

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: 349 GEORGE STREET ATTACHMENT NO. 3
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

The property at 349 George Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual values.

Description

Located on the east side of George Street, south of Gerrard Street East, the property at 349 George Street contains the Allan School, which was completed in 1910 for the Toronto Board of Education and named for the neighbouring Allan Gardens, the centrepiece of today's Garden District. The school was built beside the Toronto Boys' Home (1864) for destitute youth where education was provided by teachers from the public school board, first inside the institution and afterward at the Allan School. The building remained an educational facility for most of the 20th century, including the period after World War II when it served as the Board's Teaching Aids Centre for the production of educational materials. Acquired by the City of Toronto in 1977, the Allan School was more recently known as the School House Shelter for men.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Allan School has design value as a rare and well-crafted example of school building that blends stylistic details from the Boys' Home (1864-1958) that once adjoined it with architectural elements identified with contemporary schools in early 20th century Toronto. The unique composition combines the plan, roof detailing, frontispiece and two-tone pattern brickwork from the Boys' Home, with the oversized window openings and distinctive bay window that became standard features in schools built by the Toronto Board of Education during this era.

The associative value of the Allan School is drawn from its close historical ties to the Boys' Home, which was an institution of importance in Toronto for nearly a century. Founded by a group of benevolent Protestant women to provide housing and education for destitute boys temporarily removed from their families, the Boys' Home on George Street contained its own school until the Board of Education opened the purpose-built Allan School to educate its residents.

The Allan School is also valued for its historical association with the neighbourhood now known as the Garden District for its location adjoining Allan Gardens, for which the school was named. In the mid 19th century, the subdivision of the original Park Lots for upscale housing was followed by schools, places of worship and other institutions serving the community, including the Boys' Home on George Street. The Allan School opened as part of the Boys' Home campus, and continued its support of local students and service to the Board of Education until the late 20th century when it became a men's shelter adjoining Seaton House.

The Allan School is linked historically to architect C. H. Bishop through his role as Superintendent of Buildings for the Board of Education during the period when the school was

designed and constructed. Bishop is credited with dozens of elementary and secondary schools in Toronto during his thirty-year career, and developed standardized plans for the Board of Education to address the demand for new and larger schools in the early 20th century. However, as part of this portfolio Bishop continued to design smaller edifices for special requirements and settings, including the Allan School beside the Toronto Boys' Home.

Contextually, the Allan School is valued as a property that supports the character of the Garden District as it developed around Allan Gardens following the subdivision in the mid 19th century of country estates established by the Allan and Jarvis families. The area outlined by Jarvis, Gerrard, Sherbourne and Shuter streets evolved as an upscale enclave where fine residential buildings were interspersed with places of worship, schools and social institutions, including the Allan School on George Street, which is an important surviving reminder of the evolution of the community in the 20th century.

The contextual value of the Allan School is also drawn from its historical, visual and functional links to its surroundings on George Street. In place since 1910, the Allan School complements in vintage, scale and detailing the surviving group of late 19th and early 20th century house form buildings that form a heritage enclave at 295-311 George Street, particularly the Thomas Meredith House at 305 George with its complementary pattern brick detailing. Functionally, after its acquisition by the City of Toronto and conversion as the School House Shelter, the Allan School is related to the adjoining Seaton House (founded in 1931 and replacing the Boys' Home in 1959) as institutional buildings on George Street.

The Allan School, with its location at the corner of George Street and Glenholme Place and its distinctive appearance that includes two-tone pattern brickwork, is a local landmark on George Street in the Garden District.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Allan School on the property at 349 George Street are:

- The placement, setback and orientation of the building on the southeast corner of George Street and Glenholme Place
- The scale, form and massing of the structure, which has a 2½-storey rectangular-shaped plan
- The cross-gable roof with the flared eaves supported on corbelled brackets, the corbelled brickwork beneath the roofline, and the brick chimney
- The materials, with the red brick cladding, buff brick detailing and wood trim
- The decorative brickwork on all of the elevations, where contrasting buff brick is applied for the band course, the quoins, the roof detailing, and the door and window surrounds
- The principal (south) elevation, with the gabled frontispiece containing the main entrance in the round-arched surround, and the single round-arched and flat-headed window openings (this wall was altered for the addition of the fire escape, which is not identified as a heritage attribute)
- The west wall facing George Street, with the oversized openings with lintels that contain five-part windows in the ground (first) and second stories, and the small arched window

opening in the attic storey (the window opening in the first floor was altered for an entrance)

- On the east wall that is viewed from Glenholme Place, the large bay window in the ground (first) storey beneath the oversized opening with stone lintels and five-part windows in the second floor, and the arched window opening in the attic storey
- The rear (north) elevation, with the shallow frontispiece and the single window openings