



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Blair Nelson, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Planning and Growth Management

Meeting Date: August 5, 2025

Report: Designation of 183 Hunter Street West, Report IPGPL25-035

Subject

A report to recommend that Council consider the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee's recommendation that the property municipally known as 183 Hunter Street West be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18 as being a property of cultural heritage value or interest to the City of Peterborough

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report IPGPL25-035, dated August 5, 2025, of the Commissioner of Infrastructure, Planning and Growth Management as follows:

- a) That the recommendation of the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC) that Council designate the property at 183 Hunter Street West as a heritage property under Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act** R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18 being of "cultural heritage value or interest" be received; and,
- b) That Council take the following actions should it concur with the recommendation of that PACAC to designate the property at 183 Hunter Street West as a heritage property under Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act** R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18 being of cultural heritage value or interest:
 - i. Serve Notice of Intention to Designate 183 Hunter Street West and provide public notice of that intention in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality as per the **Ontario Heritage Act** R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18, s.31 (3);

- ii. Serve the owner of the property to be designated and the Ontario Heritage Trust with a Notice of Intention to Designate as per the **Ontario Heritage Act** R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18, s.21 (3).

Executive Summary

- A report to consider PACAC's recommendation that Council designate the property municipally known as 183 Hunter Street West under Part IV, Section 29 of the **Ontario Heritage Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18.
- The property at 183 Hunter Street West has been evaluated and is considered to be a property of cultural heritage value or interest to the City of Peterborough.
- The property owner has been notified of the PACAC's recommendation for the designation of the property by a letter dated May 7, 2025.

Background

Under Part IV of the **Ontario Heritage Act**, municipalities may designate individual properties deemed to be of "cultural heritage value or interest" to the community, through the passage of municipal By-laws. The designation process strikes a balance between the interests of the individual property owners and the recognized need of the community to preserve its heritage resources. Heritage designation prohibits unwarranted demolition and controls alterations that might harm specific heritage features.

Designation may also make property owners eligible for preservation grants and tax relief and provides owners access to professional expertise and advice. Since 1975, Peterborough City Council has passed 143 individual designation By-laws, although this only represents a portion of the buildings in the city that are eligible for designation. The Planning, Development & Urban Design Division administers the designation program in partnership with the PACAC and the City Clerk's Office.

PACAC considers the property at 183 Hunter Street West worthy of heritage designation as it meets two or more criteria outlined in Regulation 9/06 of the Act. A designation brief for 183 Hunter Street West was received by the PACAC at their meeting of May 6, 2025. The committee approved a motion that its opinion, that the property be designated under Part IV of the Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, be forwarded to Council.

Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

183 Hunter Street West – The Bell Telephone Exchange

The Bell Telephone Exchange at 183 Hunter Street West has cultural heritage value as a landmark building on Hunter Street in Peterborough's downtown core. It is a representative example of the Stripped Classicism style, commonly used for telephone exchanges but rare in Peterborough. It utilizes key stylistic elements such as pilasters, decorative brickwork, tiles and ironwork. The bronze plated panels on the door display a high degree of craftsmanship and visually represent Peterborough's history and role as an industrial centre.

The building has historical value as a reminder of technological advancements in the early twentieth century, namely the introduction of automatic dialing telephones, and the impact these inventions had on people's lives.

The building is a landmark thanks to its unique architecture, fine decoration and historical associations with the Bell Telephone Company of Canada. It remains widely recognized in the community as the "Bell Telephone Exchange".

Strategic Plan

Strategic Pillar: Community & Well-being

Strategic Priority: Enhance the natural, recreational, sports, the arts, and cultural aspects of our community.

The work of the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC) and the Heritage Preservation Office directly addresses and works to enhance the cultural aspects of our community. The PACAC's work also strives to "demonstrate strong leadership in environmental stewardship by proactively addressing issues and challenges of climate change and the environment" through the preservation of heritage as a critical part of building climate change resilience.

Engagement and Consultation

The Ontario Heritage Act does not require the consent of a property owner for Council to serve notice of its intention to designate a property because the law provides for an owner to object and have that objection considered by the Ontario Land Tribunal. While the Act does not require a municipality to notify the owner that their property is being considered for designation it has always been the practice in Peterborough to inform the owner.

On March 17, 2025, Council received and amended the recommendations of Report IPGPL25-015 which outlined a list of 56 properties that had been prioritized by the PACAC for designation. The owner of 183 Hunter Street West was notified that the

PACAC had prioritized the property for designation by letter on March 4, 2025. The owner was further notified of the PACAC's recommendation that Council designate the property by letter on May 7, 2025.

The property owner confirmed their support by email on June 23, 2025.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budgetary or financial implications as the result of the recommendations of this report at this time. The property is within the eligibility boundary of the Heritage Property Tax Relief Program; however, the owner is not eligible to apply to the program until it has been designated under the **Ontario Heritage Act**.

The Heritage Property Tax Relief Program is currently at capacity and is not accepting applications for new participants.

Conclusion

The PACAC has recommended to Council the designation of 183 Hunter Street West as a property of cultural heritage value or interest. This report advises Council of the PACAC's recommendation and seeks a Council decision regarding that recommendation.

Attachments

Appendix A: Heritage Designation Brief – 183 Hunter Street West – The Bell Telephone Exchange

Submitted by,

Blair Nelson, P. Eng.
Commissioner, Infrastructure, Planning and Growth Management

Contact Name:

Brad Appleby, RPP, MCIP
Director, Planning, Development and Urban Design
Phone: 705-742-7777 Ext. 1886
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
Email: BAppleby@peterborough.ca

Colin Walsh
Heritage Programs Coordinator
Phone: 705-742-7777 Ext. 1488
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
Email: CoWalsh@peterborough.ca