

## **88-1 03**

St. Catharines, Ontario  
**Front Range Lighthouse**  
Port Dalhousie

### **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Port Dalhousie Front Range Lighthouse was built in 1879 to a design by the Department of Marine and Fisheries. The light was automated in 1968, and continues to operate. The Canadian Coast Guard is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 88-103.

### **Reasons For Designation**

The Front Range Lighthouse was designated Recognized primarily as a result of its historical association with the Third Welland Canal, and also for its landmark status.

The provision of a canal system connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie began in the 1820s and evolved over the following century. The first three canal routes began at Port Dalhousie on Lake Ontario, although the fourth (current) route no longer does so. The Front Range Lighthouse was built to serve the third canal, constructed in the 1870s-1880s to meet the needs of the new steamships plying the lakes. Along with the Rear Range Lighthouse located 300 feet away, it formed a dual-light system to guide ships on Lake Ontario and those entering the canal or the port. While the rear light is no longer operational, the front light continues to serve recreational boaters.

The Front Range Lighthouse is one of a number of square wooden towers built on the Great Lakes in the nineteenth century. They were economical to construct and easy to maintain. The Lighthouse occupies the end of one of a pair of concrete piers which extend into Lake Ontario and form the harbour entrance. Visible from the water and from several vantage points on land, the Lighthouse is a well-known local landmark. It is used on postcards and in local histories to symbolize the historic Port Dalhousie area.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Front Range Lighthouse resides in its profile, materials and construction, and in the nature of its setting.

The forty-five foot high square, tapered tower supports the original octagonal lantern on a substantial, bracketed platform. This characteristic shape should be maintained without additions or alterations.

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St. Catherines, Ontario  
**Front Range Lighthouse** (continued)

Originally, the tower was clad in horizontal wood siding, and was embellished with a wide frieze and a bracketed gallery enclosed by a decorative wood railing. The projecting pedimented entrance originally framed a glazed and panelled door with a three-light transom above, while rectangular windows, one on each facade, were set flush with the walls. Following modifications to the exterior, the lighthouse currently presents the spare functional form of a beacon. The tower walls, including the window openings, are covered with aluminum siding, and the door is boarded over. The original platform railing has been replaced by a pipe railing. Restoration to the original appearance, based on pictorial, documentary and physical evidence, would enhance the character of the lighthouse and the area. This would entail reinstatement of the original railing, removal of the aluminum siding, and restoration or replacement of the historic cladding material, windows and door.

The interior retains early diagonal boarding and steep wooden staircase. Care should be taken to maintain and preserve these elements.

The lighthouse, alone at the end of the east pier, dominates its setting. The concrete pier has been extended to surround the lighthouse to protect it from high waves; this does not alter the nature of the site. The exposed maritime character of the site should be preserved. Development along both piers should be restricted.

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