

505 University Avenue - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date: January 3, 2024

To: Toronto Preservation Board

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

Wards: Ward 11 - University-Rosedale

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 505 University Avenue (including entrance address at 136 Edward Street) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value according to the Statement of Significance and description of Heritage Attributes found in Attachment 3.

Located on the northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street, the property at 505 University Avenue contains the Shell Oil Building. Designed by the prominent architectural firm of Marani & Morris, the building was originally intended to be constructed to a height of 20-storeys. However, the Shell Oil Building was erected in two phases, with the first 13 storeys completed in 1958 and the uppermost 7 storeys added in 1966 using a novel mobile crane modification created specifically for this project and signalling a technical achievement in local high-rise construction.

The Canadian office of Shell Oil was originally located in Montreal since 1925 until its new headquarters opened on University Avenue in 1958. The Shell Oil Building at 505 University Avenue forms part of the collection of Marani & Morris-designed buildings contributing to the rise of architecture in the post-WWII era along the grand ceremonial boulevard of University Avenue, including the adjacent Maclean-Hunter Building, 1961 (481 University Avenue), the nearby Bank of Canada Building, 1958 (250 University Avenue) and the Metro Toronto Court House, 1966 (361 University Avenue) that are already recognized as heritage properties by City Council.

Prior to the opening of its headquarters in Toronto, Shell Oil also commissioned The Shell Oil Tower at Exhibition Place, a modernist landmark designed by George Robb. The innovative nine-storey column of steel and glass topped by a viewing platform and large analogue clock was built to promote Shell Oil to visitors to the Canadian National Exhibition when it opened in 1955 (the same year that Shell purchased the property at 505 University Avenue for their new HQ) and while the site was leased until 1973.

Together, the Shell Oil Building and the Shell Oil Tower demonstrated the company's vision and investment in high quality modern architecture in Toronto.

Staff have determined that the property at 505 University Avenue meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act under all three categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual values. 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.

On August 31, 2022 the City received a Zoning By-law Amendment application proposing to demolish the existing Shell Oil Canada building to permit the construction of a new 64-storey mixed-use building with a 12-storey office podium and residential units above.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) completed by GBCA Architects and dated August 15, 2022 was submitted to support the application and is currently under review.

The City Clerk issued a complete application notice on October 28, 2022. The property owner has provided a waiver to extend the 90-day timeline to April 1, 2024. Council must make a decision on or before its March 20, 2024 meeting to provide sufficient time for the City Clerk to issue a notice of intention to designate before the waiver expires.

As of January 1, 2023, should a property be subject to an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application that would trigger a Prescribed Event, the property must be listed in the heritage register prior to the Prescribed Event occurring to designate a property under Section 29(1.2)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This requirement does not apply to a Prescribed Event that has occurred prior to January 1, 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 505 University Avenue (including entrance address at 136 Edward Street) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 505 University Avenue (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3, to the report, January 3, 2024, 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.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

There are no reports to committee and/or council pertaining to this file at the time of writing this report.

POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Plans and Policies

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

Further, the policies and definitions of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) identify the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage evaluation and heritage conservation will be implemented.

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

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

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>

As of July 1, 2021, Section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days of a "Prescribed Event".

A Prescribed Event is a point of time when the application for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application has been deemed complete and the City Clerk provides notice of that complete application to the public in accordance with the Planning Act. The Prescribed Event is not the date a development application is deemed complete or when an application is

made to the City. A Prescribed Event, including any prescribed exceptions, are defined under O. Reg 385/21.

If a new or subsequent Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application is submitted on the same property, the Prescribed Event date is reset to the new date the City Clerk issues notice to the public of the new or subsequent complete application.

Official Plan

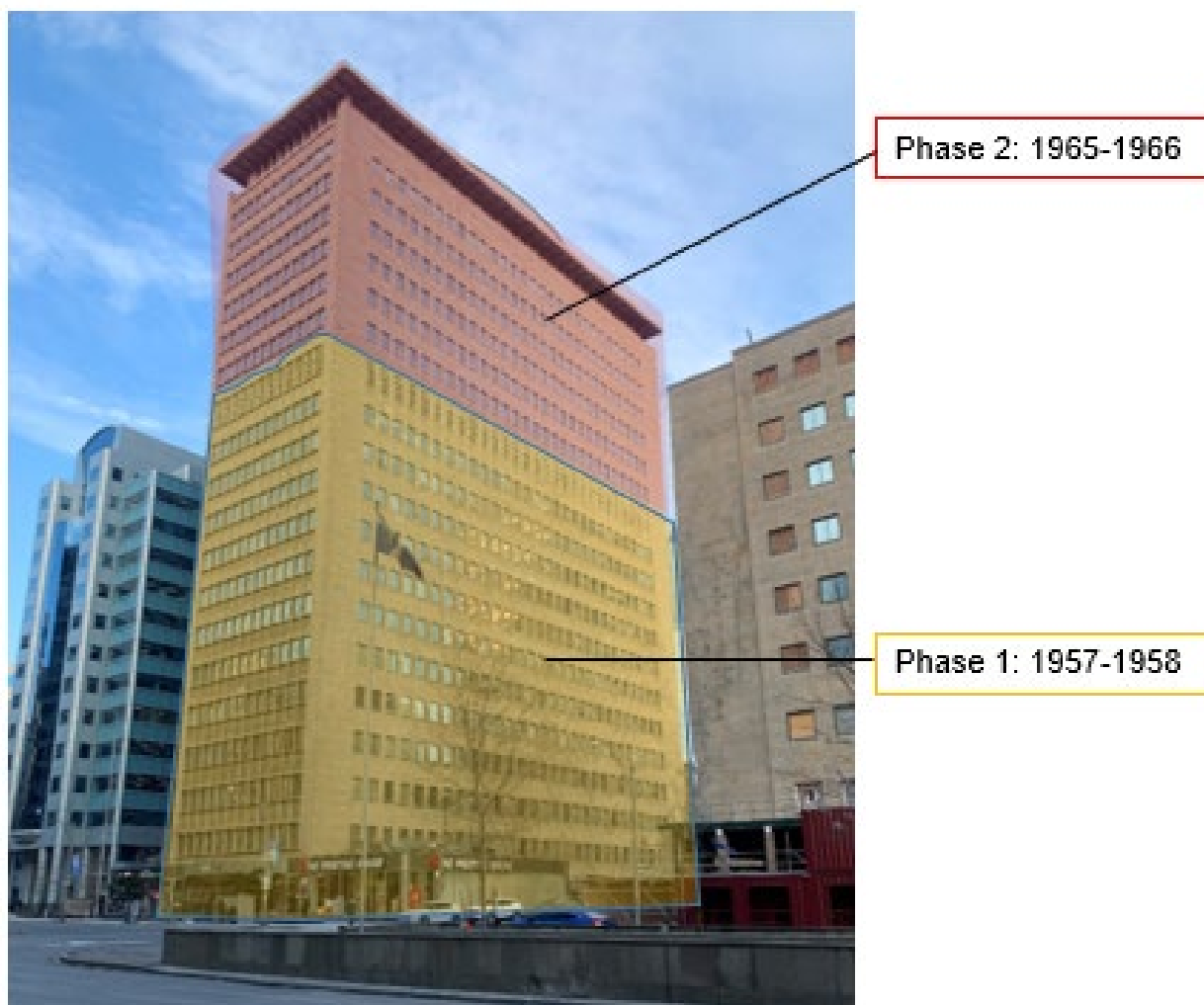
The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime and provides policies to guide decision making within the City. It contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making. The Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

COMMENTS

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. An HIA completed by GBCA Architects and dated August 15, 2022, was submitted to support the related planning application and is currently under review.

The subject property is adjacent to the MacLean-Hunter Building (481 University Avenue), a property designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and completed in 1961 by Marani & Morris, the same architectural firm as the subject property at 505 University Avenue.



Above: Current photo of the Shell Oil Building by Marani & Morris, looking northeast from the west side of University Avenue, and showing the building's two phases of construction: 1957-1958 (13-storeys indicated in orange) and 1965-1966 (7 additional storeys plus a 1-storey mechanical penthouse indicated in red). [Heritage Planning, 2023]

1. DESCRIPTION

505 UNIVERSITY AVENUE - SHELL OIL BUILDING	
ADDRESS	505 University Avenue (including entrance address at 136 Edward Street)
WARD	Ward 11 - University-Rosedale
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	PLAN 147 PT LOTS 21 TO 24
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Yonge-Bay Corridor
HISTORICAL NAME	Shell Oil Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1958: 13-storey building 1966: 7-storey vertical addition
ORIGINAL OWNER	Shell Oil Company of Canada
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial: Office

CURRENT USE*	Commercial: Office *This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	1958: Marani & Morris 1966: Marani, Rounthwaite & Dick
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	See Section 2
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	See Section 2
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative, Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	NOL
RECORDER	Heritage Planning: Liz McFarland
REPORT DATE	January 2024

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 505 University Avenue, 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.
1884	The Goad's Historical Atlas Map for this year shows the subject property and much of this portion of University Avenue defined by wood framed structures (Image 2)
1907	First Baptist Church appears on the subject property for the first time in the City Directory
1924	The Goad's Historical Atlas Map for this year shows the subject property occupied by the First Baptist Church (1907) and much of this portion of University Avenue now defined by brick clad structures (Image 3)
1931	The University Avenue By-law is passed to guide future development along the street

1955	The Shell Oil Tower (later Bulova Tower), a modernist landmark in Toronto and commissioned by Shell Oil, is completed at Exhibition Place (Images 6 and 7)
1955	Shell Oil purchases the property at 505 University Avenue for their relocated HQ
1956	Marani & Morris submits architectural plans to the City of Toronto to permit the construction of an office building at 505 University Avenue for Shell Oil Company of Canada
1958	Construction is completed on the Shell Oil Building at 505 University Avenue
1959-1964	Marani & Morris is now known as Marani, Morris & Allan with the addition of Marvin F. Allan to the partnership during this period
1964	Plans are submitted to the City to extend the existing basement and construct a 7-storey vertical addition to the 13-storey Shell Oil Building by Marani, Morris & Allan
1964-1980	Following Robert Morris's unexpected death in 1964, Marani, Morris & Allan is now known as Marani, (Fred) Rounthwaite & (Ron) Dick
1966	7-storey vertical addition (plus a 1-storey mechanical penthouse) to the original 13-storey building is completed by Marani, Rounthwaite and Dick
1984	Shell Oil continued to occupy the property at 505 University Avenue until their relocation to Calgary in 1984

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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

University Avenue Precinct

The interwar period (1918-1939) represented a defining moment in the history of University Avenue, which had been the subject of significant debate within City Hall and Toronto's architectural community as the City grappled with its growing prominence and desire for a grand thoroughfare to rival those of other metropolitan cities. In the early 1890s, the city combined College Avenue and University Street - which ran parallel to each other between Queen Street West and Queen's Park - to create University Avenue, recognizing its ceremonial role as the route to the Provincial Legislative Buildings at Queen's Park, and the presence at its southern end of significant institutions including Osgoode Hall and the Armoury Building. The first two decades of the 20th century saw little change of University Avenue's primarily residential and working class character, save for the addition of the sprawling Toronto General Hospital complex at College Street.

After a number of failed attempts to re-envision University Avenue, in 1928 the provincial government enacted legislation enabling the City of Toronto to expropriate land, and City Council subsequently passed the "University Avenue Extension Act", which formalised the plan to extend University Avenue south from its terminus at Queen

Street West on a diagonal connecting to Front Street West and to the new Union Station. The initial plans went further than just the extension of University Avenue, envisioning a series of circles, squares and new streets in the Financial District that would both improve the notoriously congested streets, and create a civic centre designed in accordance with City Beautiful principles. The grand plans recommended by the Advisory City Planning Commission fell victim to the crash of 1929, however, and when put to a referendum were refused by the citizens of Toronto¹. The project was significantly reduced in scale and the extension of University Avenue was ultimately funded as a local improvement paid through a levy placed on area property owners.

Work on the extension began in 1931 which sought to implement at least some of the grand plans envisioned by the commission, and coincided with the passage by City Council of the University Avenue By-law (13409) on the advice of the City Planning Commission and the city architect, J.J. Woolnough. The objective of By-law 13409 was to establish University Avenue as a boulevard of distinction and dignity, and did so through architectural and land use regulations that looked to ensure a cohesive appearance and character to the street. Amongst other requirements, the by-law established street wall heights, cladding materials, corner lot treatments, and maximum set back requirements in an effort to ensure a uniform quality and some form of area planning to deter speculative development and the subdivision of lots.

Owing to the onset of the Great Depression, minimal development occurred in the pre-World War II period along University Avenue, save for the Canada Life Building (330 University Avenue, Sproatt and Rolph, 1931) which is an example of what was envisioned for the grand avenue if not for the financial crisis.

In 1955, the Bank of Canada announced their plans to construct a new building to the designs of Marani & Morris to house its Toronto offices at the corner of Queen Street West and University Avenue. Soon after, other major institutions began to acquire and plan for flagship buildings along University Avenue. This included the Maclean-Hunter Building (481 University Avenue, Marani and Morris, 1961) and the Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company (165 University Avenue, Marani & Morris, 1962).

However, it wasn't long before the regulations implemented through the By-law, which at this time was over twenty years old, were challenged, their prescriptive massing and material requirements were perceived as clashing with the architectural style and corporate space requirements of the post-war period.

The first instance came with the notable modernist architect John C. Parkin at 200 University Avenue. Below, a timeline of buildings constructed along University Avenue illuminates Parkin's precedent-setting break from a traditionalist approach with his design for the Sun Life Building, conceived and submitted to the City for building permissions as early as October 1957.² Parkin pushed back against the By-law's step back and material requirements, a bold move not seen again until five years later with the Metropolitan Toronto Court House at 361 University Avenue (1966), where Marani, Morris & Allan are noted as designing a complex that "neglects its street-affirming duties

¹ Osbaldeston, 29.

² Toronto Building Records

to University Avenue"³. In the same year (1966), Marani, Rounthwaite & Dick completed the original 20-storey vision for the Shell Oil Building as the By-Law's outdated regulations continued to weaken in the face of capitalism and its corporate design defined by tall buildings.

Buildings in bolded font in the timeline below represent post-war era projects along University Avenue that were designed by Marani & Morris and its successor firms. With all of these commissions, Marani and Morris' design aesthetic is distinguished as a defining part of the University Avenue streetscape today.

- Osgoode Hall, 130 Queen St W, 1829
- Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario Building, 610 University Avenue, 1915
- Canada Life Building, 330 University Avenue, 1931
- Bank of Canada Building, 250 University Avenue, 1958
- Dominion of Canada General Insurance Building, 165 University Avenue, 1958
- Shell Oil Building, 505 University Avenue, 1958; 1966
- Sun Life Building, 200 University Avenue, 1961
- Maclean-Hunter Building, 481 University Avenue, 1961
- Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company, 165 University Avenue, 1962
- Metropolitan Toronto Court House, 361 University Avenue, 1966
- National Life Building, 522 University Avenue, 1972

Increasingly, new buildings along University Avenue were not beholden to the grand vision of the 1920s City Planning Commission and J.J. Woolnough; those buildings that did conform were the exception and not the rule.

Whereas Montreal had been the country's economic heart during the first half of the 20th century, Toronto's rise since 1960 as the unchallenged metropolis of Canada led to hundreds of corporate head offices relocating there.⁴ The grand ceremonial boulevard of University Avenue, and its proximity to the Toronto's Financial District, provided a prestigious location for major banks, corporations and institutions.

Although present-day University Avenue has a diversity of building types and architectural styles, it has maintained its character as a major thoroughfare and a prominent avenue lined by significant institutions that contribute to the downtown core's architectural character and public realm.

505 University Avenue

The First Baptist Church at the northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street was built in 1907, replacing an earlier wood frame structure on the site. According to the City Directory of the same year, the property was referenced as the "Colored Baptist Church". (Images 4 and 5)

After WWII, when the thoroughfare's lanes and the adjoining sidewalks were widened and additional public monuments were introduced to the central boulevard, another

³ Patricia McHugh, Alex Bozickovic), 101.

⁴ Linteau, Paul-Andre, The Canadian Encyclopedia online

wave of construction began. It was during this period that the subject property was developed. In the 1950s, several 19th-century residential buildings, as well as the 1907 First Baptist Church building, were sold off to the Shell Oil Company and incrementally demolished to make way for the oil giant's new Canadian headquarters at 505 University Avenue.

Shell Oil Company of Canada

The Shell Oil company initially began in London in the 1830s by Marcus Samuel who imported sea shells from the Far East to Europe, to capitalise on their popularity in the interior design industry at that time. Upon Marcus Samuel's death in 1870, the business was passed to his sons, who expanded it into the oil exporting business starting in the 1880s, achieving innovations in the way oil was transported: costs could be reduced substantially by bulk transportation in tankers. The company went through a merger and name changes in the early-20th century, culminating in the current name.

In 1911, Shell began its operations in Canada, opening its first facilities in Montreal and Longe-Pointe, Quebec. The Canadian headquarters was located in Montreal as of 1925. The company expanded in the West Coast in 1915 and the Prairies in 1939. In 1955, the Company decided to move its head office from Montreal to Toronto, on University Avenue. Shell Oil continued to occupy the property at 505 University Avenue in Toronto until its headquarters relocation to Calgary in 1984. The building has since been occupied by a variety of offices with retail uses at grade.⁵

Marani & Morris, Architects

The partnership of Marani & Morris operated between 1930 and 1959, a defining period in a much longer history for this significant architectural practice in Toronto, which began as Marani & Paisley in 1924, and continues today as RDHA. Under the leadership of Ferdinand Herbert Marani (1893-1971) and Robert Schofield Morris (1898-1964), Marani & Morris was a leading mid-century practice that catered primarily to corporate and institutional clients through the skillful integration of classical architectural principles with modernism. Over the course of their practice, and with the addition of new associates and partners along the way, Marani & Morris can be credited with bridging the perceived divide between tradition and modernity, and in doing so won both critical acclaim and significant corporate commissions. Prior to 1941 the partnership included James Irving Lawson (1886-1964), and in 1959 former associate Marvin Francis Allan (1905-1964) was promoted to partner.

The period between 1941 and 1959 in the partnership was defined by major corporate and institutional commissions, many executed in the firm's hallmark Modern Classical architectural style. Buildings attributed to the firm from this period include the Confederation Life Insurance Company Office (333 Bloor Street East, 1950-51), the addition to the Manufacturer's Life Insurance Company Building (200 Bloor Street East, 1950-51) and the Traders Building (625 Church Street, 1956). In addition to corporate clients, Marani & Morris were retained by major institutions to either contribute to or design suburban and rural campuses, including the Schmon Infirmary and Memorial

⁵ These two paragraphs reproduced from GBCA, 11.

Great Hall at Ridley College in St. Catharines, Ontario (1949) and the St Joseph's Motherhouse at Morrow Park (opened 1961). Other notable works include the Canadian National Exhibition Grandstand (1947), and Peterborough City Hall (1950-51).

While the nature of their work varied typologically, spanning from downtown office buildings to civic and institutional campuses, the firm of Marani & Morris consistently delivered high quality modern designs that retained enough of a footing in classical architecture to be palatable to corporate and institutional clients, while advancing the principles of modernism and contributing significantly to Toronto's 20th century architectural landscape.

In 1964, Morris passed away and the partnership merged with Cyril Frederic Thomas Rounthwaite and Ron Dick to form the firm of Marani, Rounthwaite & Dick. When Marani passed away in 1971, the firm was joined by Glenn Hadley. The firm eventually rebranded as RDHA, which is still in operation to this day.

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 office building at 505 University Avenue was designed by Marani & Morris for the Shell Oil Company of Canada's new headquarters. Originally conceived as a high-rise structure, the Shell Oil Building was constructed in two phases: 13 storeys (1958) and additional 7 storeys (1966).

The 13-storey steel-framed building is designed in the Modern Classical style, as a point tower over a broad one-storey base used for commercial purposes and all set on a T-shaped plan. The tower's west end is centrally located over this one-storey podium, with the tower set back from the north and south property lines. In accordance with the by-law at the time, which regulated the built form and materials of buildings facing University Avenue, the tower is clad in Queenston limestone panels on all elevations, except for the single-storey base structure which is clad in Norwegian Blue Granite. The main entrance is centered and slightly recessed in the first (ground) floor on the principal (west) elevation between a pair of projecting single-storey pavilions that form the podium.

Above the first level on the west (principal) elevation fronting onto University Avenue, the tower features recessed limestone spandrel panels between the similarly-sized, punched window openings. This feature, along with the attached, slender, stone "fins" rising between the openings from the second through twelfth storeys emphasizes the verticality of the design despite its initially truncated height of 13-storeys. These fins would be seamlessly continued upward to the nineteenth storey on the 1966 vertical addition to the 1958 building. The thirteenth storey, a mechanical floor, featured rectangular metal louvres. The flat roofline above was surmounted by a single-storey mechanical penthouse. (Images 8-13)

Originally designed to structurally accommodate an upward extension, Shell decided to add the final 7 storeys on top of the 13-storey building by the mid-1960s. The final drawings for this addition submitted to the City in 1964 were completed by the successor firms of Marani & Morris: Marani, Morris & Allan and Marani, Rounthwaite & Dick.⁶ The first step in this addition included an extension to the basement level of the existing building followed by a novel plan for hoisting the structural steel necessary for the 7-storey vertical addition on this constricted site. by York Steel Construction under Jackson-Lewis Co. Ltd, General Contractors. (Images 14-16)

The structural steel required for these additional storeys was contracted to York Steel Construction under Jackson-Lewis Co. Ltd., acting as General Contractors. A separate steel truss tower, mounted on a mobile crane with outriggers anchored to precisely positioned steel I-beams at ground level and laterally supported with prestressed cables so that the crane wouldn't collapse under its own weight, was constructed and anchored to the 13th storey of the existing building's north elevation. A 108ft jib at the top of the crane tower hoisted the addition's structural steel up to 300 feet (100m). This was described by the engineer from York Steel as "ingenious" and "one of the greatest breakthroughs in crane technology".⁷ (Images 17-20)

The seven additional storeys are very similar in design and materiality to the original building, blending seamlessly with the floors below and belying the original design intention of Marani & Morris to build a 20-storey structure on the site. The distinction between the first and second phases of the building's erection is defined by the 13th storey (the 1958 mechanical floor whose original metal louvres were replaced with decorative metal screens). The 20th storey is recessed from those below and fully glazed, the interior containing a lounge and kitchen area. The flat roofline above the recessed 20th storey creates the illusion from street level of a floating plane with a deep coffered, stone cornice. The latter feature suggests a modern interpretation of the Chicago Style skyscrapers of the late-19th and early-20th century. A lozenge-shaped, glazed mechanical penthouse with a gently-curved roofline is set back on all sides atop the main roof. Fifty years on, architecture critic Alex Bozikovic notes that the Shell Oil Building's "limestone skin and fine proportions have aged well".⁸ (Images 21-32)

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 property data map (Attachment 1, Image 1) shows the location of the Shell Oil Building on the northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street. Immediately north on the east side of University Avenue is Sick Kids Hospital and directly across the grand, landscaped boulevard along University Avenue is John C. Parkin's National Life Building (1972). Directly opposite on the south side of Edward Street stands the

6 The year 1964 marked a year of several transitions for the Marani & Morris firm with the death of both Robert Morris and Marvin Allan, and the subsequent merger of Marani with Rounthwaite & Dick.

7 Fuller, Engineering and Contract Record, 55-57.

8 McHugh and Bozikovic, 103.

contemporary Maclean-Hunter Building, 1961, which is an addition to the Maclean-Hunter complex at this location designed by Marani & Morris and a designated property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. (Images 33-36)

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	✓

A representative example of a style

The Shell Oil Building (1958; 1966) has cultural heritage value as a fine representative example of a transitional office building from the post-World War II era designed in the Modern Classical style with the scale, materials and features inspired by and yet challenging the urban design guidelines established for University Avenue in the early 20th century.

Originally conceived as a taller structure, the Shell Oil Building was constructed in two phases (13 storeys in 1958 and an additional 7 storeys in 1966) with this evolution of building height captured in the thirteenth-storey 'datum line' defined by regularly-spaced rectangular openings filled with decorative metal panels on the west, north and south elevations.

Rising 20 storeys above University Avenue where it overlooks the street's landscaped central boulevard by the celebrated landscape architects, Dunnington-Grubb & Stensson, the Shell Oil Building is distinguished today by its fine proportions, its emphasis on verticality with its slender stone fins rising from the second through the nineteenth floors on the principal (west) elevation fronting onto University Avenue and the interplay of the Queenston limestone cladding with the regular rhythm of punched window openings across its west, north and south elevations.

Demonstrates a high degree of technical achievement

The 7-storey vertical addition to the Shell Oil Building in 1966 represents a recognized engineering feat for high-rise construction in Toronto with the modification of existing mobile crane capabilities for hoisting structural steel with respect to height, extension and stabilization. The realization of this vertical addition is valued as the completion of the original 20-storey design intent for the building conceptualized as early as 1956.

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	✓
5. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
6. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	✓

Direct associations with an institution that is significant to a community

The building was purpose-built for the Shell Oil Company's Canadian headquarters (relocated from Montreal) and occupied by Shell Oil for 26 years between 1958 and 1984. Shell Oil is a global company based in London, UK and its Canadian subsidiary is an important oil company in Canada whose corporate interest in high quality architecture and design is also evident in the 1955 Shell Oil Tower (later Bulova Tower), a landmark modernist structure in Toronto's architectural history that was located at Exhibition Place until its demolition in the mid-1980s.

Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect who is significant to a community

The Shell Oil Building is reflective of the work of the architectural firm Marani & Morris, one of Toronto's leading 20th-century modern architectural practices and who are credited with the design of numerous high quality institutional and office buildings within Toronto. The skillful application of the Modern Classical style (a style that was refined by the firm in the post-war period) is a hallmark of Marani & Morris and its successor firms, and demonstrative of this period of their work.

The Shell Oil Building shares design features with other commissions of the firm from this period of the partnership. The firm's adjacent and contemporary commission for the Maclean-Hunter Building (481 University Avenue) similarly balances modern and classical styles and combining granite, steel, glass and concrete materials. The 1966 addition to the Shell Oil building, with its recessed and glazed uppermost storey and floating roof, reflects the evolution of Marani & Morris' design ethos as it further embraced modernism and gradually eschewed classical elements.

The Shell Oil Building's completion coincides with Robert Morris receiving the Gold Medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1958, making Morris one of only

two Canadian architects ever to hold this distinction. The transitional form and styling of the Shell Oil Building is emblematic of Marani's interest in classicism and Morris' modernist ideals, and is an excellent reflection of the firm's evolving work during the post-WWII era.

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 Shell Oil Building maintains and supports the character of the University Avenue precinct, which is one of Toronto's major streets and a significant ceremonial avenue that is home to significant buildings associated with important institutions in the city's history, including Osgoode Hall, the Confederation Life Building, the Bank of Canada Building, the Royal Canadian Military Institute, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice (formerly the Metropolitan Toronto Court House) and others. Although the design of University Avenue did not substantially develop as envisioned by the interwar design standards envisioned for the street, its present-day character is defined by a collection of architecturally and historically significant buildings that reflect its importance in the City of Toronto throughout the 20th century, including the Shell Oil Building.

Physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings

The Shell Oil Building is visually and historically linked to its surroundings on University Avenue, which includes a number of buildings constructed for financial and institutional organizations, including the Confederation Life Building to its north, Osgoode Hall and the Superior Court of Justice (formerly the Metropolitan Toronto Courthouse). The property is also linked to the design of University Avenue, whose modernist landscape, designed by the esteemed office of Dunnington-Grubb & Stensson, was completed between 1960 and 1962.

CONCLUSION

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 505 University Avenue and determined that the property meets 6 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. As such, the properties should be designated.

Originally conceived as a taller structure, designed and built in two phases (1958 and 1966) by Marani & Morris and its successor firms, who produced a remarkable output of institutional and commercial buildings that earned it the reputation of being one of the leading mid-20th century architectural firms in the country, the Shell Oil Building is a fine representative example of a transitional office building from the post-World War II era designed in the Modern Classical style. It is also valued as a rare example of a building

structurally designed in the 1950s for future expansion and additional floors, including the engineering feat of vertically adding its final seven storeys on such a constricted site through the modification of existing mobile tower crane technology and capabilities. As one of five buildings designed by Marani & Morris along this grand ceremonial boulevard, the Shell Oil building is historically linked to the postwar phase of development along University Avenue.

The Statement of Significance: 505 University Avenue (Attachment 3), 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: 505 University Avenue
Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources
Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation) – 505 University Avenue

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 505 UNIVERSITY AVENUE ATTACHMENT 1

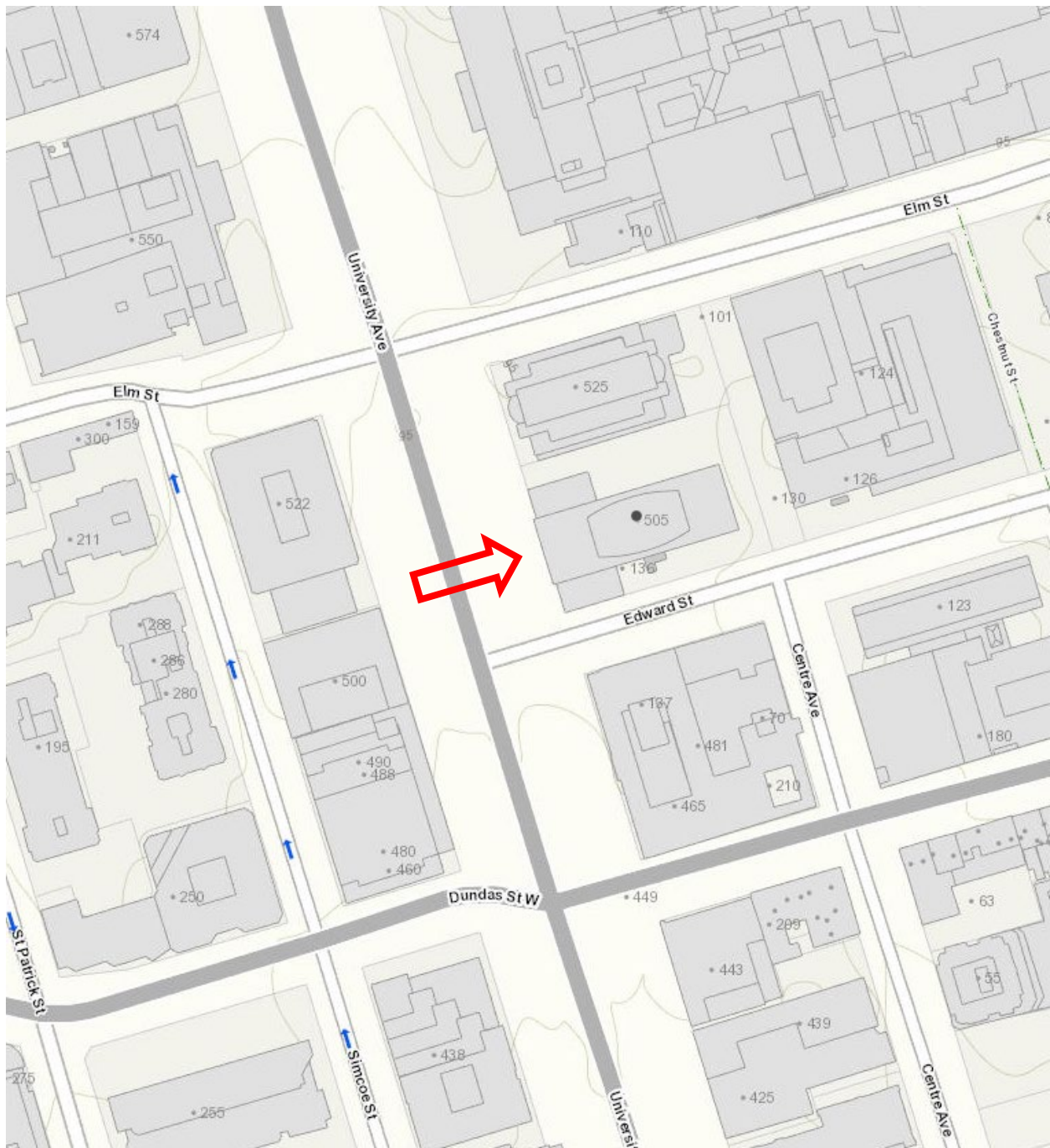


Image 1. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property is not shown. The arrow marks the location of the property at 505 University Avenue. (City of Toronto iView mapping)



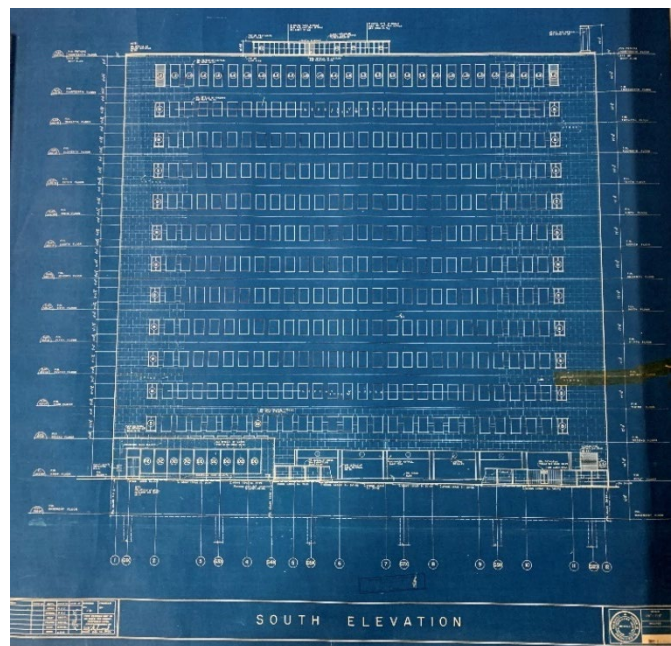
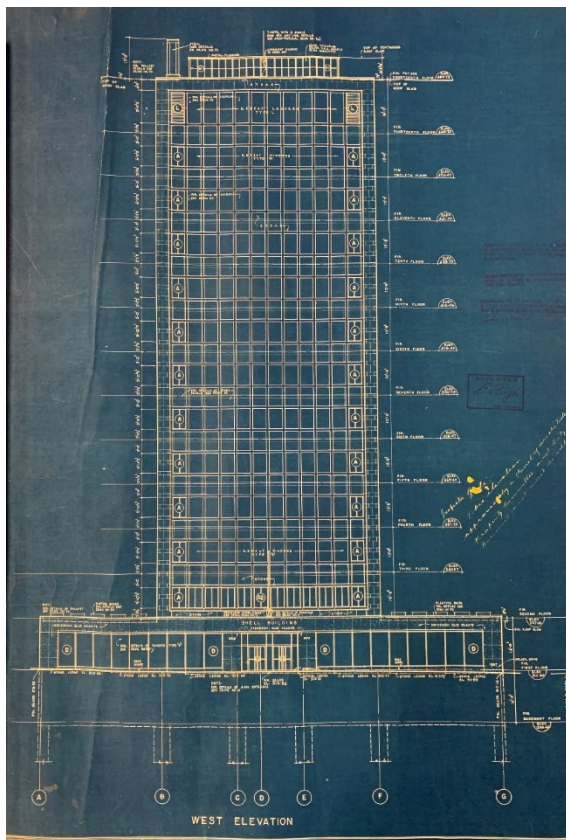
Images 2 and 3. 1884 and 1924 Goad's Historical Atlas Maps, detail, with the subject property location indicated by an arrow. (Ng)



Images 4 and 5. At left, First Baptist Church, 1907, northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street (TPL); at right, the church c.1955, just before its demolition for the shell Oil building advertised on the billboard (Wikipedia).



Images 6 and 7. The Shell Oil Tower at Exhibition Place highlighted in the inaugural edition of Canadian Architect magazine, Nov/Dec 1955. (Canadian Architect)



Images 8 and 9. 1956 original architectural drawings by Marani & Morris of the west elevation (at left) and south elevation (at right). [City of Toronto Archives (CTA)]



Images 10 and 11. At left, the subject property under construction (1957, CTA); at right, the subject property nearing completion in the background with the MacLean-Hunter Building, also by Marani & Morris, under construction in the foreground (1958, CTA).

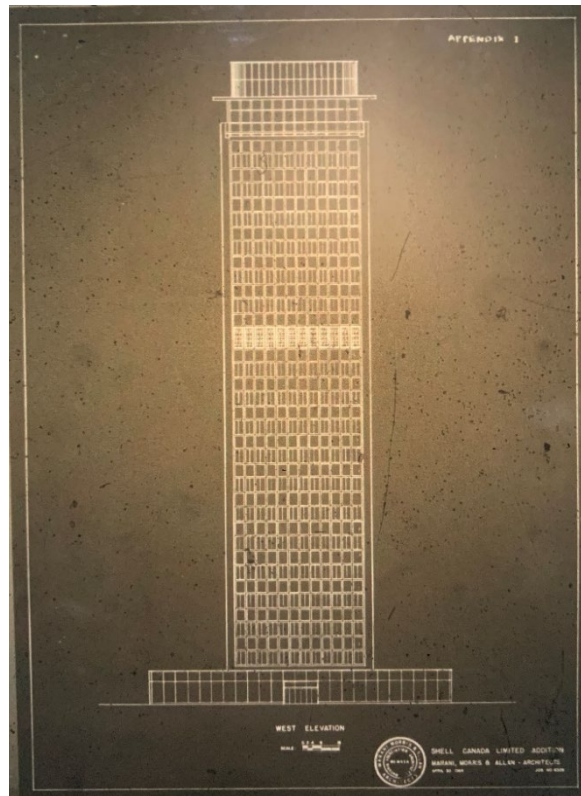
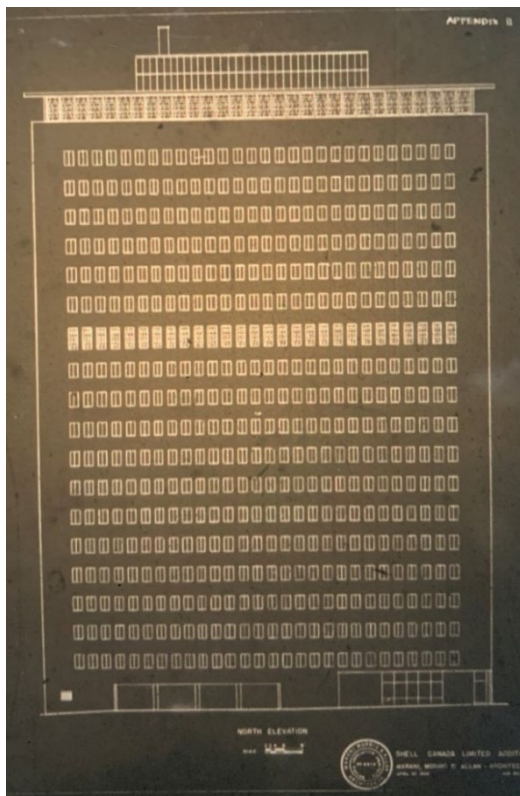


Image 12. West elevation of the completed Shell Oil Building (initial 13 storeys). (CTA, late 1950s)



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1128, Series 390, Item 393

Image 13. Archival view south along University Avenue with the Shell Oil Building indicated by the arrow at centre. (late 1950s, CTA)



Images 14 and 15. Original drawings by Marani, Rounthwaite & Dick for the 7-storey addition to the Shell Oil Building (1964, CoT Building Records)

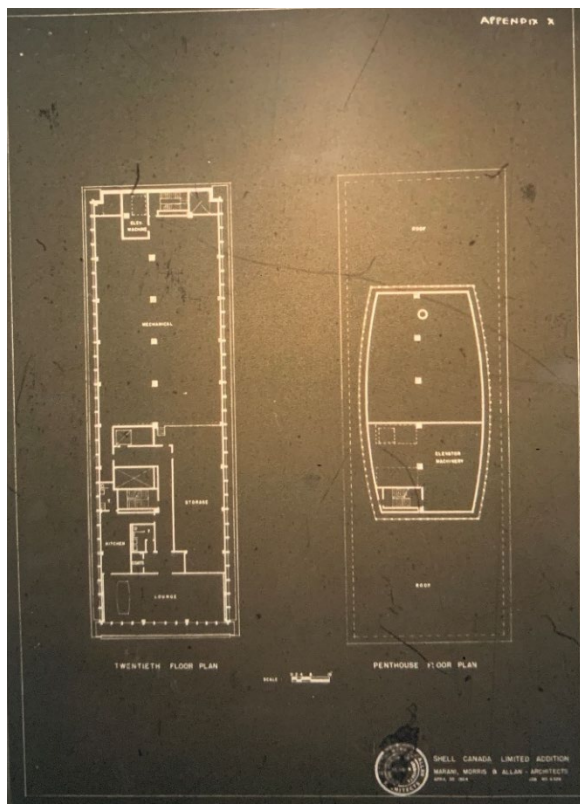
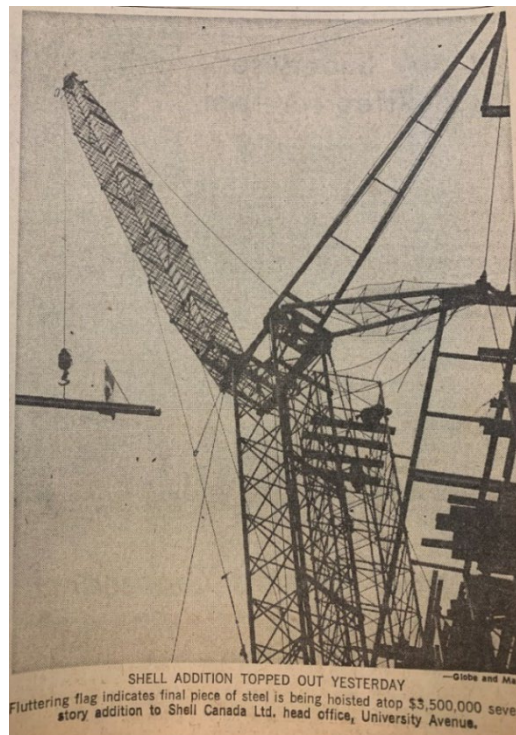
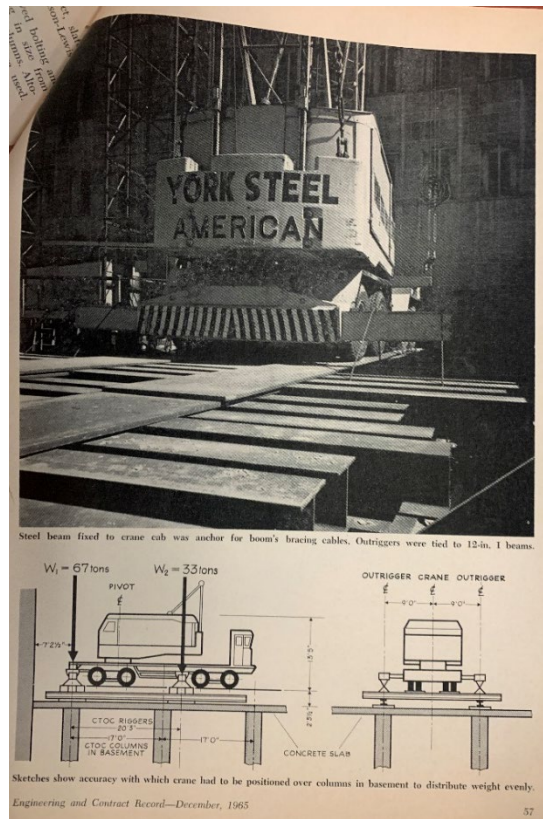
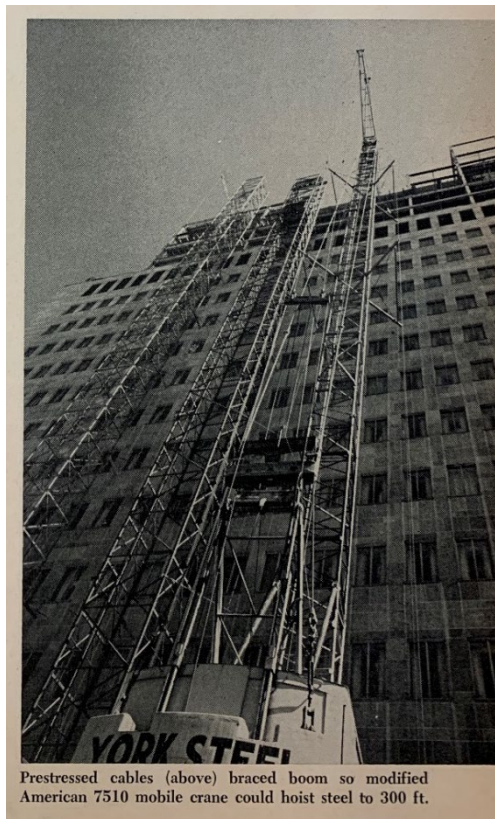


Image 16. 1964 drawing of the 20th storey and penthouse level (CoT Building Records)



Images 17 and 18. 1965 article featuring the modified mobile tower crane used to hoist the structural steel necessary for the Shell Oil Building's 7-storey addition. (Engineering and Contract Record)



Images 19 and 20. 1965 article featuring the modified mobile tower crane used to hoist the structural steel necessary for the Shell Oil Building's 7-storey addition. (Engineering and Contract Record)



Images 21 and 22. Archival photos documenting the 7-storey addition to the Shell Oil Building. (CTA, 1965)



Images 23 and 24. Archival photos documenting the recently completed 20-storey Shell Oil Building. At left, the east and south elevations; at right, the west and south elevations. (CTA, 1966)



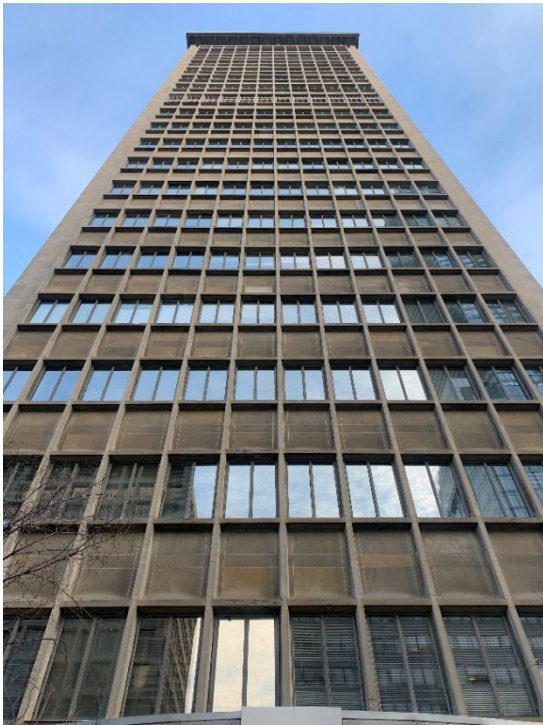
Images 25 and 26. At left, an archival photo of the west and north elevations (CTA, 1966); at right, a current photo taken from the same location and viewpoint (Heritage Planning, 2023).



Images 27 and 28. Current photos of the west elevation, at left; and the west and south elevations, at right. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Images 29 and 30. At left, a current photo of the south elevation; at right, a detail of the south elevation showing the decorative metal grilles at the 13th storey, which also serve as a datum line for the building's pre-1966 vertical termination. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Images 31 and 32. At left, the west elevation showing the raised stone 'fins' rising vertically between the window bays; at right, the north elevation showing the metal 'fins' on the Norwegian Blue Granite podium. (Heritage Planning, 2023)

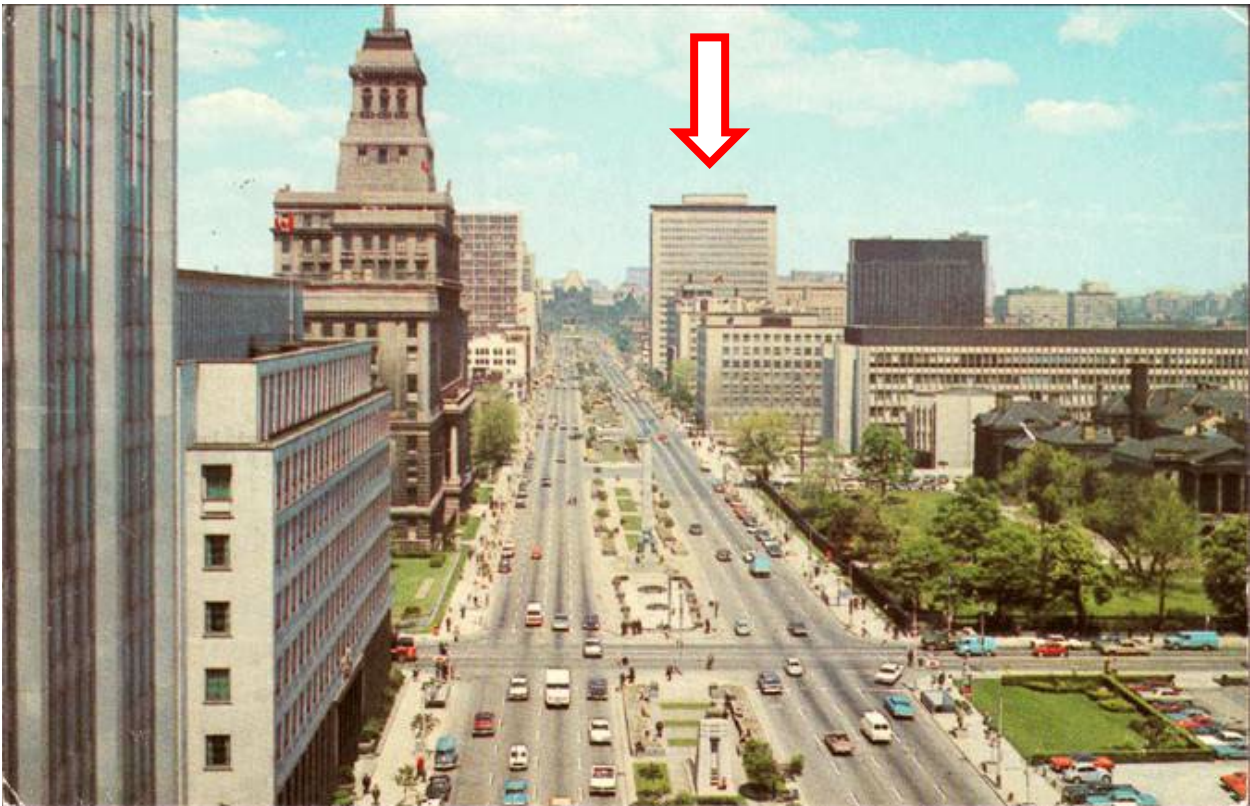


Image 33. 1960s postcard looking north along the ceremonial boulevard of University Avenue with the Shell Oil Building indicated by the arrow.
[\(http://chuckmanothercollectionvolume5.blogspot.ca/\)](http://chuckmanothercollectionvolume5.blogspot.ca/)



Image 34. Looking north along University Avenue from Adelaide Street (CTA, 1972)



Image 35. Current contextual photo from the fourteenth floor of the sun Life Building at 200 University Avenue, looking north along University with the Shell Oil building indicated by the arrow; the Canada Life building, at left; the Metro Toronto Court House and Osgoode Hall, at centre; and City Hall, at right. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Image 36. Contextual View looking southeast from Elm Street and showing the Shell Oil Building at centre, the adjacent MacLean-Hunter building also by Marani & Morris, background right and the 1972 National life Building by John C. Parkin in the foreground at right. (Heritage Planning, 2023)

Archival Sources

- Abstract Index of Deeds, Plan 147 PT LOTS 21 TO 24
- Archival maps and atlases
- Archival Photographs, Archives of Ontario
- Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives
- City of Toronto Building Records
- City of Toronto Directories
- Toronto Public Library (TPL), Photographic Collection

Secondary Sources

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

The property at 505 University Avenue (including entrance address at 136 Edward 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 categories of design/physical and contextual value.

Description

Located on the east side of University Avenue north of Edward Street and south of Elm Street, the property at 505 University Avenue comprises a 20-storey office building designed by the architectural firm, Marani & Morris, and completed in two phases: 13 storeys (1958); 7-storey vertical addition (1966).

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Shell Oil Building (1958; 1966) has cultural heritage value as a fine representative example of a transitional office building from the post-World War II era designed in the Modern Classical style with the scale, materials and features inspired by and yet challenging the urban design guidelines established for University Avenue in the early twentieth century. Originally conceived as a taller structure, the Shell Oil Building was constructed in two phases (13 storeys in 1958 and an additional 7 storeys in 1966) with this evolution of building height captured in the 13th-storey 'datum line' defined by regularly-spaced rectangular openings filled with decorative metal panels on the west, north and south elevations. Rising 20 storeys above University Avenue where it overlooks the street's landscaped central boulevard by the celebrated landscape architects, Dunnington-Grubb & Stensson, the Shell Oil Building is distinguished today by its fine proportions, its emphasis on verticality with its slender stone fins rising from the second through the nineteenth floors between the openings on the principal (west) elevation fronting onto University Avenue, and the interplay of the Queenston limestone cladding with the regular rhythm of punched window openings across its west, north and south elevations.

The 7-storey vertical addition to the Shell Oil Building in 1966 represents a recognized engineering feat for high-rise construction in Toronto with the modification of existing mobile crane capabilities for hoisting structural steel with respect to height, extension and stabilization. The realization of this vertical addition is valued as the completion of the original 20-storey design intent for the building.

Completed in 1958 and including a 7-storey vertical addition completed in 1966, the property has associative value as the purpose-built Canadian headquarters for the Shell Oil Company, one of Canada's largest integrated oil companies, who occupied the building for 26 years. Shell Oil is a global company based in London, UK and its Canadian subsidiary is an important oil company in Canada whose corporate interest and investment in high quality architecture and design is also evident in the 1955 Shell

Oil Tower (later Bulova Tower), a landmark modernist structure in Toronto's architectural history that was located at Exhibition Place until its demolition in the mid-1980s.

The value of the property at 505 University Avenue is also linked to its association with the prolific Toronto partnership of Marani & Morris (including its successor firms), recognized as "one of the leading architectural firms in the country". The firm was responsible for innumerable commercial buildings in Toronto during the post-World War II era, including five properties along University Avenue, with the adjacent Maclean-Hunter Building (1961, 481 University Avenue), the Bank of Canada Building (1958, 250 University Avenue), the Dominion General Insurance Company of Canada Building (1962, 165 University Avenue) and the Metro Toronto Court House (1966, 361 University Avenue). With more commissions than any other firm for projects along this prominent thoroughfare, the design aesthetic of Marani & Morris is distinguished as a defining part of the University Avenue streetscape today.

Contextually, the Shell Oil Building is valued for its role in defining, maintaining and supporting the character of the University Avenue Precinct, one of Toronto's major streets and a significant ceremonial avenue that is home to a collection of significant buildings associated with important institutions in Toronto's history and constructed during the twentieth century following the adoption of the University Avenue By-law (1931) that established guidelines directing the scale, materials and appearance of commercial and institutional buildings along the ceremonial boulevard leading to Queen's Park.

The Shell Oil Building at 505 University Avenue is physically, historically and visually linked with its surroundings where it contributes to the group of custom-designed buildings characterizing University Avenue, including the Canada Life Building (1931, 330 University Avenue), the Bank of Canada Building (1958, 250 University Avenue), the Maclean-Hunter Building (1961, 481 University Avenue), the Sun Life Assurance Company Building (1961, 200 University Avenue), and the Metro Toronto Court House (1966, 361 University Avenue), which are all recognized heritage properties in the city. The Shell Oil Building is also linked to the design of University Avenue, whose modernist landscape designed by the office of Dunnington-Grubb & Stensson was completed between 1960 and 1962.

Heritage Attributes

Design and Physical Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 505 University Avenue as representative of the Modern Classical architectural style include:

- The placement, setback and orientation of the building at the northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street
- The scale, form and massing of the 20-storey building on a T-shaped plan that includes the ground-storey podium set parallel to University Avenue and perpendicular to the tower
- The materials, with the Queenston limestone cladding and stone, metal and glass detailing

- The flat roof of the tower with its deep, coffered stone cornice on the underside
- The one-storey, glazed mechanical penthouse atop the tower roof with its lozenge-shaped form and surmounted by a gently-curved roof
- The organization of the principal (west) tower elevation fronting on University Avenue with its twelve bays of evenly spaced, punched openings alternating with limestone spandrels between the second and nineteenth storeys
- The raised and attached stone "fins" both framing the fenestration on the principal (west) tower elevation and vertically delineating each of the twelve bays of fenestration within the raised stone frame
- On the north and south elevations, the regular rhythm of the evenly-spaced punched window openings between the second and nineteenth storeys
- On the west, north and south elevations, the tall, rectangular openings on the thirteenth storey (mechanical level) which are distinguished by their decorative metal screens
- At ground level on the principal (west) elevation, the location of the main entrance centred in the one-storey podium clad in Norwegian Blue Granite
- At ground level, the north and south returns of the one-storey podium, also clad in Norwegian Blue Granite

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 505 University Avenue as demonstrating high technical achievement include:

- The 7 uppermost storeys plus the 1-storey rooftop penthouse, whose vertical addition in 1966 to the 1958 building was enabled by the development of a novel ground-located tower crane capable of hoisting the necessary structural steel up to 300ft above grade

Contextual Value

Attributes that contribute to the contextual value of 505 University Avenue as maintaining and supporting the character of the University Avenue precinct, and as being historically and visually linked to its surroundings include:

- The placement, setback and orientation of the building at the northeast corner of University Avenue and Edward Street with its primary entrance on University Avenue
- The materials, with the Queenston limestone cladding and stone, metal and glass detailing