

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
738-746 BATHURST STREET

ATTACHMENT NO. 4A

The properties at 738, 740 (which is a convenience address for 738), 742, 744 and 746 Bathurst Street are worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for their cultural heritage value.

Description

The properties at 738-746 Bathurst Street contain a row of five attached three-storey commercial buildings that are located on the northwest corner of Lennox Street in the block south of Bloor Street West. Archival records indicate that the buildings were in place in September 1891 when the tax assessment rolls described a group of "five unfinished stores" owned by T. W. Wilson (who commissioned the neighbouring commercial buildings at 756-760 Bathurst at the same time). Two years later, William Austin operated a drug store in the corner building at 738 Bathurst, with the remaining units tenanted by the end of the century.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The properties at 738-746 Bathurst Street have cultural heritage value for their design as a fine representative example of a late 19th century row of commercial buildings with a high degree of craftsmanship that was inspired by the popular architectural styles of the era. The T. W. Wilson Buildings at 738-746 Bathurst are particularly distinguished by the arrangement of the east elevations, which are treated as a single composition with elaborate fenestration and distinctive brickwork.

The T. W. Wilson Buildings at 738-746 Bathurst Street contribute to an understanding of the cross-roads community that developed around the intersection of Bathurst and Bloor Streets in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The commercial buildings at 738-746 Bathurst were situated to serve the residential sectors adjoining these major streets as this area evolved from its origins as country estates and farmland northwest of the City of Toronto to suburban subdivisions that were integrated as an important city neighbourhood.

Contextually, the properties at 738-746 Bathurst Street define, support and maintain the character of the area centered at the crossroads of Bathurst-Bloor as it developed in the late 19th century with the placement of commercial and institutional buildings along these major thoroughfares to serve the surrounding residential neighbourhoods. The T. W. Wilson Buildings at 738-746 Bathurst were among the earliest commercial buildings near this intersection.

The T. W. Wilson Buildings at 738-746 Bathurst Street are also visually, historically, physically and functionally connected to their setting on the west side of the street south of Bloor Street West where they complement the adjoining commercial row at 756-760 Bathurst (which were constructed at the same time) and also anchor the northwest corner of Lennox Street in the Bathurst-Bloor area.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the commercial buildings on the properties at 738-746 Bathurst Street are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the buildings on Bathurst Street at the northwest corner of Lennox Street where the principal (east) elevations face east onto Bathurst and the south wall of the building at 736 Bathurst faces Lennox Street
- The scale, form and massing of the five-part row of three-storey buildings with the rectangular-shaped plans
- The materials, with the brick cladding and the brick, stone and wood detailing (the southernmost units at 738 and 740 Bathurst Street are currently painted)
- The rooflines, with the parapets, corbelled brickwork, brackets and cornices, where the parapet is extended above the centre building at 742 Bathurst Street (the cornice is altered on the buildings at 738 and 740 Bathurst)
- The principal (east) elevations of the row of five buildings where the individual units are flanked by brick piers with decorative detailing above the first (ground) floor storefronts with cornices (the storefronts have been altered)
- The arrangement of the window openings in the upper stories, with oriel windows placed alternatively in the second floors of the units at 738, 742 and 746 Bathurst beneath pairs of flat-headed openings with lintels and sills, and the openings on 740 and 744 Bathurst where the pairs of flat-headed window openings in the second floor with lintels and flat arches are surmounted by trios of round-arched openings in the third stories
- The decorative brickwork on the window openings
- The south elevation of 738 Bathurst Street that faces and is viewed on Lennox Street with the flat-headed window openings, the band courses and the roof detailing that is continued from the east elevation