

29 Basin Street - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date: June 26, 2023

To: Toronto Preservation Board

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: 14 - Toronto-Danforth

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 29 Basin Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value under the following criteria: design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

The subject property at 29 Basin Street, historically known as the Sun Oil Company Building, is located on the south side of Basin Street east of Bouchette Street, on the north side of the Port Lands' Ship Channel and west of the Turning Basin. The Sun Oil Company Building was completed in 1931 as a two-storey, factory/warehouse structure designed by T.H. Mothershill and Company. Once the main office building for a large industrial site, the subject property was part of the Port Lands' first major phase of modern development during the early twentieth century.

29 Basin Street was listed on the Heritage Register on October 28, 2004. In proximity to several other listed and designated properties, including the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station located directly south across the Ship Channel, the Sun Oil Company Building is an important part of the early twentieth-century industrial history of the Port Lands that will form part of a planned film and television studio campus to be known as the "Basin Media Hub."

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 29 Basin Street and determined that it meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. 29 Basin Street has cultural heritage value as an early twentieth-century factory/warehouse type building with Classical Revival design elements, as expressed through its structural grid of cast stone vertical capped piers and horizontal bands, the two large cast stone entablatures upon its façade, its factory/warehouse type windows, and its scale, form, and massing.

On March 15, 2023, the City received a Site Plan Application for a proposed redevelopment of the subject property at 75 Basin Street including the municipal addresses of 29, 35, and 41 Basin Street for a film and television studio campus with 59,100 square metres of development with twelve sound stages, production offices, mill and support spaces, vehicular and bicycle parking in an above-grade garage, and associated base camp and backlot facilities. The subject property is proposed to be maintained in situ to be used as offices with no significant alterations planned aside from the removal of the later rear addition which dates to the 1990s.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties and will be considered when determining how a heritage property is to be conserved. On March 15, 2023, an HIA was submitted for 29, 35, 41 Basin Street and 75 Basin Street by ERA Architects on behalf of Adamson Associates.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets two or more of the nine criteria. The property at 29 Basin Street meets four criteria related to its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 29 Basin Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance; 29 Basin Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3, to the report, June 26, 2023, from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning;
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council included the subject property at 29 Basin Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register on October 28, 2004.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2004/agendas/council/cc041026/ts8rpt/cl009.pdf>

The Port Lands Official Plan Modification (OPM), as modified, was brought into full force and effect for the Turning Basin District, which includes the lands at 29, 35, 41 and 75 Basin Street, by OLT Decision on May 18, 2021, including land use, transportation, built form and public realm policies. The OLT Decision can be found at:

<https://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl030514-May-18-2021.pdf>

A further Port Lands OPM Phase 2 Decision was issued on July 11, 2022 that resolved the majority of outstanding matters, specifically cultural heritage, views, inclusive communities, community infrastructure, built form, arts and culture, sustainability and biodiversity. The OLT Decision can be found at:

<https://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/OLT-22-002109-JUL-11-2022.pdf>

At its meeting on July 19, 2022, Toronto City Council considered and adopted without amendments a motion to substantially amend Zoning By-law 569-2013 for the lands at 29, 35, 41, and 75 Basin Street. The item was previously considered by Toronto and East York Community Council on June 29, 2022 and was adopted with amendments.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.TE34.14>

BACKGROUND

Heritage Planning Framework

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. Cultural heritage resources are considered irreplaceable and valuable assets that must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). Heritage Conservation is enabled through the Ontario Heritage Act. The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime, the Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and provides policies to guide decision making within the city.

Good planning within the provincial and municipal policy framework has at its foundation an understanding and appreciation for places of historic significance, and ensures the conservation of these resources are to be balanced with other provincial interests. Heritage resources may include buildings, structures, monuments, and geographic areas that have cultural heritage value or interest to a community, including an Indigenous community.

The Planning Act establishes the foundation for land use planning in Ontario, describing how land can be controlled and by whom. Section 2 of the Planning Act identifies heritage conservation as a matter of provincial interest and directs that municipalities shall have regard to the conservation of features of significant architectural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Heritage conservation contributes to other matters of provincial interest, including the promotion of built form that is well-designed, and that encourages a sense of place.

The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall conform to the Growth Plan and shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, both of which position heritage as a key component in supporting key provincial principles and interests.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

The Provincial Policy Statement provides policy direction on land use planning in Ontario and is to be used by municipalities in the development of their official plans and to guide and inform decisions on planning matters, which shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement articulates how and why heritage conservation is a component of good planning, explicitly requiring the conservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources, alongside the pursuit of other provincial interests. The Provincial Policy Statement does so by linking heritage conservation to key policy directives, including building strong healthy communities, the wise use and management of resources, and protecting health and safety.

Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development states that long-term economic prosperity is supported by, among other considerations, the promotion of well-designed built form and cultural planning, and the conservation of features that help define character. Section 2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology subsequently directs that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". Through the definition of conserved, built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscape and protected heritage property, the Provincial Policy Statement identifies the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds on the Provincial Policy Statement to establish a land use planning framework that supports complete communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity. Section 1.2.1 Guiding Principles states that policies in the plan seek to, among other principles, "conserve and promote cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Metis communities". Cultural heritage resources are understood as being irreplaceable, and are significant features that provide people with a sense of place. Section 4.2.7 Cultural Heritage Resources directs that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.

<https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>

The Ontario Heritage Act is the key provincial legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in Ontario. It regulates, among other things, how municipal councils can identify and protect heritage resources, including archaeology, within municipal boundaries. This is largely achieved through listing on the City's Heritage Register, designation of individual properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, or designation of districts under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The Bill 108 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1, 2021, which included, amongst other matters, amendments to the listing and designation processes.

On November 28, 2022, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) received Royal Assent. Schedule 6 of the More Homes Built Faster Act amended various sections of the Ontario Heritage Act. Most of the key changes to the Act came into effect on January 1, 2023.

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

COMMENTS

City Council included the property located at 29 Basin Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 2004.

On March 15, 2023, the City received a Site Plan Application by Hackman Capital Partners, working in partnership with Basin Media Hub and CreateTO, with plans by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Adamson Associates Architects for a proposed redevelopment of the subject property at 75 Basin Street including the municipal addresses of 29, 35, and 41 Basin Street. These plans include the development of a 59,100-square-metre film and television studio campus including twelve sound stages, production offices, mill and support spaces, which will form a film studio and production complex to be known as the "Basin Media Hub."

The subject property is proposed to be maintained in situ to be used as offices for the Basin Media Hub, with no significant alterations planned aside from the removal of the later rear addition which dates to the 1990s. The Sun Oil Company Building will be situated next to a service entrance to the site which will be accessed by a new metal sliding gate which will project eastward from the southeast corner of the building.

Additionally, two new buildings are proposed to neighbour the Sun Oil Company Building: a one-storey, double-height production building with a 5.1-metre separation

distance from the south elevation of the Sun Oil Company Building and a one-storey, three-level, soundstage building with a 19-metre separation from the east.

On March 15, 2023, a Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted for 29, 35, 41 Basin Street and 75 Basin Street by ERA Architects on behalf of Adamson Associates.

The subject property is situated directly across the Ship Channel from the Part IV designated properties at 440 and 470 Unwin Avenue which contain the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station.

29 Basin Street

Research and Evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06

While the research and evaluation of the property referenced above is, in staff's determination, sufficient to support the designation of the property at 29 Basin Street, it should be noted that new and additional relevant information on the subject property further expanding on its cultural heritage value following community input and additional access to archival records may be incorporated in the final version of a Part IV designation by-law.



Sun Oil Company Building, front (north) elevation. Heritage Planning, 2023

1. DESCRIPTION

29 BASIN STREET - SUN OIL COMPANY BUILDING	
ADDRESS	29 Basin Street
WARD	14 - Toronto-Danforth
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	PLAN 540E PT BLK 2 RP 66R25186 PART 41
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Port Lands
HISTORICAL NAME	Sun Oil Company Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1931

ORIGINAL OWNER	Sun Oil Company Limited (Sunoco)
ORIGINAL USE	Company Office
CURRENT USE*	CreateTO offices
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	T.H. Mothershill and Company
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick and Cement
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Classical Revival
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	Aluminum and vinyl siding on west elevation (c. 2010); Replacement windows with attached mullions (2019)
CRITERIA	Design/Physical; Historical/Associative; Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed
RECORDER	Adrian Gamble
REPORT DATE	June, 2023

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 29 Basin Street and applies evaluation criteria as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest. The application of the criteria is found in Section 3 (Evaluation Checklist). The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in the Conclusion of the report. Maps and Photographs are located in Attachment 1. The archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Attachment 2. The Statements of Significance are contained in Attachment 3.

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
	The area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.
1793	At the time of the founding of the Town of York, the marsh between the Toronto Harbour and Ashbridges Bay is the largest wetland on Lake Ontario (Figure 4).
1850s	Grand Trunk Railroad expands eastward along the waterfront, thereby encouraging industrial development along Queen Street East and South Park Street (today Eastern Avenue). Landfilling operations begin east of the Don River (Figure 5).
1858	Toronto Islands separated from the waterfront during a storm, thus allowing ships to navigate the harbour more easily.

1890	Lower Don River straightened and contained by a concrete course to prevent flooding. Engineer E.H. Keating proposes terminating the river in a channel, later known as Keating Channel.
1912	Toronto Harbour Commission's 1912 Waterfront Development Eastern Section Plan sees to the modernization of the Port Lands, allowing future industrial and commercial development. A new street grid and rail lines are built, along with a Ship Channel and Turning Basin supported by upgraded shipping facilities.
1912-1945	Port Lands' first modern phase of development includes the Queen's City Foundry (1914), Toronto Harbour Commissioners Buildings (1916), Bank of Montreal (1920), Toronto Dry Dock Company (1920), Fire Hall No. 30 (1928), Cherry Street Toronto Hydro-Electric System substation (1930), Dominion Boxboards Building (1931), and the Sun Oil Company Building (1931).
1921	Sun Oil Company Limited acquires a large parcel of land south of Commissioners Street spanning east along Basin Street from Bouchette Street towards the Turning Basin and backing onto the Port Lands' Ship Channel.
1930-1931	Sun Oil Company commissions T.H. Mothershill and Company to design a new office building at 29 Basin Street. Sun Oil Company Building completed in 1931.
1945-1970s	Port Lands' second modern phase of development includes the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station (1949), Incinerator Building (1953), and the Lake Ontario Portland Cement Company (1960s).
1983	Richard L. Hearn Generating Station decommissioned.
1992	Sun Oil Company Limited sells Port Lands Site, including 29 Basin Street. Oil tank field and outbuildings demolished.
1996	Sun Oil Company Building acquired by Toronto Port Lands Company, extra space leased to a Performance Solutions, a film production company. Rear addition is built.

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the properties which are the basis for determining historical or associative value of Criteria 4, 5 or 6 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The Port Lands

Prior to the early twentieth-century industrial development of the Port Lands, located east of downtown along the Toronto waterfront, the area surrounding the mouth of the Don River was once home to one of the largest wetlands on the Great Lakes.¹ Archaeological evidence gathered in this area shows that people were likely living and hunting in the area as early as 10,000 years ago, making this one of the longest inhabited areas within the city.² However, by the late nineteenth century, owing to

¹ Waterfront Toronto: History and Heritage.

² Section 5.3.3 First Nations and Aboriginal Interests: TSMP_EA-Report-Sept+29+2017.compressed.pdf (portlandsto.ca)

Toronto's rapid growth, and following decades of landfill efforts and the construction of wharves and shipping channels from the 1850s onwards, the Port Lands eventually became a site of heavy industry. In 1890, the Lower Don River was straightened to prevent flooding and plans emerged to terminate the river in Keating Channel. Subsequently, the working-class neighbourhoods on the east side of the Don River north and south of Eastern Avenue and Queen Street East began to develop as industry moved into the area.

In 1910, following years of public concern over pollution and the poor state of conditions of the port facilities and shipping channels, a municipal referendum resulted in the Federal Government creating the Board of the Toronto Harbour Commission in 1911. The Toronto Harbour Commission was mandated to manage and develop the Port and was put in charge of a slate of improvements and developments to the waterfront in the name of public interest.³ The resultant 1912 Waterfront Development Eastern Section Plan "asserted that access to the waterfront was a matter for public enjoyment as much as for commercial and industrial development."⁴ A central component of this plan called for the filling in of Ashbridges Bay which would provide 650 acres for heavy industry, improved shipping facilities, and parkland - the latter to feature a small residential enclave of summer homes similar to those on the Toronto Islands. Collectively, this new, manmade neighbourhood would be known as the Port Lands.

The 1912 Plan saw the construction of a new street grid as existing entry points to the Port Lands along Cherry Street, Broadview Avenue, and Leslie Street were connected to newly constructed east-west routes along Commissioners Street and Unwin Avenue. The laying of railway tracks and spur lines throughout the district helped advance industrial development, creating a seamless connection between factory warehouses and Great Lakes freighters. Shipping interests were significantly improved by the construction of the 120-metre-wide Ship Channel and Turning Basin, which allowed access to the largest ships on the Great Lakes.

Despite these improvements, the first decades of development within the Port Lands were slow. Only a handful of buildings were completed between 1912 and WWII, including the Queen's City Foundry (1914), Toronto Harbour Commissioners Buildings (1916), Bank of Montreal (1920), Toronto Dry Dock Company (1920), Fire Hall No. 30 (1928), Cherry Street Toronto Hydro-Electric System substation (1930), Dominion Boxboards Building (1931), and the Sun Oil Company Building (1931). Following WWII, however, development within the Port Lands hastened, with a collection of significantly larger factories and facilities, including the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station (1949), Incinerator Building (1953), and the Lake Ontario Portland Cement Company (1960s). The largest of these Postwar developments, the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station, or "The Hearn," has long-dominated the local landscape with the scope of its main building and its 213-metre chimney stack.

In recent decades, the Port Lands' industrial character has begun to transform as certain of its largest factories, shipping facilities, and power generating stations have either closed and been repurposed - as with The Hearn - or have given way entirely to

³ Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, 9.

⁴ Ibid, 12.

new developments, such as the numerous film studios which today define much of the area. Further to this transformation, the City of Toronto's 2017 Port Lands Planning Framework, which includes the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, has set into motion a full-scale reimagining and revitalization of the neighbourhood. The plan includes a significant heritage component, centred upon key cultural and heritage corridors which will link existing heritage assets to the city and water's edge.

The Port Lands revitalization now underway includes the construction of several new pieces of infrastructure, including vehicle and pedestrian bridges, roadways, and a waterfront path, as well as an extension of light rail transit into the district. Another defining element of the plan will see the re-naturalization of the mouth of the Don River will restore hundreds of acres of wetlands, while providing a natural flood barrier.

29 Basin Street

Beginning in 1921, Sun Oil Company Limited (founded 1886) developed a large industrial site south of Commissioners Street spanning along Basin Street from Bouchette Street east towards the Turning Basin and backing onto the Port Lands' Ship Channel. In 1930, the Sun Oil Company commissioned T.H. Mothershill and Company to design a new office building, resulting in the completion of the present structure at 29 Basin Street. The Sun Oil Company Building was originally surrounded by a large field of oil tanks interconnected via an overhead network of pipes, alongside at least five outbuildings (Figures 6 & 7). Part of the Port Lands' first phase of industrial development, the Sun Oil Company Building and tank field were long a staple of the neighbourhood, the subject site situated directly across the Ship Channel to the Hearn.

Sun Oil Company Limited occupied 29 Basin Street until its closure in 1992. That same year, all 42 oil tanks and adjacent outbuildings were demolished, leaving the main office building vacant upon its large lot. In 1996, 29 Basin Street was acquired for use as offices for the Toronto Port Lands Company, with additional space leased to Performance Solutions, a television and film prop and stage set manufacturing company. At this time, a rear addition was built for film production purposes.

In 2019, exterior restoration work, including masonry repairs and window replacements, was completed following the submission of a Heritage Permit Application by ERA Architects (Figure 8). All the steel-framed, factory/warehouse type windows were replaced with custom-built, thermally glazed units manufactured by Norwood Windows and supplied by Ridley Windows, which were designed to replicate the originals. Wood-framed and aluminum-capped to replicate the look of the originals, the same number of lights per pane were used, albeit in a fixed (non-operable) configuration (Figure 13).

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining design or physical value of Criteria 1, 2 or 3 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The Sun Oil Company Building at 29 Basin Street is a representative example of an early-twentieth-century, factory/warehouse type structure completed in 1931. Designed

by T.H. Mothershill and Company, the two-storey, brick structure features Classical Revival elements. These are expressed by the use of a geometric, structural grid of cast stone capped piers and horizontal bands (with brick infill) which organize the exterior elevations into a series of stacked, rectangular bays, as well as the reliance on symmetry upon the principal (north) elevation (Figure 9). The front façade has a central entranceway framed by a cast stone surround, flanked by a pair of cast iron coach lights, and is topped by a cast stone entablature reading: "Office." (Figure 12). The geometric organization of the piers and horizontal bands divides the front façade into three stacked bays, all but one of which are punctuated by either one or two fixed, factory/warehouse type windows with attached mullions. Replaced in 2019, the new windows were built to resemble the originals, albeit without the central, operable panes.

The second storey is defined by a red brick parapet with centred gable at the roofline on the principal (north) elevation. This design element allows room for a second, larger cast stone entablature which reads: "Sun Oil Company Limited" (Figure 10). The roofline is finished in terra-cotta coping, punctuated at regular intervals on all four elevations by the protruding, capped tops of the cast stone structural piers.

The east elevation, which originally contained a bay of ground-level garage doors, was overclad between 2009 and 2014 with a mix of vinyl (first storey) and aluminum (second storey) siding (Figure 11). Though several of the garage doors have been filled in, the second-storey window openings on this elevation have been maintained and feature the same replacement windows as installed upon the other three elevations.

iv. CONTEXT

The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining contextual value of Criteria 7, 8 or 9 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The Sun Oil Company Building at 29 Basin Street is located on the south side of Basin Street east of Bouchette Street on a large lot which backs onto the north side of the Port Lands' Ship Channel west of the Turning Basin. Originally the main office building for a large industrial site complete with 42 oil tanks and several outbuildings, the Sun Oil Company Building now sits on an empty lot, thereby allowing an uninterrupted view of its surroundings, including the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station which sits directly south across the Ship Channel (Figure 16). A FedEx warehouse is situated across Basin Street to the north of the subject property. To the immediate west of the subject property sits a Toronto Hydro Substation and the Basin Transformer Station. Further west, north of Basin Street, a cluster of large film studios and film production offices sit.

A vestige of the 1912 Plan, remnants of a single railway track, with spur lines running to various former industrial lots, run east and west along Basin Street terminating at the Turning Basin. Further visual reminders of the Port Lands' industrial history can be observed in the form of the remaining chimney stacks which populate the local landscape, several of which can be seen from the subject property site.

Included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 2004, the subject property sits in close proximity to two listed and/or Part IV designated properties. These include the Part IV designated Richard L. Hearn Generating Station (1949) at 440 and 470 Unwin

Avenue, located on the south side of the Ship Channel in view of the subject property and the City of Toronto Incinerator (1953) at 400 Commissioners Street to the north.

One of the earliest sites of modern industrial activity in the Port Lands, dating to its establishment in 1921 and the completion of the subject property in 1931, the Sun Oil Company Building forms an integral part of the neighbourhood's contextual heritage.

3. EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act, and the City of Toronto is also required to use these criteria when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "✓" if it is applicable to the property, with explanatory text below.

DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

The property has design value or physical value because it	
1. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	✓
2. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
3. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

Representative example of a style and/or type

The Sun Oil Company Building at 29 Basin Street has cultural heritage value as an early twentieth-century example of a factory/warehouse type structure with Classical Revival design elements. These are expressed by the use of a geometric, structural grid of cast stone capped piers and horizontal bands (with brick infill) which organize the exterior elevations into a series of stacked, rectangular bays, as well as the reliance on symmetry upon the principal (north) elevation. Completed in 1931 with designs by T.H. Mothershill and Company, the subject property is a rare surviving example within the Port Lands of an early twentieth-century industrial building constructed with an exposed, cast stone frame with brick infill. The grid-like form of the frame produces a relentless repetition and dimensional uniformity of red brick infill spandrels across all four elevations, many containing aluminium-capped, multi-light, factory/warehouse type windows with attached mullions which are faithful replicas of the originals. Typical of factory/warehouse type structures of this era, the property features some Classical Revival details, including the central entryway with cast stone surround, brick parapet with central gable, and two prominent, cast stone entablatures upon the front elevation which read "Office" and "Sun Oil Company Limited."

HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The property has historical value or associative value because it	
4. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	N/A
5. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	✓
6. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

Yields information that contributes to an understanding of a community

The subject property yields information that contributes to an understanding of the historical industrial development of the Port Lands neighbourhood. The Sun Oil Company Building is reflective of the first major phase of development of the area following the completion of the Toronto Harbour Commission's 1912 Waterfront Development Eastern Section Plan. The subject property's location along the Ship Channel and attached Turning Basin is historically linked to its use as an oil refinery and storage facility upon the Toronto Harbour.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value because it is	
7. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9. a landmark.	N/A

Important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area

The Sun Oil Company Building maintains and supports the early twentieth-century, industrial character of the Port Lands neighbourhood. The subject property forms part of a broader collection of listed and Part IV designated properties within the Port Lands which date to the area's first major phase of industrial development between 1912 and 1945. These properties include the Queen's City Foundry (1914), Toronto Harbour Commissioners Buildings (1916), Bank of Montreal (1920), Toronto Dry Dock Company (1920), Fire Hall No. 30 (1928), Cherry Street Toronto Hydro-Electric System substation (1930), the Dominion Boxboards Building (1931), and others.

Physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings

Located on the north side of the Port Lands' Ship Channel west of the Turning Basin, the subject property is visually linked to its immediate surroundings where it sits in close proximity to two listed and/or Part IV designated properties. These include the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station (1949) at 440 and 470 Unwin Avenue, located directly south across the Ship Channel, and the City of Toronto Incinerator (1953) at 400 Commissioners Street to the north.

CONCLUSION

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 29 Basin Street and determined that it meets 4 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act.

Completed in 1931, the Sun Oil Company Building at 29 Basin Street has cultural heritage value as an early twentieth-century factory/warehouse type building with Classical Revival design elements and is a rare surviving example within the Port Lands of an early-twentieth-century industrial building constructed with an exposed, cast stone frame with brick infill. Once the main office building for a large industrial site, the subject property was part of the Port Lands' first major phase of modern development during the early twentieth century. The property is an important part of the early twentieth-century industrial history of the Port Lands and today, the building forms part of a planned film and television studio campus.

The Statement of Significance (Attachment 3) 29 Basin Street comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Maps and Photographs
Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources
Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)

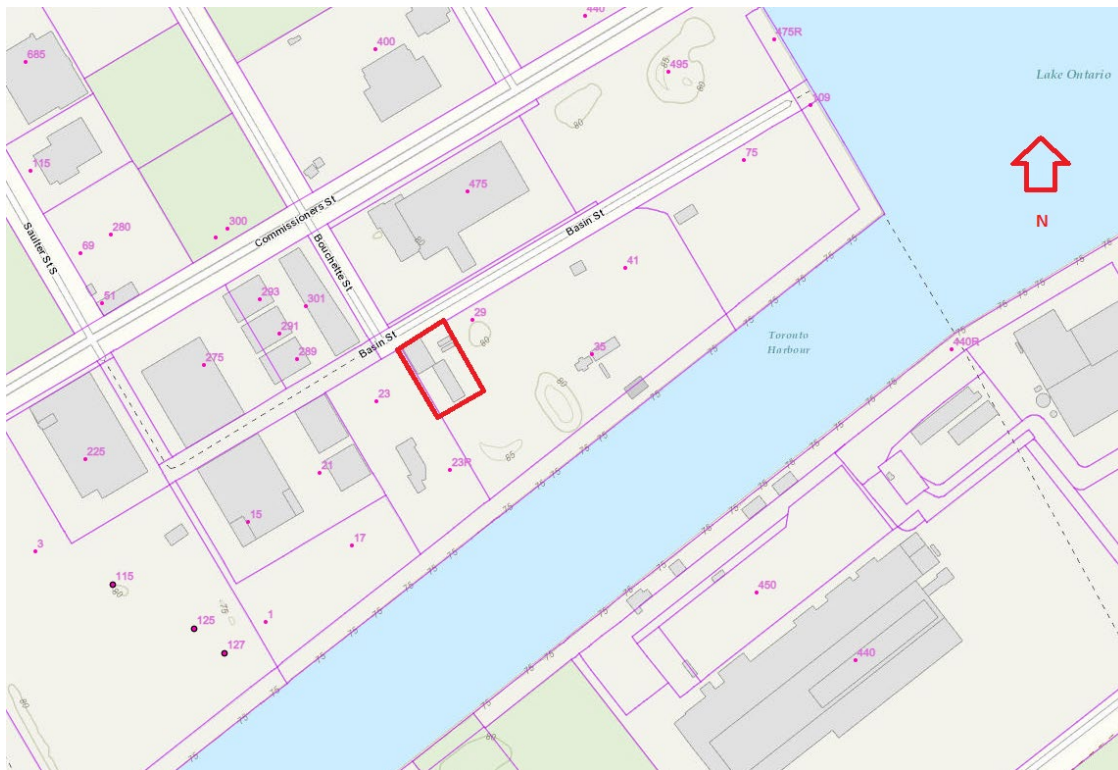


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the subject property at 29 Basin Street. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the properties are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping).

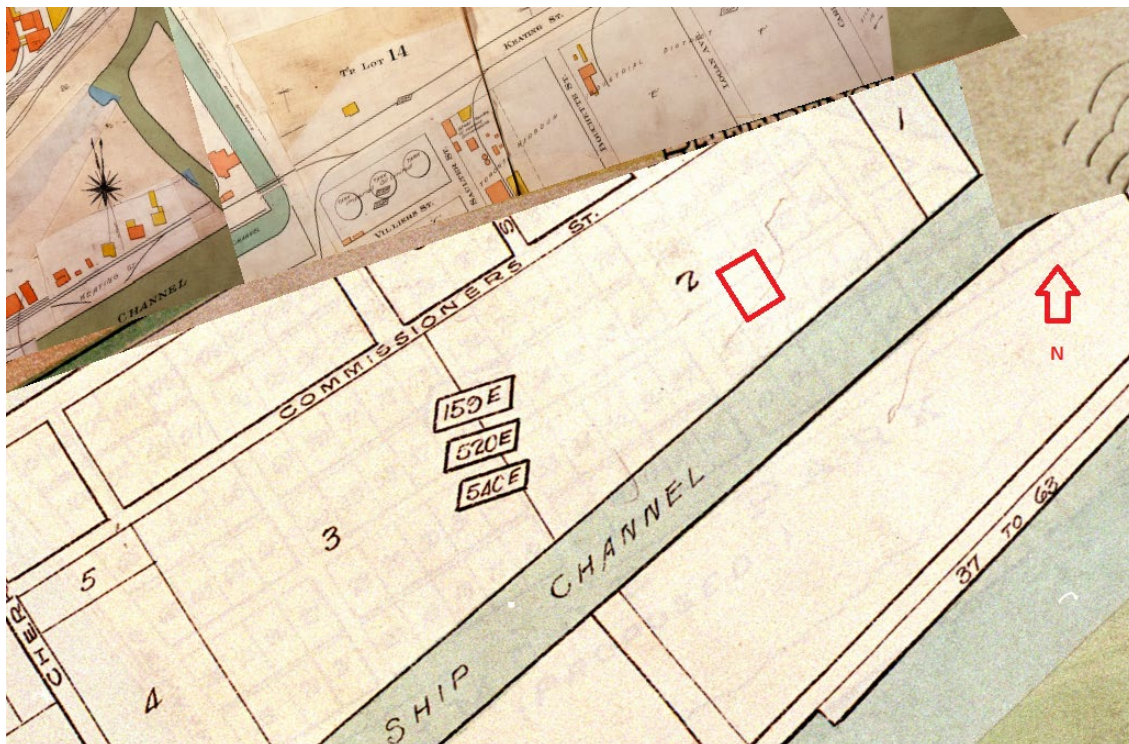


Figure 2. 1924 Goad's Historical Atlas showing the future site of the subject property at 29 Basin Street.



Figure 3. 1965 Aerial photo showing the site of the subject property during Sun Oil Company Limited's active operations from 1921-1992.



Figure 4. Toronto Port Lands, 1899. Looking northwest to Toronto skyline in left background. Painting by John Wilson. TPL/Baldwin Collection of Canadiana.



Figure 5. Dredging and filling for the expansion of the Port Lands, 1914. TPL/Baldwin Collection of Canadiana.



Figure 6. View of freighters, oil tankers, and colliers berthed in the Port Lands' Ship Channel, 1931. TPL/Baldwin Collection of Canadiana.



Figure 7. Sun Oil Company Limited site with oil tanks, viewed from the south, perhaps the Turning Basin, 1934. Library and Archives Canada.



Figure 8. Sun Oil Company Building in 2009 prior to the recladding of the east elevation and 2019 masonry restoration and window replacement work. Google Maps.



Figure 9. Sun Oil Company Building, front (north) elevation. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 10. Sun Oil Company Building, cast stone entablature. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 11. Sun Oil Company Building, side (east) elevation. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 12. Sun Oil Company Building, main entryway. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 13. Sun Oil Company Building, replacement window. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 14. Context view looking east. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 15. Context view looking west. Heritage Planning, 2023.



Figure 16. Context view looking south, Richard L. Hearn Generating Station in background (left). Heritage Planning, 2023.

Archival Sources

- Architectural Conservancy of Ontario: TOBuilt, "Sun Oil Company Building"
- City of Toronto Archives
- City of Toronto Building Records
- City of Toronto Directory
- Goad's Historical Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1924
- Library and Archives Canada
- Toronto Public Library (Baldwin Collection of Canadiana)

Secondary Sources

City of Toronto. Port Lands Profile, 2013.

<https://portlandsto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Port%20Profile%20nov12.pdf>

ERA Architects. Basin Media Hub: Heritage Impact Assessment, 2023.

Port Lands Planning Initiatives: Final Report, Attachment 1: Section 4-3 - Cultural Heritage Resources, 2017.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-107825.pdf>

Waterfront Toronto: History and Heritage

<https://www.waterfronttoronto.ca/about-us/history-heritage>

Waterfront Toronto: Port Lands

<https://www.waterfronttoronto.ca/our-projects/scope-scale/port-lands>

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The property at 29 Basin 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 the criteria of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual values.

Description

The subject property at 29 Basin Street, historically known as the Sun Oil Company Building, is located on the south side of Basin Street east of Bouchette Street, on the north side of the Port Lands' Ship Channel west of the Turning Basin. Today, the building forms part of a planned film and television studio campus in the Port Lands.

The subject property at 29 Basin Street is comprised of a two-storey, brick, factory/warehouse type structure which was completed in 1931 as the main office for Sun Oil Company Limited. The Sun Oil Company Building was designed by T.H. Mothershill with Classical Revival elements. These elements are expressed by the use of a geometric, structural grid of cast stone capped piers and horizontal bands with brick infill which organize the exterior elevations into a series of stacked, rectangular bays, as well as the reliance on symmetry upon the principal (north) elevation. The subject property is further defined by its factory/warehouse type windows, modern replicas of the originals which were installed in 2019, and for its two cast stone entablatures upon the front (north) elevation. The front façade is characterized by its central, ground-level entryway with cast stone surround and flanking cast iron coach lamps, which is topped by the smaller of two entablatures, which reads: "Office." A second, larger entablature adorns the second-storey gable, reading: "Sun Oil Company Limited."

The property at 29 Basin Street was included the City's Heritage Register on October 28, 2004.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**Design and Physical Value**

The Sun Oil Company Building at 29 Basin Street has cultural heritage value as an early twentieth-century example of a factory/warehouse type structure with Classical Revival design elements. These are expressed by the use of a geometric, structural grid of cast stone capped piers and horizontal bands with brick infill which organize the exterior elevations into a series of stacked, rectangular bays, as well as the reliance on symmetry upon the principal (north) elevation. Completed in 1931 with designs by T.H. Mothershill and Company, the subject property is a rare surviving example within the Port Lands of an early twentieth-century industrial building constructed with an exposed, cast stone frame with brick infill. The grid-like form of the frame produces a relentless repetition and dimensional uniformity of red brick infill spandrels across all four elevations, many containing aluminium-capped, multi-light, factory/warehouse type windows with attached mullions which are faithful replicas of the originals. Typical of

factory/warehouse type structures of this era, the property retains Classical Revival details, including the central entryway with cast stone surround, brick parapet with central gable, capped with terra-cotta coping, and two large, cast stone entablatures upon the front elevation which read "Office" and "Sun Oil Company Limited."

Historical or Associative Value

The subject property yields information that contributes to an understanding of the historical industrial development of the Port Lands neighbourhood. The Sun Oil Company Building is reflective of the first major phase of development of the area following the completion of the Toronto Harbour Commission's 1912 Waterfront Development Eastern Section Plan. The subject property's location along the Ship Channel and attached Turning Basin is historically linked to its use as an oil refinery and storage facility upon the Toronto Harbour.

Contextual Value

The Sun Oil Company Building maintains and supports the early twentieth-century, industrial character of the Port Lands neighbourhood. The subject property forms part of a broader collection of listed and Part IV designated properties within the Port Lands which date to the area's first major phase of industrial development between 1912 and 1945. These properties include the Queen's City Foundry (1914), Toronto Harbour Commissioners Buildings (1916), Bank of Montreal (1920), Toronto Dry Dock Company (1920), Fire Hall No. 30 (1928), Cherry Street Toronto Hydro-Electric System substation (1930), the Dominion Boxboards Building (1931), and others.

Located on the north side of the Port Lands' Ship Channel west of the Turning Basin, the subject property is visually linked to its immediate surroundings where it sits in close proximity to two listed and/or Part IV designated properties. These include the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station (1949) at 440 and 470 Unwin Avenue, located directly south across the Ship Channel, and the City of Toronto Incinerator (1953) at 400 Commissioners Street to the north.

Heritage Attributes

Design and Physical Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 29 Basin Street as representative of an early twentieth-century factory/warehouse type structure with Classical Revival design elements:

- The form, scale, and massing of the two-storey, factory/warehouse type building
- The materials, with the exposed concrete frame construction on a raised foundation, the red brick infill cladding, and the cast stone detailing
- The structural cast stone capped piers and horizontal bands which geometrically organize the exterior elevations into a series of rectangular stacked bays
- The central main entryway upon the front (north) elevation with cast stone surround and flanking cast iron coach lights
- The smaller of two cast stone entablatures above the main entryway upon the front elevation which reads: "Office"

- The larger of two cast stone entablatures affixed to the second-storey gable upon the front elevation which reads: "Sun Oil Company Limited"
- The replica, aluminum-capped, fixed pane, multi-light, factory/warehouse type windows with attached mullions installed on north, south, east, and west elevations
- The cast stone lintels supporting each of the factory/warehouse type windows
- The flat roofline (except for front gable) with red brick-clad parapet capped with terra-cotta coping, above the concrete frame

Historical or Associative Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 29 Basin Street for the contribution to yielding an understanding of the historical development of the area include:

- The building's form, scale, massing, and Classical Revival design elements which identify it as part of the collection of pre-WWII-era structures which constitute the earliest modern phase of industrial development in the area
- The building's placement along the north side of the Ship Channel thereby connecting the site to its historic use as an oil refinery and storage facility

Contextual Value

Attributes that contribute to the contextual value of the property at 29 Basin Street as visually linked to its surroundings and helping to define, maintain, and support the character of the area include:

- The building's setback, placement, and orientation on Basin Street
- The building's form, scale, and massing; its brick and cast stone finish; and Classical Revival design elements