

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
STATISTICS CANADA BUILDING
(FORMER DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS BUILDING)
HOLLAND AVENUE, TUNNEY'S PASTURE, OTTAWA, ONTARIO**

FHBRO number: **04-051**
DFRP number: **08752**
Resource name: **Statistics Canada Building
(Former Dominion Bureau of Statistics Building)**
Address: **Holland Avenue, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario**
FHBRO status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1950-1953**
Designer: **Ross, Patterson, Townsend & Heughan
(now Duschenes & Fish Architectes)**
Original function: **National Headquarters for the Department of Statistics Canada**
Current function: **Unchanged**
Modifications: **Addition of metal siding over the brick cladding of the fourth floor
and removal of the coat of arms above the main entrance (1976);
replacement of the windows and of most interior finishes; partial
infilling of most of the exterior courtyards with ramps and other
constructions**
Custodian: **Public Works and Government Services Canada**

Description of Historic Place

The Statistics Canada Building is an imposing office building composed of a four-storey central spine abutted by eight symmetrically placed, lower three-storey wings creating several courtyards. The generous setbacks and lawns, and the building's location at the head of a perpendicular street combine to make it a prominent address along the main axis of the Tunney's Pasture campus, despite its overall restrained expression. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

Heritage Value

The Statistics Canada Building is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, as well as its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

The Statistics Canada Building is one of the best examples of a purpose-built national headquarters, in this case following a significant expansion of the Department's mandate in support of new social and economic programs. As the first of many office buildings to be constructed at Tunney's Pasture, the Statistics Canada Building is also a very good example of the initial development phase of this campus and represents the consolidation of federal departments into suburban governmental nodes. It is moreover associated with Herbert Marshall, Dominion Statistician from 1948 to 1956, who played a key leadership role in transforming the Dominion Bureau of Statistics to meet the new challenges of the post-war period, increasing the profile of this organization in the international community, and more specifically ensuring the completion of the Statistics Canada Building.

Architectural value:

Designed by the well-known Montreal firm of Ross, Patterson, Townsend & Heughan (now Duschenes & Fish Architectes), the Statistics Canada Building is a good example of an institutional office facility designed in the modern Classical style, despite significant alterations

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over the years. Its formal character primarily derives from its layout and massing, but is also reinforced by heavy stone pilasters at the end of each wing and central forecourts framed with low walls, pillars and light fixtures. Functionally simple and efficient, the Statistics Canada Building was constructed with standard durable materials and good craftsmanship.

Environmental value:

Due to its scale, massing, style and materials, the Statistics Canada Building continues to reinforce the early character of the site as a campus of low brick buildings. Its prime location and important function make it a prominent building on the campus.

Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of the Statistics Canada Building should be respected:

Its aesthetic expression in the modern Classical style, as illustrated in:

- Its horizontal lines, enhanced by the low massing, flat roof, buff-coloured brick and continuous bands of windows framed with stone mouldings, all typical of the buildings constructed during the initial phase of development of Tunney's Pasture;
- The contrasting verticality of its main entrances, with their heavy stone frames and generous glazing extending three storeys high, which express on the exterior the central lobby and vertical circulation core. Heavy stone pilasters are also used at each end of the building's eight wings to create a colonnade-like frame around the windows;
- The strong symmetry and formal institutional character of the main façades deeply set back from the street, which are reinforced by the axial approaches (in line with Sorrel Street to the west), long central entranceways framed by two sets of pillars capped with bronze lamps, and low stone walls delimiting the forecourts.

Its good functional design, standard for institutional buildings of its era, as demonstrated in:

- The simple and adaptable eight-wing double H layout, with its central corridors and rooms on either side providing generous natural lighting and ventilation.

Its use of standard durable materials assembled with good craftsmanship, as exemplified in:

- Its brick cladding, stone mouldings around the windows, structure made of concrete slabs and blocks, and terrazzo flooring inside;
- The bronze light fixtures in the forecourts and the marble-clad walls in the vestibules and lobby, which speak to the prestigious function housed in the building.

Its role in reinforcing the character of group of low brick buildings constructed during the early development phase of Tunney's Pasture, and as a familiar landmark for the community of civil servants working on the campus, as evidenced in:

- Its scale, massing, style, materials and important function;
- Its generous setbacks and lawns, despite the construction of the adjacent H.R. Coats Building and Jean-Talon Building in the 1970's, and the partial infilling of most of the exterior courtyards created by its eight-wing double-H plan;
- Its prime location along the main axis of Tunney's Pasture campus (Holland Avenue), and at the head of perpendicular Sorrel Street.

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For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. For further information contact FHBRO.

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