

90-270

Matane, Québec

Armoury

374-76 rue St. Jerome

The Matane Armoury was constructed in 1913. It was designed by the Chief Architects Branch, Department of Public Works under David Ewart. It was designed as a federal building to house the post office and after 1979 was used as an armoury for the local militia. Large additions and alterations occurred in 1949-50. The Department of National Defence is the custodian .See FHBRO Building Report 90-270.

Reasons For Designation

The Matane Armoury was designated Recognized because of its environmental significance and its architectural importance, and also for its historical associations.

The corner site in the core of the business district contributes to the buildings prominence in the town. The design, scale and proportions of the armoury and the proximity to the Palais de Justice reinforces the historic character of its setting. The previous use as a post office has contributed to its local familiarity and community landmark status.

The Romanesque Revival detailing of the building is used in a restrained and simplified manner. The striking feature of the asymmetrical massing of clock tower and office block is characteristic of the distinctive federal post office designs of the early 1900s. The variety of window sizes and shapes contribute to the visual interest of the facades.

The building is associated with the development of a national postal service extending to rural centres. The construction of the building represents an extension of the federal presence into Quebec and the provision of government services into regional administrative centres.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Armoury resides in its overall form, proportions, construction materials, Romanesque Revival architectural details, interiors, and in site relationships.

The simple cube-like massing and footprint of the two-storey hip-roofed building has a projecting four-storey corner tower. The corner tower defines the main entrance and reinforces the picturesque composition of forms. The dormer projections at the simple mansard roof profile add complexity. The external massing, footprint, and roof profile

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Armoury (Continued)

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should be maintained. The well-scaled facades of the building derive from the regular rhythm of the windows which are grouped in a variety of ways - singly, paired, in threes - which adds variety to the elevations, reflecting Romanesque Revival characteristics. The later flagpole addition is poorly located and does not reflect design intentions. When replacing the mast it should be relocated following the original design.

The facades are executed in red brick with crisp accents of white stone either rough-faced, smooth, and decoratively carved. This provides lively colour and textural contrast which should be respected. The masonry requires conservation expertise for repairs and an ongoing maintenance program.

Painted metal is used for the ribbed roofing, finely detailed fascias, and flashings of the masonry. It contributes to the attractive colour scheme and visual richness of the Romanesque Revival design. The material and forms should be maintained.

The generously scaled wood sash windows appear to be original. The repetitive rhythm of the windows with the variety of sash profiles and forms, is an important visual component of the design. The Romanesque Revival design is expressed in the original wood entrance doors with their panelling, glazing, and hardware; these should be maintained.

The interior planning maintains the principal access points to the building these should be retained as part of the internal circulation system. Interior finishes reflecting the original construction should be preserved and maintained.

The street frontage is hard-surfaced with sidewalks and pavement characteristic of the urban site and should be maintained. There is a poorly located coniferous tree which should be removed to permit a clear view of the facade and to minimize any structural damage to the building. Foundation planting would be inappropriate. The open, hard-surfacing to the rear accommodates requisite service functions and should be maintained.

97.03.27

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.
