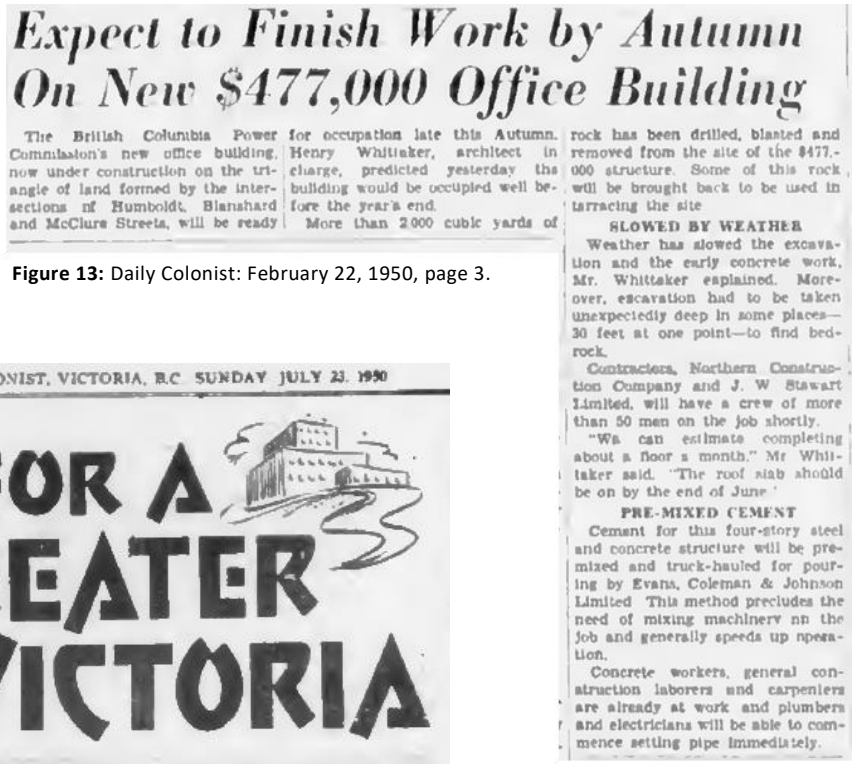
Colonist 7 Sept 1949

New Power Commission Headquarters

Tenders have been called on new administratration headquarters for B.C. Power Commission. Three-story, reinforced concrete building will be located in triangle bounded by McClure, Burdett and Blanshard Streets.

Figure 12: New Power Commission Headquarters, Daily Colonist, September 7, 1949.

Constructed at a cost of $476,915.00, its architectural style is a late expression of Art Deco composed of geometric forms and ornamentation that unify all elevations of the building. A more detailed description of the building's exterior can be found in Section 3.2 – Statement of Heritage Value, which assesses the value of the BCPC's architectural expression using the *Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework* within the Theme 5.1: Cultural Exchange.



Expect to Finish Work by Autumn On New $477,000 Office Building

The British Columbia Power Commission's new office building, now under construction on the triangle of land formed by the intersections of Humboldt, Blanshard and McClure Streets, will be ready for occupation late this Autumn. Henry Whittaker, architect in charge, predicted yesterday the building would be occupied well before the year's end.

More than 2000 cubic yards of rock has been drilled, blasted and removed from the site of the $477,000 structure. Some of this rock will be brought back to be used in tarracing the site

SLOWED BY WEATHER

Weather has slowed the excavation and the early concrete work, Mr. Whittaker explained. Moreover, excavation had to be taken unexpectedly deep in some places—30 feet at one point—to find bedrock.

Contractors, Northern Construction Company and J. W. Stewart Limited, will have a crew of more than 50 men on the job shortly.

"We can estimate completing about a floor a month," Mr. Whittaker said. "The roof slab should be on by the end of June."

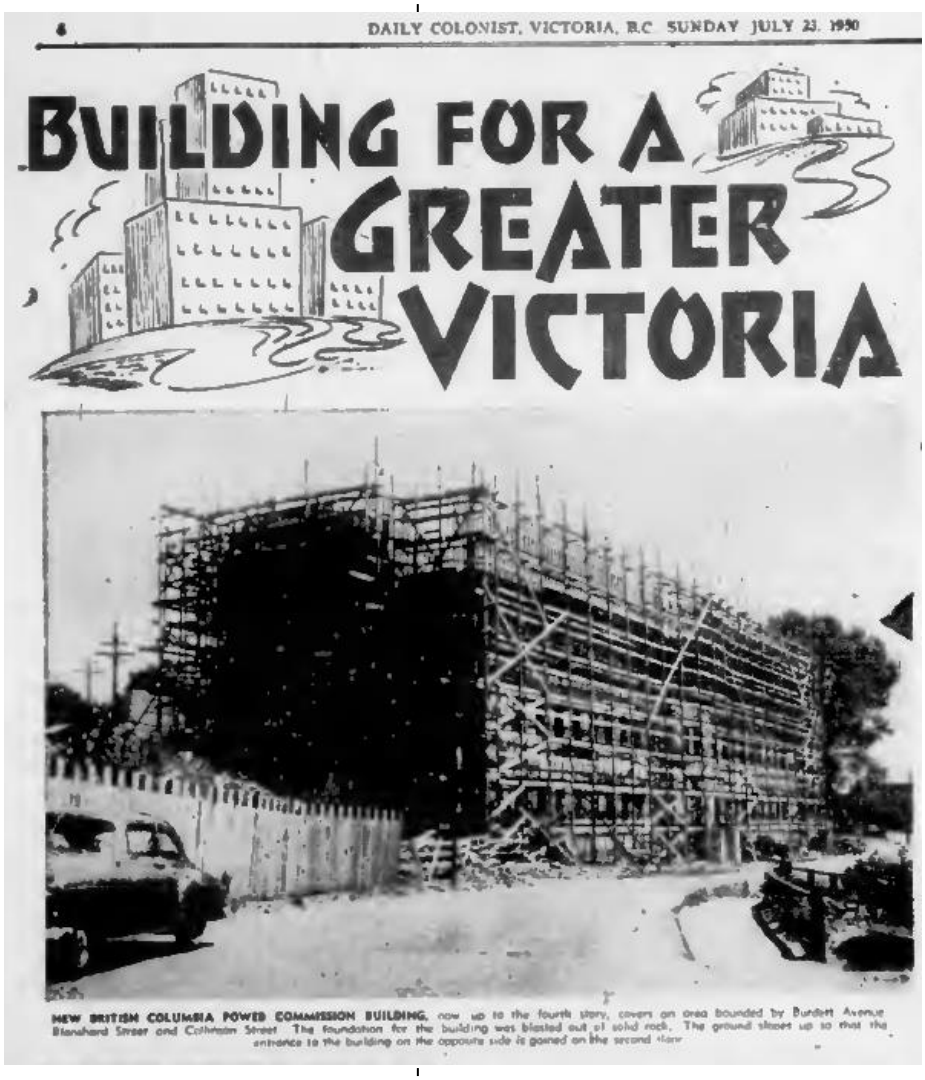
PRE-MIXED CEMENT

Cement for this four-story steel and concrete structure will be premixed and truck-hauled for pouring by Evans, Coleman & Johnson Limited. This method precludes the need of mixing machinery on the job and generally speeds up operation.

Concrete workers, general construction laborers and carpenters are already at work and plumbers and electricians will be able to commence setting pipe immediately.

Figure 13: Daily Colonist: February 22, 1950, page 3.

Figure 14: Daily Colonist: July 23, 1950, page 42.



DAILY COLONIST, VICTORIA, B.C. SUNDAY JULY 23, 1950

BUILDING FOR A GREATER VICTORIA

NEW BRITISH COLUMBIA POWER COMMISSION BUILDING, now up to the fourth story, covers an area bounded by Burdett Avenue, Blanshard Street and Cormorant Street. The foundation for the building was blasted out of solid rock. The ground slopes up so that the entrance to the building on the opposite side is gained on the second floor.

Figure 15: South-facing view of the BCPC building along Fairfield Road, BC Archives, b-04581_141, 1951.

A plaque on the interior of the building details a chronological (approximate) history of the building that notes the building was renovated in 1980-81, including new interior paint highlighting the chair and plate rails and coving, carpets, and altering some walls after which the building became the headquarters of the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the Ministry of Environment. In 1994, the exterior was painted, and a Wildlife Diversity Mural was painted on the north entrance of the building by Victoria artist, Rick Thomas, with the assistance of other staff members of the Ministry at the time.

In 1998, wood-panelled rooms and the entrance foyer were re-stained by West Isle Industries Limited of Victoria, at which point the building became the headquarters of the new Ministry of Fisheries.

As noted in the *CRD Art Deco and Moderne* survey undertaken by Donald Luxton in 1984, The BCPC Building is considered *"one of the best buildings of this period in the province."*

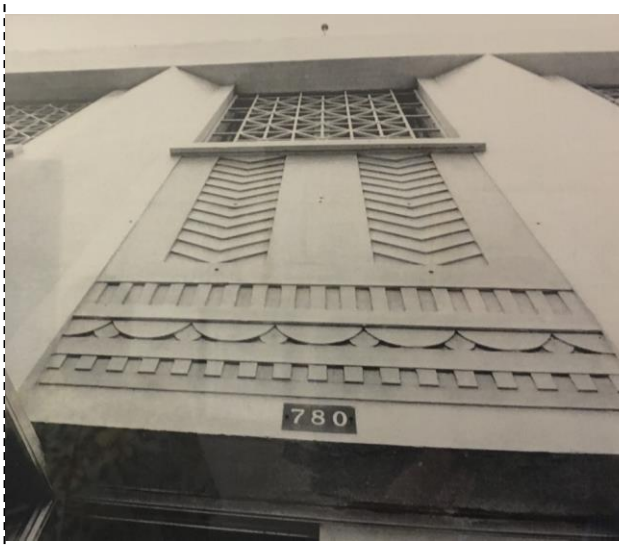


Figure 16: View of chevron spandrels and horizontal bands of vertical beveled geometrics and half-disc motifs, decorative metal window grilles on the north entrance.

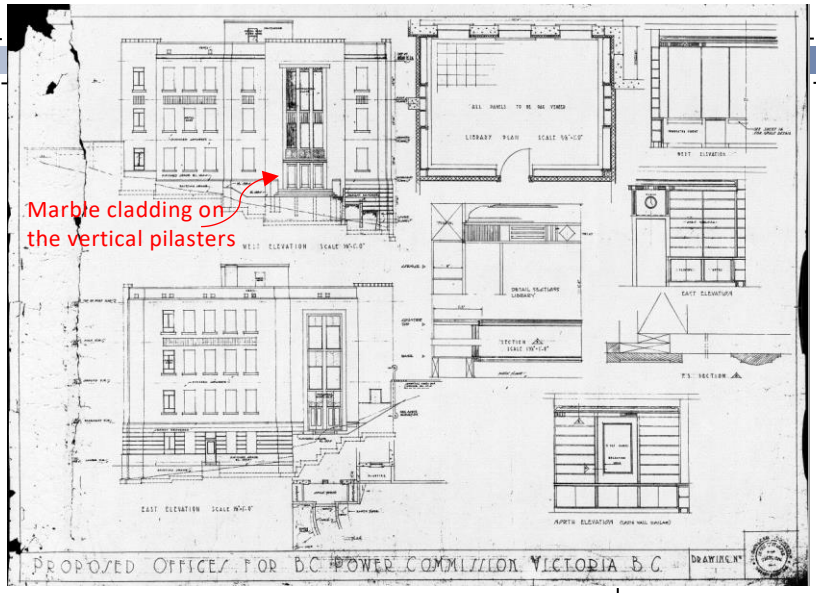


Figure 17: West and East Elevations, Library Plan and Details

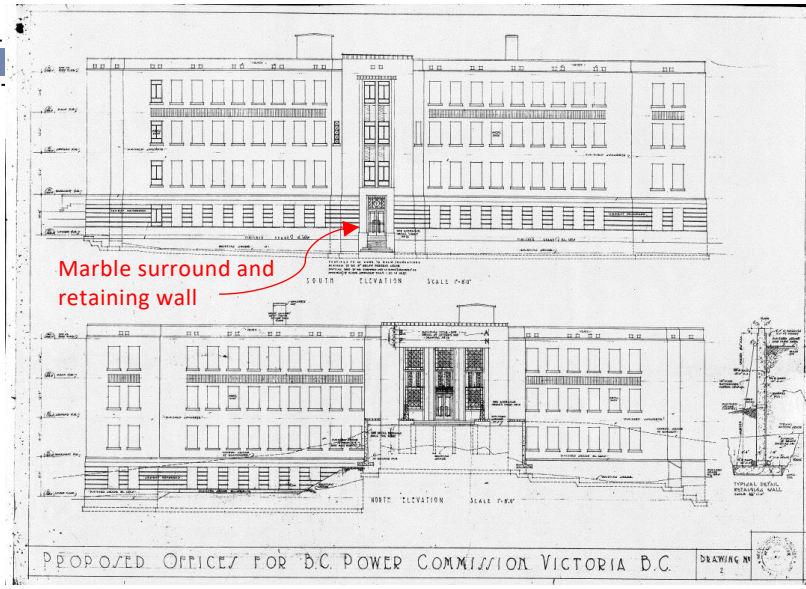


Figure 18: West and East Elevations, Library Plan and Details

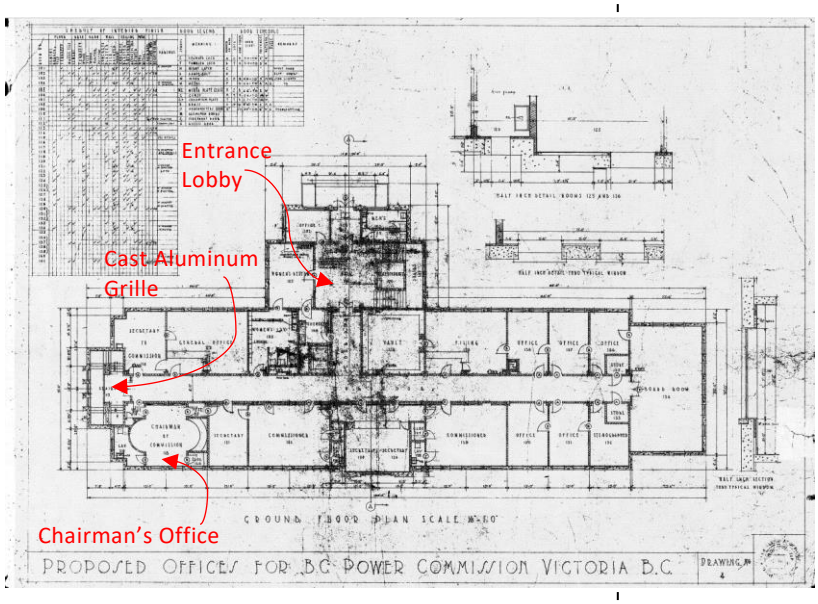


Figure 19: Ground Floor Plan (North Entrance) – Level 3

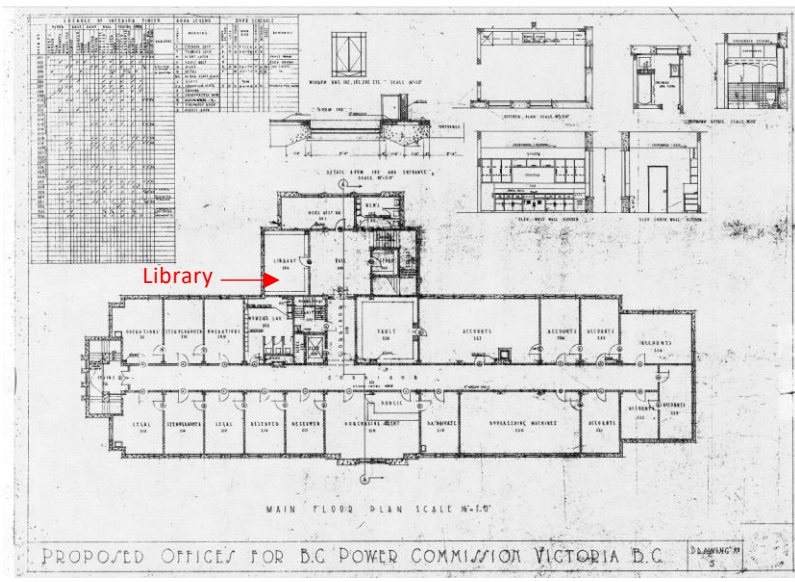


Figure 20: Main Floor Plan – Level 4

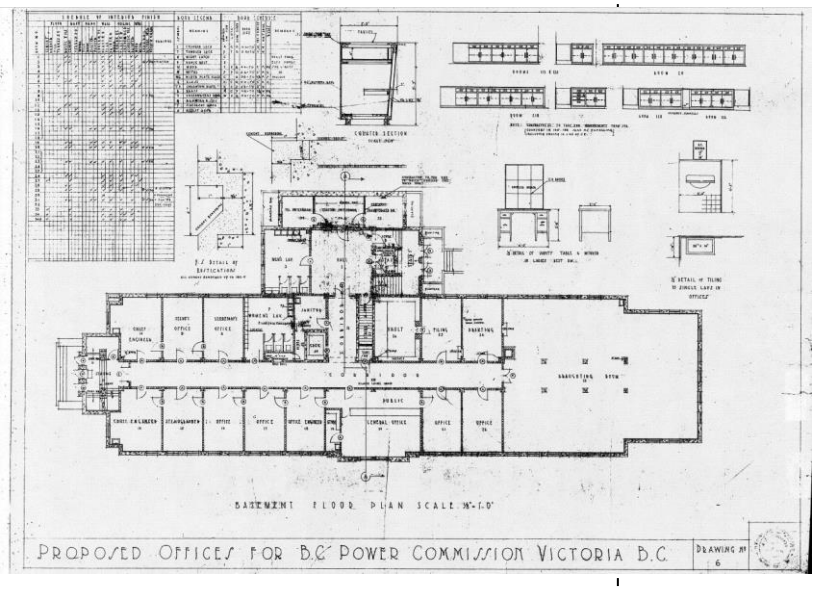


Figure 21: Basement Floor Plan (West Entrance) – Level 2

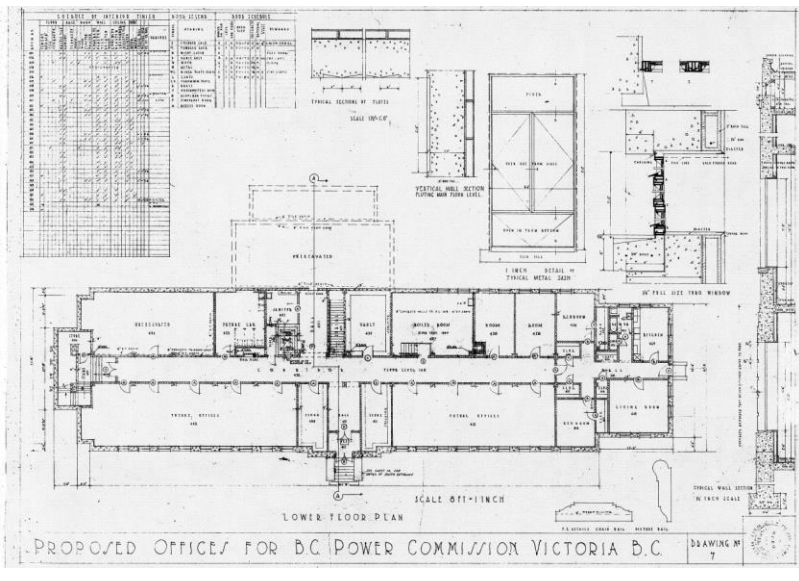


Figure 22: Lower Floor Plan (South Entrance) – Level 1

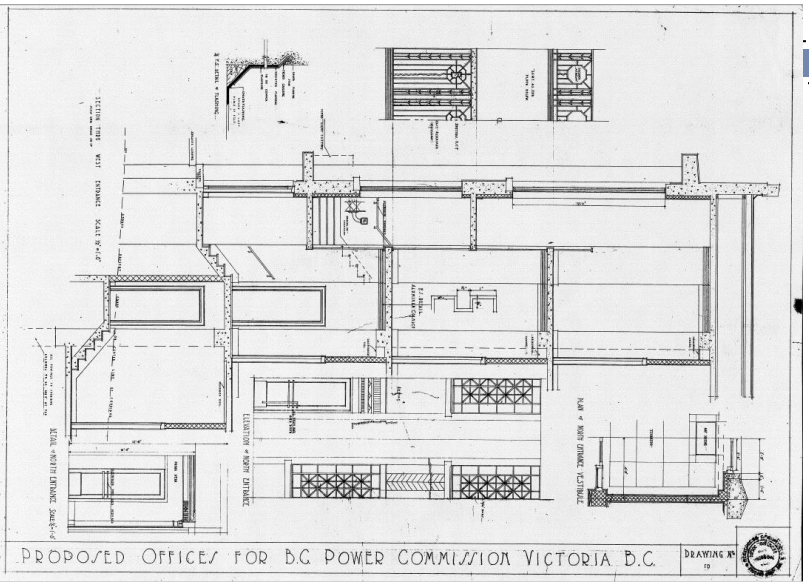


Figure 23: Section Thru West Entrance / Elevation of North Entrance

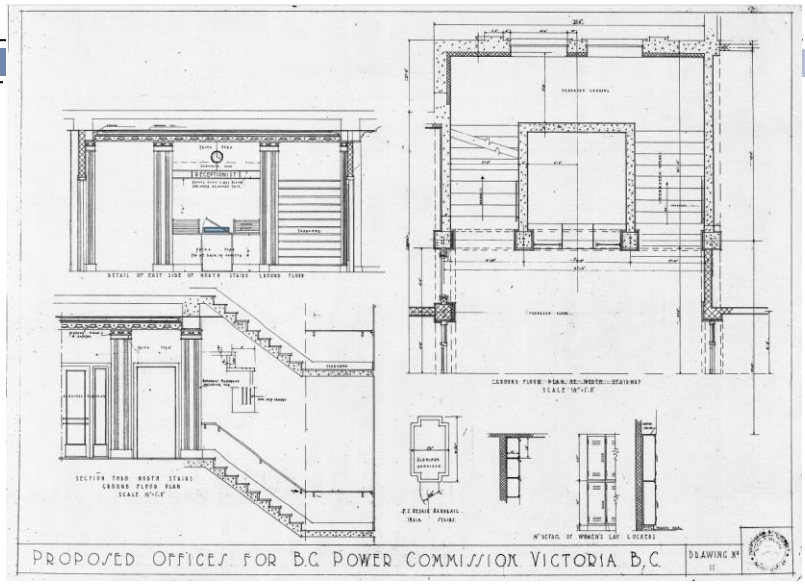


Figure 24: Section Thru North Entrance / Stairwell Plan

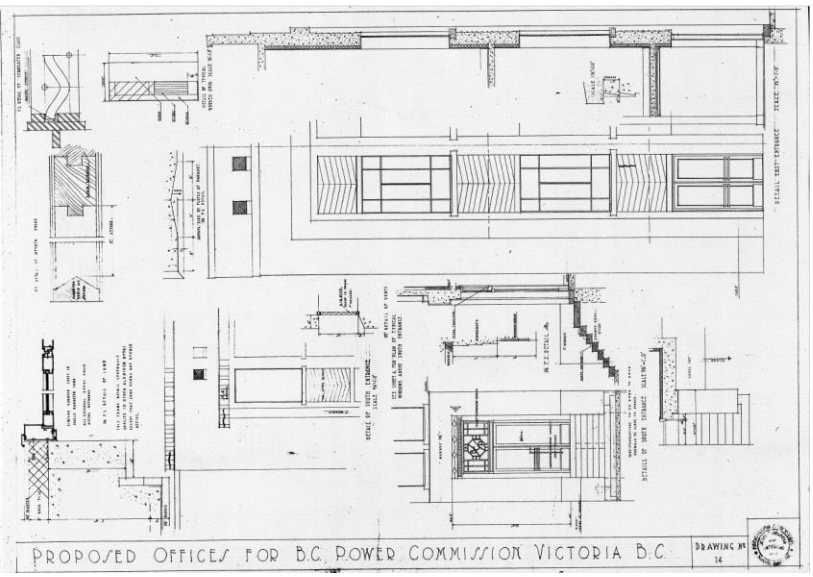


Figure 25: Details of South and East Entrance

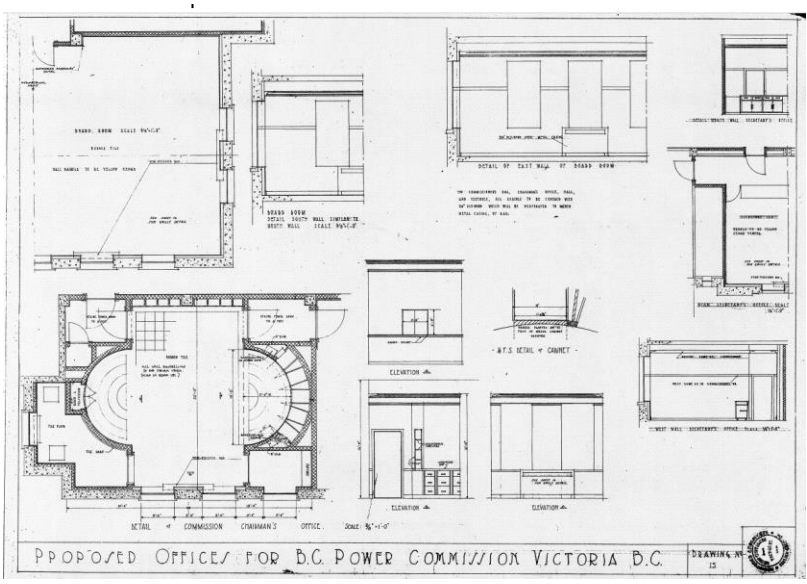


Figure 26: Plan and Details of Chairman's Office and Boardroom

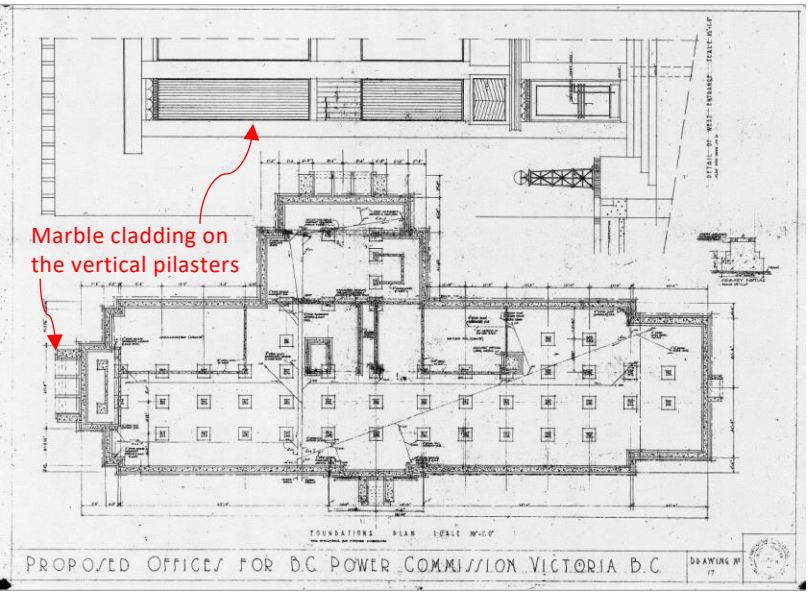


Figure 27: Foundation Plan and Details of West Entrance

These architectural drawings were sourced from Reliance Properties Ltd., who obtained them from the City of Victoria. The drawings included here are part of a larger set of architectural, electrical, heating, and mechanical/plumbing drawings that were released to Reliance Properties. Such archival drawings are immensely useful in providing information about the original design and detailing. The drawings could also be displayed along the corridors of the ground floor on the same level as the original Chairman's Office (now referred to as the Conference Room).

3. Heritage Value Assessment

3.1 Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework

The Heritage Value Assessment is based on Victoria's Heritage Thematic Framework and supports a value-based assessment of its heritage beyond just the architectural value of the resource. *Heritage Value* is defined as "the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, or spiritual importance for past, present or future generations." Victoria's city-wide *Heritage Thematic Framework* is a set of historic themes that define a range of significant historic activities and places in the development of Victoria up to present day, including the physical development of the city, non-physical ideas, movements, and events.

The Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework:

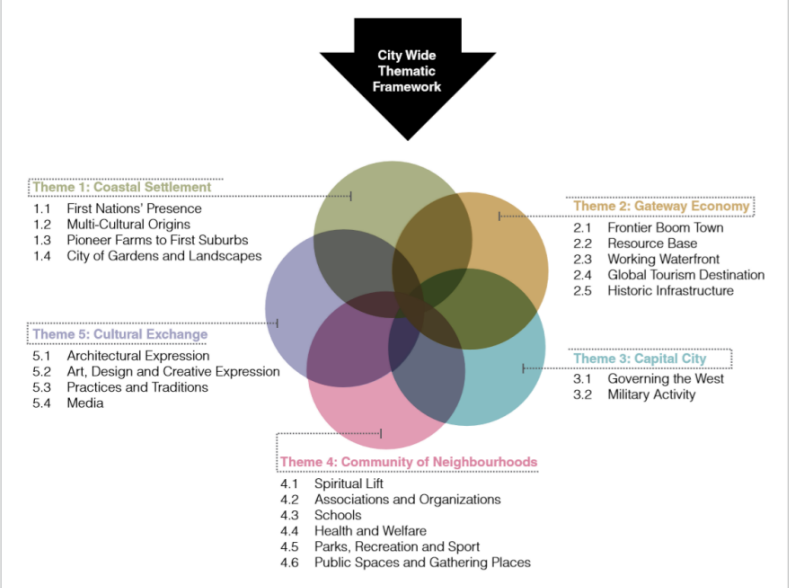


Figure 28: The Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework, City of Victoria Official Community Plan, page 72. The *Statement of Heritage Value* in Section 3.2 is based on this Thematic Framework. Relevant themes include:

- Theme 1: Costal Settlement
- Theme 2: Gateway Economy
- Theme 5: Cultural Exchange

3.2 Statement of Heritage Value

The British Columbia Power Commission is a large Art Deco style office building located at the edge of the Humboldt Valley in downtown Victoria. Built on a triangular steep sloping site, the building has a four-storey south-facing elevation and a three-storey north-facing elevation featuring a two-storey main entrance.

Theme 1.1: Coastal Settlement – First Nations' Presence

The location of the historic place is associated with the land of the Lekwungen, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations (part of the Indigenous North American Coast Salish people). The

continuing presence of the First Nations is evident in several historic places that are identified with unique site markers that designate culturally significant sites to the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in Victoria.

Theme 2.2: Gateway Economy – Resource Base

The historic place has heritage value for its association with the public sector enterprise that helped shape British Columbia's waterpower industry. During the Second World War, Victoria was a wartime defense centre and Canada's major coast naval port. After the war, the city was impacted by thousands of returning demobilized troops. Many new families relocated to Victoria, which transformed the urban downtown core. The provincial economy was rapidly expanding and saw its population more than double between 1946 and 1966. Urban renewal to house the returning veterans led to new subdivisions and appealing neighbourhoods with bungalows representing the new modern spirit of domestic ideals.

One of the greatest obstacles to growth in British Columbia at the time was the lack of power. Outside of major Victoria and Vancouver, smaller cities, towns, villages, and remote ranches and homesteads obtained

Figure 29: South-facing view of the BCPC Building along Fairfield Road, BC Archives, i-51736_141, 1956.

Figure 30: North Entrance, January 2022.

power from small diesel and hydroelectric plants operated by local municipalities.

Within this new urban context, the BC Power Commission was created by the Electric Power Act passed in 1945 by Premier John Hart. The building was constructed in 1949-50 as the administrative headquarters for the Commission. The mandate of the Commission was to oversee hydro power production in the province by merging generation and distribution facilities into one system, and to extend service to communities that did not have power at all. The goal was to stimulate population growth and industrialization. The Nanaimo Duncan Utilities (NDU) was the first utility acquired by the Commission, leading to 200 additional communities to its system over a fifteen-year period.

The building was also the location of the development of the Columbia River Treaty, which was signed in 1991, and led to the Commission amalgamating with BC Electric in 1962 to form what is now known as BC Hydro.

Theme 5.1: Cultural Exchange – Architectural Expression

The BC Power Commission Building has heritage value for its late representation of an Art Deco vernacular. The building is situated on a sloping triangular site of approximately 0.59 acres in area. The sloped site buries the mass of the building on the north side exposing two stories at the north entrance and four stories on the south side. The structure is

Figure 31: View of south elevation of the BCPC Building from Fairfield Road, May 6, 2017.

Figure 32: View of west elevation from Burdett Avenue, May 6, 2017.

constructed with a partial basement/ground level cast-in-place concrete slab-on-grade, with cast-place foundation walls. The overall structure is comprised of reinforced concrete.

The building's stylistic motifs unify the mass that is composed of different elevations. The Art Deco geometric forms and ornamentation include horizontal incised speed-stripes along the first floor paralleled by a horizontal band of vertical bevels spanning the façade above the third-floor windows; low-relief chevron spandrels, zigzag geometrics, half disc motifs, and vertical ridges; beveled roof termination, decorative metal window grilles on the north entrance, and vertical corrugated glass panels separated by four vertical quadrangular pilasters that accentuate the west entrance; and a fluted parapet termination over the north, west and south entrances.

The interior of the building also contains heritage value. The third-floor entrance lobby expresses a vernacular adaptation of Art Deco with flush wood panelling and columns and coves interpreting classical elements with rich detail and finish. The west side stairwell comprises of a terrazzo floor, tall corrugated glass windows, and aluminum rails that contain frozen fountain motifs and the B.C.P. initials integrated into octagonal insets. The Chairman's Office, also known as the "The Rounded Room" consists of blond unstained wood wall panelling that is quarter-sliced prima veneer from Mexico. The darker inlays are zebrawood from West Africa and the diamond shapes are pomelle mahogany from Central America. Built-in cabinets circle one end of the symmetrical, oval room. The interior woodwork was provided by Victoria-based Crow Gonnason

Figure 33: Chairman's Office (The Round Room), January 2022.

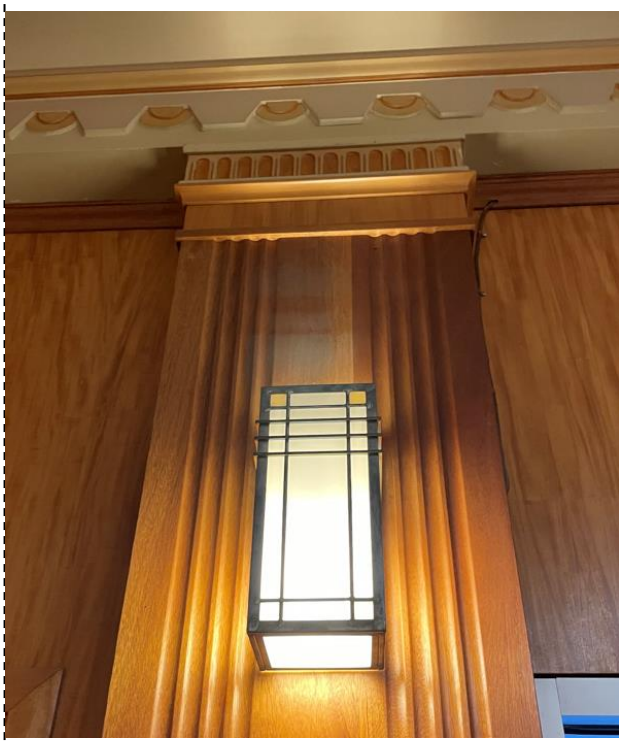
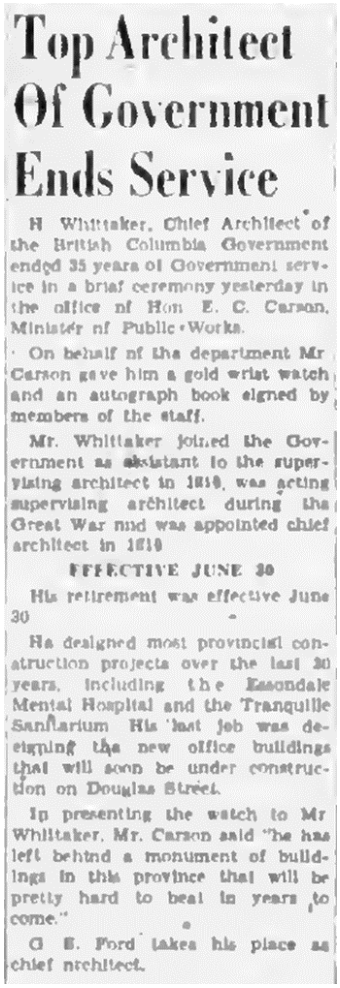


Figure 34: Example of Art Deco interior light fixtures, January 2022.

Figure 36: Henry Whittaker, 1886-1971. Source: Building the West: The Early Architects of British Columbia, page 428.



Top Architect Of Government Ends Service

H Whittaker, Chief Architect of the British Columbia Government ended 35 years of Government service in a brief ceremony yesterday in the office of Hon E. C. Carson, Minister of Public Works.

On behalf of the department Mr Carson gave him a gold wrist watch and an autograph book signed by members of the staff.

Mr. Whittaker joined the Government as assistant to the supervising architect in 1910, was acting supervising architect during the Great War and was appointed chief architect in 1919

EFFECTIVE JUNE 30

His retirement was effective June 30

He designed most provincial construction projects over the last 30 years, including the Essondale Mental Hospital and the Tranquille Sanitarium His last job was designing the new office buildings that will soon be under construction on Douglas Street.

In presenting the watch to Mr Whittaker, Mr. Carson said "he has left behind a monument of buildings in this province that will be pretty hard to beat in years to come."

G E. Ford takes his place as chief architect.

Figure 37: Daily Colonist: June 16, 1949, page 3.

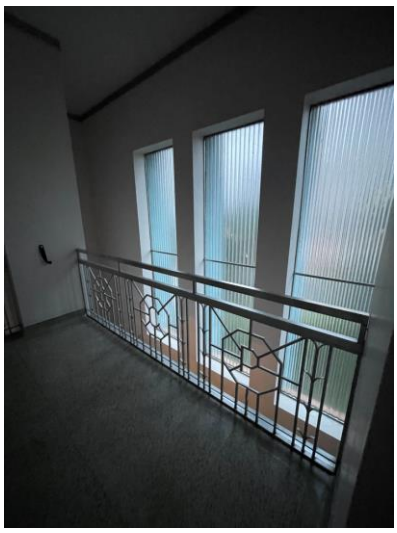


Figure 35: Three-storey high aluminum stairwell screen with the initials B.C.P., January 2022.

Company Ltd. Many of the interior fittings and fixtures remain intact, especially in the public spaces.

Henry Whittaker is noted as the architect, and Northern Construction Co. from Vancouver and J.W. Stewart Ltd as the builders. Henry Whittaker was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on May 15, 1885. Whittaker arrived in Canada in 1913, after which he became an assistant in the drafting department of the BC Public Works Department in Victoria. He retired in 1954 and died in Victoria on August 18, 1971. Although other sources offer differing information, the fiscal year reports of the Minister of Public Works provide a reliable account that show Whittaker was promoted to Acting Supervising Architect in 1917-18, to Supervising Architect in 1918-19, and then to Chief Architect for the province in 1928-29 until leaving his position in 1949.

Although Whittaker retired as Chief Architect on June 30, 1949, he entered private practice in partnership with Donald Wagg, and continued to advise on government projects, including the British Columbia Power Commission Building. Whittaker was also the First Vice-President of The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) in 1936, and later serving on the RAIC Council. He also served as President of the AIBC in 1935-37. Other examples of his work include the Douglas Building, constructed in Victoria in 1949-50, the Penticton Court House and a Provincial Government Building in Courtenay, BC.

The *Dictionary of Architects in Canada* biography identifies the British Columbia Power Commission Building as one of Whittaker's best works.

4. Statement of Significance

4.1 Statement of Significance

Description

The BC Power Commission is a large Art Deco style office building located at the edge of the Humboldt Valley in downtown Victoria. Built on a slope, it has two visible storeys on its northern façade and four storeys facing south.

Heritage Value

The BC Power Commission Building is valuable to the City of Victoria because of its distinctive architectural design, and for its connection with the public sector enterprise that helped shape British Columbia's waterpower industry.

This historic site was built in 1949-50 and first occupied in January 1951 as the headquarters of the British Columbia Power Commission, which was created by the provincial government in 1945. The building was designed by the BC Public Works Department's Chief Architect, Henry Whittaker,

Figure 39: View of north elevation with two-storey entrance with the 1994 Wildlife Diversity Mural. Note the incised 'British Columbia Power Commission' letters are filled in. Existing colour palette is not original to the 1949 building, nor is the mural.

Figure 40: British Columbia Power Commission Administrative Building, Victoria. Source: The 6th Annual Report of the British Columbia Power Commission for the Year Ended March 31st, 1951.

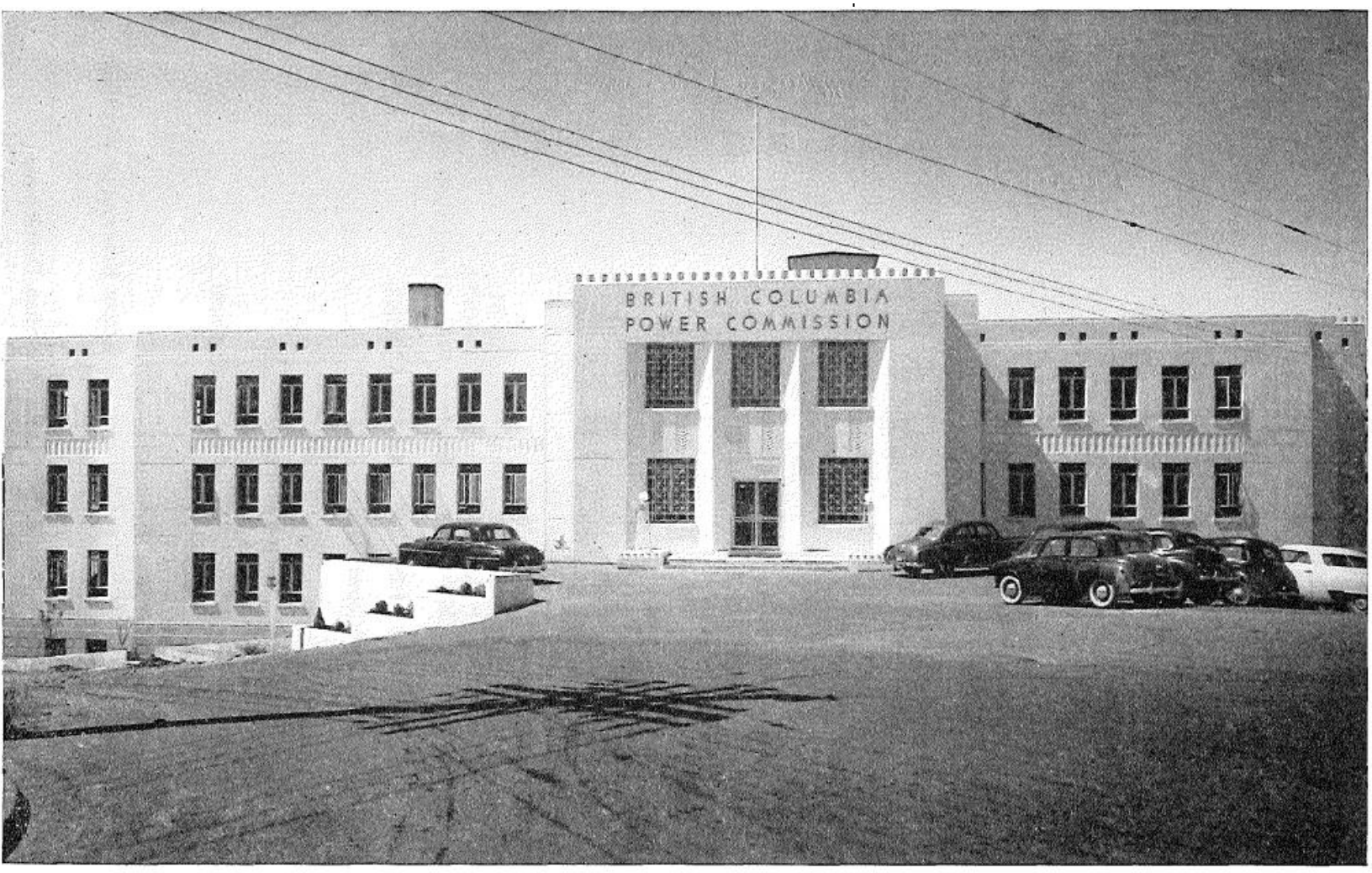


Figure 41: View of east elevation.

Figure 42: View of west elevation. Vertical pilasters and the closed stair retaining walls to be restored to original appearance clad in marble.

who in 1949 left his position after 36 years of service. Whittaker also served as the First Vice-President of the RAIC in 1936 and served as President of the AIBC in 1935-37. Although Whittaker's design is a fairly late expression of the Art Deco style, the poured concrete building's fine architectural composition is integral to its heritage role within the urban core of Victoria's downtown. Its geometric form and stylistic motifs provide a significant counterpoint to the typically Victorian nineteenth century architecture of nearby landmarks, such as St. Ann's Academy, and communicate a sense of modernity well suited to its original function as the control centre for the electrification of the province in the mid-twentieth century.

The history of continuous public sector use of this building supports Victoria's role as a centre of government since the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that this building was the location of the development of the Columbia River Treaty which was signed in 1961.

Figure 43: View of south elevation facing Fairfield Road.

Figure 44: (left) Surround around south entrance and closed stair retaining walls to be restored to their original appearance clad in marble.

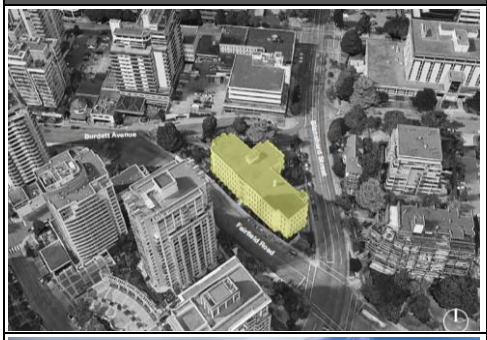
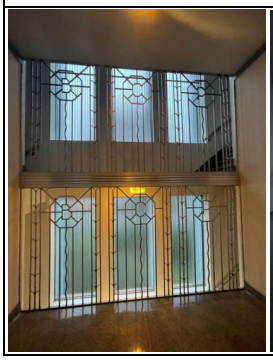
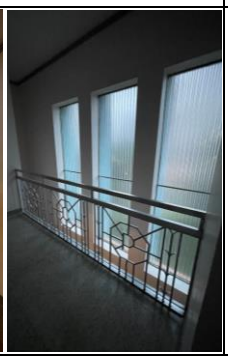
Figure 45: (right) Stained and faded painted exterior wall surfaces.

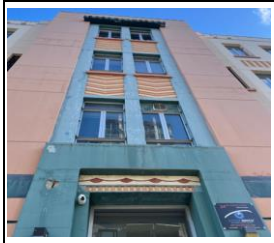
4.2 Character-Defining Elements

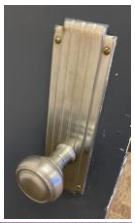
The primary character-defining elements that distinguish the heritage character of the BC Power Commission Building include, but are not limited to, the following:

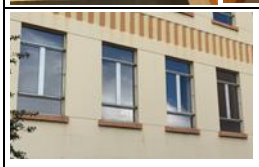
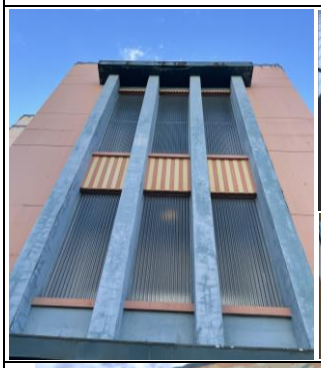
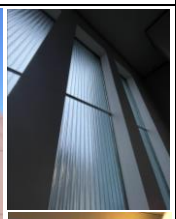
- Location on the edge of the Humboldt Valley.
- Four-storey flat-roofed form and geometric massing.
- Architectural composition designed to accommodate its sloping lot and to accentuate the height of the southern façade.
- Association with the BC Power Commission as evidenced in such interior elements as the three-storey high aluminum stairwell screen with the initials B.C.P.
- All surviving Art Deco detailing relevant to its 1949 design.
- Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design.
- Original spatial configurations, fittings, and detailing of the Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office).
- Pattern of fenestration openings, window pane divisions, and south entrance transom.
- Corrugated glass windows on west elevation.
- Metal window grilles.

Table 1: List of Character-Defining Elements and their Present Condition

Character-Defining Element	Description	Location	Present Condition
	On the edge of Humboldt Valley	780 Blanshard Street with Fairfield Road along the south edge and Burdett Avenue on along the north edge.	Remains in its original location.
	Four-storey flat-roofed form and geometric massing.	Same as above. View looking NW from Fairfield Road and Blanshard Street.	Form and massing have not changed other than a four-storey exterior stair addition on the northeast section of the north facing façade. The current multi-colour palette departs from the original intent of using the play of light and shadow to further express its geometric patterns.
	Architectural composition designed to accommodate its sloping lot and to accentuate the height of the southern façade.	Evident on the east and west elevations where it slopes down from Burdett Avenue to Fairfield Road.	Topography of site has not changed.
 	Association with the BC Power Commission as evidenced in such interior elements as the three-storey high aluminum stairwell screen with the initials B.C.P.	West interior entrance.	Excellent condition.

Character-Defining Element	Description	Location	Present Condition
	All surviving Art-Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design, such as horizontal banding and zig zag geometry.	View of south façade facing Fairfield Road.	Generally, the exterior wall surfaces are in good condition with some localized paint maintenance and repair. Evidence of paint peeling, bubbling, spalled concrete, cracks in stucco, and staining.
	All surviving Art-Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design, such as chevron spandrels, horizontal bands of half-disc motifs, and angular pilasters.	View of north entrance facing Burdett Avenue.	Generally, the exterior wall surfaces are in good condition with some localized paint maintenance and repair. Evidence of paint peeling, bubbling, spalled concrete, cracks in stucco, and staining.
	All surviving Art-Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design, such as the vertical rectangular pilasters terminating with a projecting horizontal canopy, tall corrugated glass windows interrupted by bands of zig zag geometry.	View of west entrance facing Penwill Green Park.	Concrete metal-clad canopies show signs of corrosion, efflorescence, deteriorating and loose concrete, and the soffits above the entrance doors are in disrepair. The original marble cladding on vertical pilasters and closed stair retaining walls were replaced with stucco in 1966.
 	All surviving Art-Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design, such as zig zag panels, fluted canopy, chevron panels and geometric detailing.	Central entrance on the south four-storey façade; and north two-storey entrance.	Art Deco detailing remains in good condition; however staining is evident. Original marble cladding on the south entrance surround and closed stair retaining walls were replaced with stucco in 1966.

Character-Defining Element	Description	Location	Present Condition
 	Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design such as the ceiling fixtures.	Third-floor entrance vestibule and lobby.	Good working condition.
 	Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design such as Art Deco wall sconces.	Third-floor lobby.	Good working condition.
	Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design such as the porcelain pedestal sink and tap fixtures.	Chairman's Office.	Good condition.
    	Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design such as Art Deco door hardware.	Various locations throughout the interior.	Good condition.

Character-Defining Element	Description	Location	Present Condition
	Original spatial configurations, fittings, and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office).	Third-floor Chairman's Office.	Excellent condition.
 	Original spatial configurations, fittings, and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office).	Clothes and storage closet is located in the SE corner of the office and the water closet is located in the SW corner of the office.	Excellent condition.
 	Pattern of fenestration openings, window pane divisions, and south entrance transom.	North elevation.	Condition of windows in poor condition. Windows will be replaced with energy efficient units to replicate the existing in colour and appearance.
  	Corrugated glass windows on west elevation.	West elevation facing Penwill Green Park.	Appears to be in excellent condition, aside from a small crack in the upper right corner at the top of the upper right unit as it appears from the interior and is barely noticeable from the exterior. All defects will be repaired in a manner that is physically and visually compatible with the original fluted glass element.
	Metal window grilles.	North entrance.	Excellent condition.

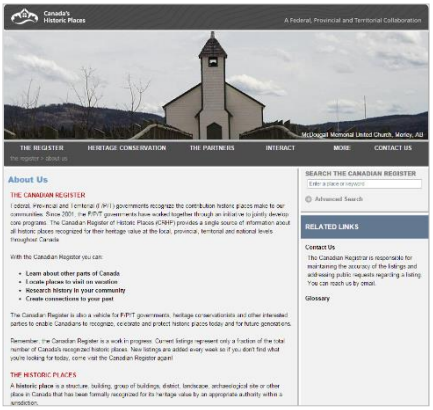


Figure 46: Canadian Register of Historic Places website, The Canadian Register of Historic Places: An invaluable resource - History and culture (pc.gc.ca)

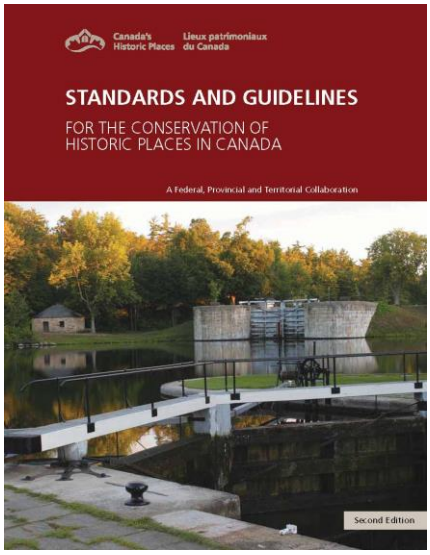


Figure 47: Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

Figure 48: BCBC Code 2018.

5. Policy Framework

5.1 National Framework

5.1.1 Canadian Register of Historic Places

The Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP) is a joint project of Canada's provincial, territorial, and federal governments to create a single source of information about all historic places recognized for their heritage value throughout Canada. The Register is a searchable online public tool to learn, locate, and research thousands of historic places across the country.

5.1.2 Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* is the first-ever pan-Canadian benchmark for heritage conservation practice in this country. It offers results-oriented guidance for sound decision-making when planning for, intervening on, and using historic places. This document establishes a consistent, pan-Canadian set of conservation principles and guidelines for preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration that is useful to anyone conserving historic places. The document is a tool that forms the basis for review and assessment of a conservation project before the project begins, and again upon completion.

5.2 Provincial Framework

5.2.1 British Columbia Building Code

The *British Columbia Building Code* sets out technical provisions for the design and construction of new buildings, but it also applies to alterations, change of use and demolition of existing buildings. Building Code upgrading is an important element of heritage building rehabilitation as it ensures the life safety and long-term protection of the heritage resource. Dealing with aspects of the Code is on a case-by-case basis with heritage buildings. The requirements of the Code are not specific to individual buildings; therefore, each heritage building requires consideration on a case-by-case basis to achieve the most economically viable option to achieving building upgrades. Although the BCBC does offer Code equivalencies, such as the use of sprinklers in a heritage building to meet the fire separation and existing requirements, obtaining a report from a Building Code consultant may be the best option to correctly interpret and identify acceptable levels of Code performance.

5.2.2 Energy Efficiency Act

The provincial *Energy Efficiency Act* (EEA) sets energy performance standards to improve the energy efficiency of manufactured fenestration products for all new and existing buildings. However, the Act was amended in 2009, and revised in 2015, to exempt heritage-designated buildings. For the purpose of this Conservation Plan, under the Act a "designated heritage building" is a heritage site protected through heritage designation or included in a community heritage register by a local government under the *Local Government Act*. Therefore, the Energy Efficiency Regulations for windows, glazing, doors, and skylights do not apply.

However, when feasible, an increase in energy efficiency by other means is recommended, such as upgrading insulation material, and mechanical systems. The goal is to comply with energy efficiency objectives in a manner that minimizes impact on the character-defining elements and overall heritage value of the historic building.

5.3 Municipal Framework

5.3.1 Official Community Plan

Victoria's *Official Community Plan* (OCP) is a 30-year plan that provides direction for growth and change in the community and was adopted by Council in 2012. Heritage related policies are provided in Section 8: Placemaking – Urban Design and Heritage with the goal to protect and celebrate Victoria's cultural and natural heritage for present and future generations.

The OCP's broad heritage related **Placemaking** objectives include:

8 (c) That new buildings and features contribute to the sense of place in development permit areas and heritage conservation areas through sensitive and innovative responses to existing form and character.

8 (i) That heritage values are considered in land management at every scale from sites to local areas.

8 (j) That heritage property is conserved as resources with value for present and future generations.

8 (k) That streetscape improvements include art in public places and reflect the culture and heritage of Victoria.

8 (l) That heritage and cultural values are identified, celebrated, and retained through community engagement.

The OCP's heritage related **Placemaking** policies for **City Form** include:

8.1 Continue to balance new development and heritage conservation throughout the Urban Place Designations in this plan.

8.6 Conserve and enhance the heritage value, character and special features of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscapes and individual properties throughout the city.

Figure 49: City of Victoria Official Community Plan (OCP), July 2012. Updated: September 7th, 2023.

8.11 Determine the heritage value of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscape and individual properties using the Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework.

The OCP's heritage related **Placemaking** policies for **Areas and Districts** include:

8.28 *Maintain and enhance the heritage character of the Urban Core through incentives that support:*

8.28.1 Conversion of upper storeys of heritage-designated properties from non-residential uses to residential; and,

8.28.2 Rehabilitation of non-residential heritage-designated properties, such as offices and hotels.

The OCP's heritage related **Placemaking** policies for **Buildings and Sites** include:

8.49 Continue to support new additions that conserve and enhance heritage property, as consistent with the National Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

8.50 Encourage new development to avoid the demolition of heritage property, or one or more of its facades.

8.51 Continue to give consideration to tools available under legislation to protect or conserve heritage property including, but not limited to: heritage designation bylaws; listing on the heritage register; temporary protection; heritage alteration permits; heritage revitalization agreements; design guidelines; and, the protection of views of heritage landmark buildings from public vantage points as identified in Map 8, and to be determined in future local plans.

8.52 Continue to enable and support heritage conservation through incentives and allowances including, but not limited to: property tax reductions; grants; bonus density provision; and zoning variances.

8.53 Require a heritage conservation plan, as appropriate, and heritage impact assessment, where relevant, for heritage alteration permits, heritage revitalization agreements, and rezonings to heritage properties.

8.54 Continue to work with senior government, community and business partners to identify, protect and conserve property of heritage value.

8.55 Continue to produce and update, as required, statements of significance for all property on the heritage register.

The location of the BC Power Commission Building at 780 Blanshard Street is in the neighbourhood of **Downtown** as shown on Map 22 of the OCP**.** The OCP's Vision in the citywide context for this area includes:

21.3.3 Home to the Capital Region's primary heritage district that defines the region's international image.

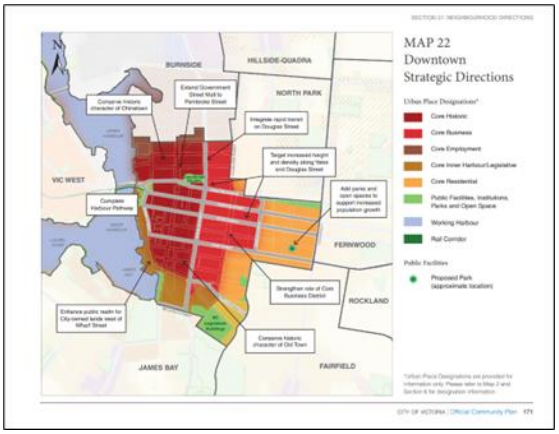


Figure 50: Map 22 – Downtown Strategic Directions, City of Victoria OCP.

In addition to the heritage related objectives, policies, and strategic directions, the OCP established urban place designations, including built form, place character, land use and density characteristics to support development that provides a diversity of places throughout the city further confirmed in policy 6.2. The **Urban Place Designation** for 780 Blanshard Street is **Core Business.** This designation is related to new development and is included here because of the scale of the proposed addition to the heritage-registered 780 Blanshard Street. The urban place guidelines for this designation include commercial, institutional, and mixed-use buildings with a continuity of commercial uses at grade and heights ranging from 10 to 15 storeys and up to 24 storeys in select locations, with high site coverage. Uses consist of continuous commercial at grade, including office and retail, and complementary uses such as residential, hotels and other visitor accommodation with emphasis on retail and restaurants. Other uses include civic and public facilities, and home occupations. Character features for primarily commercial and mixed-use areas include facades that define the street wall at three to five storeys in medium to high density areas.

However, the OCP's General Development Guidance also states that where a site is *"achieving heritage conservation objectives, or other significant public benefit, development can depart from the guidance established for Urban Place Designations, if the development is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objects of this plan, and is responsive t the envisioned context of the surrounding area."*

5.3.2 Downtown Core Area Plan

The *Downtown Core Area Plan* (DCAP) guides development in the downtown area and lays out a vision to encourage and foster the development of an attractive, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and economically resilient downtown area that also celebrates its heritage. The DCAP encourages owners of heritage buildings to rehabilitate and upgrade their properties by way of financial incentives for seismic upgrades and tax incentives. The heritage goals of the DCAP are to celebrate Victoria's architectural and cultural heritage, and to encourage the conversion of upper storeys of Downtown heritage buildings to residential use with the financial incentives available through the City's Heritage Tax Incentive Program.

The BC Power Commission Building at 780 Blanshard Street is in the **Central Business District (CBD)**, which contains a concentration of higher density office buildings to support a range of commercial uses. Hotels also play a significant commercial role in the CBD.

Relevant heritage related DCAP objectives for the **Central Business District** include:

4. *That new development respect the scale, character and function of the CBD.*

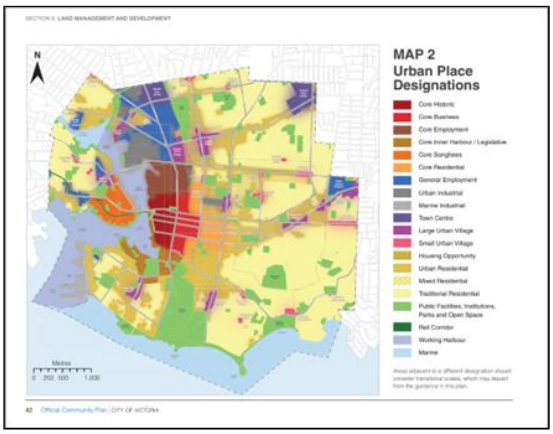


Figure 51: Map 2 – Urban Place Designations, City of Victoria OCP.

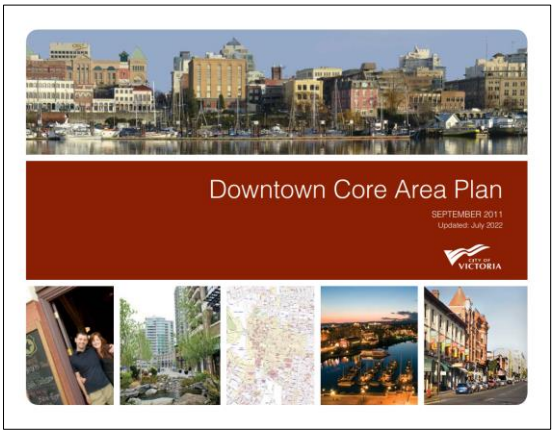


Figure 52: City of Victoria Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP).

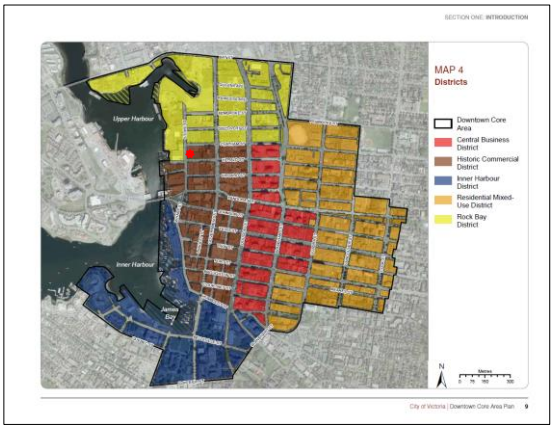
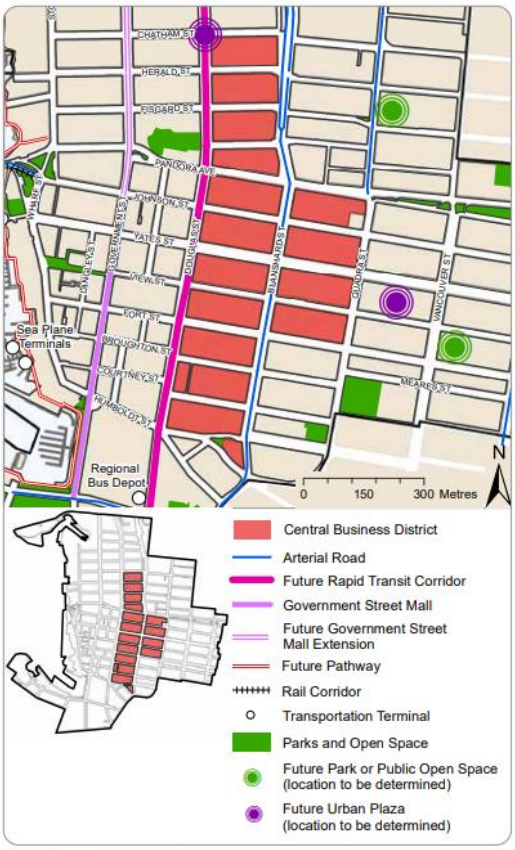


Figure 53: Map 4 – Districts, City of Victoria DCAP.



Map 9: Central Business District

Figure 54: Map 9 – Central Business District, City of Victoria DCAP.

Relevant heritage related DCAP policies and actions for the **Central Business District** include:

3.4 Support high density commercial buildings within the CBD to make efficient use of infrastructure and to maintain compact building footprints.

3.15 Amend the Zoning Regulation Bylaw to provide development standards for new commercial, residential and office developments that reflect the scale, density and context of the CBD.

3.18 Ensure that designs for new buildings located along the edges of the CBD consider scale, orientation, setback, mass and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding Districts.

The British Columbia Power Commission Building would be eligible to benefit from the **Downtown Heritage Building Seismic Upgrade Fund** under the following conditions:

4.23.1 Be located within the Downtown Neighbourhood and identified on the City of Victoria Heritage Register.

4.23.2 Complete the physical rehabilitation and seismic upgrading as stipulated within a Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

4.23.3 Agree to be designated by a Municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw, if not already.

4.23.4 Demonstrate the full and complete use of all other City of Victoria heritage financial incentives and programs.

The DCAP's **Heritage Objectives** related to 780 Blanshard Street include:

1. Retain, protect and improve real property with aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual value and heritage character as a benefit to the public.

2. Development and heritage conservation are balanced through sensitive new infill and property additions that respond to the heritage value and character of Downtown Core Area Districts.

3. Heritage conservation and urban design are integrated in streetscaping and open spaces in beautification, arts and cultural programming and public history initiatives.

4. Properties with heritage value are identified and selected for retention and protection through community engagement.

5. City of Victoria support for the conservation and celebration of properties with heritage value is maintained and enhanced.

The DCAP's **Areas and Districts - Policies and Actions** related to 780 Blanshard Street include:

7.2 Continue to balance the demand for new development and heritage conservation in the Downtown Core Area.

7.3 *Conserve heritage values of the Downtown Core Area and its character-defining elements, such as individual buildings, collections of buildings, streetscapes, structures and features.*

7.5 Produce and update, as required, Statements of Significance for Heritage Conservation Areas within the Downtown Core Area.

7.8 Continue to support the rehabilitation of heritage-designated property that is non-residential such as office and hotel, in strategic locations within the Downtown Core Area that serve to support the policies of this Plan.

The DCAP's **Buildings and Sites - Policies and Actions** related to 780 Blanshard Street include:

7.18 Support new development that conserves and enhances the form, character and features of heritage property and areas, where controlled and regulated in the Downtown Core Area.

7.19 Give consideration to tools available under legislation to conserve heritage property in the Downtown Core Area, including, but not limited to heritage designation bylaws, heritage register listings, temporary protection, heritage alteration permits, heritage revitalization agreements, design guidelines and protection of views of heritage landmarks from public vantage points as identified in this Plan.

7.20 Continue to work with the private sector to identify, protect and conserve property and areas with heritage value in the Downtown Core Area.

7.21 Require a Heritage Conservation Plan, as appropriate, and heritage impact assessment, if relevant, where heritage alteration permits, heritage revitalization agreements or rezonings that involve a protected heritage property in the Downtown Core Area.

7.25 Accumulate information about seismic conditions of all property with heritage value or character in the Downtown Core Area, particularly the landmarks identified in this plan, and property in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District.

7.26 Encourage owners of property with heritage value or character in the Downtown Core Area, particularly landmarks or those in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District, to upgrade the seismic conditions of buildings and structures.

7.28 Produce and update, as required, Statements of Significance for properties listed on the Heritage Register in the Downtown Core Area.

The DCAP's **Heritage Incentives - Policies and Actions** related to 780 Blanshard Street include:

7.29 Continue and enhance incentives for heritage conservation such as, tax incentives, parking variances and other zoning variances, where

broadly consistent with the policies for each District of the Downtown Core Area that are provided in this Plan.

7.30 Maintain and develop financial incentives for building rehabilitation, particularly seismic upgrading, for eligible heritage-designated commercial, institutional, industrial and residential property in the Downtown Core Area.

The DCAP's **Community Engagement - Policies and Actions** related to 780 Blanshard Street include:

7.35 Partner with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations to acknowledge and integrate the culture, values and heritage of First Peoples in the Downtown Core Area, particularly in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District.

The DCAP also includes design guidelines for **Heritage Buildings – Additions and Adjacencies** in Appendix 4 to ensure new buildings and additions complement adjacent heritage buildings within the Downtown Core Area. Section 5.2 Additions to Heritage Buildings is relevant to 780 Blanshard Street and recommends:

a. Where a rooftop addition is proposed as part of a heritage restoration and seismic upgrade project, ensure the rooftop addition is designed and integrated in a manner that is sensitive and compatible with the principal heritage building and that enables conservation of the whole building including its original structure to the greatest extent possible.
b. Construct new additions in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the heritage building would still be legible.
c. Conserve and reuse original finishes, columns, or other elements within publicly accessible, ground floor interior spaces.
d. Restore missing façade features and preserve existing features when a new rooftop addition is proposed.
e. Design new rooftop additions with high quality, durable materials and finishes.
f. Rooftop additions should be stepped back no less than 3 m from the façade of the building that faces a street in order to reduce the impact of the additional building mass on the public street, improve sunlight access on the public street and better distinguish the form and scale of the original heritage building.
g. Design and locate balcony railings, plantings, mechanical equipment, furniture, or any other structures associated with a new addition so that they are minimally visible when viewed from the adjacent street.

Similarly, Section 5.3 **Murals on Heritage Buildings** is also relevant, and states:

a. Avoid the application of murals on heritage building facades. Murals may be considered on secondary (not street fronting) facades provided they do not occupy the entire wall surface and

where they do not detract from the heritage value or character defining elements of the property.

5.3.3 Local Government Act

Under the Province of British Columbia, the *Local Government Act* is the primary legislation for regional districts and improvement districts, setting out the framework for structure and operations, as well as the main powers and responsibilities. It also details planning and land use powers for both municipalities and regional districts. Within this Act, Part 15 – Heritage Conservation contains seven divisions specific to a municipality's authority regarding local heritage property.

In addition, pursuant to Section 919.1 (1) (d) and (f) and 970.1 (1) of the *Local Government Act*, and the *Official Community Plan*, the area that is shaded on the OCP's Map 34 is designated as **Development Permit Area DPA 2 (HC): Core Business**.

5.3.4 Heritage Conservation Areas

Heritage Conservation Areas are distinct districts with special heritage value and character. The British Columbia Power Commission Building is in **Development Permit Area DPA 2 (HC): Core Business** which, for the purposes of heritage conservation, requires a Heritage Alteration Permit for land, buildings or other structures, or portions thereof, which are listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register, subject to a Heritage Designation Bylaw, or subject to a Covenant for heritage conservation.

As detailed in the OCP's Appendix A, the **DPA 2 (HC): Core Business** area is a major commercial and employment centre for Victoria and the surrounding region. Potential remains for revitalization through redevelopment, infill, building additions and heritage conservation, and high-density commercial development is identified for this area.

Figure 55: Map 36 – DPA 2 (HC): Core Business, City of Victoria OCP.

The OCP also places heritage value on Core Business area for its location at the eastern edge of Victoria's first commercial district in the Core Historic area. It contains high quality examples of Victoria and Edwardian architecture and streetscapes and visibly prominent features of heritage landmark buildings, such as the City Hall clock tower, the spires of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and St. Andrew's Cathedral and the Empress Hotel roofline, with the objective to protect these views from public vantage points.

The OCP identifies additional heritage-related objectives of this designation to include:

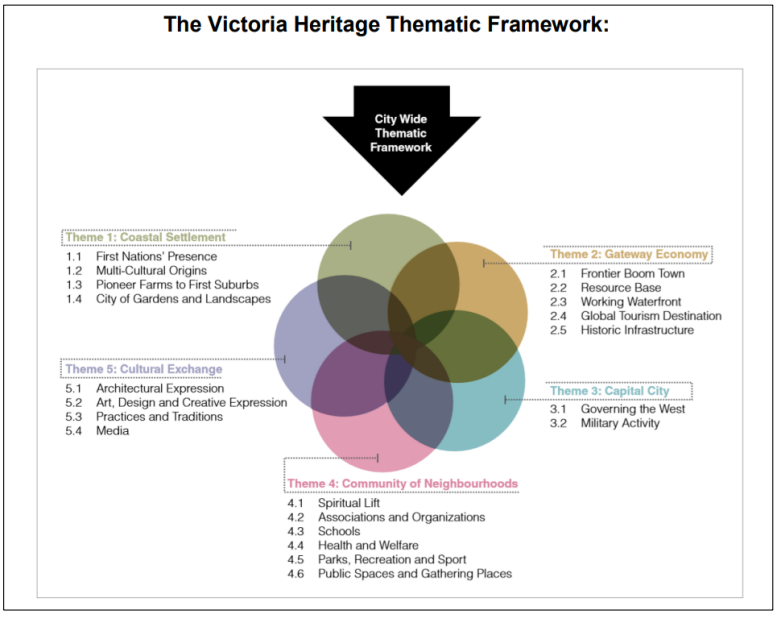
4. (b) *To conserve the heritage value, special character and the significant historic buildings, features and characteristics of this area.*

(c) *To enhance the area through a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects the function of a central business district in scale, massing and character while responding to its historic context.*

5.3.5 Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework

Victoria's OCP policies for City Form require the determination of the heritage value of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscape, and individual properties using the Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework. Victoria's Heritage Thematic Framework supports a value-based assessment of its heritage beyond just the architectural value of the resource. *Heritage Value* is defined as "the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, or spiritual importance for past, present or future generations." Victoria's city-wide Thematic Framework is a set of historic themes that define a range of significant historic activities and places in the development of Victoria up to present day, including the physical development of the city, non-physical ideas, movements, and events.

Figure 56: The Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework.



6. Proposed Project

6.1 Brief Project Description

The proposed project envisions a residential 16-storey concrete tower placed within the existing 4-storey BCPC Building while conserving its historical structure finishing. The central placement of the 16-storey footprint is in a confined central location that aligns with and rises above the central entrances of the north and south elevations, and is intended to retain the BCPC Building's horizontality, scale, and character, while accentuating the building's prominence and strengthening its sense of place on the southeastern edge of Victoria's downtown neighbourhood.

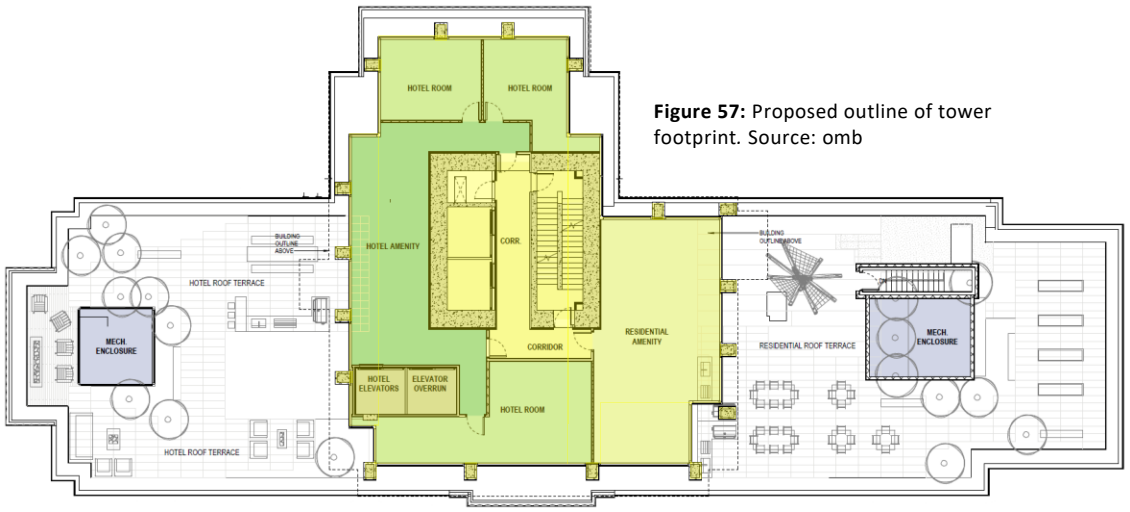


Figure 57: Proposed outline of tower footprint. Source: omb

Figure 58: Bird's eye view of proposed 16-storey tower over the 4-storey BCPC Building. Source: omb Architects + Designers.

Figure 59: View looking northeast. Source: omb Architects + Designers. Architects + Designers.

Figure 60: View looking northwest. Source: omb Architects + Designers.

6.2 Project Goal and Objectives

The architectural concept approaches the building as a heritage rehabilitation with a contemporary addition. The goal is to:

- Retain and enhance the existing character of the site.
- Deliver thoughtful architecture that is complementary to the heritage building, its immediate neighbours, and the city.
- Provide urban design that transforms the public realm around the site to better activate the street and welcome people to and around the site.
- Develop a mixed-use program that aligns with the employment, housing, and tourism goals of the city.
- Transform the site as a potential landmark at an inflection point in the city.

The proposal intends to conserve the historic building through actions and processes that protect its character-defining elements to retain the building's heritage value and extend its physical life. As described in the ***Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada***, this process involves preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration – or a combination of all three.

The rehabilitation of the BCPC Building proposes to preserve the exterior and interior character-defining elements. Although the interior configuration will be adapted for contemporary reuse, the Conference Room (Chairman's Office) and west stairwell with the three-storey aluminum railing will remain largely intact but will require minimal intervention to ensure public access. The historically intact third-floor lobby and the original wood-panelled library on the fourth floor are not identified as character-defining elements, however the intention is to

retain and reuse Art Deco features within these areas to the greatest degree possible, as well as other features identified in the Inventory of Interior Art Deco Features completed in February 2023 and revised in October 2023. In addition, the marble cladding on the surround of the south entrance and closed stair retaining walls be restored as will the marble cladding on the vertical pilasters and the closed stair retaining walls of the west entrance. The original heritage paint colours based on the heritage consultant's investigative research will also be restored, and the unoriginal northeastern exit stair core added to the building in 1979 will be removed.

As described in RJC Engineers *Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment* report, the proposal also intends to seismically upgrade the BCPC Building through a proposed concrete shearwall core design that will significantly increase the building's stiffness and limit deflections during a seismic event, which will help preserve the building's heritage value and extend its physical life. The tower and system proposed also avoids the need for external seismic elements and bracing that would damage the integrity of the entire building and have a serious impact on its character-defining elements.

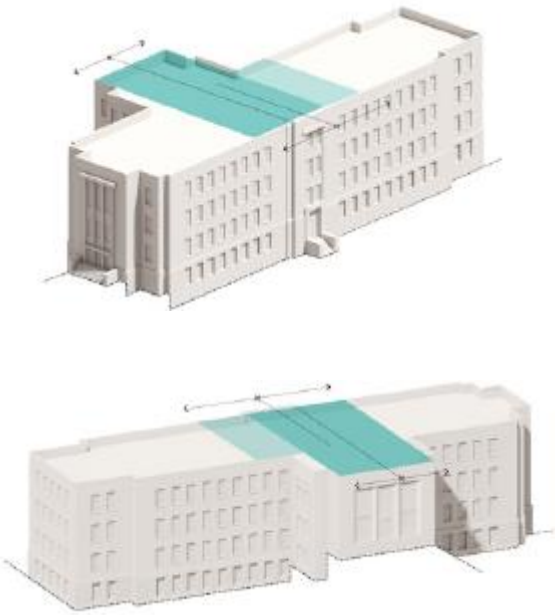


Figure 61: Floor plate of tower is in response to existing entrances and asymmetry. Source: omb Architects + Designers.

Figure 62: North elevation of the 16-storey tower showing alignment with north entrance. Source: omb Architects + Designers.

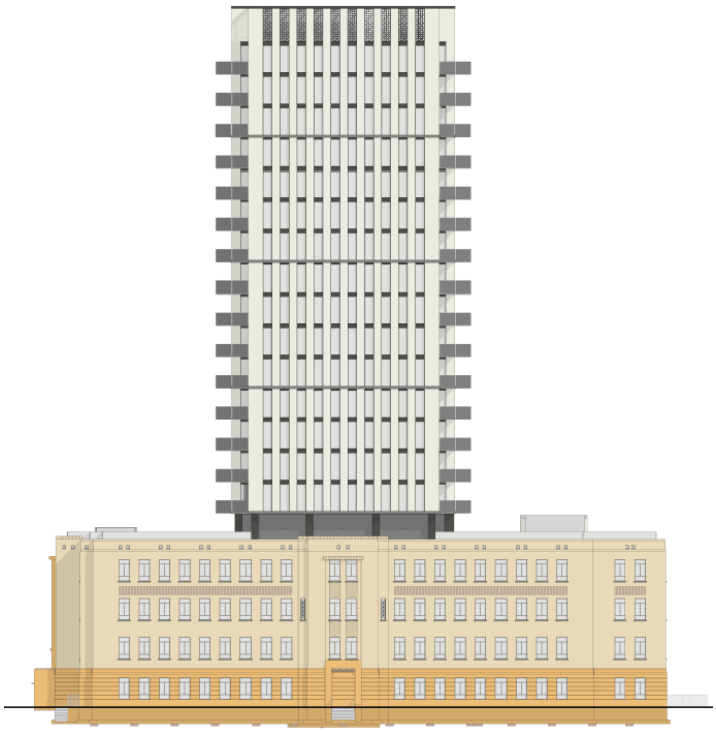


Figure 63: South elevation of the 16-storey tower showing alignment with south entrance. Source: omb Architects + Designers.

Partial Slab Demolition

Figure 64: Proposed Outline for Existing Level 1 Slab Demolition. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023. Note the existing west stairwell will be preserved and restored, the NE stair to be demolished for restoration of façade and replaced with new internal exit stair.

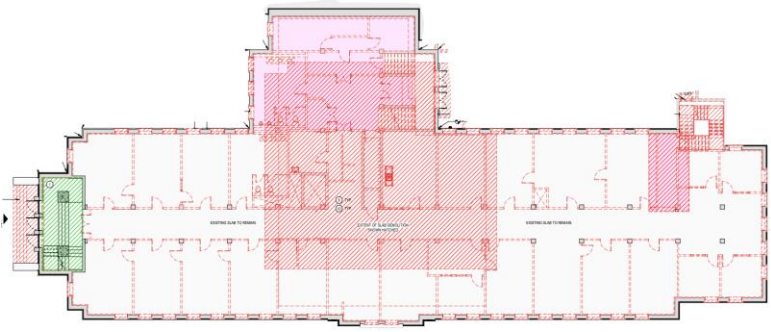


Figure 65: Proposed Outline for Existing Level 2 Slab Demolition. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

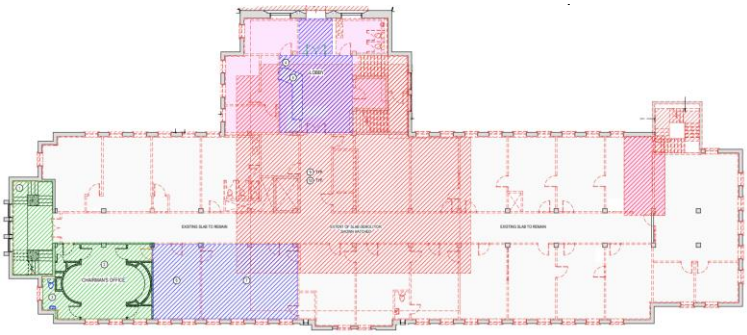


Figure 66: Proposed Outline for Existing Level 3 Slab Demolition. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023. Note the Chairman's Office will be preserved and restored, and features of the Lobby, and the offices of the Secretary and Commissioner shown in purple hatched areas will be retained and reused.

Figure 67: Proposed Outline for Existing Level 4 Slab Demolition. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023. Note the features of the Library, shown in the purple hatched area, will be retained and reused.

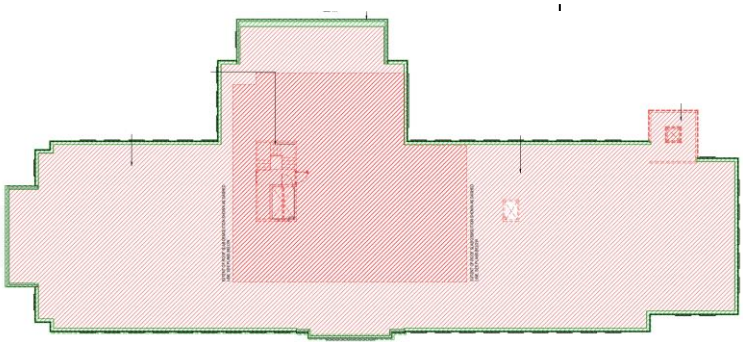


Figure 68: Proposed Outline for Existing Roof Demolition. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

Shearwall Layouts

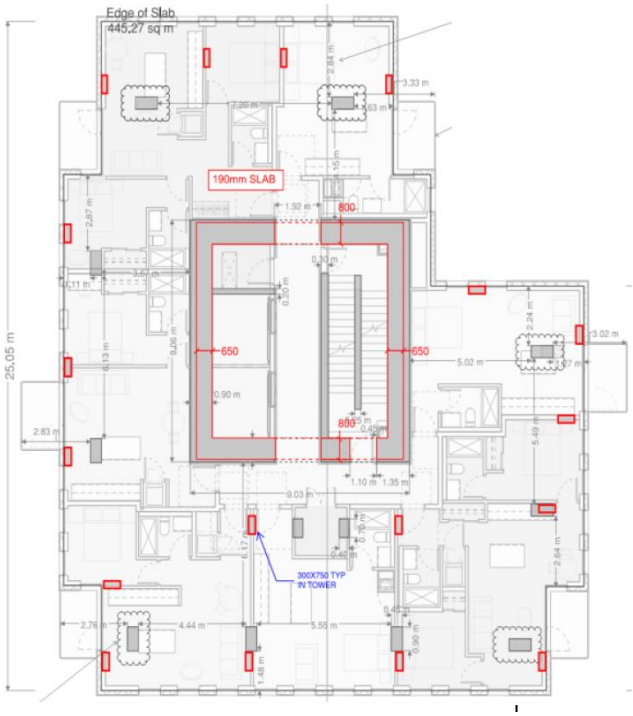


Figure 69: Preliminary Shearwall Layout for the Upper Floors of the Tower Option. Source: RJC Engineers Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment report, February 28. 2023.

Figure 70: Preliminary Shearwall Layout for the Lower Floors of the Tower Option. Source: RJC Engineers Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment report, February 28. 2023.

Proposed Floor Plans

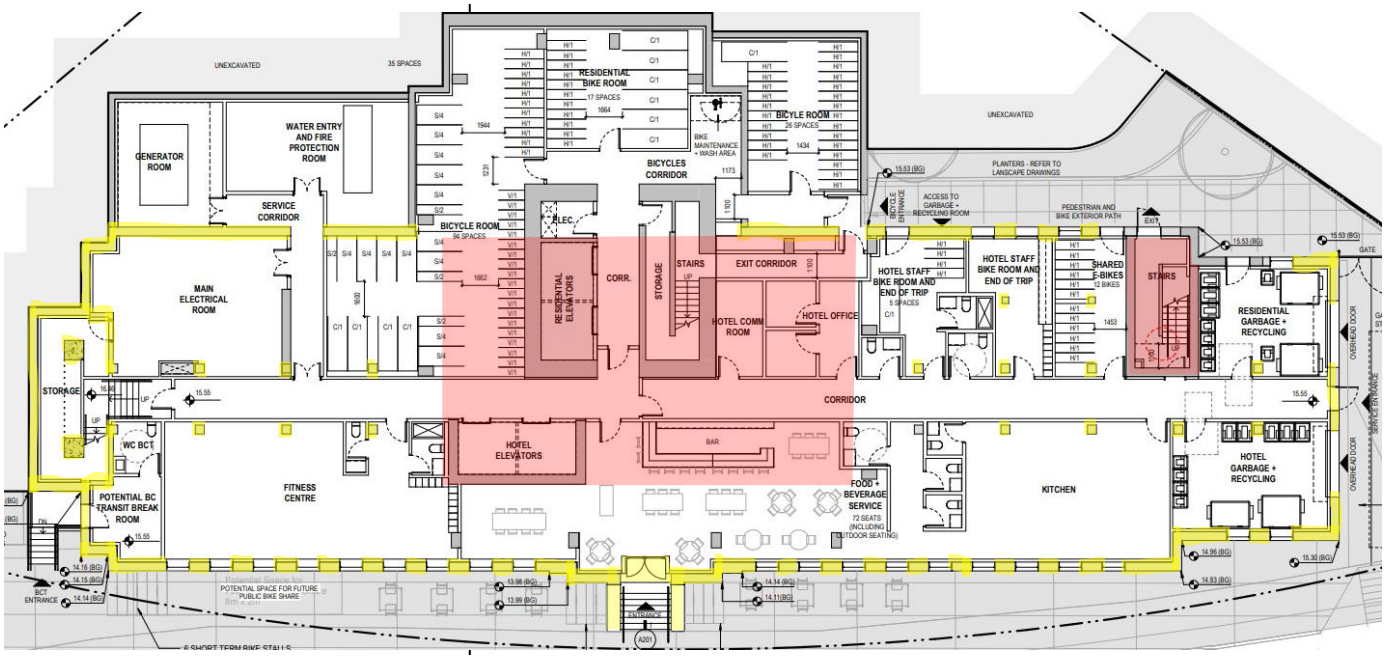


Figure 71: Proposed Level 1 Floor Plan. Retention of building and structure. The south entrance and closed stair retaining walls and surround will be restored to their original appearance with dark marble cladding. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

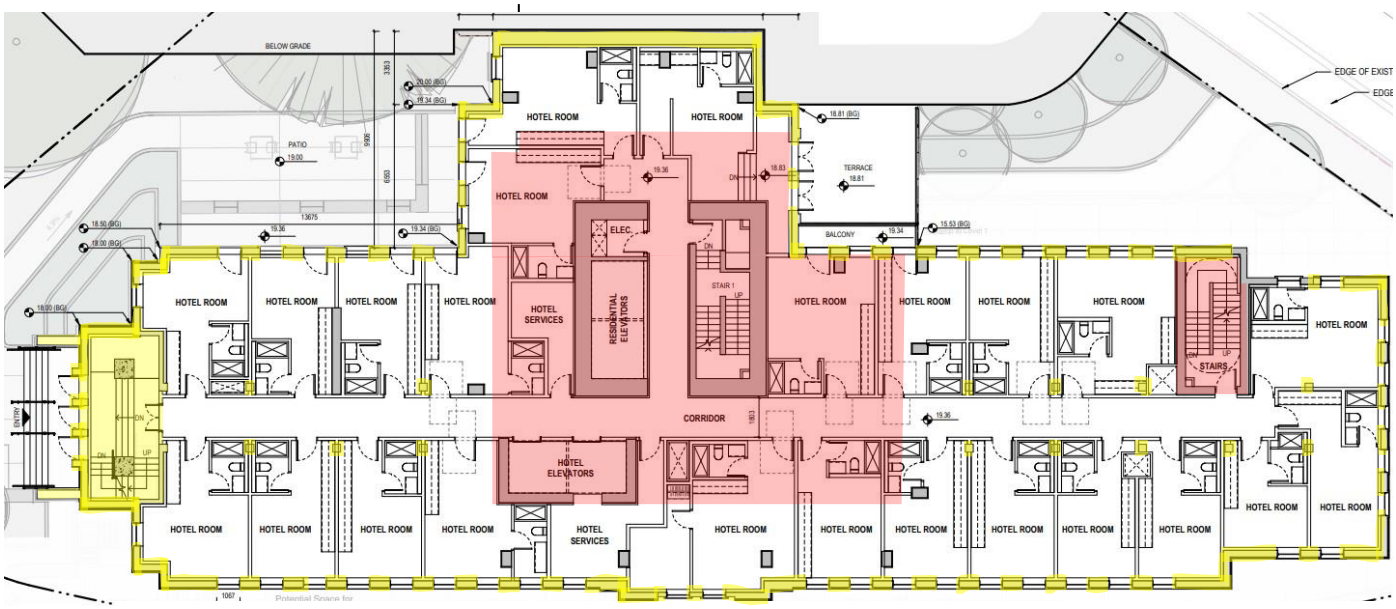


Figure 72: Proposed Level 2 Floor Plan. Retention of building and structure. The west entrance and closed stair retaining walls and vertical pilasters will be restored to their original appearance with dark marble cladding. The interior west stair will be preserved and restored. Internal configuration is relatively maintained. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

Red area indicates proposed outline for integration of new and existing slabs. Source: RJC Engineers Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment report, February 28, 2023.

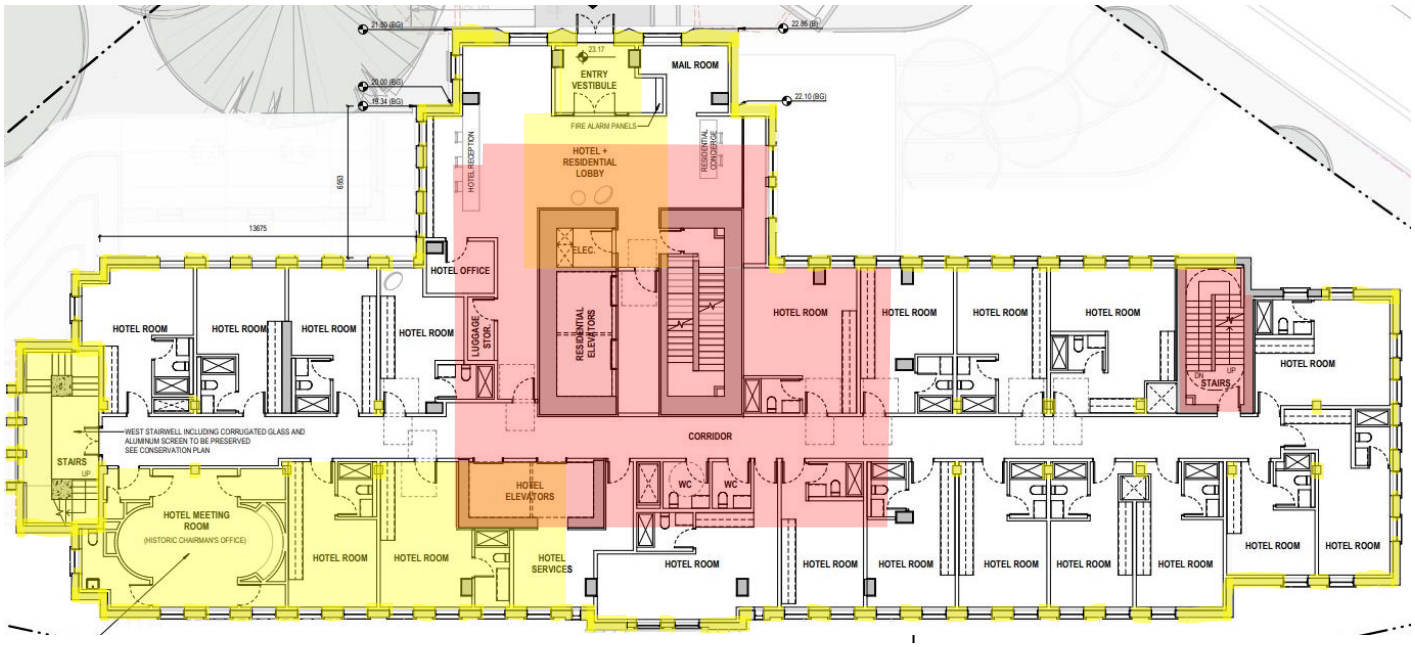


Figure 73: Proposed Level 3 Floor Plan. Retention of building and structure. The Conference Room (Chairman's Office) and West Entrance Stairwell are also fully retained. Art Deco features in the vestibule, lobby, and the Secretary and Commissioner's Offices will be retained and reused. Internal configuration is relatively maintained. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

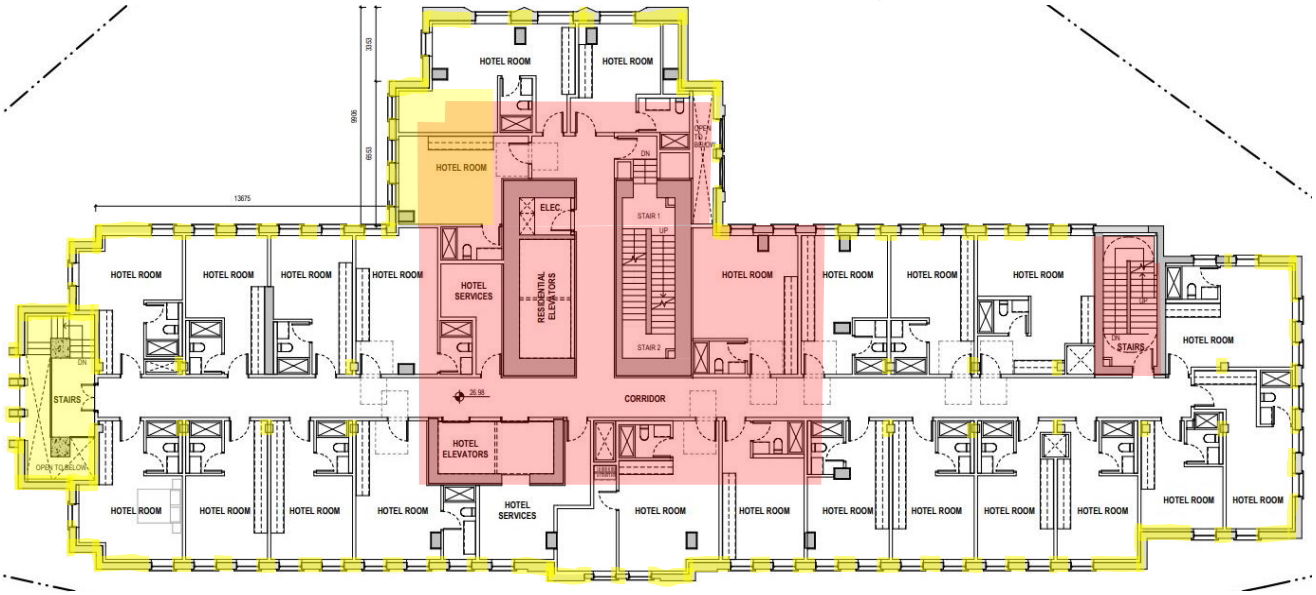


Figure 74: Proposed Level 4 Floor Plan. West stairwell fully retained. Features in the Library will be retained and reused. Internal configuration is relatively maintained. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

Red area indicates proposed outline for integration of new and existing slabs. Source: RJC Engineers Seismic Upgrade & Heritage Impact Assessment report, February 28, 2023.

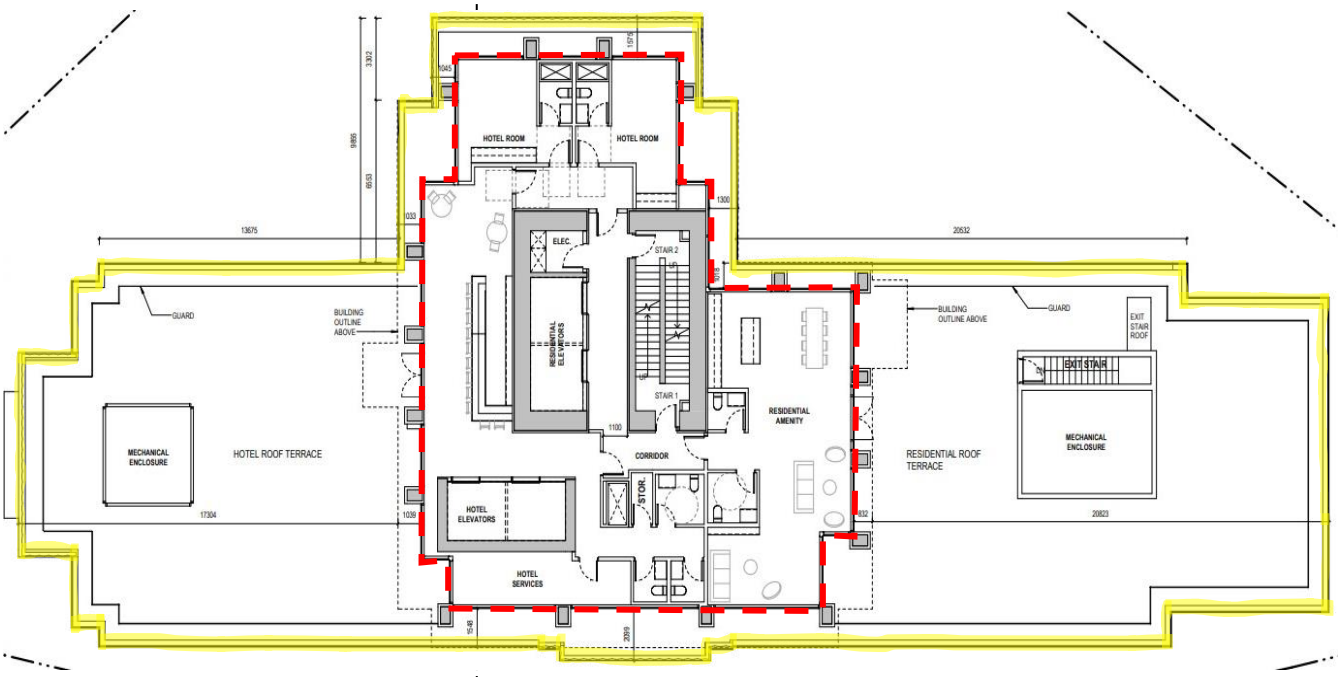


Figure75: Proposed Roof Plan. Footprint of tower shown as a red dashed line and is set back 1.575m from north façade and between 1.548m-2.099m from the south facade. Source: omb Architects + Designers architectural drawings, February 17, 2023.

7. Impact Identification and Assessment

7.1 Potential Direct and Indirect Impacts

In accordance with the BC Heritage Branch *British Columbia Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference*, adverse effects are more specifically defined as direct or indirect impacts. More specifically, the *Terms of Reference* states:

> *Direct impacts are the immediately demonstrable effects of a project which can be attributed to particular land modifying actions.*
>
> *Indirect impacts result from activities other than actual project actions. Nevertheless, they are clearly induced by a project and would not occur without it.*

The *Terms of Reference* also states:

> *The assessment is aimed at determining the extent or degree to which future opportunities for conservation or public appreciation are foreclosed or otherwise adversely affected by the proposed action.*

Using the "level-of-effect indicators" identified by the BC Heritage Branch, this assessment will study **the impact on the heritage building of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction** in terms of the building's heritage value and character-defining elements as identified in the Statement of Significance.

The assessment also includes level-of-effect indicators identified by the BC Heritage Branch and is reported in a quantitative and objective manner to determine the level of impact on the heritage resource in terms of its heritage value and character-defining elements from low to high as shown below.

Heritage Value

- Its distinctive architectural design.
- Its connection with the public sector enterprise that helped shape British Columbia's waterpower industry.

Character-Defining Elements

- Location on the edge of the Humboldt Valley.
- Four-storey flat-roofed form and geometric massing.
- Architectural composition designed to accommodate its sloping lot and to accentuate the height of the southern façade.
- Association with the BC Power Commission as evidenced in such interior elements as the three-storey high aluminum stairwell screen with the initials B.C.P.
- All surviving Art Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design.
- Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design.
- Original spatial configurations, fittings, and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office).
- Pattern of fenestration openings, window pane divisions, and south entrance transom.
- Corrugated glass windows on west elevation.
- Metal window grilles.

LOW
- Little to no impact on heritage resource.

LOW/MODERATE
- Impact on heritage resource on a small scale.

MODERATE
- Impact on heritage resource but not critical.

MODERATE/HIGH
- Impact on heritage resource is severe but not high.

HIGH
- Impact on heritage resource is severe.

Table 2: Potential Direct Impacts on the BCPC Building's Heritage Value

Direct Impacts	Relevance to the Heritage Building
Magnitude: The amount of physical alteration or destruction which can be expected. The resultant loss of heritage value is measured either in amount or degree of disturbance. **LOW** • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The new structural elements required for the tower and during construction are confined to the central core area, ensuring a large portion of the existing structure will be retained, thus eliminating the need for external seismic elements and bracing, which would have a direct impact on the exterior. Slab demolition is confined to the central core and ensures the retention of the exterior form by maintaining proportions, colour and massing of the original structure. The verticality of the structural elements required for the tower is in proportion to the horizontality of the heritage resource and rather than diminish the resource, it accentuates it. Although not identified as character-defining elements, the interior third-level lobby and fourth-level library configurations will be impacted but their materials, details, and fittings will be retained and reused in areas of the hotel that are visible to the public. In some cases, removal could cause irreparable damage to one or more features. In such cases, the features would need to be replaced with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements. Overall, it is anticipated the resultant loss of heritage value by the impact of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction is considered to be on a low scale.
Severity: The irreversibility of an impact. Adverse impacts which result in a totally irreversible and irretrievable loss of heritage value are of the highest severity. **MODERATE** • Impact on heritage resource but not critical. **LOW** • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	With the new structural elements required for the tower and during construction confined to the central core area, the severity of impact is kept to a minimum. A portion of the building's floor slabs, and roof, shown in Figures 62, 63, 64, 65 and 66 will be demolished to accommodate structural elements for the proposed tower, a new elevator, and a new exit stairwell. The preliminary shearwall layout for the BCPC building shows a central core shearwall envelope for the core of the tower, as well as shearwalls incorporated into the new elevator, stairs, and demising walls. The new structural elements for the tower are realistically irreversible and have a moderate impact on the form and mass of the historic resource in a non-critical manner while having little effect on the building's heritage value and character-defining elements listed in the SoS. The new structural elements will also have no impact on the building's current location, its relationship to the sloping topography, elements expressing association with the BCPC, exterior Art Deco detailing, or the Conference Room configurations, fittings, and detailing. An inventory of other interior Art Deco features not listed as character-defining elements was completed in February 2023 and documents finishes, fittings and fixtures in the lobby, library, and other locations for the purpose of retention and reuse in public areas of the hotel. Overall, the new structural elements required for the tower and during construction does not impact future opportunities for conservation and public appreciation, and is therefore not considered severe nor critical.

Table 2: Potential Direct Impacts on the BCPC Building's Heritage Value

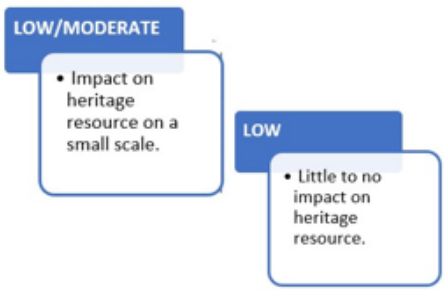
Direct Impacts	Relevance to the Heritage Building
Duration: The length of time an adverse impact persists. Impact may have short-term or temporary effects, or conversely, more persistent, long-term effects on heritage sites.  	The impacts of new structural elements required for the tower will be long-term, while those for construction are anticipated to be short-term and temporary, and dependent on construction schedules. The proposed construction sequence stages the removal of the central existing slab while preserving the exterior façade and providing access to construct the central core, upgrade the foundation, and construct columns to support the tower. The impact of the structural elements does alter the heritage structure's form and massing; however, the confined footprint of the tower and its proportion in relation to the BCPC's horizontality accentuates the heritage resource rather than diminishing it, which is a positive long-term effect. Thus, the impact is not considered critical. In addition, the duration of the impact will have no effect on the west stairwell elements such as the terrazzo floor, aluminum rails, and the three-storey corrugated glass. The configurations, fittings and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room will not be impacted and there will be little impact to the exterior Art Deco detailing.
Range: The spatial distribution, whether widespread or site-specific, of an adverse impact. 	The impact of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction is confined to the central core of the historic resource and is not anticipated to be widespread beyond proposed shearwall locations on all four levels around a new interior northeast stairwell, a new elevator shaft, and demising walls. In addition, the range of the impact will have no effect on the west stairwell elements such as the terrazzo floor, aluminum rails, and the three-storey corrugated glass. The configurations, fittings, and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room will not be impacted and there will be little impact to the exterior Art Deco detailing.
Frequency: The number of times an impact can be expected. For example, an adverse impact of variable magnitude and severity may occur only once. An impact such as that resulting from cultivation may be of recurring or ongoing nature. 	The impact of new structural elements required for the tower will occur once. It is anticipated there will be an impact frequency of temporary structural elements during construction until the completion of the interior core area on all floors and roof of the historic resource. Thus, the frequency of the impact on heritage value is considered to be on a small scale. In addition, the frequency of the impact will have no effect on the west stairwell elements such as the terrazzo floor, aluminum rails, and the three-storey corrugated glass. The configuration, fittings and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room will not be impacted and there will be little impact to the exterior Art Deco detailing.

Table 2: Potential Direct Impacts on the BCPC Building's Heritage Value

Direct Impacts	Relevance to the Heritage Building
Diversity: The number of different kinds of project-related actions expected to affect a heritage site. LOW/MODERATE • Impact on heritage resource on a small scale. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The diversity of impacts of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction will be limited to the central core with additional shearwall elements incorporated into the existing building at the elevator, stairs, and demising walls. It is anticipated the overall diversity of project-related actions will have a small scale impact on the heritage resource. The diversity of the impact will have no effect on the west stairwell elements such as the terrazzo floor, aluminum rails, and the three-storey corrugated glass, nor on the configuration, fittings and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room.
Cumulative Effect: A progressive alteration or destruction of a site owning to the repetitive nature of one or more impacts. MODERATE • Impact on heritage resource but not critical. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	Demolition of central portions of the concrete floor slab will be required to accommodate the new structural elements of the tower and will progress to all four slabs, including the roof. However, the majority of existing slab diaphragms will continue to support the heritage façade laterally while the new structure connects with no seismic separation. The new structural elements will serve to retain, stabilize, and protect the existing form, material, and integrity of the historic resource, thus extending its physical life and increasing life safety. There will be no cumulative effect on the west three-storey stairwell, nor on the original spatial configurations, fittings, and details of the third-floor Conference Room.
Rate of Change: The rate at which an impact will effectively alter the integrity or physical condition of a heritage site. Although an important level-of-effect indicator, it is often difficult to estimate. Rate of change is normally assessed during or following project construction. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The impact of new structural elements required for the tower and during construction will not negatively alter the integrity or physical condition of the heritage site. Instead, the structural elements will incorporate a retrofit of the existing structure to achieve life-safety performance at 100% of the current BCBC. The upgrade will also include seismic and gravity enhancement to meet 100% of the current code. In addition, the proposal incorporates the retention of a significant amount of the existing interior structure, materials, and configuration, most which are not identified as character-defining elements, as well as all of the exterior character-defining elements. Thus, the negative impact is considered low, and the positive impact is considered high.

This study also considers Indirect impacts on the BCPC Building's heritage value as defined by the BC Heritage Branch within the *Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference*:

> *Indirect impacts result from activities other than actual project actions. Nevertheless, they are clearly induced by a project and would not occur without it.*

In the case of 780 Blanshard Street, character-defining elements relate to location; building form and massing; architectural composition; association with the BC Power Commission; Art Deco detailing; surviving interior fittings and fixtures; and original spatial configurations, fittings, and details of the third-floor Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office); pattern of fenestration openings, window pane divisions, and south entrance transom; corrugated glass windows on west elevation; and metal window grilles. It is in this context that indirect impacts related to shadow, isolation, and land disturbance are assessed.

Table 3: Potential Indirect Impacts on the BCPC Building's Heritage Value

Indirect Impacts	Relevance to the Heritage Building
Shadows created that alter the appearance of a character-defining element. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The new structural elements required for the tower and during construction are not anticipated to result in shadows that will alter the appearance of character-defining elements or the heritage value of the historic resource. While the proposed structural elements will cast shadows where they may not currently exist, shadow impacts are considered where they will alter a heritage character-defining element. Since shadowing on these character-defining elements is not anticipated to be permanent due to fluctuation throughout the day and season, alteration or destruction of the character-defining elements is not anticipated.
Isolation of a character-defining element from its surrounding environment, context, or a significant relationship. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The impact of the new structural elements for the tower and during construction is not anticipated to result in isolation of a character-defining element from its surroundings, environment, context, or a significant relationship.
Land Disturbance such as a change in grade that alters the historic patterns of topography or drainage. LOW • Little to no impact on heritage resource.	The impact of the new structural elements for the tower and during construction is not anticipated to cause land disturbances or change in grade that alters historic patterns of topography or drainage.

A summary of these direct and indirect impacts on each of the character-defining elements described in the BCPC Statement of Significance is provided in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Summary of Potential Direct and Indirect Impacts on the BCPC Building's Character-Defining Elements

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS	DIRECT IMPACT								INDIRECT IMPACT		
	Magnitude	Severity	Duration	Range	Frequency	Diversity	Cumulative Effect	Rate of Change	Shadows	Isolation	Land Disturbance
Location on the edge of the Humboldt Valley.	L	L	M	L	L/M	L/M	M	L	L	L	L
Four-Storey flat-roofed from and geometric massing.	L	M	M	L	L/M	L/M	M	L	L	L	L
Architectural composition designed to accommodate its sloping lot and to accentuate the height of the southern façade.	L	L	M	L	L/M	L/M	M	L	L	L	L
Association with the BC Power Commission as evidenced in such interior elements as the three-storey high aluminum stairwell screen with the initials B.C.P. and such exterior elements as incised signage on the north façade.	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
All surviving Art Deco detailing relevant to its 1949-50 design.	L	L	L	L	L/M	L/M	M	L	L	L	L
Surviving interior fittings and fixtures related to its original design.	L	M	M	L	L/M	L/M	M	L	L	L	L
Original spatial configurations, fittings and detailing of the third-floor Conference Room (originally the Chairman's Office).	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Pattern of fenestration openings, window pane divisions, and south entrance transom.	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Corrugated glass windows on west elevation.	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Metal window grilles.	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L

L – Low Impact **L/M – Low/Moderate Impact** **M – Moderate Impact** **M/H – Moderate/High Impact** **H – High Impact**

7.2 Potential Beneficial Impacts

Direct and indirect impacts in a Heritage Impact Assessment often focus more so on the negative or destructive effects an alteration may have on a heritage property. However, the BC Heritage Branch Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference states the following:

> *Beneficial impacts occur wherever a proposed development actively protects, preserves, or enhances a heritage resource.*

In terms of this proposed project for 780 Blanshard Street, potential beneficial impacts are as follows:

- The retention and re-adaptation of the building, thus a full demolition to construct a fully compliant structure with current zoning, which would be considered a HIGH impact, is avoided.
- Heritage value of the building will be conserved and will continue to be an integral part of the community.
- All exterior facades will be retained and preserved and restored to their original condition, rather than partially concealed.
- Character-defining elements contributing to the building's heritage value will be retained.
- Many of the interior heritage elements not identified as character-defining, but obviously carrying heritage value in their own right, will be retained and reused for a continuing or compatible contemporary use.
- The construction approach intends to preserve existing materials, features, and spatial configurations while limiting temporary exterior bracing that would otherwise be required during construction.
- Repair or replacement of deteriorated features will be undertaken following the recommendations outlined in the Conservation Plan and in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.
- The existing structure will be upgraded to meet full seismic and gravity compliance with the current BCBC for new and existing primary and secondary structural elements.
- The majority of the building will remain completely intact while the interior core of the new slabs are integrated with the existing slabs.
- The proposed concrete shearwall core design provides the greatest stiffness to the existing structure's lateral system to limit deflections, preserve the building, and extend its physical life.
- Gravity upgrades are focused on the central core area, thus ensuring a large portion of the existing structure is retained, significantly reducing the bracing and timelines required during construction.
- The tower configuration preserves all exterior elements of the existing structure and reduces the need for additional external

seismic elements and bracing, thus external walls will remain unchanged.

- The tower configuration eliminates the need for seismic separation between the new and existing structure.
- The tower configuration provides the greatest retention of the building components and ensures the majority of floor slabs are preserved to continue to act as a large player in supporting the heritage facades laterally, thus significantly reducing the amount of external temporary steel bracing and construction time.
- The existing building's concrete diaphragm will be utilized for future gravity and seismic loads for 100% of the BCBC and upgraded if and where required.
- The existing architectural appearance of the BCPC Building will be maintained during the construction phase and well into the future.
- The compatible use as a hotel, and substantial retention of the interior configuration, removes the need to make changes or readapt the exterior expression to accommodate other non-compatible uses and needs, such as exterior balconies.
- Repair of any damage caused by temporary bracing during construction will be minimal as exterior bracing attached to the exterior façade is not required.
- All parapets and other potential falling hazards, such as the projecting concrete canopies on the west façade, will be upgraded and restrained to 100% of the BCBC requirements.
- The existing roof slab of the existing BCPC Building will be retained and upgraded to carry the new rooftop amenity space. As a result, a non-accessible and unused space in the former use becomes active with semi-public accessibility that allows more people to experience the rooftop's spatial qualities and appreciate the building's location and outward views within the city.
- There will be new semi-public access to areas identified as character-defining, such as the Conference Room (Chairman's Office) and the west stairs that were previously only accessible to a few.
- Art Deco features not identified as character-defining in the SoS will be salvaged with the aim of reusing elements in public areas of the hotel.
- Upon completion, the BCPC Building, and the tower will act together as one to exceed a life safety designation.
- An increase in population density on the site of the historic building, thus creating a resurgence of vibrancy that enables a greater appreciation of the BCPC Building and its heritage values, as well as a heightened level of security with a greater number of eyes on the site, the street, and beyond.

8. Conservation Strategies

8.1 Potential Mitigation

There are several ways to mitigate adverse impacts of new development on an historic structure, and the best option is one that conserves the heritage value of a historic resource. Most often, this requires retaining a heritage resource *in situ* for the life of the building. However, privately owned heritage buildings that require rehabilitation to ensure their extended physical life and conservation can become cost-prohibitive, thus requiring additional support from external sources or additional development on the site to make the vision realistic and achievable for the sake of the historic resource.

In that light, the following outlines a number of strategies designed to mitigate the force of low/moderate and moderate impacts described in Section 7 on heritage values and character-defining elements. Each strategy is tailored to each impact and its effect on values and CDEs and are based on *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

8.1.1 Severity

The new structural elements required for the tower and during construction will have a moderate impact on the form and mass of the BCPC Building, but the impact is not substantial enough to destroy or be detrimental to elements that are essential to the building's heritage character and value. For instance, from various viewpoints the original appearance of the building itself remains unchanged, especially from eye-level, and the opposing verticality of the tower places emphasis on the BCPC Building's permanence and stability that, in turn, reinforces the building's heritage value.

Since the initial writing of this Heritage Impact Assessment, the design of the tower addition has undergone a number of revisions that further underscore and strengthen the heritage value of the BCPC Building. For instance, the tower places emphasis on the BCPC Building's offsets, reveals, recesses, setbacks, alignments, and material differentiation; the transparent waistband is interrupted by dark structural columns that emphasize both connection and separation between the two parts; the inclusion of Art Deco metal grilles in the terminating parapet make reference to those in the window grilles of the north entrance; and mirrored balcony treatments allow for a play of light and reflection against the minimalist exterior surface of the tower, all of which accentuate the BCPC Building's heritage value and character-defining elements to which it is subordinate, and serve to mitigate the impact of severity.

While the tower addition is a means of renewal for the BCPC Building and therefore should enhance the building's systems, structural reinforcement, accessibility, and circulation; it is also an opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between new and old by enabling the BCPC Building to represent its own history. Carefully salvaging the interior Art Deco features identified in the Inventory Of Interior Art Deco Features and reusing the features in a thoughtful and purposeful manner will enable the public to appreciate the continuity these elements offer in a more contemporary context.

8.1.2 Duration

Construction duration is a concern, but it has been noted that the configuration of the tower reduces construction time due to the reduced need for exterior components related to seismic upgrading. In addition, with the reduced need for exterior seismic upgrading the exterior facades will remain unaffected throughout and after construction. This assurance will most definitely be required and will reassure the surrounding community that expectations and delivery will be met in a timely fashion.

8.1.3 Frequency

The number of times an impact of project-related actions expected to affect the site will be restricted to the central core of the BCPC Building. Although the frequency of such actions will have a low to moderate impact, such actions need to consider the potential impact to the structure as a whole. Monitoring the structural integrity of the existing building on an ongoing basis during construction is advisable, as is the acceptability of ground vibration during the early construction stages and noise levels throughout the construction stages.

8.1.4 Diversity

The number of various kinds of project-related actions expected to affect the heritage site is difficult to determine at this stage. However, the primary concern and need is that the impact of all actions on the site be minimized to the greatest degree to ensure the protection and conservation of the existing heritage resource. The protection of the BCPC Building, in addition to human safety, should be of greatest priority, and its heritage value, character-defining elements, and overall integrity should never be placed in jeopardy.

8.1.5 Cumulative Effect

In order for the new structural elements for the tower to be placed during construction a portion of the concrete floor slabs on four levels, as well as the roof slab, will need to be demolished, as will small portions of the floor slabs to accommodate a new interior stairwell and elevator shaft. Although the structural system of the heritage building is not identified as a character-defining element, and its current level of "life safety" performance is well under the 75% of the BCBC 2018 design demands, increasing life safety to 100% of current code may require unforeseen alterations or destruction to accommodate upgrades to seismic performance. With life safety being most important, any progressive

changes to the original structure beyond what is currently anticipated should be assessed alongside all other less intrusive actions.

In addition to the above conservation strategies, it is understood that advice will be obtained from a Code consultant to develop alternative solutions where possible to any existing non-compliant code conditions to ensure the retention of heritage features (e.g. stairs) while ensuring life safety for the user / occupant.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Overall Recommendations

This assessment has determined that the proposed new structural elements for the tower and during construction will have a low impact on magnitude, range, rate of change, shadows, isolation, and land disturbance. However, it has the potential to result in direct impacts that are low/moderate to moderate in nature related to severity, duration, frequency, diversity, and cumulative effect, all of which should be addressed in recognition of the conservation strategies given in Section 8.

The proposed new structural elements for the tower and during construction has low impact in its magnitude as the tower is limited to the central core of the BCPC Building. This eliminates the need for external seismic components and additional internal seismic elements throughout the west and east wings, thus ensuring the retention of a large portion of the existing structure. The range of the impact is also low in that the structural elements are very site specific and do not extend beyond the boundaries of the site. The cumulative effect of ongoing alteration or destruction of the site is also low in that the new structural elements for the tower and during construction will not lead to repetitive site impacts in the future, and the rate of change has low impact as the new structural elements will help stabilize the BCPC Building and extend its physical life, thus providing a high positive impact or benefit.

Overall, the positive benefits the development will deliver to 780 Blanshard Street outweigh the direct and indirect impacts this assessment has identified. As a result, the BC Power Commission Building's heritage value and character-defining elements will not be compromised and will continue to maintain its Art Deco presence as an anchor to this site.

Again, the BC Heritage Branch *British Columbia Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference* states:

> *The assessment is aimed at determining the extent or degree to which future opportunities for conservation or public appreciation are foreclosed or otherwise adversely affected by the proposed action.*

This assessment has determined that the new structural elements for the tower and during construction will not exclude future opportunities for conservation and will not limit opportunities for the public to appreciate the heritage value and character-defining elements of the British Columbia Power Commission Building.