

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
42-46 OVERLEA BOULEVARD
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

ATTACHMENT NO. 5

Coca-Cola Building

Description

The property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the north side of Overlea Boulevard east of Thorncliffe Park Drive, the Coca-Cola Building (constructed in 1964 and officially opened in 1965) is a three-storey office structure. The property was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register) in 2013.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Coca-Cola Building has cultural heritage value as a well-crafted office building reflecting the Modern Movement in architecture in Toronto in the late 20th century. Employing clean lines, contemporary materials and technologies, the structure's curtain wall construction with the fenestration and the spandrel panels under the flat roof are all hallmarks of Modernist design. However, the building is particularly distinguished by the distinctive vertical louvers (sunshades), the columns with the polished metal cladding, and especially the projecting south wall where geometrical shapes associated with the Coca-Cola brand are incorporated in the black granite facing.

The value of the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard also relates to its association with the architectural partnership of Mathers and Haldenby, which was one of the best-known and most successful practices in Toronto throughout most of the 20th century and noted for its range of commissions for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial buildings. As part of its extensive portfolio, Mathers and Haldenby prepared plans for Coca-Cola Limited's complexes in 17 cities in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia between 1940 and 1963, with the office building and bottling plant in Thorncliffe Park marking the culmination of their work for the soft drink firm.

The Coca-Cola Building is valued for its association with the development of Thorncliffe Park where, following the acquisition of the former Thorncliffe Racetrack lands and the annexation of the tract by the adjoining Town of Leaside the community was laid out with separate sectors for high- and mid-rise residential buildings and low-scale industrial complexes. As the long-time occupant of one of the last original industrial sites on Overlea Boulevard, the Coca-Cola Building reflects the mid 20th century origins of Thorncliffe Park as a planned community.

Contextually, the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard has cultural heritage value for its role in maintaining and supporting the historical character of Thorncliffe Park as it evolved in the early 1960s as a planned community where the Coca-Cola Building stands as one of the original structures in the sector first devoted to industrial uses. It is also visually and historically linked to its surroundings on Overlea Boulevard where it is set back from the street in a highly visible location opposite the East York Town Centre (formerly the Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza).

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard are the building known historically as the Coca-Cola Building with:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on the north side of Overlea Boulevard
- The views of the principal (south) and side (east and west) elevations from Overlea Boulevard
- The scale, form and massing of the building with the three-storey plan that rises from the podium and includes a penthouse
- The materials, incorporating stone, concrete, metals and glass
- The curtain walls holding the glass and the white spandrel panels
- The flat roofline, which extends beyond the principal (south) elevation as a canopy
- On the south elevation, the eight columns clad with polished copper-coloured metal, where the four easterly columns extend from the podium to the roof canopy
- The single-storey projecting wing at the west end of the south elevation, with the black granite cladding on the south face that is inscribed with geometrical patterns resembling the bottom of Coca-Cola bottles
- At the east end of the south elevation, the setback of the lower storey of the wall where the main entrance is placed
- On the east and west elevations above the ground floor, the two-storey vertical louvers (sunshades) that project from the walls and were originally movable
- Directly east of the building, the sunken walled courtyard, which originally contained a bronze sculpture of interlocking Coca-Cola bottles by the notable Canadian abstract painter and sculptor, Walter Yarwood