TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

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

Date: January 23, 2026
To: Toronto Preservation Board
From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning
Wards: Parkdale - High Park - Ward 4

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value according to the Statement of Significance which includes a description of heritage attributes found in Attachment 1.

The subject property at 40 Wabash Avenue is located on the north side of Wabash Avenue between Sorauren Avenue to the west and MacDonell Avenue to the east, west of the CNR/CPR railway, in the Roncesvalles neighbourhood. A location map and current photograph of the heritage property are found in Attachment 2.

The City-owned property at 40 Wabash Avenue contains a former linseed oil mill factory comprised of several buildings constructed in phases from 1910 into the 1940s, and varying from one- to three-storeys in height and featuring a prominent chimney stack that is visible from Dundas Street West and the adjacent rail corridor. The factory was purpose built for the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd., a Montreal-based company in operation from 1901 until circa 1970, and portions of it were designed by the architectural firm Langley & Howland. The property is closely associated with the industrial activity of the Wabash-Sorauren area, the development history and character of which was influenced by the location of the railways to the east.

Staff have determined that the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) has cultural heritage value and meets 5 of the Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. 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 was listed on the City's Heritage Register on June 26 and 27, 2024.

Vacant since 1969-70, the former Canada Linseed Oil Mills Limited factory at 40 Wabash Avenue was acquired by the City in 2000. It is adjacent to the Sorauren Avenue Park and the Sorauren Fieldhouse, the former office building of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills factory.

In 2016, Council approved a budget for the redevelopment of the remaining lands at 40 Wabash Avenue, including the adaptive re-use of the former industrial buildings as a community centre. A city-initiated Site Plan application was submitted in July 2024 that proposes a Community Recreation Centre adjacent to Sorauren Park. The project is now in the detailed design phase. The designation of the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act will conserve the cultural heritage value of the property and help to inform the detailed design of the City's adaptive re-use of the building into the new community centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance for 40 Wabash Avenue (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 1 to the report (January 23, 2026) 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

City Planning confirms there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On November 7, 2017, City Council adopted the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019 - 2038, which included the development of the Wabash Community Centre. https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2017.EX28.2

On September 11, 2019, City Council adopted the decision of the Bid Award Panel to award the contract for the design of the new Wabash Community Centre to Diamond and Schmitt Architects.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2019.BA43.3

On June 26 and 27, 2024, City Council included the subject property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.TE14.13

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 Planning Statement (2024) identify the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage evaluation and heritage conservation will be implemented.
Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (ontario.ca)

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

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

Evaluation Analysis

The following evaluation analysis is based on the comprehensive research conducted on the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) (see Attachment 3) and provides the rationale for the recommendations found in this report.

The property at 40 Wabash Avenue meets the following 5 out of 9 criteria:

The property has design value or physical value because is a representative example of a type

The property has design or physical value because it is a representative example of an early 20th century industrial mill (or factory) building type, with Edwardian Classicism detailing. While the architecture of industrial buildings primarily focuses on utility and function, architects could help wealthier companies showcase their success by designing the appearance of their buildings to align with the prevailing fashions of the time. As an architect-designed factory, the Canada Linseed Oil Mills exhibits stylistic elements reminiscent of Edwardian Classicism, which was a popular architectural style in Toronto during the early- 20th century. Features contributing to the property's industrial typology include but are not limited to its reinforced concrete and brick construction; varying height, scale, and complex massing indicative of the various functions of each building; flat rooflines; regularly spaced window openings; its steel structure canopy that reflects how the factory had direct access to the rail spur along Wabash Avenue; the grain hopper on the roof; its surviving chimney stack; and the remnants of the original company signage painted onto the bricks of the south façade.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with an activity that is significant to a community

The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with the industrial activity of the Wabash-Sorauren area which was impacted and encouraged by the location of the railways to the east. The first decade of the 20th century saw a transformation of the area from a residential plan by James Clarkson into an industrial site by the Ross Land Company; the industrial activity was significant to the development of the historic Brockton Village and Roncesvalles communities. The development of the property at 40 Wabash Avenue in 1910 by the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. followed several other industries located between Sorauren Avenue and the railway line, including the Dominion Bridge Co., the Chapman Double Ball Bearing Co., the Robert Watson Co., and the National Equipment Company, exhibiting a trend for the area. The presence of the Linseed Oil Mills may have additionally influenced the construction of specific factories in the area, such as the Lowe Brothers Ltd. paint manufacturers that would have used linseed oil in its products. These and other industries provided employment for the residents of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The property has historical value or associative value because it reflects the work of an architect who is significant to a community

The subject property is valued for its association with the architectural firm of Langley & Howland, who designed the factory with Edwardian Classical detailing. Charles Langley (1870-1951) and William Ford Howland (1874-1948) worked together for over 35 years, from 1905 to 1941, and compiled a substantial list of known works with a marked specialization in prominent residential buildings and bank buildings. The commission for the Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash Avenue is unique within the partnership of Langley & Howland because it is their only known industrial project and contributes to the diversity of their portfolio.

The property has contextual value because it is important in maintaining and supporting the character of an area

Situated on the north side of Wabash Avenue, east of Sorauren Avenue and west of the CNR and CPR railways, 40 Wabash Avenue is important in maintaining and supporting the historic industrial character of the Wabash-Sorauren area. Constructed as a linseed oil mill in 1910, the design and typology of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills buildings share typological similarities with the remaining historic factories along Wabash and Sorauren Avenue, which individually and collectively maintain a sense of how the adjacent neighbourhood developed in tandem with these industries. The historic industrial buildings exhibit similar large-scale and/or complex massing, brick cladding with subtle examples of decorative brickwork, and large window openings regularly spaced along the façades.

The property has contextual value because it is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills is historically and functionally linked to its surroundings as a purpose-built industrial building constructed in the context of an early 20th century industrial subdivision Plan 1256. The plan was purposefully designed with large lots intended to accommodate large-scale industrial buildings with access to the rail corridor. Access to the railway lines was pivotal to the success of linseed oil production in the early 20th century because flax seed had to be transported into the mills for processing. Since the flax seed was also imported from international suppliers, the rail corridor was additionally beneficial for providing access to the waterfront and its inexpensive transportation. The layout of the factory responded to the former rail spur along Wabash Avenue which ran directly parallel to the Mill (and former Grain Elevator) for easy delivery and loading. The steel canopy frame of the loading dock still remains on the Mill's south façade, illustrating how the property's design was informed by its context.

See Attachments 1, 2 and 3 of this report for the Statement of Significance; Location Map and Photograph; and Research, Evaluation & Visual Resources pertaining to the property at 40 Wabash Avenue, as all of these documents are integral to the recommendations made in this staff report.

Wabash Community Centre

The subject site of the former Canada Linseed Oil Mills Limited factory complex at 40 Wabash Avenue was acquired by the City in 2000. In 2003, a city-commissioned study concluded that the former industrial buildings on the complex could be adaptively re-used as a community centre. The Wabash Building Society, a non-profit corporation with a volunteer board of directors, was formed in 2006 by local residents to push the redevelopment of 40 Wabash Avenue forward. Since renamed the Friends of Sorauren Park, the group led a fundraising campaign which contributed to the conversion of the former office building of the Canada Linseed Oil Mill Company into a fieldhouse for Sorauren Park, which opened in 2008. Further community activation and fundraising led to the redevelopment of the vacant lands between the fieldhouse and the factory buildings into the Sorauren Park Town Square, which opened in July 2014.

In 2016, Council approved a budget for the redevelopment of the remaining lands at 40 Wabash Avenue, including the adaptive re-use of the former industrial buildings, as a community centre. A city-initiated Site Plan application was submitted in July 2024 that proposes a Community Recreation Centre adjacent to Sorauren Park. The property was not subject to a Prescribed Event under Section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act. The project is now in the detailed design phase.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties to determine how a heritage property is proposed to be conserved. Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance. An HIA was prepared for the subject property by SBA; the final revised version was submitted in December 2024 with the Site Plan application.

Proceeding with the designation of the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act at this time will facilitate the efficient adaptive re-use of the buildings into the new community centre.

CONCLUSION

Staff have determined that the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) meets 5 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. As such, the property merits designation and staff recommend that Council support the designation of this property to conserve its cultural heritage value.

The Statement of Significance: 40 Wabash Avenue (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 1 to this report comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)
Attachment 2 – Location Map and Current Photograph
Attachment 3 – Research, Evaluation & Visual Resources

40 WABASH AVENUE ATTACHMENT 1

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

The property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value and meets Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria for municipal designation.

Description

The property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) is located on the north side of Wabash Avenue where it occupies most of the street between Sorauren Avenue to the west and the CNR/CPR railway tracks to the east. The property contains a former linseed oil mill factory comprised of several buildings constructed in phases from 1910 into the 1940s, varying from one- to three-storeys in height, with a prominent chimney stack that is visible from Dundas Street West and the adjacent rail corridor. The factory was purpose built for the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd., a Montreal-based company in operation from 1901 until circa 1970. The property is adjacent to the Sorauren Park and was purchased by the City of Toronto in 2000.

The property was included on the Heritage Register on June 26, 2024.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The property has design or physical value because it is a representative example of an early 20th century industrial mill (or factory) building type, with Edwardian Classicism detailing. While the architecture of industrial buildings primarily focuses on utility and function, architects could help wealthier companies showcase their success by designing the appearance of their buildings to align with the prevailing fashions of the time. As an architect-designed factory, the Canada Linseed Oil Mills exhibits stylistic elements reminiscent of Edwardian Classicism, which was a popular architectural style in Toronto during the early 20th century. Features contributing to the property's industrial typology include but are not limited to its reinforced concrete and brick construction; varying height, scale, and complex massing indicative of the various functions of each building; flat rooflines; regularly spaced window openings; its steel structure canopy that reflects how the factory had direct access to the rail spur along Wabash Avenue; the grain hopper on the roof; its surviving chimney stack; and the remnants of the original company signage painted onto the bricks of the south façade.

The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with the industrial activity of the Wabash-Sorauren area which was impacted and encouraged by the location of the railways to the east. The first decade of the 20th century saw a transformation of the area from a residential plan by James Clarkson into an industrial site by the Ross Land Company; the industrial activity was significant to the development of the historic Brockton Village and Roncesvalles communities. The development of the property at 40 Wabash Avenue in 1910 by the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. followed several other industries located between Sorauren Avenue and the railway line, including the Dominion Bridge Co., the Chapman Double Ball Bearing Co.,

the Robert Watson Co., and the National Equipment Company, exhibiting a trend for the area. The presence of the Linseed Oil Mills may have additionally influenced the construction of specific factories in the area, such as the Lowe Brothers Ltd. paint manufacturers that would have used linseed oil in its products. These and other industries provided employment for the residents of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The subject property is valued for its association with the architectural firm of Langley & Howland, who designed the factory with Edwardian Classical detailing. Charles Langley (1870-1951) and William Ford Howland (1874-1948) worked together for over 35 years, from 1905 to 1941, and compiled a substantial list of known works with a marked specialization in prominent residential buildings and bank buildings. The commission for the Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash Avenue is unique within the partnership of Langley & Howland because it is their only known industrial project and contributes to the diversity of their portfolio.

Situated on the north side of Wabash Avenue, east of Sorauren Avenue and west of the CNR and CPR railways, 40 Wabash Avenue is important in maintaining and supporting the historic industrial character of the Wabash-Sorauren area. Constructed as a linseed oil mill in 1910, the Canada Linseed Oil Mills buildings share typological similarities with the remaining historic factories along Wabash and Sorauren Avenue, which individually and collectively maintain a sense of how the adjacent neighbourhood developed in tandem with these industries. The historic industrial buildings exhibit similar large-scale and/or complex massing, brick cladding with subtle examples of decorative brickwork, and large window openings regularly spaced along the façades.

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills is historically and functionally linked to its surroundings as a purpose-built industrial building constructed in the context of an early 20th century industrial subdivision Plan 1256. The plan was purposefully designed with large lots intended to accommodate large-scale industrial buildings with access to the rail corridor. Access to the railway lines was pivotal to the success of linseed oil production in the early 20th century because flax seed had to be transported into the mills for processing. Since the flax seed was also imported from international suppliers, the rail corridor was additionally beneficial for providing access to the waterfront and its inexpensive transportation. The layout of the factory responded to the former rail spur along Wabash Avenue which ran directly parallel to the Mill (and former Grain Elevator) for easy delivery and loading. The steel canopy frame of the loading dock still remains on the Mill's south façade, exhibiting how the property's design was informed by its context.

Heritage Attributes

Design and Physical Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 40 Wabash Avenue as a representative example of the industrial building type:

- The scale, form, and complex massing of the collection of buildings that comprise the early 20th century linseed oil mill, including:
  - the two-storey Mill building (c.1910) with raised basement on a rectangular plan
  - the three-storey Storage and Barrelling Refinery (c.1910) with raised basement on a rectangular plan

    - the one-storey Boiler House (c.1910) with connected chimney stack
    - the three-storey Warehouse addition (c.1925-1931) with raised basement on a rectangular plan
    - the detached, one-storey Office building (c.1914-1924)
- The flat rooflines accentuated with corbelled parapets
- The materials, including:
    - reinforced concrete
    - precast concrete
    - brick
    - clay tile coping
- The existing positions and proportions of all original window openings as regularly spaced within the bays on the façades of the Mill, Refinery, and Warehouse buildings
- Segmental brick arches with precast keystones over the window openings along the upper storeys
- Brick pilasters with corbelling and triangular, precast concrete details
- Steel grain hopper on the roof of the Mill building
- Steel "lean-to" or canopy frame structure attached to the south façade of the Mill and Refinery buildings
- The prominent chimney stack, connected to the Boiler House, with corbelling on its shaft and top

Contextual Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 40 Wabash Avenue as supporting and maintaining the historic industrial character of Wabash Avenue and Sorauren Avenue north of Wabash and for being functionally and historically linked to its surroundings:

- The placement and orientation of the property on the north side of Wabash Avenue, east of Sorauren and in proximity to the rail corridor to the east
- The prominence of the scale, form, and complex massing of the buildings situated within a large property lot with open surroundings
- The location of the steel "lean-to" or canopy frame structure on the south façade of the Mill and Refinery buildings

Note: the three-storey 1940 addition located at the rear (north) elevation of the Warehouse building and the two-storey c.1941-47 addition located at the rear (north) elevation of the Mill building are not included as attributes.

LOCATION MAP AND CURRENT PHOTOGRAPH ATTACHMENT 2

40 WABASH AVENUE

Figure 1. This location map is for information purposes only. The exact boundaries of the properties are not shown. The red outlie marks the location of the subject site (City of Toronto iView Mapping, annotated by Heritage Planning, 2026).

Figure 2. View of the southeast elevations of 40 Wabash Avenue, looking northwest (Heritage Planning, December 2025).

RESEARCH, EVALUATION & VISUAL RESOURCES

ATTACHMENT 3

40 WABASH AVENUE

In undertaking this research and evaluation, we recognize that 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.

Figure 3. View of the southeast elevations of 40 Wabash Avenue, looking northwest (Heritage Planning, December 2025).

1. DESCRIPTION

40 WABASH AVENUE	
ADDRESS	40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue)
WARD	Ward 4 (Parkdale - High Park)
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Roncesvalles
CONSTRUCTION DATE	c.1910 (with later additions dating from 1915 into the 1940s)
ORIGINAL USE	Linseed Mill (factory)

CURRENT USE* (*This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law	N/A
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Langley & Howland Architects (1910)
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 3
LISTING DATE	June 26 and 27, 2024

2. ONTARIO REGULATION 9/06 CHECKLIST:

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The following checklist identifies the prescribed criteria met by the subject property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if the property 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.

40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash)

1.	The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	✓
2.	The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	N/A
3.	The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	N/A
4.	The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	✓
5.	The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	N/A
6.	The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	✓
7.	The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8.	The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9.	The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.	N/A

3. RESEARCH

This section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property. Visual resources related to the research are located in Section 4. Archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Section 5 (List of Sources).

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

For time immemorial, Toronto has been home to Indigenous peoples. Ojibway oral histories speak of Ice People, who lived at a time when ice covered the land.[1] Following the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago, small groups of Indigenous peoples moved from place to place, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Over millennia, they adapted to dramatically changing environmental conditions, developing and acquiring new technologies as they did so. Waterways and the lake were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and shorelines and nearby areas were important sites for gathering, trading, hunting, fishing, and ceremonies. Long-distance trade moved valuable resources across the land.

After maize and squash were introduced to Southern Ontario, by approximately 500 CE, horticulture began to supplement food sources. By 1300 CE, villages focused on growing food became year-round settlements surrounded by crops. These villages were home to ancestors of the Huron-Wendat Nation, who would continue to occupy increasingly larger villages in the Toronto area and beyond. These villages were connected to well-established travel routes which were part of local and long-distance trail networks, including the Carrying Place trails on the Don, Rouge and Humber rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. Beads made from seashells from the eastern seaboard were found at the Alexandra site in North York, which was a community of 800-1000 people in approximately 1350.

By 1600, the Wendat had formed a confederation of individual nations, and had concentrated most of their villages away from Lake Ontario, in the Georgian Bay area. Following contact with French explorers and missionaries in Southern Ontario in the early 1600s, European diseases decimated First Nations. Competition for furs to trade with Europeans and the desire to replenish numbers through absorption of captives, among other factors[2], contributed to the Beaver Wars, which after 1640, saw the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expand into Southern Ontario, dispersing the Wendat. Within the boundaries of today's Toronto, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy then occupied villages on the Carrying Place trails on the Humber and Rouge Rivers from approximately the 1660s to the 1680s.

In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy chose to leave their village in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York. As evidenced by the

1 With thanks to Philip Cote for the reference to Benton-Banai, Edward, The Mishomis book: The voice of the Ojibway (Indian Country Press, 1985), p. 26.

2 https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/chapter/chapter-5-colonial-wars-looking-east; Gary Warrick, "The Aboriginal Population of Ontario in Late Pre-history," in Munson and Jamieson, eds., Before Ontario: The Archaeology of a Province (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), p. 72.

1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the 1701 Nanfan Treaty, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Haudenosaunee continued to have an interest in the resources of the area.

Anishinaabe people from the Lake Superior region then moved into the Toronto area. While the Wendat and Haudenosaunee people lived in year-round villages surrounded by crops, the Anishinaabe people continued to live primarily by seasonally moving across the land to hunt, fish and gather resources that were available at a specific time, including migrating birds and maple syrup. To the west of Toronto, the Anishinaabe people became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. To the east, they became known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama and the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island.[3]

In 1787, as the British began to prepare for an influx of colonists into the area following the American Revolution, the British Crown negotiated the Toronto Purchase with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to obtain title to the land. The flawed and poorly documented agreement was invalidated, and Treaty 13 was negotiated in 1805 for lands now including much of the City of Toronto. In 1923, the Governments of Ontario and Canada signed the Williams Treaties for over 20,000 km2, including portions of eastern Toronto, with seven First Nations of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama) and the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha and Scugog Island).

The Mississaugas, Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, or the Wendat did not traditionally regard land as a commodity to be sold. Following the Toronto Purchase, the British government quickly set out to survey the land into lots which were either sold or granted into private ownership of settlers. In 2010, the Government of Canada settled the Toronto Purchase Claim with the Mississaugas of the Credit after agreeing that the Mississaugas were originally unfairly compensated. In 2018, the Williams Treaties First Nations settled litigation about land surrenders and harvesting rights with the Governments of Canada and Ontario.

The City of Toronto remains 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 also covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with seven Mississaugas and Chippewa First Nations.

i. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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.

3 Mississaugas of the Credit, "The History of Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation." n.d.

Brockton Village

The subject property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue) occupies the majority of the northern side of Wabash Avenue, an east-west street of short length yet broad width situated between Sorauren Avenue to the west and MacDonell Avenue to the east, which turns southeast sharply truncated by the curving CNR/CPR railroads.

To the north of the subject property lies Dundas Street West, its layout a superimposition over a portion of an Indigenous trail running east-west and connecting with the Toronto Carrying Place Trail.[4] Under direction of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, the Dundas Street trail was incorporated into a provincial highway intended for military and communication purposes connecting Kingston in the east with the town of London in the west. To encourage settlement around the new capital at York (Toronto), the land was surveyed and 100-200 acre lots were granted to individuals with strong connections in the government and military offices of the period. Park Lot 33 spanned from Bloor Street West to just north of Queen Street West and encompassed the future location of the subject property.[5]

In 1840, Park Lots 33 and 34 were purchased by Colonel Walter O'Hara (1789-1874) who was born in Dublin and fought with the British in the Napoleonic Wars between 1808 and 1815.[6] O'Hara distinguished himself for his part in the battles fought in Spain, two of which occurred at Roncesvalles (a small town in the Pyrenees) and Sorauren (a town closer to Pamplona). And therein lies the interest behind this anecdote of historic ownership, for when O'Hara subdivided lots 33 and 34 in 1856 he chose to name the present day Roncesvalles and Sorauren avenues after the battles he had won there. In 1868, O'Hara further subdivided the lots, creating 76 lots ranging in size between two and 14 acres.

During these ownership transactions and land subdivisions, the subject lots existed outside the city limits. The subject property itself was part of the historic village of Brockton.[7] Brockton was one in a series of villages established outside the northern limits of the city of Toronto, including Dovercourt hamlet, Seaton Village, and Yorkville. Around the mid-19th century, these villages developed in proximity to the toll-gates along Dundas Street; the toll-gates financed the street's macadamization and attracted hotels and taverns that likewise capitalised on the flow of travellers.[8] Residential settlements were naturally drawn to establish themselves near these businesses and

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4 The Carrying Place Trail is a route first established by First Nations millennia ago to connect Lake Ontario with Lake Simcoe via several rivers including the Humber, the Rouge, and the Don.

5 Eric Sehr, "Who Got the Land? Reading Land Petitions from Brockton, Toronto (1796-1812)," *Brockton: A Lost Toronto Village*, 13 June 2025. https://brockton-history.ca

6 O'Hara immigrated to Canada in 1826 with his wife, Marian Murray. O'Hara was later appointed the Assistant Adjutant of the Militia of Upper Canada.

7 Eric Sehr, "Finding Brockton on the Map," *Brockton: A Lost Toronto Village*, 20 February 2025, https://brockton-history.ca. As Sehr illustrates, the boundaries of Brockton village have shifted over the years, but have (for the most part) historically included the subject property.

8 Cynthia Patterson, Carol McDougall, and George Levin, *Bloor-Dufferin in Pictures* (Toronto: Toronto Public Library Board, 1986), 5.

were followed by amenities such as post offices and general stores.[9] Brockton illustrated this pattern with the Collard's Hotel, Joseph Church's Brown Bear Tavern, the Queen Street Hotel, and Larkin's general store that later expanded to become the Brockton Post Office.[10] For the most part, early residents of Brockton worked in various types of agricultural labour.[11]

The flow of travel along Dundas Street West was affected by the construction of the railways in the 1850s and 1860s because rail lines became the preferred method of transportation. Industrial activity soon followed. Factories appeared along either side of the tracks laid out by the major rail companies, creating an industrial-rail corridor and impacting the character of the adjacent neighbourhoods; by 1878, Brockton had a growing number of residents working as artisans.[12] For example, the Ashdown & Co. manufacturers of willow furniture and baskets was a major employer for the Brockton area in the early 1880s.[13] These employment opportunities were important because the population of Brockton was in a period of growth and the village was officially incorporated in 1880.[14] Accordingly, the Village Council worked to attract more industry to the area by granting tax exemptions for up to 20 years;[15] however, it was difficult for the village to compete with the inexpensive water and electricity amenities offered by nearby Toronto, the city limits of which were at Bloor-Dufferin by this time.[16] Within a few years of incorporating, Brockton Village was outgrowing its government and this, paired with additional financial issues, contributed to the amalgamation of Brockton with the City of Toronto in 1884.[17]

In 1882 James Clarkson purchased Lot 28 and registered Plan 502; Lot 28 was part of the Township Lot 33 that had been subdivided by O'Hara several years prior. Plan 502 contained 64 lots for residential development (Figure 4). However, attempts at encouraging residential development in this area were initially unsuccessful. Comparing the Toronto Fire Insurance Atlases from 1884 to 1903 illustrates that very little residential development, or any development, actually occurred in this area between these years (Figures 4-6). Clarkson subsequently sold Plan 502 to the Ross Land Company Ltd., which subdivided the property into a new survey registered as Plan 1256, circa 1905-1907. Plan 1256 obliterated the previous street layout with its residential-sized lots and replaced them with six large lots sized for industrial development (Figure 9). This shift is marked pointedly by the replacement of Wabash Avenue with a railway spur that branches off from the Canadian Pacific Railway direct into the centre of the new plan. Industrial buildings were already in place by 1910, indicating the ready demand for this type of development. At the same time, house-

9 Patterson et al., *Bloor-Dufferin in Pictures*, 5.
10 Patterson, 5.
11 Patterson, 6.
12 Patterson, 6.
13 Patterson, 7.
14 The official village borders were established and included Dufferin Street between Grand Truck Railway to the south and Bloor Street to the north; west on Bloor as far as Indian Road; then south on Indian Road to the northern limit of Parkdale.
15 "Official Planning Proposals: Wabash-Sorauren," City of Toronto (November 1981), City of Toronto Archives (Box 225052, Series 60, Item 2169), 1.
16 Patterson et al., *Bloor-Dufferin in Pictures*, 8.
17 Patterson, 8.

forms finally appeared adjacent to the new industrial area, which reflects the close, symbiotic relationship between the employees and their places of employment.[18] The industrial character that eventually came to define the Sorauren-Wabash context developed in tandem with the surrounding residential neighbourhood.[19]

The majority of the factories lining Sorauren and Wabash avenues, many of which survive today, were constructed between 1906 and 1920, including the Chapman Double Ball Bearing Co. Factory at 345-7 Sorauren Avenue (1906); the Dominion Bridge Company at 287 Sorauren Avenue (1907; demolished); Winnett & Wellinger Leather Goods Co. at 348-50 Sorauren (c.1910); Lowe Brothers Paint Manufacturers at 263-9 Sorauren with frontage on Wabash (1911; demolished); Robert Watson Confectioners at 363-9 Sorauren (1912); the Doan & Charles Ltd. at 383 Sorauren (1912); the National Equipment Co. Ltd. at 41 Wabash (1913); J.M. Loose and Sons Ltd. piano key manufacturers at 239-251 Sorauren (c.1920), and the Dominion Bedstead Company at 393 Sorauren Avenue (c.1920). The Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. joined this growing industrial community in 1910 with the construction of a linseed mill on the north side of Wabash Avenue, at the current address of 40 Wabash Avenue (Figures 7 and 8).

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd.

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills Limited was a Montreal-based company incorporated in 1901.[20] The purpose of the company was set out in the Letters of Patent and primarily concerned the manufacturing of linseed oil. At the time of incorporation, the shareholders were listed as Joseph Ovide Gravel, Hugh Montague Allan, John Baillie (manager), John J. McGill (manager), and Edward Liersch (manager). The name Liersch is of significant note and will be discussed further on in the report.

The company's first mill was constructed in Montreal by Sherwin-William Co. Ltd. in 1906.[21] Later, the company expanded into Toronto with the construction of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills industrial factory, construction beginning in 1910, located at 40 Wabash Avenue.[22] The architectural firm Langley & Howland was hired to design the Toronto mill.[23]

Flaxseed, alternatively referred to as linseed, is considered one of the world's oldest cultivated crops and is prized for both its fibre and oil. The fibre is used in the production of linen fabric and paper, while the oil has a diverse range of application. Raw linseed oil can be used as protective varnish for furniture or leather softener (although it has a slow drying time) and has even been used for medicinal purposes. Boiling, or refining,

18 "Official Planning Proposals: Wabash-Sorauren," 1.

19 Patterson et al., *Bloor-Dufferin in Pictures*, 16.

20 "Incorporation [of] the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd [Limited] issue of Letters Patent - Secretary of State 1901/05/01," Library and Archives Canada, No.328 D.

21 "Canada Linseed Oil: Sherwin-Williams Will Construct a New Factory in Montreal," *Toronto Daily Star*, 23 August 1906, 8.

22 Historical address was initially unnumbered in the Toronto City Directories. The company was first listed on the east side of Sorauren Avenue in the 1911 edition, and later appears on the north side of Wabash Avenue when the street was first included in the 1914 edition.

23 City of Toronto building permit No. 22693, 10 August 1910 (City of Toronto Archives).

the oil was a specialised process undertaken by secondary producers to improve the drying capabilities of the oil and ensure its performance consistency when integrated into various oil-based consumer goods such as paint, ink, lubricants, oil cloth, soap, or flooring.[24] However, in the North American linseed oil market the relationship between linseed oil and paint production perhaps proved to be the most significant, as discussed below.[25]

The roles in linseed oil production of the late 19th century can be chronologised and summarised as follows: the growers and harvesters of the flax seed; the primary processors that extracted oil from the seeds; and the secondary processors that refined the raw linseed oil. Refined linseed oil was then sold to other trades as a key ingredient for their products, such as oil-based paints and varnishes.

The Canada Linseed Oil (or CLO) Mills at 40 Wabash Avenue was a primary processor.[26] This means that the CLO Mills received the flax seed already harvested and threshed, and the main function of the mill was to heat, crush, and press the seeds to extract the oils.[27] The Toronto Fire Insurance Plan for 1910-1914 illustrates the layout of the CLO Mills at 40 Wabash; the site includes a grain elevator to receive and store the flax seed, a two-storey rectangular mill building to house the crushers and pressers, a three-storey storage and barreling building, a one-storey boiler house with chimney stack, and an oil tank house (Figures 10 and 11). A drawing of the mill appeared in one of the company's promotional, instructional pamphlets and gives an idea of what the original buildings looked like (Figure 12).[28] While the two detached buildings comprising the flax seed storage elevator and the oil tank house were demolished circa 1968, the "Linseed Oil Mill,' "Storage and Barreling," and "Boiler House" buildings as labeled in the drawing all remain extant on the property today.

The goal of the primary processing phase was to maximise the amount of oil released from the seeds. Technologies to achieve this varied over the years from the traditional mechanical presses (which resembled wine or olive presses) to the wedge press, an 18th century model that could drain anywhere from 10 to 13 pounds of oil from a bushel of seed.[29] Later, most presses in Canada became hydraulically operated and were far less noisy than the earlier wedge versions.[30] Current research does not confirm what type of presses were utilised at the CLO Mills; however, the Fire Insurance Plan does detail how the Mill building accommodated three sets of crushers and three sets of presses on site in 1914 that could process 1,000 bushels of flax per day (Figure 11).

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24 When combined with cork shaving, hardened linseed oil was a base ingredient for linoleum, hence the inspiration behind the name of the product.

25 Joshua MacFadyen, *Flax Americana: A History of the Fibre and Oil That Covered a Continent* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018), 141.

26 In this report, the abbreviated "CLO Mills" refers to the property at 40 Wabash Avenue, Toronto, unless otherwise indicated.

27 MacFadyen, *Flax Americana*, 13.

28 "Successful Feeding – A Practical Feeding Manual for Canadian Farmers", *Canada Linseed Oil Mills*, 1931. The pamphlet explained how consumers could use the linseed product in animal feed.

29 MacFadyen, *Flax Americana*, 155. Later improvements in heating and pressing technologies resulted in slightly improved oil extraction. Once the oil was extracted, the by-product was a residual flax seed mash typically sold as a source of protein in livestock feed.

30 MacFadyen, 169.

After the initial pressing phase the quality of the oil varied, partly depending on proper filtering followed by a long storage period that allowed the oil to settle; properly settled oil could then be sold as a finished product of raw linseed oil.[31] Since the CLO Mills included a storage and barreling building as well as an oil tank house, it is evident that the site followed this step of the process. The Toronto Fire Insurance Plan for 1941 includes an annotation on the three-storey storage and barrelling building that says 'refinery' (Figure 14), which suggests that the CLO Mills may have also filled the role as a secondary processor (refining the linseed oil) as well as being a primary processor (extracting the linseed oil). This adoption of dual roles would be typical of early 20th century industrial complexes that aimed to cover multiple stages of production within a single site for efficiency.

The incorporation of The Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. and their expansion of mills into major city centres like Montreal and Toronto aligns with the expansion of the linseed oil industry that was occurring in the late 19th century.[32] The increased demand for linseed oil was connected to the development of ready-mixed paints around 1877.[33] "Ready-mixed" meant that the specialised trades people formerly required to mix refined linseed oil with the proper pigments and chemicals to create oil-based paint were no longer necessary - the product could be marketed direct to consumer.[34] Interest and investment in flax seed continued to rise into the early 20th century such that, "at its peak in 1912, the US and Canadian flax crop occupied over 5 million acres of land, making it the largest flax-producing region in world history to that point."[35]

The interconnections between the two products of linseed oil and ready-mixed paint contributed to the market success of both and in many cases the two industries conducted harmonious relations of supplier and buyer. However, the demand for linseed oil and the desire of some companies for vertical integration in their business models also created competitiveness between the industries wherein larger paint companies began pressing their own oil supplies independently, or partnering with smaller linseed mills.[36] In this context, it is intriguing to see that within one year of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills' construction on Wabash Avenue, the Lowe Brothers Ltd. paint manufacturers built their factory and warehouse across the street at the southwest corner of Wabash and Sorauren Avenues (263 Sorauren; since demolished); the railway spur along Wabash Avenue that connected the CLO Mills to the larger rail line was also connected to the Lowe factory (Figure 16). Whether these two factories were competitive or collaborative is currently unconfirmed, but the connection between them is evident in the placement of their buildings and in the manufacturing histories of their products.

The largest markets for ready-mixed paints and other linseed oil-based products were, logically by population, cities. Urban centres quickly became the preferred locations for

31 MacFadyen, *Flax Americana*, 155.
32 MacFadyen, 14.
33 MacFadyen, 21.
34 MacFadyen, 141.
35 MacFadyen, 6.
36 MacFadyen, 171 and 184.

linseed mills, particularly those located on North America's east coast because they were well situated to access waterways for less expensive transportation and importation of flax seed.[37] Despite the size of the flax farming industry in North America (concentrated in the prairie regions), the demand for linseed oil was outpacing the rate at which local farmers could supply it and so companies looked to international markets to supplement supplies.[38] These conditions contributed to Montreal becoming one of the centres of linseed oil production, along with Buffalo and New York.[39]

One of the most successful processors of linseed oil in Canada was Livingston Linseed Oil, a veritable flax empire started in Baden, Ontario. James Livingston was born in Scotland in 1838 to a family of linen weavers and immigrated to Waterloo County in 1854 along with his brother, John.[40] James found work at the Perine Brothers flax mill in Baden and became the mill foreman in 1861; in the same year, he married Louisa Liersch. When the Perine Brothers' company transitioned towards cordage manufacturing, the Livingstons purchased their pre-existing network of mills.[41] By 1864, James and his brother John had officially formed their own company.

Initially the Livingstons were operating mills for both flax fibre and linseed oil and were relying on national flax seed suppliers.[42] Their operations in Baden were so successful that the town momentarily eclipsed Montreal as a major production centre.[43] However, once it was clear that the market was turning to prefer linseed oil over fibre and international supply chains were becoming vital, the Livingstons began to sell their fibre operations in the 1890s and expanded their factory sites into urban centres, following the trends described above.[44] These decisions contributed to Livingston Linseed Oil (later called Dominion Linseed Oil) becoming Canada's largest producer by 1891, and furthermore the largest in the British Empire.[45]

Family relationships were important to the expansion of Livingston's business and he followed a pattern of "training sons and sons-in-law to manage the new urban outposts while [Livingston] remained in the rural headquarters."[46] James' son, H.P. Livingston, operated a branch of Dominion Linseed Oil in Montreal by 1907, and Edward Liersch, a relative through James' wife Louisa, became manager of the new Canada Linseed Oil

37 MacFadyen, *Flax Americana*, 184.
38 MacFadyen, 25. Argentina and Uruguay became the largest flax seed producers until after WWII, at which point production returned to the North American prairie regions.
39 MacFadyen, 24-25.
40 Nancy Silcox, "LIVINGSTON (Livingstone), JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* vol. 14 (University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003-present), Accessed 25 November 2025, https://www.biographu.ca/en/bio/livingston_james_14E.html
41 MacFadyen, 160.
42 MacFadyen, 159.
43 MacFadyen, 183.
44 MacFadyen, 184.
45 Silcox, "LIVINGSTON (Livingstone), JAMES." Livingston Linseed Oil changed their company name after John Livingston, James' brother, died in 1896.
46 MacFadyen, 184.

Mills in Montreal in 1901.[47] The connections between the Livingston and Liersch families contributed to the continued success and competitiveness of the Livingston linseed business.[48] In one article, Edward Liersch is particularly singled out for his success at managing the Montreal location, 808 Notre Dame Street, as evidenced by the mill's increased output and preferred patronage from large paint manufacturers.[49]

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash Avenue is therefore connected to the Livingston linseed empire,[50] as well as the larger story of linseed production in Canada. The construction date of the mill and its location alongside a railway in a major eastern urban centre are illustrative of the early 20th century industry trends and the Livingston business model. As of 2018, Canada was the world's largest producer of flax seed, and while the CLO Mills factory has undergone additions and demolitions since its first phase of construction in 1910, the majority of its original buildings remain intact as a connection to that history of successful industry.

In the latter half of the 1950s, the paint industry innovated again and found synthetic replacements for linseed oil in their products, likewise for manufacturers of linoleum flooring. These alternatives were less expensive and easier to produce. The demand for linseed oil as an ingredient markedly decreased and led to a sympathetic decrease in global flax seed production and the requirement for linseed mills.[51] The mills at 40 Wabash Avenue ceased operations in the late 1960s, and an article in the Globe and Mail from 1970 details how the company Domco "is negotiating [the] sale of Canlin Ltd., a subsidiary formerly called Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd."[52]

Architects: Langley & Howland

In the landscape of Toronto architecture, the Langley name is associated with both quality and quantity, interwoven through numerous buildings and several individuals, including Henry Langley, Edward Langley, and Charles Langley. Henry Langley (1836-1907) was a leading Ontario architect of the mid-to-late 19th century; he practiced for four decades both individually and within partnerships (including with his brother, Edward Langley, a builder) and trained some dozen architects before his retirement in 1898: one of them being his own son, Charles Langley.

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47 Sources vary on the exact relation. MacFadyen cites Edward as James' brother-in-law, but census information compiled by the *Waterloo Region Generations* https://generations.regionofwaterloo.ca/ (Accessed 5 January 2026) suggests that Edward was James' nephew.

48 MacFadyen, 184.

49 "Canada Linseed Oil Mills," *The Globe* (2 July 1904), 11.

50 Albeit tangentially, until or unless further research parcels out the level of overlap between the two companies.

51 MacFadyen, 9.

52 "Banks lead Montreal decline," *The Globe and Mail* (7 March 1970), B7. In his article, Wencer speculates that Domco is likely the updated company name of Dominion Oil Cloth and Linoleum. John Baillie, signatory to the letters of patent for Canada Linseed Oil Mills, was listed as a former vice-president and managing director of Dominion Oilcloth in an article in the *Globe and Mail*, (13 April 1921), 11. Obviously, the connections between these companies were longstanding and further research would be necessary to fully understand the corporate cross-overs in the linseed industry.

Charles Edward Langley (1870-1951) was born in Ontario and educated at the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto, where he was the first student to graduate from their Department of Architecture. Following his education, Charles trained at his father's firm, Langley & Burke, from 1888 to 1982.[53] When Edmund Burke (who was also Henry's nephew) left the practice in 1892, Charles became full partner in the new firm of Langley & Langley. Despite Henry's retirement in 1898, Charles retained the name of Langley & Langley until 1905, at which point he began a new partnership with William Ford Howland.

William Ford Howland (1874-1948) was not formally educated in architecture, but acquired knowledge and practice in the field through his experience working at various firms including Burke & Horwood from 1891-96; Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen in New York from 1896-1902, and Cady, Berg, & See from 1902-04.[54] When Howland returned to Toronto, he resumed a collaborative relationship with Edmund Burke.[55] It is likely that his connection with Burke put Howland in contact with Charles Langley, and may have contributed to the formation of their practice together.

Langley & Howland worked together for over 35 years, from 1905 to 1941. Their list of known works is substantial, with a marked specialization in prominent residential buildings and bank buildings. Langley & Howland notably established a pleasing Beaux-Arts-inspired iconography for the bank typology and became well-known for achieving a standardized design for these types of commissions.[56] For his own part, Howland had additional interests in conserving historic buildings as well as designing new ones and he, "developed proposals for restoring the military structures at Fort York and creating new entrances to the site."[57]

The commission for the Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash Avenue is unique within the partnership of Langley & Howland because it is the only industrial project attributed to them. They designed numerous churches, residences, banks, and various institutional buildings together, yet the Linseed Mills remains an outlier. However, Langley was not entirely without reference in the industrial typology: in 1904, while working independently under Langley & Langley, Charles designed the Cowan Cocoa Ltd. cocoa and chocolate factory at 72 Sterling Road.[58] Portions that remain visible from the street appear to exhibit minimal style, perhaps in deference to the functionality required of the industrial typology. The construction of the Cowan factory generally falls within the same time period as the Linseed Oil Mills which was constructed six years later.

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53 Robert G. Hill, "Langley, Charles Edward," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800 - 195,* Accessed 20 November 2025, http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1432

54 Robert G. Hill, "Howland, William Ford," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800 - 195,* Accessed 20 November 2025, http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/280

55 Hill, "Howland, William Ford."

56 Hill, "Langley, Charles Edward."

57 Hill, "Howland, William Ford."

58 Portions of which still stand, although they have been incorporated into more contemporary additions, now owned by Nestle Canada Inc.

While banks and residences comprise the majority of works by Langley & Howland, looking at the complete collection of their careers illustrates their capability to adapt to a diverse range of building types and functional requirements. Langley & Howland represent a second generation of accomplished architects building off of the training and legacies of well-renowned figures in the field such as Henry Langley and Edmund Burke, while also developing their own areas of expertise - of which the Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash forms a part.

ii. 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.

Industrial Buildings c.1840-1914

Industrial buildings comprise any building or structure primarily used for the extraction, processing, manufacturing, or storage of raw materials and goods for economic purposes. While the architecture of industrial buildings primarily focuses on utility and function, architects and builders could help wealthier companies showcase their success by designing the appearance of their buildings to align with the prevailing fashions of the time, particularly if the property included showrooms or office space accessed by the public.[59] As an architect-designed factory, the Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash exhibits stylistic elements reminiscent of Edwardian Classicism, which was a popular architectural style in Toronto during the early 20th century. It was also common for companies to integrate advertising onto their buildings, either through large painted letters or signage mounted on walls, along the roof ridge line, or carved on a parapet or frieze. The Canada Linseed Oil (or CLO) Mills retains faded lettering painted directly on the bricks of its south façade that spell out the name of the company.

In an urban setting, merchants' warehouses and factories are the most common industrial building types. On larger sites, discrete functions could be accommodated in separate buildings, forming an industrial complex. Open courtyards and rail sidings were desirable for the ease of transporting materials to and from the factory. Situated on a large property lot and connected to a major railway line by a rail spur that ran direct to the buildings, the CLO Mills is representative of these typology characteristics.

A factory is a facility that makes or assembles discrete components and/or materials to produce goods and may also be called a plant or mill. The word mill is often used when the input is a raw, natural material. For example, the input of flax seed to produce linseed oil at a Linseed Oil Mill. The origins of the factory as a distinct sub-typology can be traced to the Industrial Revolution, which began in Great Britain during the 18th century. As manufacturing became increasingly mechanized, purpose-built structures were needed to house the specialized equipment that processed and assembled materials into an array of new products. Many of these early machines were large, heavy, and produced high levels of vibration, requiring the buildings containing them to

59 Lynn Pearson, *Victorian and Edwardian British industrial architecture* (Wiltshire, UK: The Crowood Press Ltd, 2017), 23.

be structurally robust. Improvements in energy technology meant that machines could become even larger, and the scale of factories correspondingly increased. In the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, this resulted in factories constructed using thick masonry walls, typically brick, and often featuring generous floor to ceiling heights. The reinforced concrete and brick construction of the CLO Mills, particularly the mill building itself, would have been necessary to house the collection of seed crushers and presses.

The interest of the insurance industry in mitigating the risk of fire (particularly in the years following the Great Fire of 1904 that destroyed a significant portion of Toronto's warehousing district) meant that industrial buildings were generally constructed with solid, milled timber or steel and reinforced concrete.[60] In certain drying conditions, linseed oil was apt to spontaneously combust and thus the main workplace hazard at the oil mills was the high risk of fires and explosions.[61] Fire separated elevator shafts and enclosed stairwells were often implemented at industrial sites to limit the speed at which fire could spread between floors, while also keeping the main production spaces unencumbered by interior walls. The uniformity of the structural grid is expressed in the regular patterning of windows on the exterior façades.

Access to a reliable and consistent power supply was critical for manufacturers, and factory complexes on larger sites would often feature their own powerhouse or boiler house as a result. These structures are recognisable by their tall brick chimney stacks. For reasons of fire prevention (and to reduce insurance costs), powerhouses were kept physically separate from the rest of the buildings in the complex, while still being centrally located.[62]

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills is comprised of several buildings constructed in phases from 1910 into the 1940s. Construction on the original buildings began in 1910 following the designs of the architects Langley & Howland; they include the following: the one-storey Tank House (demolished c.1968); the Grain Elevator (demolished c.1968); the two-storey Mill; the three-storey Storage and Barrelling Refinery; and the one-storey Boiler House with chimney stack (Figure 11).[63] The names for these buildings are used for the purpose of clarity within the report, and were selected based on their historic labels as featured in the Toronto Fire Insurance Plans.

A one-storey detached Office building was constructed at the western side of the property circa 1914-1924 (Figures 13 and 35). A three-storey Warehouse addition was added to the rear (north) façade of the Storage and Barrelling Refinery circa 1925-31 (Figures 13-14). The design of both the Office and Warehouse buildings are largely sympathetic with the design of the original buildings, however they have no confirmed architect to date. An elevation rendering of each building with construction dates is provided in Figure 20.

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60 John B. Laidlaw, "Methods of construction in relation to insurance," *The Canadian Architect and Builder* vol 16, no.4, 60.

61 MacFadyen, 169.

62 Laidlaw, 60.

63 Note that Langley & Howland did not design the Grain Elevator.

Located on the east side of the property, the six abutting buildings that comprise the former Canada Linseed Oil Mills factory each follow a rectangular plan, red brick walls, reinforced concrete construction, flat roof, and overall height varying between one, two and three-storeys.

The original Mill building (c.1910) is located at the south-west corner of the collection and is two-storeys in height on a raised basement, with exterior brick laid in common bond with headers every fifth course and fading remnants of white paint (Figures 26-28). A corbelled brick parapet runs along the south and west elevations, visible from Wabash Avenue and Sorauren Park. The parapet has remnants of clay tile coping. Its south elevation is comprised of three (3) bays, while its west elevation has eight (8) bays, all of them defined by brick pilasters starting at the corners. The top four courses of brick project from the rest of the pilaster shaft; each pilaster is topped with sculpted, triangular precast concrete coping. Each bay generally contains one window per floor centred between the pilasters, except for the west elevation's first bay at the ground floor, which has two openings one for a window and one for a door with transom. The third bay contains two smaller windows located in between levels; the sixth bay contains a larger door opening next to a projecting loading dock and the last bay has no ground level masonry opening. All window openings have been covered with metal screening over industrial style windows with multi-pane glazing, metal frame and muntin bars. Window openings have precast concrete lintels and sills. Segmental brick arches made of three rows of bricks on their rowlock, with a precast key stone, are visible above the top storey windows. The segmental arches have been filled in with brick, and there is a precast concrete lintel for the masonry opening. A steel grain hopper on the roof is visible on this section of the building (Figure 27).

The three-storey Warehouse addition (c.1925-1931) abuts the Mill on its east elevation and generally follows the same brick exterior design laid in common bond with headers every fifth course, pilasters and punched windows, arranged within five bays where the northernmost bay has slightly larger and lower window openings (Figures 22-23). The Warehouse abuts the Storage and Barrelling Refinery at its north elevation.

The Storage and Barrelling Refinery (c.1910) generally follows the same brick exterior design as the Mill and Warehouse buildings and is three (3) bays wide along its Wabash Avenue façade (south) and three (3) narrower bays along the east façade that faces the adjacent railway tracks (Figures 27, 27, and 29). The south façade has faded white paint and there are the remnants of painted signage which once said: ‘Canada Linseed Oil Mills Limited’ in large white letters, with black outline (Figure 30). The east façade has variations in window sizes on the second floor, and it has no window or door openings on the third bay (northernmost bay). There is a small rectangular masonry structure on the roof possibly for the purpose of providing roof access. A lean-to steel structure that once supported the docking canopy is in place across the lower portion of the south façade. It indicates the location of the former rail spur that once ran directly up to the building (Figure 27, 28, and 31).

The one-storey Boiler House (c.1910) is connected to the Storage and Barrelling Refinery along the lower east façade. The Boiler House has a flat roof, common bond brick wall with clay tile coping (partially), three small basement level windows along the

south façade facing Wabash Avenue, one window opening along its east façade, and includes a tall, brick chimney stack or smokestack along its north wall that features corbelling on its shaft and its top (Figures 21 and 36).

The former Office (c.1914-1924) is a detached, two-storey brick structure with a rectangular plan and a flat roof (Figure 34). Each elevation of the original building is comprised of two bays defined by recessed brick walls framed by corner brick pilasters with a brick pilaster in between; the pilasters all rise two-storeys from the building base to the roofline to meet the parapet. The parapet wall includes three rows of brick which corbel down to the recessed walls of each bay. Punched windows with precast concrete sills and lintels are arranged within each bay and each elevation has a different composition. Doors in the building have precast concrete lintels. The main façade (south) ground floor windows align with the second-storey windows. The east elevation has no ground floor openings, only second-storey punched windows. The rear (north) elevation has second-storey window openings that align with the window and door openings on the ground floor, and two doors are located at either end of the composition. The main entrance is located on the west (side) façade and is accessed via concrete stairs leading to a one-storey vestibule attached to a two-storey, curving brick addition. Attached to the east façade is a one-storey wood clad shed with hip asphalt shingled roof, constructed in 2019. The office is currently used as a fieldhouse for the Sorauren Farmer's Market.

The Canada Linseed Oil Mills building at 40 Wabash Avenue is representative of the early 20th century industrial building type through its reinforced concrete and brick construction; varied height, scale, and complex massing indicating the various mill-related functions of each building; flat rooflines; regularly spaced window openings; its steel structure that reflects how the factory had access to the transportation of the rail spur along Wabash Avenue; the grain hopper on the roof; its surviving chimney stack; and the remnants of the original company signage painted onto the bricks of the south façade.

Later Additions

A three-storey addition was added to the rear (north) façade of the Warehouse in 1940 (Figures 14 and 15). It has a flat roof without parapet, and there is a small rectangular masonry structure possibly for the purpose of providing roof access (Figures 23-24). While this addition was designed by Chapman & Oxley, it does not feature design elements sympathetic to the original buildings. This was typical to some later commissions undertaken by Chapman & Oxley, who were known to have been sensitive in accommodating client budgetary requirements; these commissions had little ornamentation and instead favoured a simplicity approaching austerity.[64] The 1941 Fire Insurance Plan labels the addition the 'CANLIN' building, which was the name Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. assumed when it became a subsidiary of a larger corporation. This perhaps explains the difference in budget and design. A final two-storey addition was added to the rear (north) façade of the Mill circa 1941-47 (Figure 25). These last two additions have masonry openings with steel lintels and precast sills, but only the last

64 Howard D. Chapman, "Alfred Chapman: The Man and His Work," The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (Toronto: Toronto Region Branch, 1978).

addition has soldier courses at the top of the first-floor masonry opening, and precast concrete surround for the second-floor window masonry openings, which contain glass block windows.

iii. 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 City of Toronto Property Data Map (Attachment 2) shows the site of the property at 40 Wabash Avenue (including entrance address at 50 Wabash Avenue).

A 1947 aerial view indicates the extent of the industrial built form which characterized the neighbourhood for almost a century (Figure 15). The character of the Wabash-Sorauren portion developed as part of a larger industrial swath that extended from Keele Street and St. Clair Avenue all the way down to the waterfront, following the railway lines.[65] Wabash Avenue stretches from the railways in the east to Sorauren Avenue in the west. It has a notable width and currently features a central median with paving and trees planted along its length (Figure 32). The avenue's width and median are reminiscent of the railway spur that once ran down the middle, serving not only the National Equipment Company Ltd. at 41 Wabash and the Canada Linseed Oil Mills at 40 Wabash, but also the Dominion Bridge Company that formerly dominated Sorauren Avenue Park's site and the Lowe Brothers paint and varnish company that formerly sat at the south-east corner with Sorauren Avenue (Figure 16). The connection of this area to rail and water transportation was especially important to the site selection of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills factory at 40 Wabash Avenue because the factory required access to these routes for the import of flax seed supply - as delivered direct to its grain elevator and Mill building via the convenience of the Wabash rail spur. The Canada Linseed Oil Mills and the National Equipment Company Ltd. buildings are the last remaining structures on Wabash Avenue with ties to the historic, industrial function of the street that developed over 100 years ago.

The 1947 aerial also illustrates the contrast between the large, complex industrial buildings immediately surrounded by the rows of small, regular residential lots along tree lined streets. The proximity of these otherwise contrasting characters is indicative of how the industrial character of the area progressed by supporting the local employment economy and was in turn supported by the local employees.

However, the relationship between the two has not always been harmonious. An Official Planning Study was initiated in the 1980s, partly prompted by the uncertain status of industry in the area and partly by related conflicts arising between industry and housing (such as traffic congestion, noise and air pollution).[66] At that time, the Wabash-Sorauren area still hosted industrial activity with residential uses on the southern side of Wabash Avenue; however, by the 1990s the industrial uses waned and most of the companies were vacating the area. With the demolition of Dominion Bridge Co and the Lowe's

65 "Official Planning Proposals: Wabash-Sorauren," 1.
66 "Official Planning Proposals: Wabash-Sorauren," 5.

Paint factory pre-1990 and their replacement with two parks, the area has experienced notable changes. Today, while the industrial character remains in the built form of select heritage buildings along Wabash and Sorauren, the functions of the buildings have transitioned to primarily residential or commercial uses (Figures 37-38).

Since the cessation of operations in the late 1960s, the Canada Linseed Oil Mills has remained vacant and inactive, at least in the formal sense. Its community significance is attested by the ongoing efforts of the Wabash Building Society (or Friends of Sorauren Park), a non-profit corporation whose objectives include the adaptative re-use of the subject property to convert it into a community centre.

Some efforts at re-purposing the former industrial sites in the area for community use have already been achieved. The Sorauren Avenue Park sits on the north side of Wabash Avenue and features a sports field, dog park, and a seasonal farmer's market - all surrounding the extant remaining buildings of the Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd. factory (Figure 35). The chimney stack of the boiler house is visible from a wide radius, especially from across the park where the Robert Watson Factory features its own chimney stack echoing back across the expanse (Figure 33).[67] Together the pair link the industrial heritage of the two streets and signify the broader industrial development history of the Roncesvalles area (Figure 36). While the remaining factory buildings may currently be used for residential, community, or commercial purposes, their typologies remain rooted in the industries that built them (Figure 37).

67 363 Sorauren Avenue; designated Part IV in 2008.

4. VISUAL RESOURCES

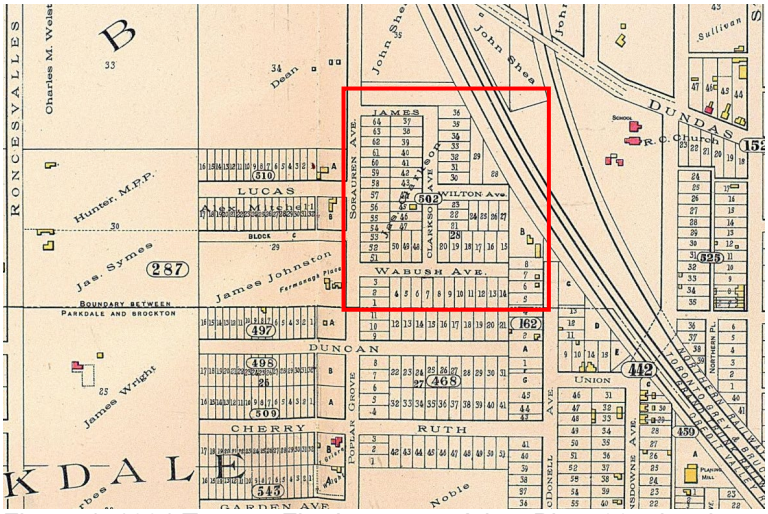


Figure 4. 1884 Toronto Fire Insurance Atlas, Plate 33, showing residential Plan 502 (U of T).

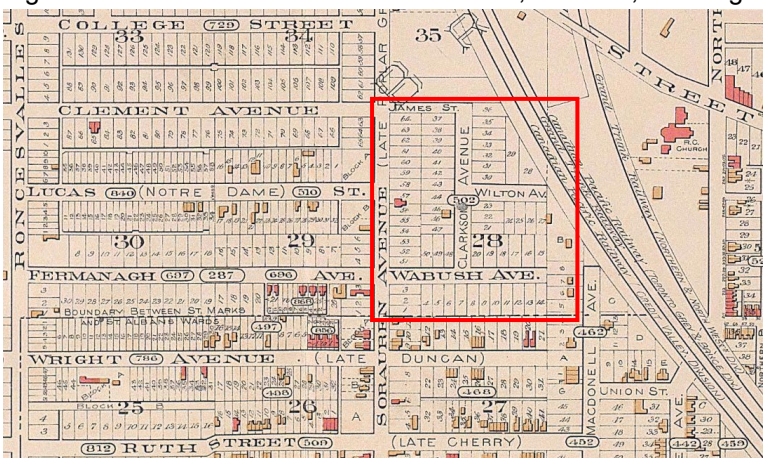


Figure 5. 1890 Fire Insurance Atlas, Plate 42, showing residential Plan 502 that still has no development on its residential lots (U of T).

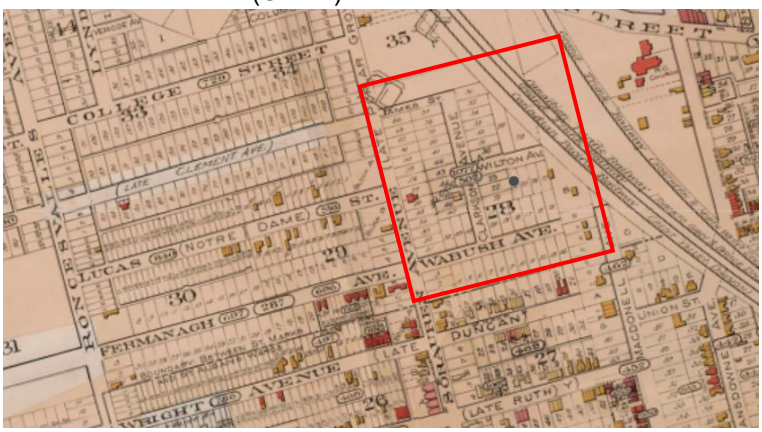
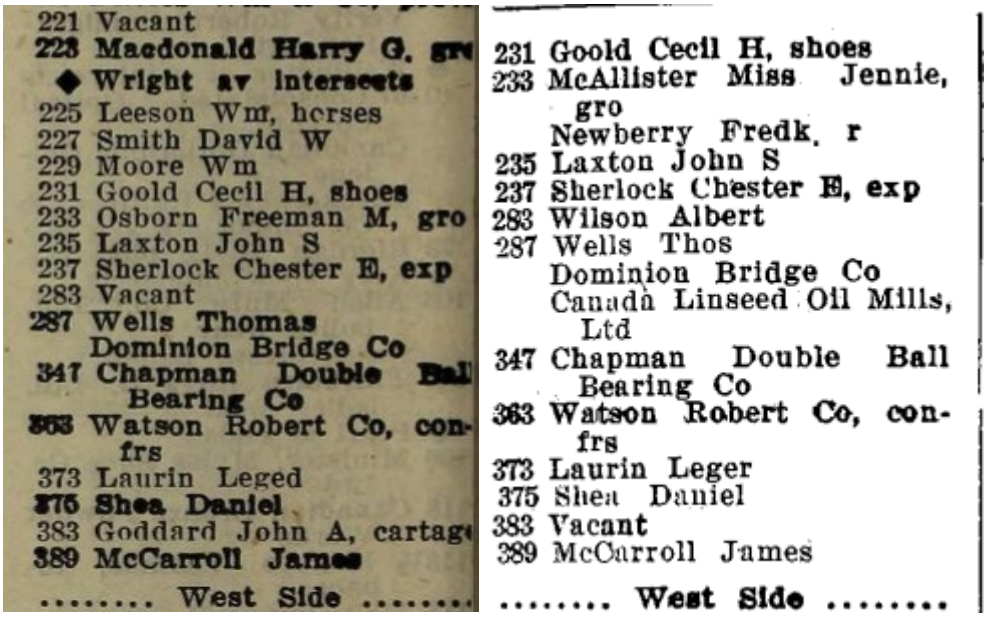


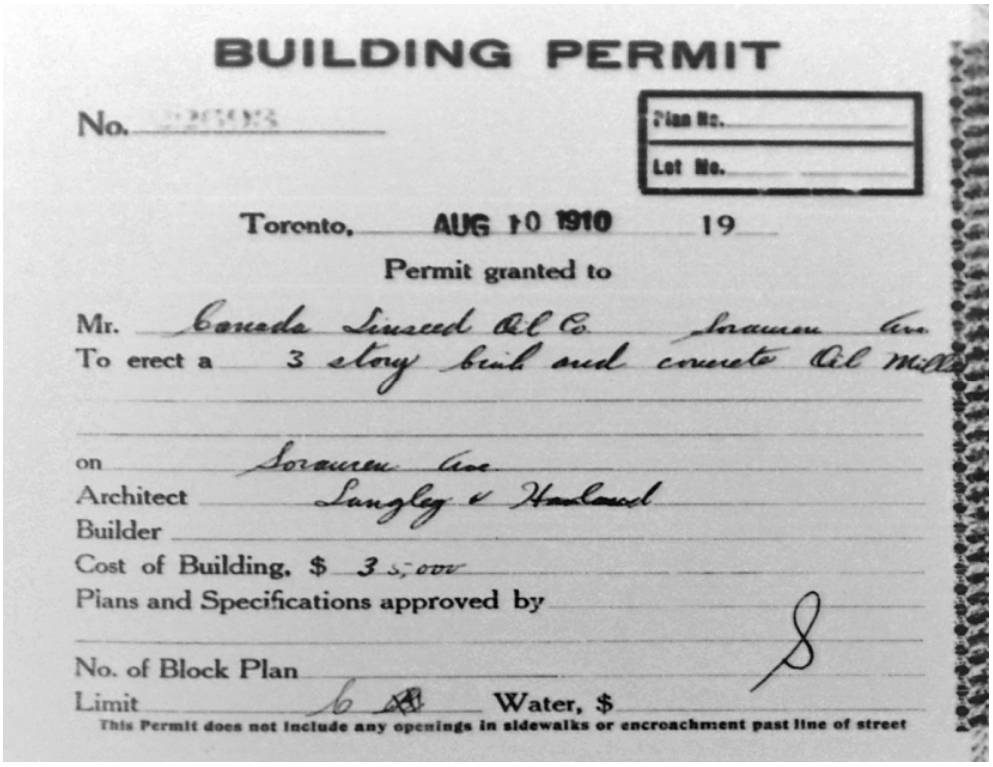
Figure 6. 1903 Goad's Atlas showing no residential development on Plan 502, and very little residential development in the surrounding area (Toronto iView Mapping).



221 Vacant
223 Macdonald Harry G, grc
◆ Wright av intersects
225 Leeson Wm, horses
227 Smith David W
229 Moore Wm
231 Goold Cecil H, shoes
233 Osborn Freeman M, gro
235 Laxton John S
237 Sherlock Chester E, exp
283 Vacant
287 Wells Thomas
Dominion Bridge Co
347 Chapman Double Ball Bearing Co
363 Watson Robert Co, con-frs
373 Laurin Leged
375 Shea Daniel
383 Goddard John A, cartage
389 McCarroll James
..... West Side .....

231 Goold Cecil H, shoes
233 McAllister Miss Jennie, gro
Newberry Fredk, r
235 Laxton John S
237 Sherlock Chester E, exp
283 Wilson Albert
287 Wells Thos
Dominion Bridge Co
Canada Linseed Oil Mills, Ltd
347 Chapman Double Ball Bearing Co
363 Watson Robert Co, con-frs
373 Laurin Leger
375 Shea Daniel
383 Vacant
389 McCarroll James
..... West Side .....

Figure 7. At left: City Directory for 1909 showing the first industrial buildings along Sorauren Avenue. At right: 1911 edition of the City Directory showing the appearance of Canada Linseed Oil Mills Ltd., listed on Sorauren Avenue (Wabash Avenue did not appear in the directories until 1913). The 1911 City Directory was published in January 1911, and therefore reflects the street conditions of 1910.



BUILDING PERMIT

No. 22693

Plan No.

Lot No.

Toronto, AUG 10 1910 19

Permit granted to

Mr. Canada Linseed Oil Co. Sorauren Ave.

To erect a 3 story brick and concrete Oil Mills

on Sorauren Ave.

Architect Langley & Howland

Builder

Cost of Building, $ 35,000

Plans and Specifications approved by

No. of Block Plan

Limit 6 Water, $

This Permit does not include any openings in sidewalks or encroachment past line of street

Figure 8. City of Toronto Building Permit No. 22693, granted August 10, 1910. Permit was granted to the Canada Linseed Oil Co. to erect a 3 storey brick and concrete Oil Mills, address listed on Sorauren Avenue, at the cost of $35,000. Architects are listed as Langley & Howland (CTA).

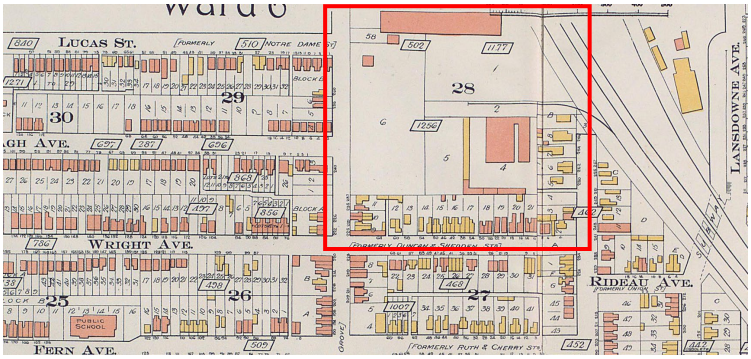


Figure 9. 1910 Toronto Fire Insurance Atlas, Plate 56, showing the new Plan 1256 that includes large lots, a rail spur, and some industrial buildings. The surrounding area is starting to develop with residential buildings (U of T).

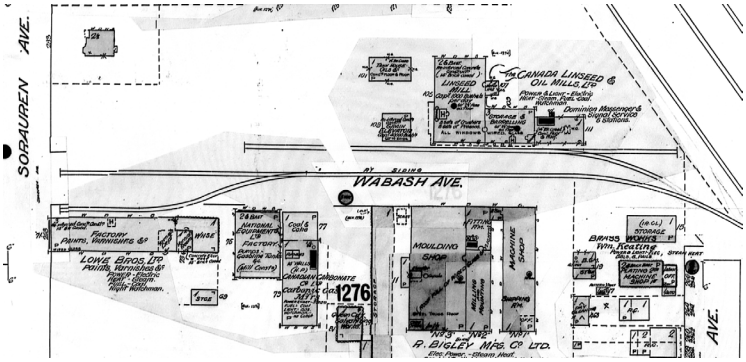


Figure 10. 1910-1914 Toronto Fire Insurance Plan, Volume 4 Sheet 300, showing the industrial buildings in place along Wabash Avenue, including the subject property at 40 Wabash Avenue. The rail spur has been extended to Sorauren Avenue (U of T).

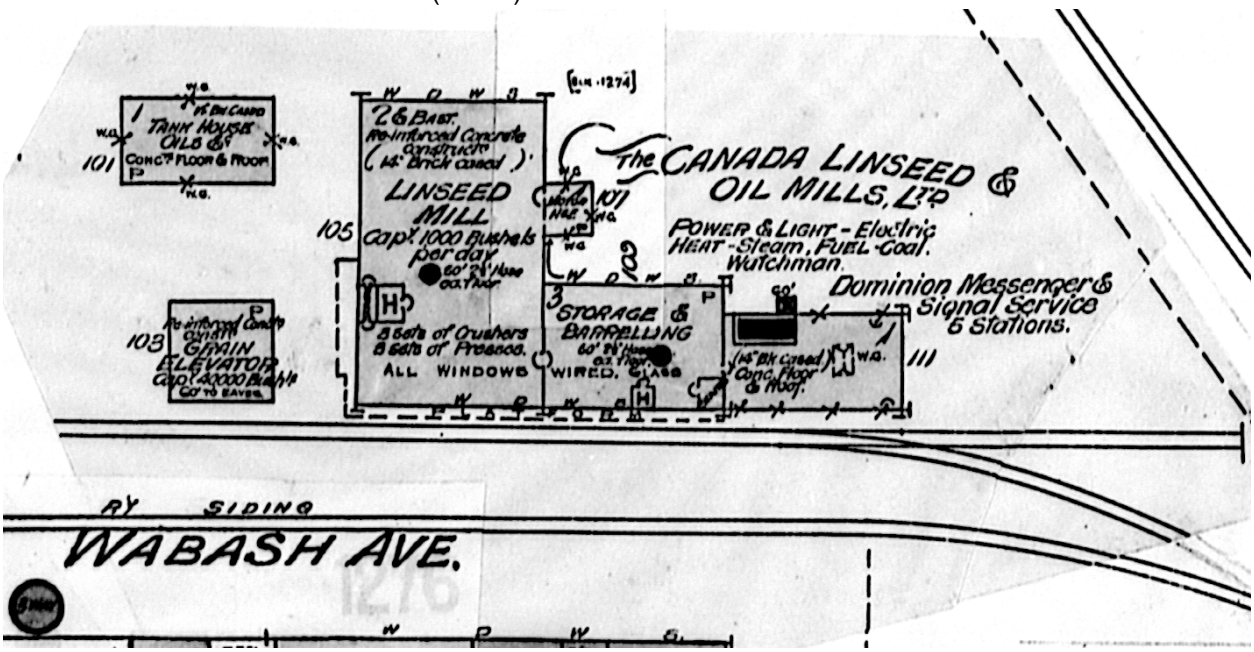


Figure 11. Detail of the 1910-1914 Toronto Fire Insurance Plan showing the annotated functions of each building on the subject property: Tank House; Grain Elevator; Linseed Mill; and Storage & Barrelling (U of T).

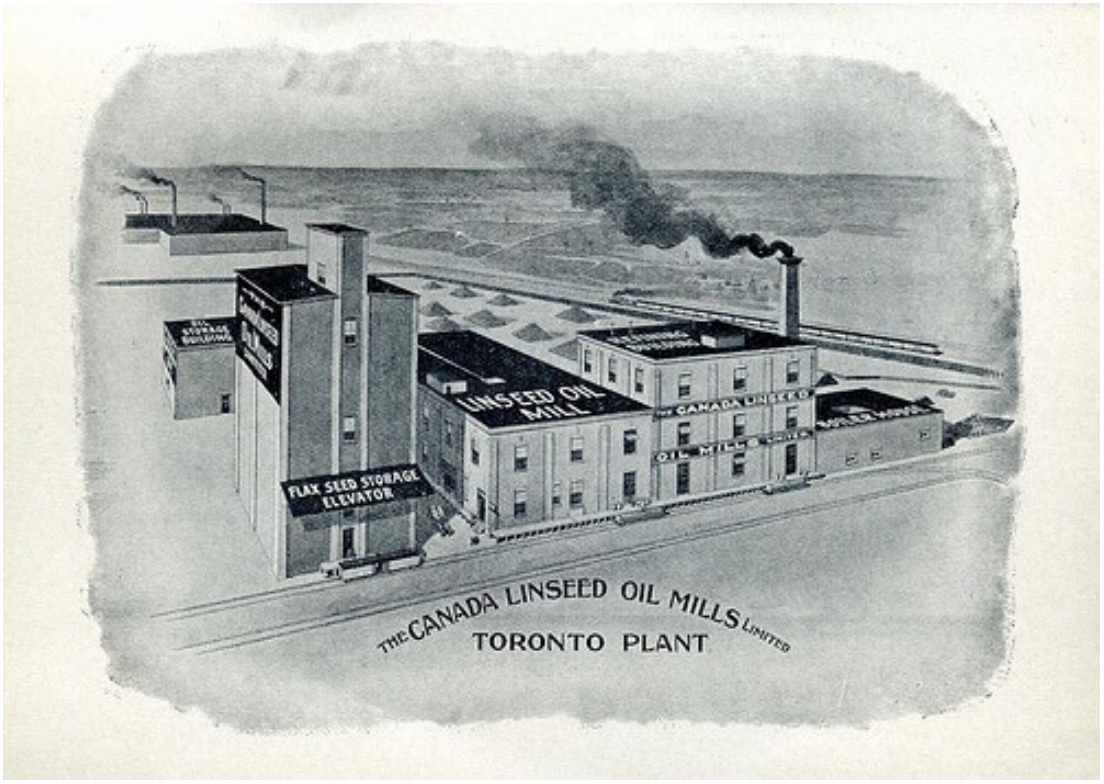


Figure 12. Excerpt from the publication Successful Feeding - A Practical Feeding Manual for Canadian Farmers, published by the Canada Linseed Oil Mills, c.1931 (via David Wencer, Heritage Toronto). Drawing of the buildings depict what the factory looked like circa 1910-1930 before any of the later additions were added, including the labels of the buildings' functions.


Figure 13. 1931 aerial of 40 Wabash Avenue showing the appearance of the Warehouse building (Toronto iView Mapping).

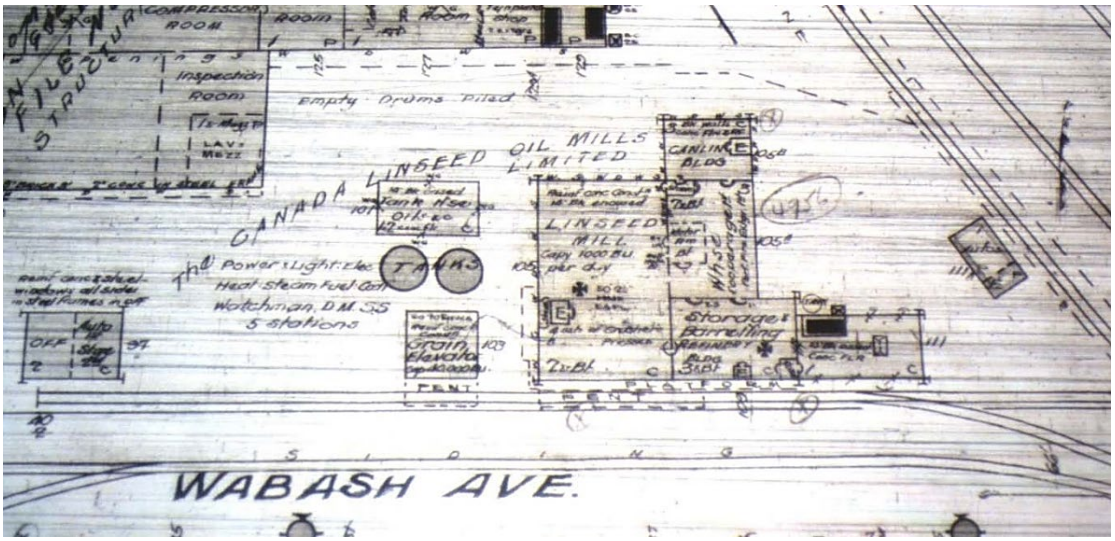


Figure 14. 1941 Fire Insurance Plan showing the Warehouse and the Canlin addition. Note that the 'Storage & Barrelling' building includes the 'Refinery' annotation (CTA)

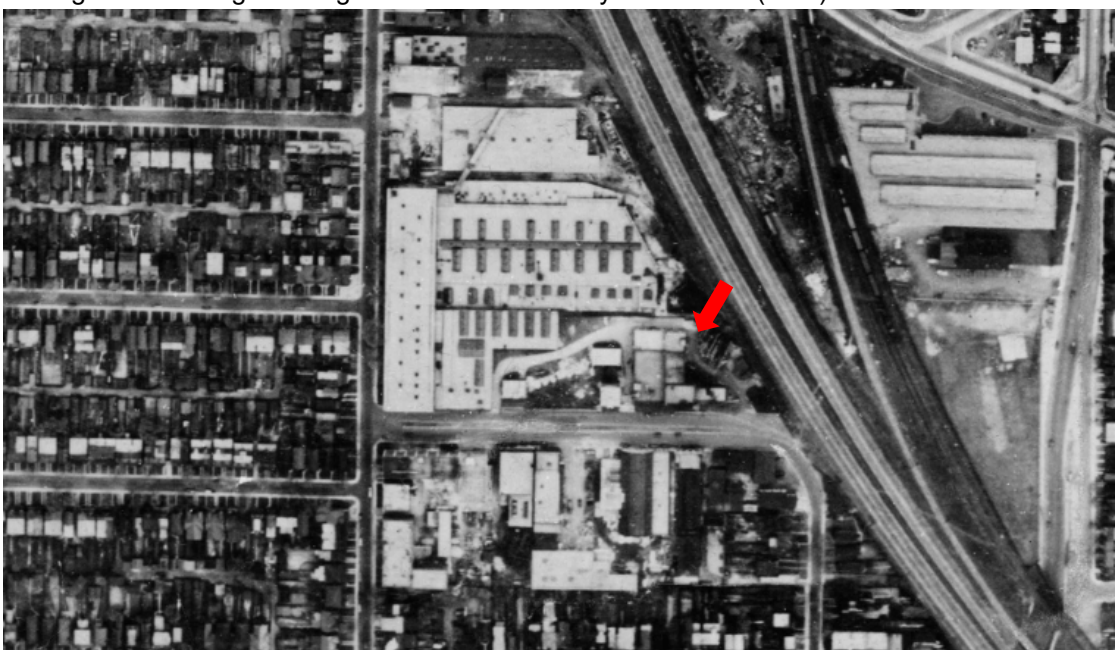


Figure 15. 1947 aerial photo showing both rear additions in place. The Wabash-Sorauren industrial area is surrounded by residential development to the west and south (CTA).

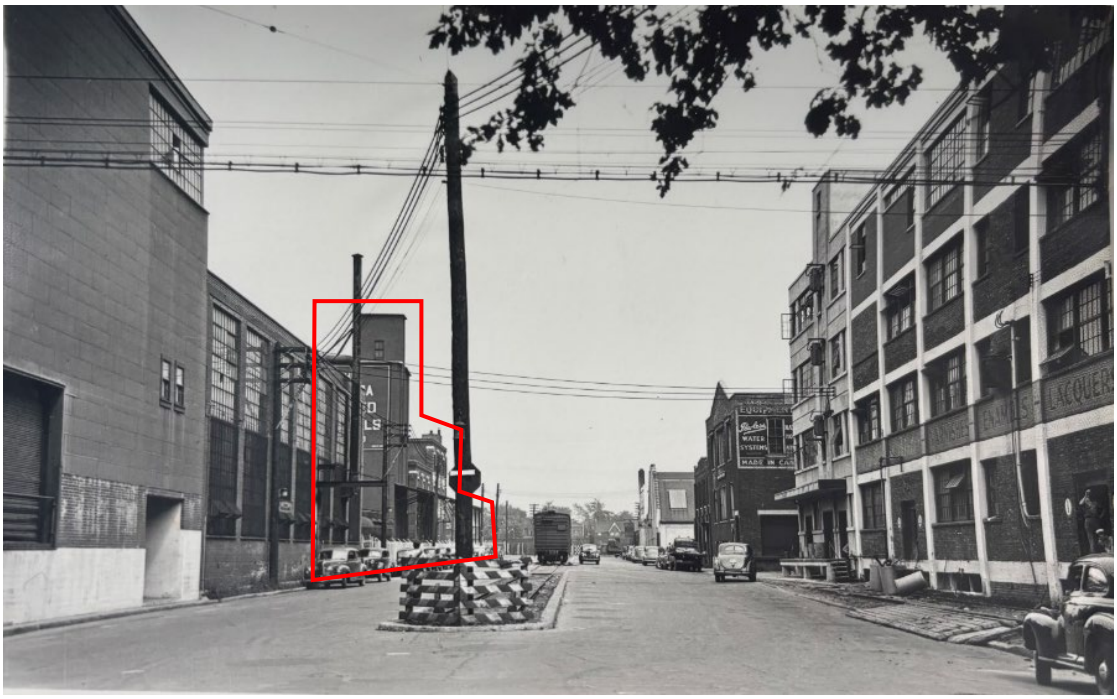


Figure 16. 1947 photograph of Wabash Avenue looking east from Sorauren. The Canada Linseed Oil Mills is outlined in red; the Grain Elevator is still extant at this time, as is the rail spur that formerly ran down the centre of Wabash Avenue. An additional rail spur runs up to the Lowe Brothers Paint Manufacturers, at the right of the photo (CTA).

Figure 17. 1947 photograph of Sorauren Avenue, looking north from Wabash. At the right of the photo is the large building of the Dominion Bridge Co., future sight of the TTC's Parkdale garage, and present site of the Sorauren Avenue Park (CTA). Photograph shows the close proximity of the residential buildings at left with the industrial character at right.

Figure 18.1968 aerial photograph, plate 45, showing the property with the Tank House and Grain Elevator still intact (CTA).

Figure 19. 1969 aerial photograph, plate 45, showing the Tank House and Grain Elevator now demolished (CTA).

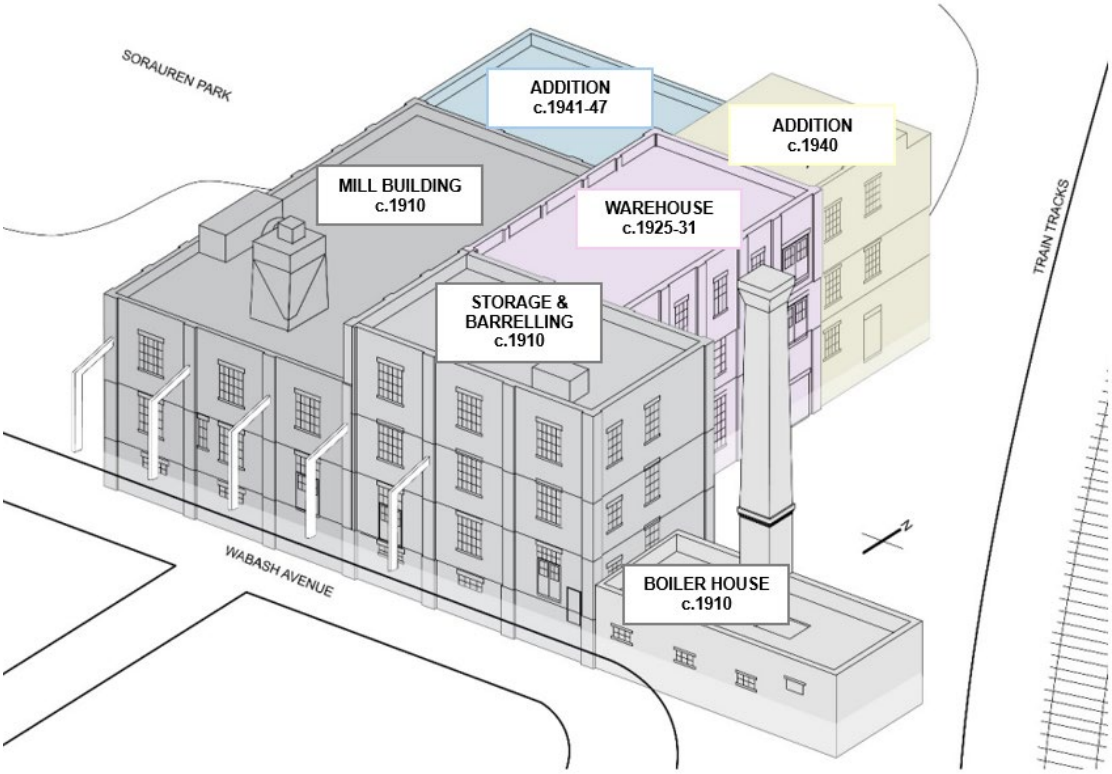


Figure 20. Rendering of the building elevation showing the building chronology. Original rendering by Taylor Hazell Architects (40 Wabash Avenue - Cultural Heritage Evaluation Recommendation Report, 2019); annotations amended by Heritage Planning, 2026.

Figure 21. View of the southeast elevation showing the Boiler House, Chimney Stack, Storage & Barrelling Refinery, and part of the Warehouse addition (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 22. View (partially obstructed) of the east elevation (Heritage Planning, 2025).

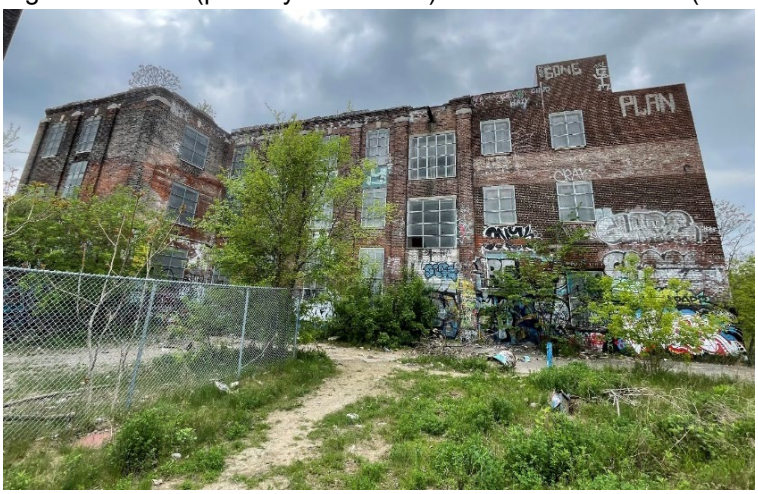


Figure 23. View of the east elevation showing the Storage & Barrelling Refinery, the Warehouse, and the c.1940 addition (Heritage Planning, 2024).

Figure 24. View of the northeast elevation looking southwest (Heritage Planning, 2024).


Figure 25. View of the northwest elevation looking southeast (Heritage Planning, 2025).


Figure 26. View of the west elevation looking east showing the different between the original c.1910 Mill building at right and the c.1941-47 rear addition at left (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 27. View of the south elevation looking north showing the two-storey Mill Building at left with the "lean-to" steel canopy frame structure below and grain hopper above, the three-storey Storage & Barrelling Refinery at right, and the Boiler House Chimney Stack at far right (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 28. View of the southwest elevation with detail of the steel "lean-to" canopy frame (Heritage Planning, 2025).

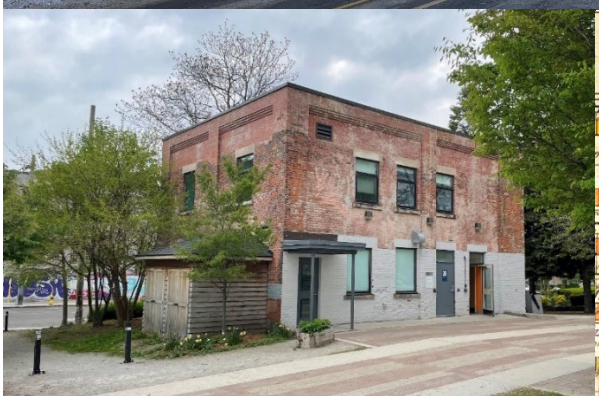
Figure 29. Detail view of the south elevation of the Storage & Barrelling Refinery showing the regular placement of the window openings and pilasters (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 30. Detail of the south elevation of the Storage & Barrelling Refinery "ghost signage" lettering painted onto the bricks (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 31. Detail view of the south elevation looking west showing the remnant of the possible pathway the former rail spur took into the steel canopy docking station (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 32. View of Wabash Avenue with 40 Wabash Avenue at left, looking west; the centre landscaped and paved median is where the former rail spur was located (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 33. View of the south elevation of the Mill Building at right and Sorauren Park at left looking north towards the industrial buildings on Sorauren Avenue, as indicated by the chimney stack in the background (Heritage Planning, 2025).



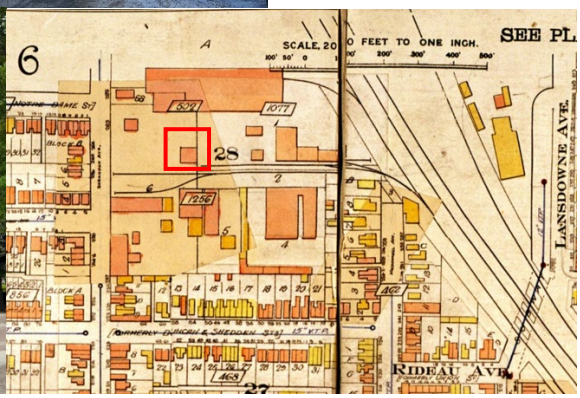


Figure 34. Above: Wabash Ave. showing the former Office building in context with the factory. Below left: north elevation of the former Office building at left. Below right: the 1924 Fire Insurance Plan (Toronto iView Mapping) showing the appearance of the office building outlined in red.

Figure 35. View of the subject property from across Sorauren Park, looking southeast, where the Boiler House Chimney Stack is visible as are the residential infill houses on the south side of Wabash Avenue (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 36. Detail view of the Boiler House Chimney Stack with corbelling details, its form and massing characteristic of the early 19th century industrial typology (Heritage Planning, 2025).

Figure 37. Industrial buildings along Sorauren Avenue that have been adaptively re-used (Heritage Planning, 2026).

Figure 38. Sorauren Avenue looking southeast showing industrial buildings that have been adaptively re-used (Heritage Planning, 2026).

Figure 39. The chimney stack of the boiler house at 40 Wabash Avenue as visible from Dundas Street West, looking southwest (Heritage Planning, 2026).

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