



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Community Heritage Commission

Date: June 1, 2022

From: Kathleen Stevens,
Heritage Planning Analyst

File: 13.2606.03

Item #: 2022-380

Subject: Heritage Register Building Mural Proposal: 728 Columbia Street

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

To review the proposed mural concept on the heritage register building at 728 Columbia Street and provide feedback.

SUMMARY

A proposal has been received for a painted mural on the Front Street (rear) elevation of a heritage register building at 728 Columbia Street, in the downtown historic district. Though no Council approvals or Heritage Alteration Permits, are required for changes to buildings on the Heritage Register, the City's policy is that the Community Heritage Commission (CHC) reviews applications for changes to Heritage Register buildings and provides feedback.

GUIDING POLICY

Heritage Register

Though not legally protected by bylaw, the building at 728 Columbia Street is listed on the City's Heritage Register. The Heritage Register is an official list of properties with heritage value which have been identified by the City. Applications for changes to or demolition of properties listed on the Heritage Register are generally reviewed by the Planning Division and referred to the CHC. Alterations and additions are reviewed to determine the appropriateness of the proposed changes in relation to the character defining elements of the building or structure. However, no heritage-related permits are required in addition to the standard Building Permit.

Heritage Related Design Guidelines

Council endorsed *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* in 2008 as a basis for assessing heritage projects within the city. These are national guidelines for best practice in heritage conservation and design.

All proposals for changes to heritage sites are carefully evaluated using this document. The guidelines recommend that character defining elements of a protected site (as listed in the Statement of Significance) be retained and restored. New additions are permitted, providing they are respectful of the site's heritage values.

BACKGROUND

Heritage Value

The Bank of Nova Scotia building is located at the corner of Columbia, Begbie and Front Streets, in the Columbia Street Historic District. See Appendix A for a site context map. Built in 1938 by architect Murray Brown, in the International style, it is a concrete and brick structure with one storey plus mezzanine and basement.

The Bank of Nova Scotia has occupied the site since 1919 and remains one of the last banking halls on Columbia Street. Numerous building permits have been issued for the site with significant additions occurring in the 1950s and 1980s. The building's Statement of Significance is Appendix B.

Project Description

Under the Public Space Activation program, a painted mural is proposed to cover a 10 m. by 8 m. portion of the building's rear wall (facing Front Street) with an iconic image of New Westminster. The remainder of the rear wall would be painted matte black. The medium proposed is exterior acrylic paint. As the mural application involves only painting, no building permit would be required. As no advertising is being proposed, no sign permit would be required.

The mural will identify important features/places in New Westminster (numbered) and will include 7-10 scannable QR codes where background information and interesting facts about the feature/place can be accessed. In order to keep the mural less congested, the QR codes and corresponding number from the mural, will be listed on the portion of the rear wall painted matte black to create a "did you know" space. See the mural proposal in Appendix D.

DISCUSSION

The rear wall's brick surface is currently painted. It would be cleaned and primed before the mural production starts. See Appendix C for current photographs of the building. The character defining elements on the Front Street (rear) elevation – the masonry construction with facing of Haddington Island andesite and Quebec black marble trim on the building's corner at Begbie and Front Street – are not proposed to be painted as part of this mural proposal.

Would the proposed mural have undue impact on the heritage elements of this site?

Are there any additional heritage implications related to the proposed mural that should be considered?

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSION

The Community Heritage Commission is being asked to provide feedback on the proposed mural at 728 Columbia Street. The following options are offered for the Commission's consideration:

- 1) That the Community Heritage Commission support the proposed mural at 728 Columbia Street; or
- 2) That the Community Heritage Commission provide an alternative recommendation, stemming from elements identified in their discussion.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A:	Site Context Map
Appendix B:	Statement of Significance
Appendix C:	Current Photograph
Appendix D:	Mural Proposal

This report was prepared by:
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