





## Heritage Impact Statement

First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street

Halifax, June 2025





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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. SITE INFORMATION

**Primary Address:** 1300 Oxford Street, Halifax

**Secondary Address:** 1290 Oxford Street

**Neighbourhood:** Regional Centre Plan Area

**Zoning:** INS

#### 1290 Oxford Street

**Type of Resource:** Residential; Dwelling; Single-family dwelling

**Historic Name:**

**Current Name:** Parsonage

**Original Owner:** Not known

**Date of Construction:** 1915 (Source: Nova Scotia Property Assessment)

**Architect:** Not known

**Builder:** Not known

**Heritage Status:** None





**1300 Oxford Street**

**Type of Resource:** Institutional; Place of Worship; Church

**Historic Name:** Granville Street Baptist Church; First Baptist Church

**Current Name:** First Baptist Church of Halifax

**Original Owner:** First Baptist Church

**Dates of Construction:**

- **Previous:** 1827 (18 Granville Street – historic address); 1886-1887 (17½ Spring Garden Road at Queen Street – historic address)
- **Current:** 1948-1949 with dedication in 1950 (Source: FBCH History – A Road Less Travelled); rear addition (Christian Education Wing) in 1958

**Architect:** Allan F. Duffus, supervising architect; Bruce Brown of Brown and Brisley, primary architect

**Builder:** Brookfield Construction Co.

**Heritage Status:** Registered Heritage Property (Approved in 2024)



The subject site comprises two properties on the west side of Oxford Street, immediately north of South Street, each of which contains one building. The church is addressed as 1300 Oxford Street ("First Baptist Church"), while the residence to the south, set on a separate parcel, is addressed as 1290 Oxford Street (the "Parsonage"). First Baptist Church has recently been approved by Halifax Regional Municipality as a Registered Heritage Property while the Parsonage has no heritage status.



The purpose of this Heritage Impact Statement is to assess the contextual, historic and aesthetic values of the area and the subject site, express this concisely and comprehensively in a Statement of Significance, and to assess the overall condition, the development proposal and how it relates to the conservation of the buildings on site, and finally, to assess alternative and mitigative strategies to minimize any impact on the overall heritage value and character-defining elements. The author, Hugh McLean, of McLean Heritage Planning and Consulting, prepared this report between January and March 2025.

## 1.2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subject site, located in the neighbourhood that has known as Halifax Common, is situated on the west side of Oxford Street, immediately north of South Street (Figure 1).



**Figure 1a: Context of subject site, looking west**  
**Source: Google Earth**





**Figure 1b: Context of subject site, looking east**

**Source: Google Earth**

It is set in the far westerly portion of the district adjacent to the westerly section of the campus of Dalhousie University. For planning purposes, it is in the area defined as the Regional Centre Plan Area.

There are a number of major university buildings in the immediate area, although the general context of the neighbourhood retains a substantial amount of its original single-family housing character.

The purpose of this Heritage Impact Statement is to present the conditions and heritage conservation strategies for both the church's reference and future and planning, and as may be required under any other circumstances by the Halifax Regional Municipality.

The two buildings that make up this Heritage Impact Statement are situated along the west side of Oxford Street immediately north of South Street. While there are two buildings, it is important to note that only one, First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street, is a Registered Heritage Property, as recently approved by the Halifax Regional Municipality. The second building, a modest single-family dwelling at 1290 Oxford Street, known as the Parsonage, dates from 1915, and is proposed to be demolished. The two properties are part of a land assembly comprising two lots intended for redevelopment by the owners, and for which a DA is required. It is the owners' intention to conserve and preserve First Baptist Church in its entirety, through retention in situ, that will see a new 14 -storey residential development

situated on the south side of the site, replacing the existing single-family dwelling. The approach proposed as part of the DA, is to retain the historic resource as the optimal approach as part of their conservation in the most meaningful context and following *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*.

First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street is a post-war place of worship designed in the Neo-Gothic style. It is valued for how it illustrates the post-war development pattern of the immediate area, and how it exemplifies the third stage in the evolution of a dynamic and growing church, from its humble roots on Granville Street, dating back to 1827, followed by its reincarnation on at 17½ Spring Garden Road near Queen Street in 1886-1887. Following a devastating fire in 1942, the congregation chose to rebuild in 1948-1949 as an even stronger parish located on Oxford Street. The growth and vibrancy of the congregation is reflected in the construction of the Christian Education Wing at the rear, in a complementary style, in 1958.

It is also valued for its aesthetic expression, primarily style, but also design details of the Neo-Gothic style. The critical elements the church are intact, including a high level of integrity vis a vis form, original window openings, frames and sashes, fenestration and other design details.

As a result of these values, First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street is formally recognized as a Registered Heritage Property.

Furthermore, the Parsonage at 1290 Oxford Street has been assessed and is not considered to have heritage value and as such its removal as part of the development is considered to be appropriate.

**It is a combination of these intangible and tangible components** – a congregation tied to one of the earliest Halifax churches, its growth, evolution, expansion and relocation – in tandem with the wider socio-economic transition of the city – and its style and design that express the heritage values of First Baptist Church. These values and character defining elements are outlined in a Statement of Significance for the building proposed to be retained and conserved as part of this development – see Section 4 for further details.

The proposed development will result in no destruction of elements on First Baptist Church. It will, however, result in the removal of the non-registered building addressed as 1290 Oxford Street, which is proposed to be sold, with the revenue generated to fund improvements to the church over the longer term that should follow the recommendations of this report vis a vis conservation.

First Baptist Church, as a Registered Heritage Property, is proposed to be retained in situ. Orientation, use and aspects that have, over time become character-defining



elements will not be change and design elements will remain intact. The interior is not proposed to be renovated or altered in any way. No exterior elements are impacted as a result the development.

As such, the anticipated level of conservation is high and is in accordance with Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*.

The conservation measures include preserving, rehabilitating all sides of the heritage building, including the addition at the rear; therefore, the impacts will be extremely minimal and require no mitigation.

### 1.3. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT – PROPOSED

The development site, comprising the two properties introduced in Section 1 of this report, comprises a building on each parcel. The church building, known as First Baptist Church, a Registered Heritage Property, is proposed to be retained in full and conserved. The dwelling set to the south at 1290 Oxford Street, known as the Parsonage, is proposed to be demolished to allow for development of that portion of the site to accommodate a 14-storey residential building (Figure 2). The Parsonage has been determined to have no heritage value.



**Figure 2: Subject site outlined (yellow), and building to be demolished outlined (blue). Source: Nova Scotia Civic Address Finder**

The existing buildings' location and images are illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Subject site outlined, comprising two buildings on two properties; from top: 1300 Oxford Street, 1290 Oxford Street. Source: Nova Scotia Civic Address Finder**

The site plan illustrates the overall development concept. As noted above, this includes retention of the Registered Heritage Property, demolition of the Parsonage and a new 14-storey residential development (Figure 4).





**Figure 4: Development Proposal – Rendering as seen from Oxford Street**  
Source: FBM Architects

The characteristics of each building, their evolution, values and proposed conservation in the context of the revised development is further outlined in Sections 3, 4, and 5 of this report.

First Baptist Church – the recently Registered Heritage Property – was dedicated on this site in 1950, although its history goes back to 1827, as part of its siting on Granville Street downtown, and subsequently to Spring Garden Road. The other building on the site, the Parsonage, dates to the pre-war period of expanded development that moved westward from downtown. The context of this Heritage Impact Statement, however, focuses on the one Registered Heritage Property, First Baptist Church. The smaller off the two properties on the development site (1290 Oxford Street) is zoned HR-1 while the larger property on the site (1300 Oxford Street) is zoned INS (Figure 5).





Source: Halifax Regional Municipality, Explore HRM Arc GIS

#### 1.4. CURRENT OWNER

## 1.5. MCLEAN HERITAGE PLANNING AND CONSULTING

As Principal of McLean Heritage Planning and Consulting, Hugh McLean has an extensive municipal background, integrating heritage conservation, urban design and project management. As a registered planner, with over 26 years of work for the City of Surrey and City of Vancouver, his work includes evaluating resources, researching and writing Statements of Significance, determining best strategies for conservation including negotiating incentives and protection through designation,

legal agreements and covenants, and administering the Heritage Incentive Program. Municipal policy work includes the Historical-Cultural Review of Powell Street (Paueru Gai), an updated City of Vancouver Heritage Register evaluation system and city-wide upgrade, the City of Vancouver Heritage Awards and plaque program. He serves on the Vancouver Heritage Foundation's Granting Committee, is a Board member, and current President, of the BC Association of Heritage Professionals, is a member of the Village of Cumberland's Heritage Advisory Committee and has served as a Collaborator to the University of Victoria's "Landscapes of Injustice" (2013-2019). A curriculum vitae is provided in Section 9.2 of this report.

## 2. HISTORIC CONTEXT

### 2.1. BROADER HISTORIC CONTEXT AND HERITAGE VALUES

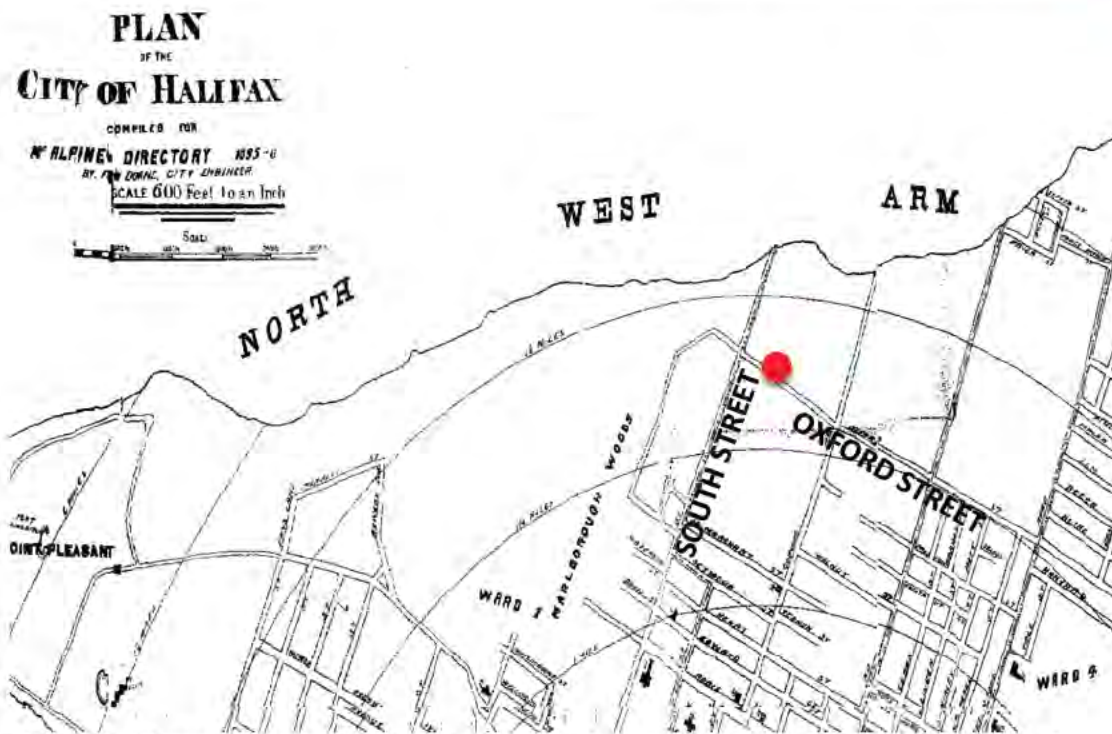
In the mid-1800s, Halifax was spreading outward from its early downtown and harbour orientation, northward and to the west beyond the Halifax Public Gardens. The area did not extend far beyond the Public Gardens, however, and much of the southwest part of the peninsula, was pastoral and rural in character with Oxford Street being one of the outermost edges of the city (Figure 6).



**Figure 6: Ruger's Early Panoramic Map of Halifax (partial) looking southwest, 1879.**

This is furthermore illustrated by the 1895-1896 City Directory which included a plan indicating the extent of development beyond the downtown in the late 1800s (Figure 7).





**Figure 7: Plan of the City of Halifax. Approximate location of subject site noted.**  
**Source: McAlpine Halifax City Directory, 1895-1896**

The area around Oxford Street in the vicinity of South Street was on the outermost fringe of the city and evidently the ideal location to bring in a railway circumventing the downtown to the south, consisting of estates and undeveloped land, some of which was to become part of Dalhousie University. The university's relocation to the Forrest Building, completed in 1887 (Figure 8), much further to the east of the subject site, signalled the start of development that grew westward to encompass the area immediately east of Oxford Street.



**Figure 8: Forrester Building, Dalhousie University (1887), as it appeared in 1910.**  
**Source: Notman Studio, Nova Scotia Archives 1983-310 No. 46**

It strongly influenced how the neighbouring blocks developed and evolved up until World War I and beyond.

The historic value of the wider area, as measured over the last 150 years, is one of gradual evolution from a rural pastoral setting to a more urban setting through the subdivision of what were originally large estate parcels into smaller lots, along with the growth and expansion of the Dalhousie University campus that took advantage of the typically large and either undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels that could accommodate an expanding campus with buildings of varying forms and height, and the desired open space surrounding those buildings to provide an attractive campus. The 1914 Fire Insurance Plan indicates how the subject site and immediate area was relatively undeveloped, or underdeveloped, well into the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as only certain areas were highlighted as warranting detailed plans (Figure 9).



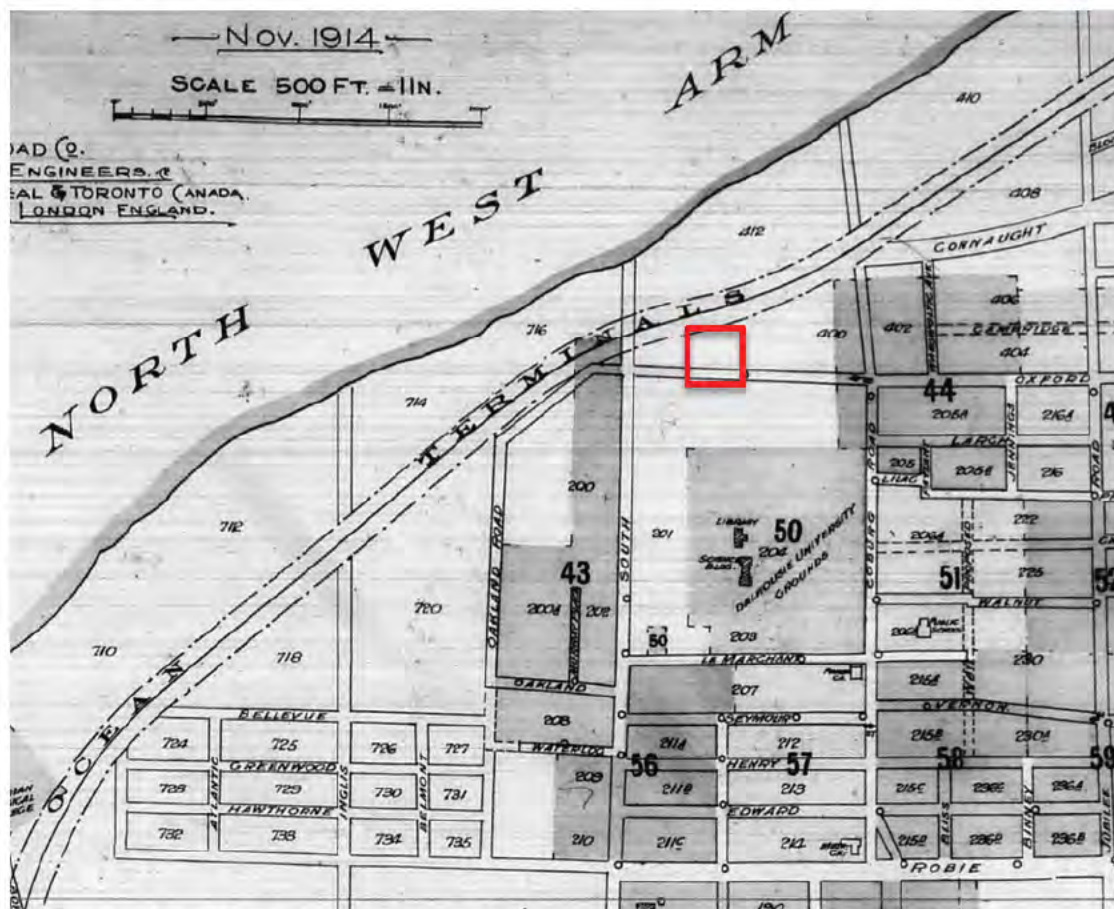


Figure 9: 1914 Fire Insurance Plan with approximate area of subject site outlined and illustrating the minimal development in the immediate area.

Source: Nova Scotia Archives

This context is discussed further in Section 2.2.

## 2.2. SURROUNDING HISTORIC AND CURRENT CONTEXT

As introduced in Section 1.3, there are no other resources in proximity to the subject site listed as Municipally Registered Heritage Properties, due in large part to the newer, post-war development of the area. On the west side of Oxford Street, low-rise apartments extend to the north (Figure 10) while to the south, there is a variety of older and newer low-rise apartments and an older house (Figures 11 and 12).





**Figure 10: Low rise apartment complex on the west side of Oxford Street immediately south of the subject site**



**Figure 11: Low-rise apartment on the west side of Oxford Street immediately south of the subject site.**





**Figure 12: Low-rise apartments and older house on the west side of Oxford Street immediately south of the subject site.**

To the north there are similar, but newer, low-rise apartments (Figure 13).



**Figure 13: Low-rise apartment on the west side of Oxford Street immediately north of the subject site.**

On the east side of Oxford Street, the form of development and overall use is entirely different: Dalhousie University extends to this western edge and includes an extension of the 1923 Shirreff Hall (1966) that runs along Oxford Street, and the Ocean Sciences Building (2013) set further back and to the north (Figures 14 and 15).





**Figure 14: Extension to the original Shirreff Hall at Dalhousie University along east side of Oxford Street immediately across from the subject site.**





**Figure 15: Dalhousie University campus along east side of Oxford Street immediately across from the subject site**

By the early 1900s, this most westerly part of the Halifax Peninsula began to develop, taking from much of the earlier large lot format that, in the pre-war period, was underdeveloped or comprised larger estates, such as the William Richardson estate bounded by Coburg, Oxford and South Streets, that would become the Dalhousie University's main campus (Figure 16).





**Figure 16: Hopkins Atlas, 1878, Plate N, Partial. Oxford Street and surroundings, with approximate area of subject site outlined. Source: Nova Scotia Archives Library O/S G 1129 H3 H67 1878**

Through the interwar period, Dalhousie University campus was beginning to unfold, with prominent buildings constructed such as the Ladies Residence (now Shirreff Hall) across from the subject site, the New Arts Building and, later, the National Research Council along Oxford Street.

This is illustrated on the Fire Insurance Plan from 1951 (Figure 17).



Figure 17: 1951 Fire Insurance Plan. Oxford Street and wider surroundings, with approximate subject site outlined. Source: Nova Scotia Archives

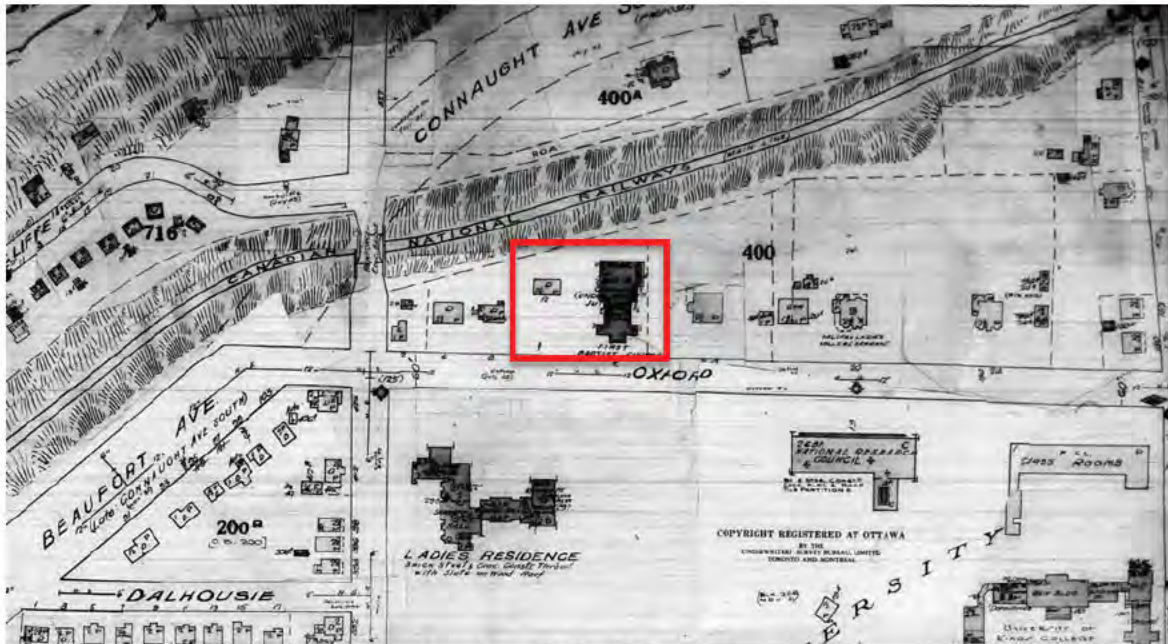
The block on which the subject site is located has evolved in character, with low rise apartments replacing modest houses on Oxford Street. The east side of the block is a contrast in form, use and design, with larger buildings serving the university campus.

### 3. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

One of the two buildings on this site is evaluated for this Heritage Impact Statement, First Baptist Church. As a resource that was only recently evaluated for inclusion by HRM as a Registered Heritage Property, it still requires a Statement of Significance, to formally document it and assist in the conservation approach.

Development in the area was essentially complete by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, as illustrated in the Fire Insurance Plans from that time (Figures 18 and 19).





**Figure 18: 1951 Fire Insurance Plan (partial), subject site outlined**  
Source: Nova Scotia Archives



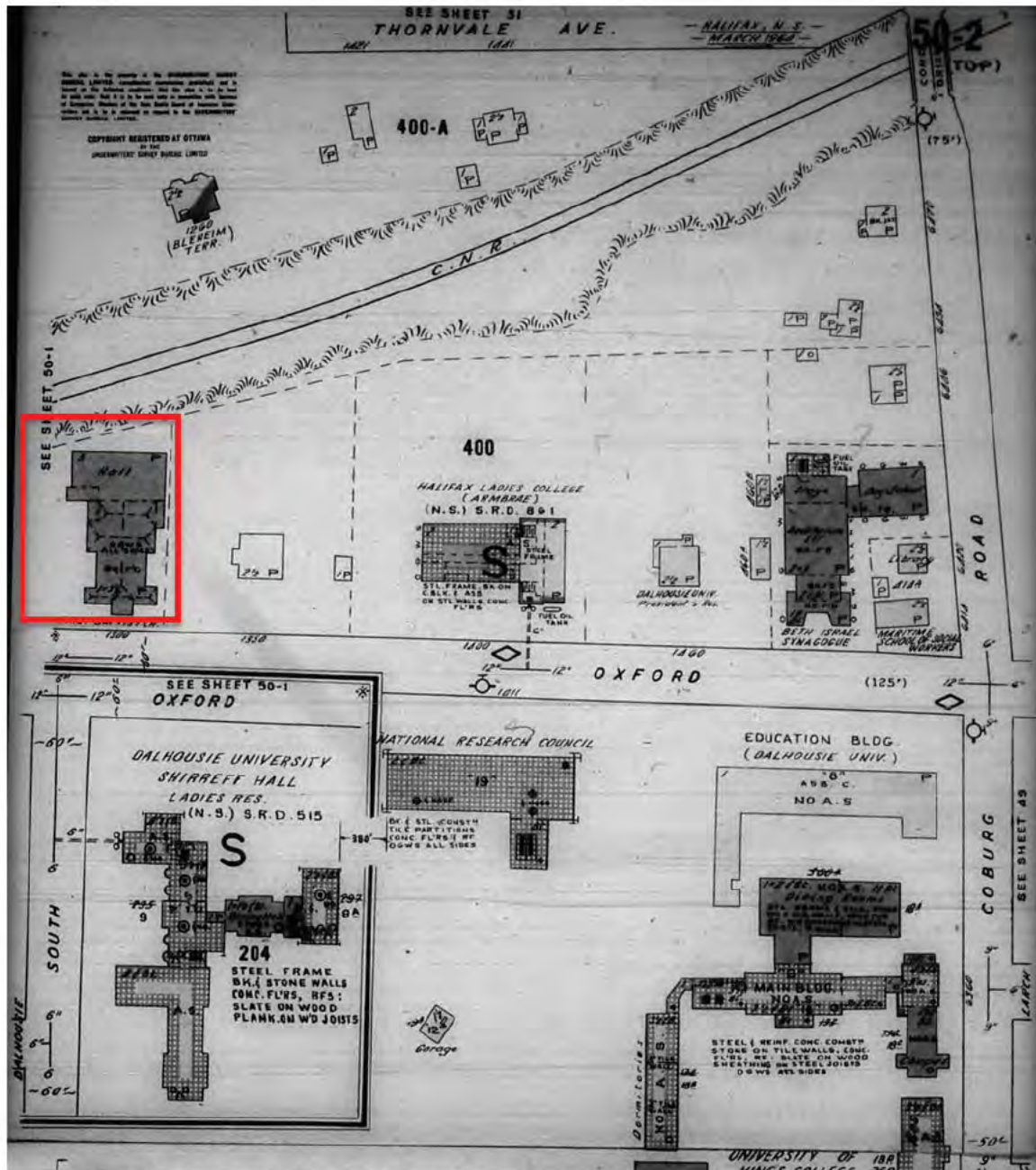


Figure 19: 1964 Fire Insurance Plan, subject site outlined  
Source: Nova Scotia Archives

The comparison in Fire Insurance Plan from 1951 and 1964 shows the newly constructed First Baptist Church, with gradual redevelopment of the west side of this block of Oxford Street including the Halifax Ladies College and the Beth Israel Synagogue at 5880 Spring Garden Road.

### 3.1. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1300 OXFORD STREET

#### 3.1.1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The historic context of First Baptist Church, now located at 1300 Oxford Street, extends far beyond the construction date of 1950 for the current building. Its earliest roots in Halifax extend back to as early as 1827.

Historical listings indicate that the address of the very first church was at 18 Granville Street, on the west side, between Sackville and Blowers (Figure 20).

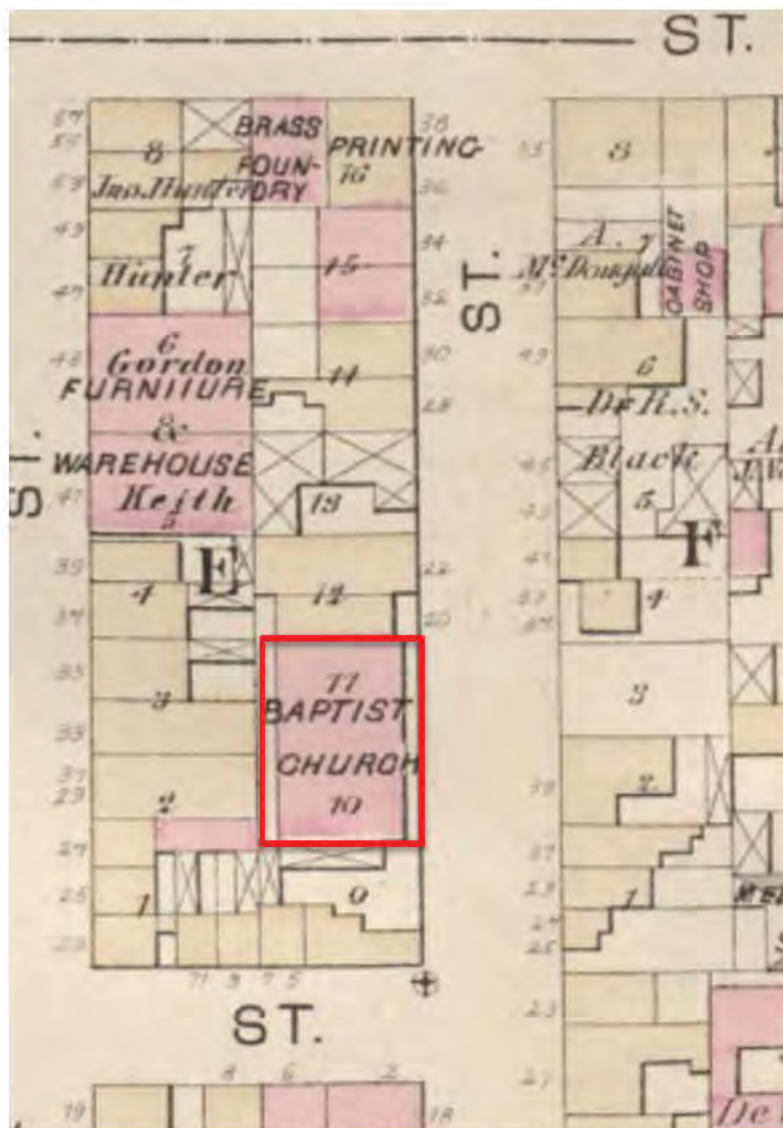


Figure 20: First Baptist Church – Granville Street location, Street, outlined  
Source: Nova Scotia Archives Library O/S G 1129 H3 H67 1878

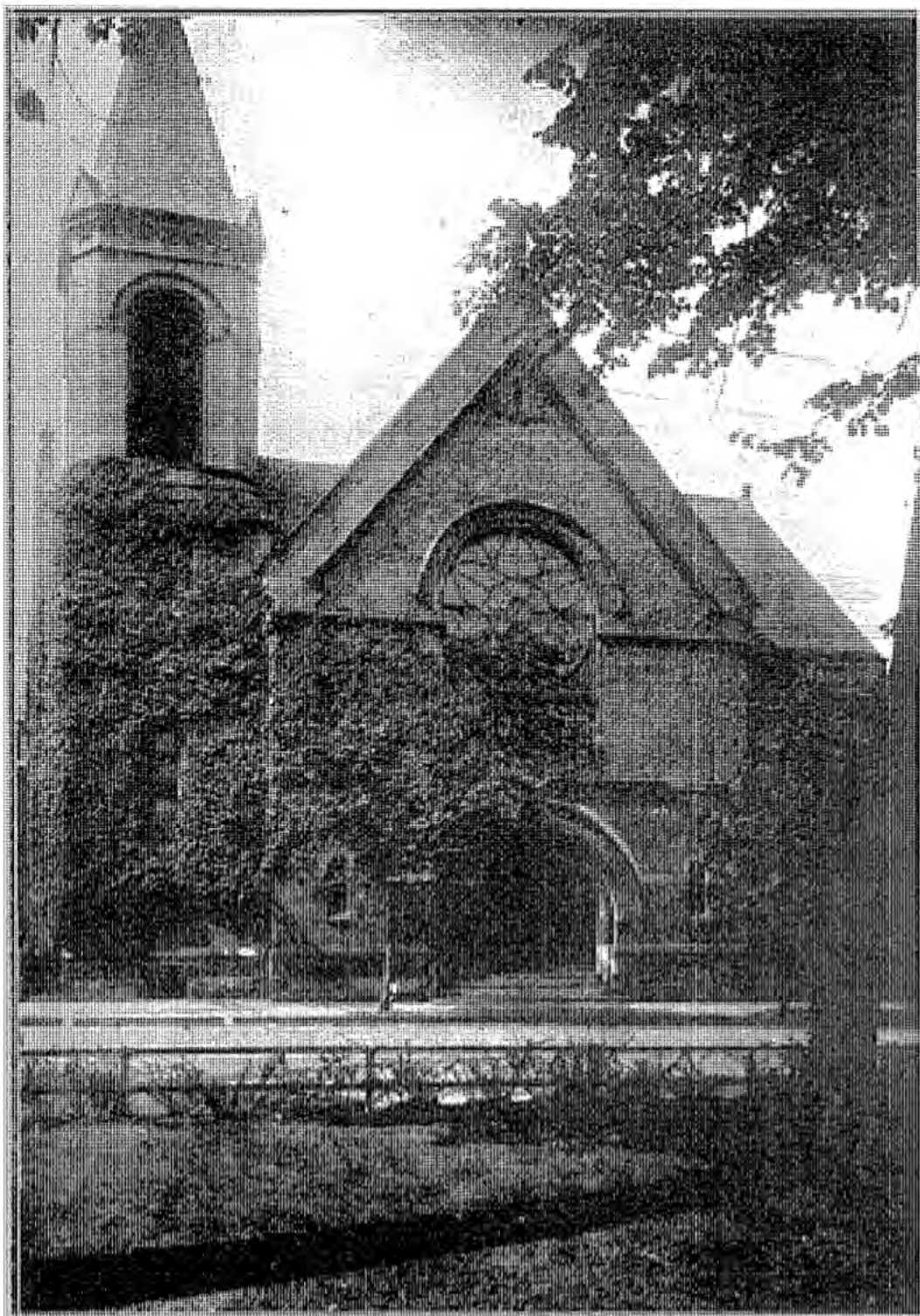






**Figure 22: 1878 City Atlas, Plate H (partial) – First Baptist Church site of 1886 relocation: 17½ Spring Garden Road, outlined**  
**Source: Nova Scotia Archives Library O/S G 1129 H3 H67 1878**

In 1870, land was purchased at the corner of Spring Garden Road and Queen Street for an enlarged church, as the original building on Granville Street was too small to serve the growing congregation. In May 1886, the cornerstone was laid for the relocated church, with the dedication service for the newly named First Baptist Church held on April 10, 1887 (Figures 23 and 24).



**Figure 23: First Baptist Church. Source: History of First Baptist Church, Halifax, NS, Canada – 1827-1977, p. 47 (Church documents).**





**Figure 24: Queen Street looking towards Spring Garden Road and First Baptist Church, 1939. Source: Nova Scotia Archives Photo Collection, Places: Halifax: Streets**

The church continued to thrive and grow over this period. A catastrophic event was to occur in March 1942, with its destruction by an all-consuming fire (Figures 25 and 26).





**Figure 25: Fire at First Baptist Church as seen from Doyle Street, Halifax, 1942.**  
**Source: Nova Scotia Archives 1975-305 No. 596-3**



**Figure 26: Fire at First Baptist Church Halifax, 1942. Source: Nova Scotia Archives 1975-305 No. 596-4**

The extent to which the fire spread is evident in Figure 27.



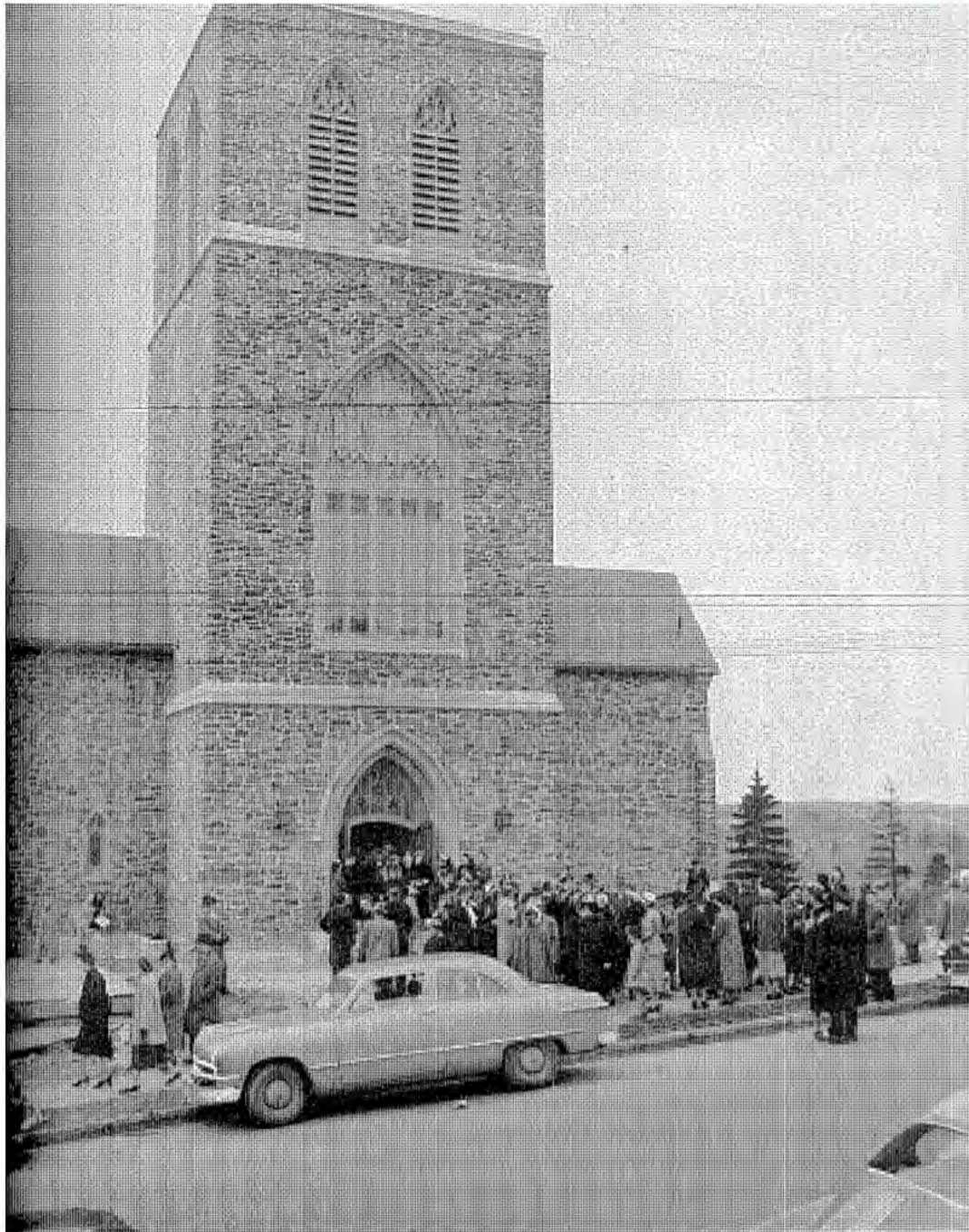


**Figure 27: Fire at First Baptist Church Halifax, 1942. Source: Nova Scotia Archives 1975-305 No. 596-9**

The search began for a new location, with the current site on Oxford Street chosen by the congregation and ministry. On November 13, 1948, the cornerstone was laid by Rev. Harvey L. Denton, President, Maritime United Baptist Convention. It reads *"And they said let us rise up and build; so they strengthened their hands for the good work."*<sup>1</sup> The dedication service for the new First Baptist Church was held on April 16, 1950 (Figure 28).

<sup>1</sup> History of First Baptist Church, 1827-1977, p. 83.





**Figure 28: Opening Sunday, April 16, 1950. Source: History of First Baptist Church, Halifax, NS, Canada – 1827-1977, p.87 (Church documents)**

The choice of this location on Oxford Street was, in large part, due to the migration of the city population in general, and likely the similar migration of the church's parishioners, who were moving westward.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> History of First Baptist Church, p. 83.



The church was designed by Bruce Brown (1899-1983), of Bruce Brown and Brisley of Toronto, who were also the designers of the rear addition. Francis Bruce Brown formed a partnership with E.F. Ross Brisely with the firm named Bruce, Brown and Brisley (but with only those two in partnership). Brown devoted much of his early career to designing Protestant churches. Joined by Douglas Brown in 1962, the firm was active until 1972 and designed more than 100 churches across Canada for Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist Protestant congregations.<sup>3</sup> He died in Toronto on July 30, 1983.

As early as March 1953, discussion began on expanding the church, as the need for more space was evident, with review of possible plans soon afterwards. By the spring of 1957, a call for tenders went out followed by the sod breaking in May. The new building, known as the Christian Education Wing, opened in May 1958.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.1.2. ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

First Baptist Church serves as a good example of a modern church built in the mid-1900s in the neighbourhood. It has been described as illustrating the Gothic style of an English Parish Church.<sup>5</sup> Notably, it has some setback from the street and occupies much of a large lot abutting a railway line at the rear; it has a narrow north side yard and a parking lot occupying much of the south side yard (Figure 29).

The building is a hybrid of the two sections, the original 1948-1949 church, and the 1958 addition at the rear, comprising the following components:<sup>6</sup>

#### Main church and rear addition:

- Concrete foundation and concrete slab on grade;
- Solid masonry walls composed of outer layer of stone and multi-whythe masonry back up (i.e. brick and "tile");
- Hybrid steel and wood roof and floor structure;

#### Additional components unique to the rear:

- Reinforced concrete columns;
- Some concrete block interior partitions.

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<sup>3</sup> Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950  
<http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1212>

<sup>4</sup> First Baptist Church of Halifax – A Road Less Travelled, October 2014, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> History of First Baptist Church, p. 85.

<sup>6</sup> Source: FBM Architecture, Halifax



**Figure 29: Front and south side of First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street**

There is an extension at the rear that expresses the evolution of the church over time (see Section 3.1.3 for more discussion on the integrity).

The other elements that contribute to the overall character and significance of this building are: <sup>7</sup>

- Location on the west side of the block north of South Street;
- Continuous spiritual, educational and social use;
- Main floor set nominally above grade;
- Craftsmanship as evidenced in its design and finishes;
- Neo-Gothic style, presented in a cross-gable form, with a tall steeple and steep-pitched roof structure, with secondary side gables extending behind the bell tower as the narthex and toward the rear as the transept of the original church, along with a flat roof and gable form at the rear making up the newer three-storey addition, and a small two-storey flat roof extension on the north side with a secondary entry;
- Bell tower set at front with flat roof on a rectangular footprint with large vents and into which the main entry is set;
- Horizontal banding set into the bell tower framing three sections: main floor, upper section and attic with vent openings;
- Fenestration including:

<sup>7</sup> A more extensive list can be found in the Character-Defining Elements of the Statement of Significance, Section 4.1



- Heavy paired wooden doors on the front, south and south sides with decorative motifs set into the space above the doors;
- Narrow wooden entry door on the north side, facing east;
- Neo-Gothic window openings with smooth stone edge framing and sills located on upper front and north and south sides, many of which contain multiple wood-frame windows with stained glass;
- ⊖ Leaded glass windows set as pairs and singles on the lower level of the south and north sides of the original section of the church;
- Stacked bay windows on the side of the rear addition with flat roof, with five-set leaded glass ribbon windows with smooth stone surrounds and sills;
- Single-set, paired and tripartite set leaded glass windows with stone surround and sills on the rear addition;
- Design details including:
  - Wrought iron door hardware hinges mounted on outer face of doors on front, south and north sides;
  - Decorative motifs set into the space above the front and secondary side entry doors;
- Rough stone cladding;
- Copper leader heads and downpipes from the flat roof on the rear additions, and on the flat roof extension on the north side;
- Wrought iron wall lights, paired and low-set at front entry and set in singles above south and north secondary entries.

These elements are illustrated in Figure 30a to 30f.



**Figure 30a: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – front, showing the Denton Memorial Window set in the bell tower**





Figure 30b: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – south side



Figure 30c: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – north side





Figure 30d: Church addition looking north





Figure 30e: Church addition – rear



**Figure 30f: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – rear**



### 3.1.3. INTEGRITY, REPRESENTATION OF STYLE AND DESIGN

Overall, the integrity of First Baptist Church is excellent. The only notable alteration is the connection of a newer building, comprising a two-storey addition with a basement, situated primarily at the rear, but also highly visible on the south side, and on the north side, appearing as a 'wrap-around form' attached to both the rear and covering some of the east side (Figures 31 and 32).



Figure 31: Rear addition as seen wrapping around the south side, with original portion of church at top right (roof and partial wall)



**Figure 32: Rear addition as seen wrapping around the north side**

This addition allows for a secondary entry along the north side.

This expresses its evolution over time, as a large addition providing substantial additional floor space for church purposes. Despite its size, it has a fairly low impact on the overall character due to several reasons: it is situated almost entirely at the rear, it is of a lower form and flat roof, and its cladding material is stone which is complementary to the original style but it subtly different. Overall, it is a very good modification that does not does not affect the overall character of First Baptist Church.



### 3.2. PARSONAGE, 1290 OXFORD STREET

#### 3.2.1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The historical and cultural context has not been assessed as it has not been determined to be a necessary part of this Heritage Impact Statement. However, the church had a Parsonage at an earlier location (45 Vernon Street) <sup>8</sup> and church records indicate that it had served, from the time of construction of the current church until a later (undetermined) time as serving or housing the clergy.

According to church records, the Parsonage was dedicated as the “The Rachael Smith House” in 1950; <sup>9</sup> this name was the same one that had been given to the prior parsonage located at 45 Vernon Street and which had been purchased in 1917 to serve the church when it was situated at Queen Street and Spring Garden Road.

#### 3.2.2. ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

The Parsonage at 1290 Oxford Street is a two-storey wood frame dwelling that is a good example of the Georgian Revival style, fronting Oxford Street and situated north of South Street. Its side-gable form includes fenestration consisting of a balanced central-set entry and single and paired window arrangements.

It has generous setback from the street, on a lot that provides room at the rear, with some south side yard. Its front is defined by an expansive lawn (Figures 33a and 33b).

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<sup>8</sup> History of First Baptist Church, 1827-1977, p. 62.

<sup>9</sup> History of First Baptist Church, 1827-1977, p. 85.



**Figure 33a: Context of the Parsonage, in relation to First Baptist Church**





**Figure 33b: Context of the south edge of the subject site, with the Parsonage, and neighbouring apartment**

The other elements that contribute to the overall character and significance of this building are: <sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> A more extensive list can be found in the Character-Defining Elements of the Statement of Significance, Section 4.2

- Location on the west side of Oxford Street and north of South Street;
- Continuous residential use;
- Main floor set slightly above grade;
- Craftsmanship as evidenced in its design and finishes;
- Side gable form with a modest extension on the rear, and elements of the Georgian Revival style;
- Symmetrical frontage with the entry set above a paired window and with flanking windows on either side of both floors;
- Fenestration including:
  - Punched window openings set as singles on the main floor and as pairs on the upper floor, and a pointed-top attic window, with most set as double-hung wood windows with multi-pane upper sashes;
  - Central-set main entry with sidelights and narrow flanking light windows and an arched transom;
- Decorative elements including:
  - Modest overhang porch roof with square supporting columns;
- Lap siding on all sides;
- Brick chimney on south wall face.

These elements are illustrated in Figures 34a to 34d.





**Figure 34a: Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – front**



Figure 34b: Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – north side





Figure 34c: Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – rear



Figure 34d: Relationship of the Parsonage to First Baptist Church and the apartments to the south

### 3.2.3. INTEGRITY, REPRESENTATION OF STYLE AND DESIGN

Despite modifications at the rear to accommodate a small single car garage at the rear in the lower level, the Parsonage retains a high degree of integrity. That, along with an open deck at the rear, are the only visible exterior alterations and as such the building represents a good example of its Georgian Revival style.

### 3.3. SUMMARY

The historical significance of the Registered Heritage Property that makes up this Heritage Impact Statement is notable. While relatively new by Halifax standards (with construction starting in 1948 and its opening in 1950) it exemplifies the westward development of the Halifax peninsula in the period immediately following World War II and which coincided with similar growth of adjacent Dalhousie University. First Baptist Church is a local landmark designed in the Neo-Gothic style. It represents the third building of this congregation that was established in Halifax as early as 1827, with the other two located more centrally, and the change in location perpetuated by expanding needs and, in the second church on Spring Garden Road, a catastrophic fire.

The character remains well intact, and together with the addition completed in the late 1950s, represents an excellent example of the Neo-Gothic style of churches that, for churches in general, was to change substantially by the early 1960s with the introduction of more modern designs. No notable alterations are evident.

**It is a combination of tangible and intangible values** – a nearly 200-year continuous association with the same congregation of local importance, along with the transition of the same congregation that saw its relocation to a new neighbourhood its landmark status, and style and design elements, **that expresses the heritage value (see Section 4, Statements of Significance)**. It is also the basis for retention of this Registered Heritage Property.

## 4. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A Statement of Significance is prepared for First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street due to its status as a Registered Heritage Property; a Statement of Significance is not proposed for the Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street.



#### **4.1. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1300 OXFORD STREET**

##### **DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC PLACE**

First Baptist Church is a 2½ storey stone clad place of worship from the post-war era, situated at 1300 Oxford Street on the west side immediately north of South Street, in the downtown neighbourhood of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It features elements of the Neo-Gothic style and is notable for its prominent bell tower, expansive stone faces and detailing and its front stained glass window arrangement.

##### **HERITAGE VALUE**

First Baptist Church, built in 1948-1949 and expanded in 1958, is valued for its long-term and continuous association with a congregation of local importance, the transition of the same congregation that saw its relocation to a new neighbourhood, and for its aesthetic landmark status, style and design elements.

First Baptist Church is valued for the continuous association with a local vibrant and growing Baptist congregation dating back to 1827. It first developed a church facility on Granville Street downtown and, needing a larger building, moved in 1887 to its new location on Queen Street at Spring Garden Road after already having set up a church school nearby in 1878. This illustrates the growth and prosperity of the congregation in requiring larger and newer facilities. This continued through the first several decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, spurred on by a catastrophic fire that destroyed the second church in 1942, led to the current location being selected on Oxford Street. The evolving needs of the congregation led to an addition being completed in 1958, comprising a Christian Education Wing.

The church is additionally valued for its landmark status in a newer neighbourhood that occurred in conjunction with the general westward growth of the city in the post-war era, including the growth of nearby Dalhousie University. This new site offered a larger space on which to build a new church.

First Baptist Church is valued for its Neo-Gothic style, exemplified by its stone walls, window arrangements and prominent bell tower at the front.

##### **CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS**

The character-defining elements of First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street are its:

- Location in the Downtown Neighbourhood of Halifax;
- Siting on the west side end of Oxford Street immediately north of South Street;

- Continuous spiritual, educational and social use;
- Main floor set nominally above grade;
- Craftsmanship as evidenced in its design and finishes;
- Materials that are considered, in today's context, to be uncommon or more challenging and costly to source and represent significant embodied energy, and for which the retention is in line with principles of sustainability, in this case its stone and brick;
- Neo-Gothic style, presented in a cross-gable form, with a tall steeple and steep-pitched roof structure, with secondary side gables extending out from the bell tower as the narthex and toward the rear as the transept of the 1948 church, along with a flat roof and gable form at the rear making up the newer three-storey addition, and a small two-storey flat roof extension on the north side with a secondary entry;
- Bell tower set at front with flat roof on a rectangular footprint with large vents and into which the main entry is set;
- Horizontal banding set into the bell tower framing three sections: main floor, upper centre section and attic with vent openings;
- Fenestration including:
  - Heavy paired wooden doors on the front, south and south sides framed with tracery sandstone with decorative motifs set into the space above the doors;
  - Narrow wooden entry door on the north side, facing east;
  - Neo-Gothic window openings with smooth stone edge framing and sills located on upper front and north and south sides, many of which contain multiple wood-frame windows with stained glass;
  - Memorial and liturgical windows framed with tracery sandstone, including but not limited to Barrow Window, Thomas Window, Colwell Window, situated in the chancel above the organ, the Nightingale Window, the Daley Memorial Window located in the south transept, and the Denton Memorial Window located in the bell tower, facing the street;
  - Twin Neo-Gothic louvres framed with sandstone at the top of the bell tower;
  - Leaded glass windows set as pairs and singles on the lower level of the south and north sides of the original section of the church, as fixed and operable sashes;
  - Stacked bay windows on the side of the rear addition with flat roof, with five-set leaded glass ribbon windows with smooth stone surrounds and sills;
  - Single-set, paired and tripartite set leaded glass windows with stone surround and sills on the rear addition;



- Design details including:
  - Wrought iron door hardware hinges mounted on outer face of doors on front, south and north sides;
  - Decorative motifs set into the space above the front and secondary side entry doors;
- Rough stone cladding;
- Smooth stone “buttresses” framing the north and side gables of the original church and set into the south and north side walls of the original church;
- Smooth stone brackets set on the bases of the south and north side gables of the original church;
- Decorative brackets presented as a ‘rake’ within side gables;
- Small attic vents set into the bell tower and the top of the side gables with stone edging and sills;
- Copper leader heads and downpipes from the flat roof on the rear additions, and on the flat roof extension on the north side;
- Wrought iron wall lights, paired and low-set at front entry and set in singles above south and north secondary entries;
- Granite pavers leading to the main entrance.

## 5. CONSERVATION STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

This Heritage Impact Study is to determine the appropriateness of the proposed degree of conservation for First Baptist Church, proposed to be retained building on the subject site and, in the context of the broader proposed development, using locally and nationally-approved standards for conservation.

The proposed work entails the preservation and rehabilitation of First Baptist Church. The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, by Parks Canada, is the most critical of conservation resources to be referenced when assessing the appropriate level of conservation and intervention here.

A series of Technical Preservation Briefs is also available through the *U.S National Park Service*. These include energy efficiency, roofing, abrasive cleaning and identification of visual aspects to aid in preserving character. While not outlined in this Heritage Impact Statement, these may serve as a helpful reference and supplement the two primary sources noted above.

### 5.1. STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES – PARKS CANADA

The above-noted building contributes meaningfully to the heritage character and context of the immediate area. It is already a *registered heritage resource*; and therefore, has the values that justify retention, preservation, restoration and

rehabilitation as part of the larger development project, and as formally recognized by Halifax Regional Municipality.

Under Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, the work proposed for all four buildings includes aspects of preservation, restoration and rehabilitation.

**Preservation:** the action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the existing materials, form and integrity of a historic place or of an individual component, while protecting its heritage value.

**Restoration:** the action or process of accurately revealing, recovering or representing the state of a historic place or of an individual component, as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value.

**Rehabilitation:** the action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of a historic place or an individual component, through repair, alterations, and/or additions, while protecting its heritage value.

Interventions to the historic buildings should be based upon these Standards, which are conservation principles of best practice. The following General Standards should be followed when carrying out any work to a historic property.

## STANDARDS

### Standards Relating to All Conservation Projects

1. Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable character-defining elements. Do not move a part of a historic place if its current location is a character-defining element.
2. Conserve changes to a historic place, which over time, have become character-defining elements in their own right.
3. Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.
4. Recognize each historic place as a physical record of its time, place and use. Do not create a false sense of historical development by adding elements from other historic places or other properties or by combining features of the same property that never coexisted.
5. Find a use for a historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character-defining elements.
6. Protect and, if necessary, stabilize a historic place until any subsequent intervention is undertaken. Protect and preserve archaeological resources in



- place. Where there is potential for disturbance of archaeological resources, take mitigation measures to limit damage and loss of information.
7. Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
  8. Maintain character-defining elements on an on-going basis. Repair character-defining elements by reinforcing the materials using recognized conservation methods. Replace in kind any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of character-defining elements, where there are surviving prototypes.
  9. Make any intervention needed to preserve character-defining elements physically and visually compatible with the historic place and identifiable upon close inspection. Document any intervention for future reference.

#### **Additional Standards Relating to Rehabilitation**

10. Repair rather than replace character-defining elements. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair, and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements. Where there is insufficient physical evidence, make the form, material and detailing of the new elements compatible with the character of the historic place.
11. Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to a historic place and any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.
12. Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of a historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.

#### **Additional Standards Relating to Restoration**

13. Repair rather than replace character-defining elements from the restoration period. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements.
14. Replace missing features from the restoration period with new features whose forms, materials and detailing are based on sufficient physical, documentary and/or oral evidence.

## 5.2. EXISTING CONDITION – FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1300 OXFORD STREET

The condition of First Baptist Church, which is proposed to be retained in full as part of this DA, is generally good. It has been well maintained and minimal alterations have occurred to the original components. Its current conditions are outlined in the following sub-sections.

Condition Assessment is based on the following accepted criteria:<sup>11</sup>

**Physical Condition:** The physical state of a property, system, component or piece of equipment. Within the context of the assessment, the consultant may offer opinions of the physical condition of the property, or of systems, components and equipment observed. Such opinions commonly employ terms such as good, fair and poor, though additional terms such as excellent, satisfactory and unsatisfactory may also be used.

**Good Condition:** In working condition and does not require immediate or short-term repairs above an agreed threshold.

**Fair Condition:** In working condition but may require immediate or short-term repairs above an agreed threshold.

**Poor Condition:** Not in working condition or requires immediate or short-term substantially above an agreed threshold.

Further details on conservation strategies are found in Section 8 of this report.

### **Foundation:**

Concrete, in generally good condition where it is exposed and can be assessed.

Action: None (building to be retained in situ).

### **Cladding:**

Stone, in generally good condition on all sides. Certain areas are showing signs of whitening of the mortar, which needs to be investigated further.

Action: Preservation and rehabilitation, repointing of mortar where necessary.

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<sup>11</sup> Read Jones Chrisoffersen Engineers



**Roof:**

Asphalt shingles on the roof are in fair condition, exhibiting signs of discolouration.

Action: Rehabilitation. Re-roof the entire building in the near future.

**Windows:**

As the windows are one of the most important elements of this church, historically and architecturally, a more detailed assessment has been provided by FBM Architecture as part of a report prepared in February 2022. This section summarizes their findings, and the aforementioned report should be referenced for more detailed condition assessment and strategies.

Wood frames, sills and mullions are in generally fair condition, although some are in poor condition and will need repair. These include the transept windows on all sides but particularly the south transept window. The windows have a tapered stone “trim” comprised of individual stone sections mortared in place, and poor mortar conditions were observed at the stone “trim” at the head of all windows.

Action: Preservation and rehabilitation. Select repair where necessary, and in the case of the south transept window, a replacement in full (with retention and reincorporation of the glass).

A detailed window rehabilitation plan will be necessary.

**Doors:**

Front entry doors, and secondary side entry doors and smaller entry door on north side all appear to be in generally good condition. While the rear door is not original, it does not appear to need any work and is generally not easily seen.

Action: Preservation.

**Other Decorative Elements:**

Lighting (wall sconces), stone buttresses and brackets are in good condition.

Action: Preservation.

### 5.3. PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

#### 5.3.1. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1300 OXFORD STREET

The overall views of each side of First Baptist Church, along with design details and evidence of a newer addition are illustrated in Figures 35a to 35m.



Figure 35a: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – front (east) and partial south side





Figure 35b: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – south side and front



**Figure 35c: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – partial south side. South transept window, top centre.**





Figure 35d: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – partial south side with connection to newer addition (far left). South transept window, centre.



**Figure 35e: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – details of newer addition, south side**





**Figure 35f: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – rear**



**Figure 35g: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – north side (original section)**





**Figure 35h: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – north side (original section). Photo on left shows the north transept window, far right. Photo on right shows the secondary entry, north side.**



**Figure 35i: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – west side window**



**Figure 35j: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – top of west side window showing wall efflorescence and deterioration at mortar joints**





**Figure 35k: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – north side (original and addition)**



Figure 35l: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – main entry detail





**Figure 35m: First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street – cornerstone and decorative lighting**

### 5.3.2. THE PARSONAGE, 1290 OXFORD STREET

The overall views of each side of the Parsonage are illustrated in Figures 36a to 36d.



Figure 36a: The Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – front context from the street





**Figure 36b: The Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – front close up**





**Figure 36c: The Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – front, as seen against First Baptist Church**



**Figure 36d: The Parsonage, 1290 Oxford Street – open space with the church**



#### 5.4. HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY – MUNICIPAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposed development is further guided by Halifax Regional Municipality's **Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS) with amendments to August 2022.**

The subject area is not part of any established or proposed Heritage Conservation District. As such, conservation policy and related regulations and incentives, particularly those found in **Part 5 – Culture and Heritage of the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS)**, are the basis by which further evaluation of the conservation standards are applied to the proposal to retain the building on site and integrate a new mixed-use development. This includes direction on:

- Setbacks and the relationship of the new building to the heritage building;
- Application of massing and materials;
- Façade articulation through use of materials, rhythm and order; and
- Proposed conservation approaches to 1300 Oxford Street

#### Section 5.1 – Cultural and Heritage Resources

The high-level objectives that apply to this site are:<sup>12</sup>

CH1 - Consider built heritage and the impacts of land use and built form on community character.

CH2 - Preserve and enhance the built and living heritage including places, sites, structures.....which reflect the Regional Centre's diverse evolution, built heritage and culture.

CH3 - Inventory potential cultural landscapes, built and living heritage, including heritage sites, landmark buildings, and Heritage Conservation Districts to inform land use and development decisions.

CH4 - Identify and protect a wide range of cultural resources that reflect the heritage and culture of diverse communities.

CH5 - Establish incentives to encourage public and private sector investments in heritage conservation and stewardship of cultural resources.

CH6 - Evaluate heritage and cultural policies, programs, interventions, and building regulations to ensure consistency with evolving community values and new guiding documents.

This outlines the basis for principles of formal recognition and management of heritage properties and buildings, including interiors and cultural landscapes, that define various communities, provide a sense of identity, and illustrate that

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<sup>12</sup> Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, p. 151.

community's evolution, while encouraging their continued use. This also explains the key components of identification as part of protection, restoration and interpretation. This is primarily achieved, though not exclusively, through the expression of character defining elements (as found in a Statement of Significance) and preserving, rehabilitating and restoring those elements. Furthermore, new construction should be compatible yet distinguishable from the heritage component(s). This is also consistent with *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (elaborated on in Section 5.1 of this report).

As per this section, under Policy 5.1, "The Municipality shall consider creating and maintaining a broad range of programs that provide financial or other incentives for the identification, registration, conservation, and continued use of buildings, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value."<sup>13</sup>

This forms the foundation of enabling Development Agreement policies. The intent of this tool is to support the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of Registered Properties – such as First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street – by providing increased land use flexibility and development potential to property owners, though measures such as incentives and other regulations to protect, restore and enhance through the measures outlined under Policy 5.3 to maintain the heritage value and context of the heritage building(s) and the surrounding neighbourhood.<sup>14</sup>

This includes conservation and applying regulations such as height, floor area ratios, and incentives to repair and conserve through bonus zoning and DA's.

## 6. IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT – SITE ALTERATION

The proposed development will result in specific destruction of one resource: the Parsonage at 1290 Oxford Street, which is not part of the Registered Heritage Property. However, it is important to note that as the proposal pertains specifically to impact on character-defining elements of the Registered Heritage Property, none is proposed to be altered or removed as part of the proposal.

**Due to 1300 Oxford Street being a Registered Heritage Property located outside a Heritage Conservation District, an application for substantial alterations is necessary.**

This is discussed further in the following sections.

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<sup>13</sup> Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, p. 152.

<sup>14</sup> SMPS, 2022, p. 153



## 6.1. DESTRUCTION OF CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The proposed development on the south parcel, consisting of a 14-storey residential tower, will result in no destruction of elements on the Registered Heritage Property, First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street.

There are no elements that are anticipated to be impacted as a result of the development due to the fact that the buildings will remain in situ, the use will not change, and the new development will remain on its own parcel, entirely detached from First Baptist Church allowing for a generous amount of spatial separation and landscaping between the heritage building and the tower.

All elements on First Baptist Church are to be retained, and only removed and replaced if condition warrants, in which case they are to be reinstated or restored with elements to match in all respects – material, profile, size and (if applicable) operation.

## 6.2. ALTERATIONS OR INTERVENTIONS

### 6.2.1. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1300 OXFORD STREET

The impact of development or site alterations and interventions, apart from the tower proposed for the south parcel, call for no proposed changes to the exterior of First Baptist Church, except in the case where repair is warranted on an as-needed basis, and the landscaping which is primarily on the south parcel.

### 6.2.2. THE PARSONAGE, 1290 OXFORD STREET

As noted above, there will be alterations on this parcel in terms of the new development and landscaping, and the alterations and interventions to the Parsonage require its demolition to accommodate the new development. As such, there are no unforeseen negative impacts, since the Parsonage does not have any notable heritage value.

## 6.3. SHADOWING, ISOLATION, OBSTRUCTION OR CHANGE IN USE

Aspects of shadowing and isolation, or obstruction, have been assessed. Given that First Baptist Church is to remain in situ and will have no interventions, with consideration given for ample open space and siting of the 14-storey residential tower form as far as possible from the church, along with a footprint that seeks to minimize any shadowing, no issues around isolation or obstruction are expected. Similarly, no change in use is expected.

## 7. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – ALTERNATIVE AND MITIGATIVE STRATEGIES

This section provides an assessment of alternative options and mitigative strategies to ensure that the proposed intervention on the heritage resource is the best or only option available, while mitigative strategies are presented to ensure that the impact of the proposed intervention is reduced, minimized or eliminated.

### 7.1. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

The alternative development approach considered was the ‘as-of-right’ development; however, this would have resulted in a massing that would be far less sensitive to the church. The resulting building under the as-of-right development would be a seven-storey mid-rise residential building with a penthouse. Setbacks would be minimized and the parkade entrance would be on the front. The street wall at the front would be six storeys in height.

As a result, due to the negative impacts that would be imposed on First Baptist Church, this approach was not pursued or designed to any level of detail. The steps involved in that study, and the findings, are illustrated and explained in Figure 37a to 37c.

#### PROJECT INTRODUCTION: Centre Plan

The resulting building would be a 7 storey-tall mid-rise residential building with a penthouse. Setbacks would be minimized and the parkade entrance would be on the front elevation. The street wall at the front of the building would be 6 storeys in height. The GFA is approximately 95,700 square feet.

Zoning:	HR-1
Use:	Multi-unit Residential, Limited Commercial
Lot Area:	~19,600 SF
FAR:	N/A
Max. GFA:	N/A
Setbacks:	
Front yard:	Min. 1.5m
Rear yard:	Min. 3.0m
Side yard:	Min. 2.5m
Height:	7 storeys + Penthouse
Streetwall Height:	6 storeys*
Streetwall Stepback:	2m

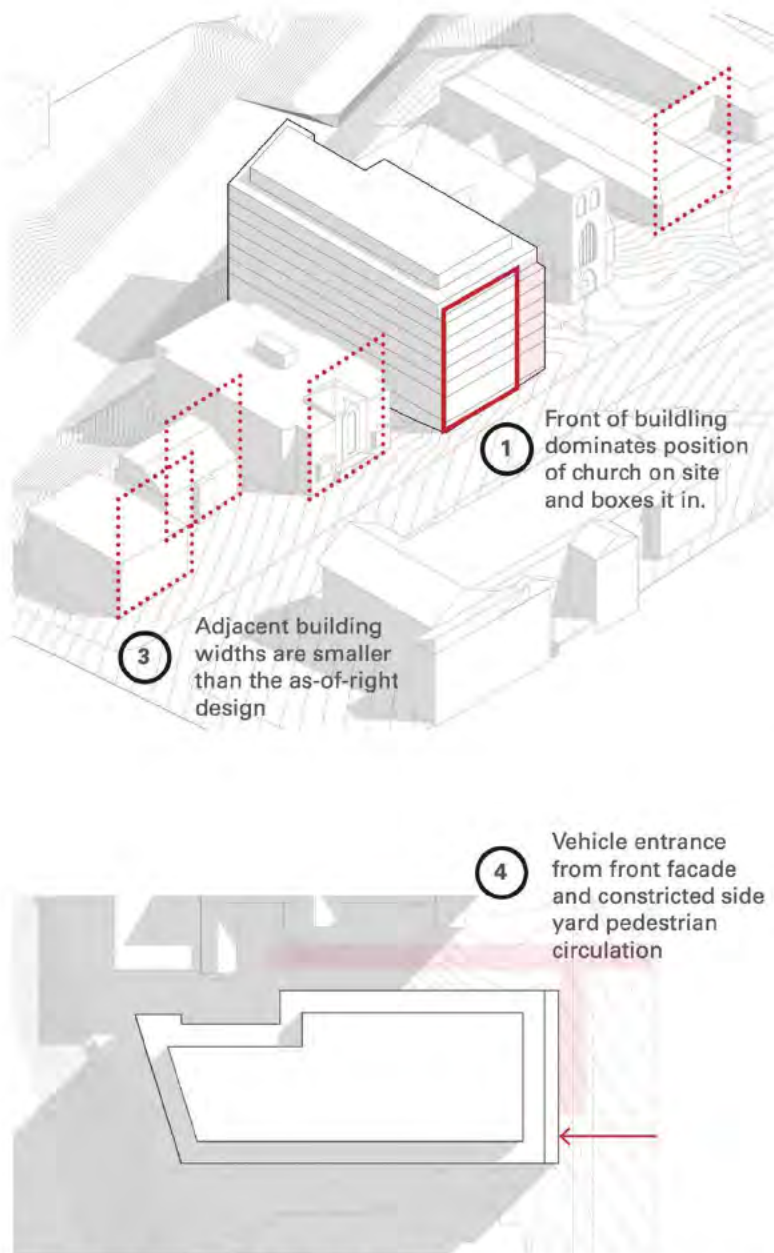
\*Maximum Streetwall height on properties abutting a heritage property is 2m above the height of the cornice line on the heritage building.



Figure 37a: Massing study - overall as-of-right development

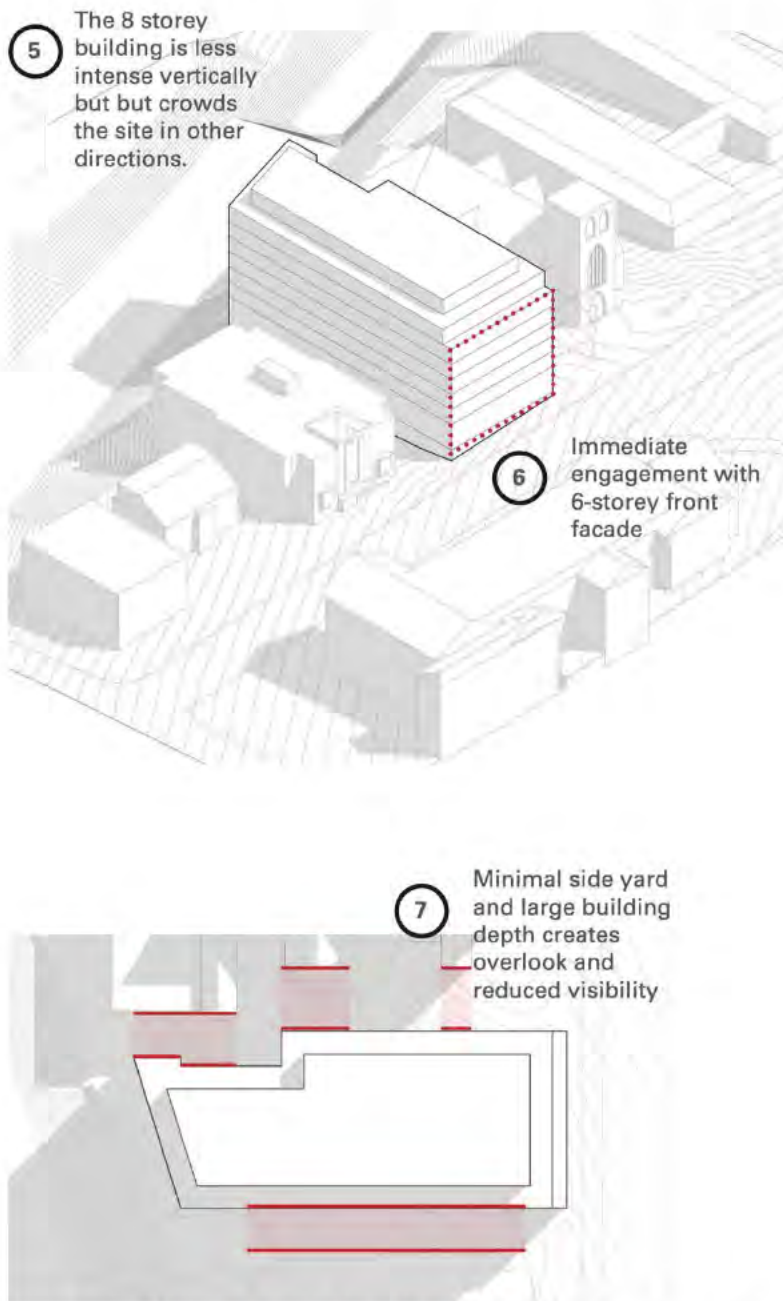


**1. As-of-Right:** 7-Storey + Penthouse / Mid-Rise - 95,700 GFA



**Figure 37b: Massing study for the as-of-right development**

**1. As-of-Right:** 7-Storey + Penthouse / Mid-Rise - 95,700 GFA



**Figure 37c: Massing study for the as-of-right development**

The steps involved in the vastly improved proposed development, that have far fewer implications and negative impacts on First Baptist Church, are illustrated in Figures 38a and 38b. While the as-of-right development would achieve a lower height than the proposed development – 8 storey plus penthouse mid-rise versus a 13 storey plus penthouse high-rise – there are clearly a number of benefits to the amended scenario that work more compatibly and respectfully with the heritage



church. This includes the effort to move the tall neighbouring building back so that the church retains its visual prominence, a new building frontage that is similar to, and therefore respects, the rest of the streetscape, and a more discreet access to parking that is set at the rear, instead of the front, as was the only option in the as-of-right development study.

## 2. Proposed DA: 13-Storey + Penthouse / High-Rise

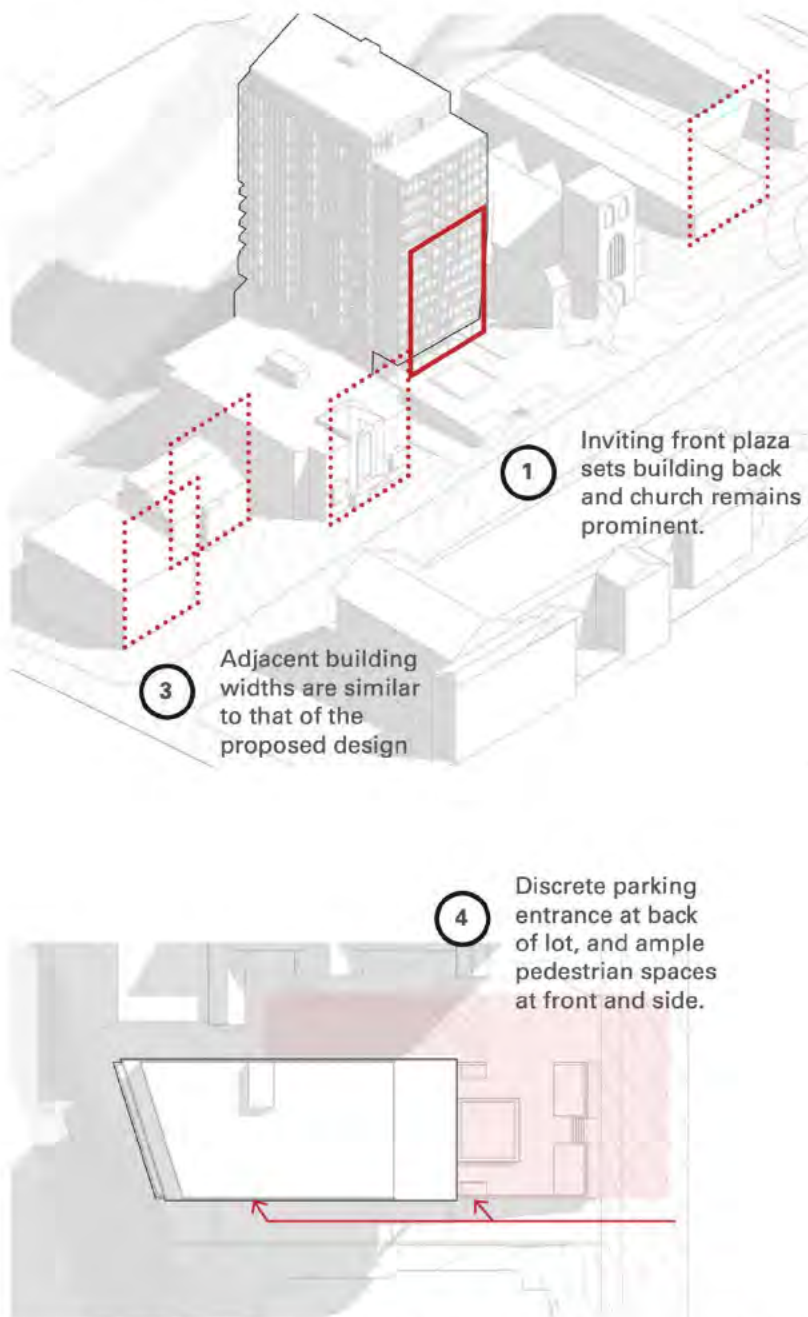
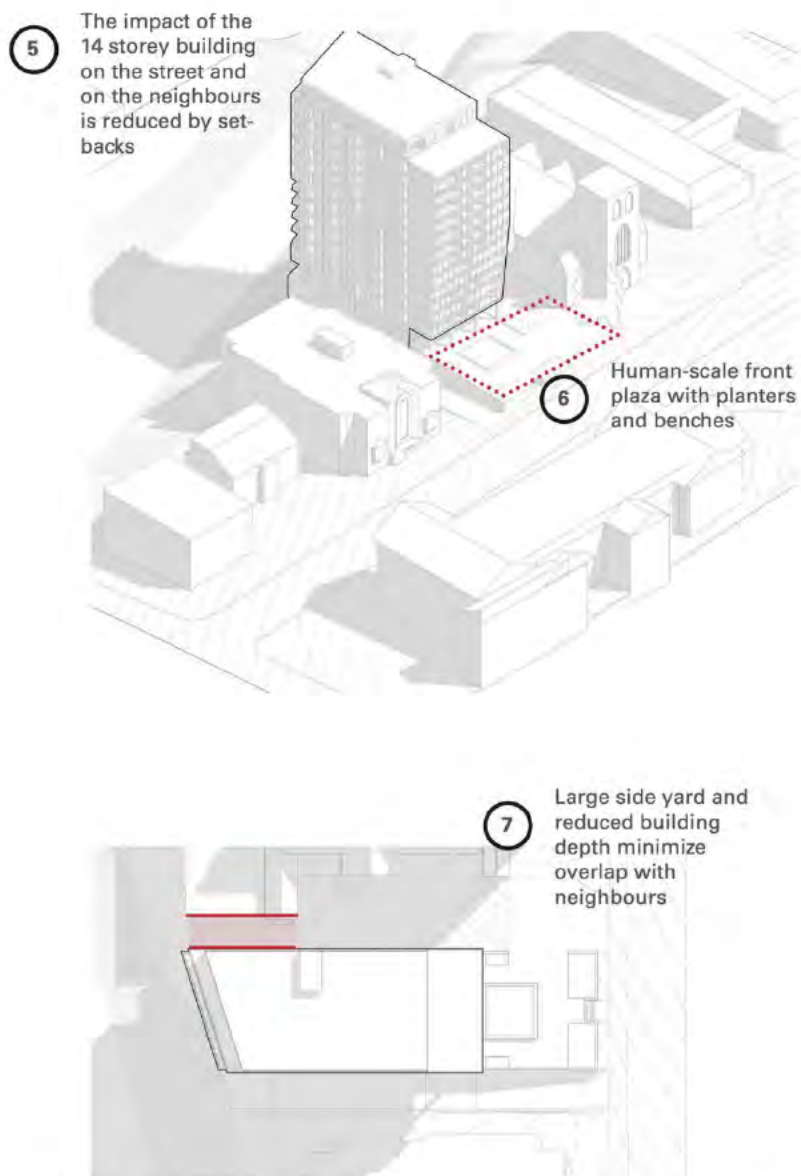


Figure 38a: Massing study for the proposed development

**2. Proposed DA: 13-Storey + Penthouse / High-Rise**



**Figure 38b: Massing study for the proposed development**



## 7.2. MINIMIZING IMPACT AND IDEAL DESIGN APPROACHES

*Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* forms the basis for addressing impact and arriving at the ideal design approaches for this development.

Due to the extremely high level of conservation expected and proposed for First Baptist Church, the preferred approach is the one that will result in the base and tower form set as far as necessary away from the shared property line to minimize any impact on the church. First Baptist Church will remain in situ, all historic alterations that are considered to have become character-defining elements in their own right will be retained, and repair of existing elements will be the overriding strategy.

Furthermore, the new development will not require any physical changes to First Baptist Church and no change in use; as such it will not impact the exterior. No introduction of new door or window openings is proposed at this time.

## 7.3. RESPECTING THE HERITAGE RESOURCES

The heritage resources on the development site are fully respected as introduced in Section 7.1 of this report.

The new building on the south parcel has been designed in accordance with *Standards and Guidelines*, ensuring that it will be subordinate, distinguishable and compatible with First Baptist Church. Substantial open space is proposed on the south side of First Baptist Church, also ensuring that the church will remain the focal point along Oxford Street. The new development allows for a transition in height from mid-rise to high-rise, with a smaller footprint that moves the massing as far as away as possible from the church. The materials of the new development are modern and distinguishable from the church, and with it set as far as possible from the church, make it subordinate and respect its overall form and character and allow it to retain its prominence, without interrupting any sightlines from the street.

## 8. CONSERVATION STRATEGY

This conservation strategy is based on the principles and direction provided in Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* (referred hereon as "*Standards and Guidelines*").

Overall, the scope of work on the heritage building, retained in situ, and as elaborated on in Section 8.2, is to:

- Conserve all character-defining elements of First Baptist Church and repair where necessary, and only replace if condition warrants, in which case replaced elements **must match** in terms of material, proportions, profile and colour;
- Undertake respectful and appropriate minor repairs to the exterior while conserving the interior, and have the building remain in situ and fully detached from the new tower development situated immediately to the south on an adjacent parcel with sufficient setbacks to mitigate the degree of impact.
- Focus of conservation work to be on the windows, some of which have deteriorated to a point where notable replacement of components will be necessary, such as window frames that are showing rot and deterioration, or addressing efflorescence and deteriorated mortar – in which case this is a suggestion for further consideration (as opposed to a binding commitment).

This section also presents how the mitigative measures will be further implemented. No need is anticipated for additional studies, documentation or salvage, since no heritage resource is proposed to be demolished.

### 8.1. METHODOLOGY FOR MITIGATING NEGATIVE IMPACTS

First Baptist Church at 1300 Oxford Street is a *contributing heritage resource* (i.e. formally listed/protected), and therefore worthy of retention. As such, all should be subject to conservation criteria specified under the *Standards and Guidelines*.

The work proposed includes, primarily, aspects of preservation and may involve limited rehabilitation as outlined in the *Standards and Guidelines*, and each standard is being met as outlined in the following table.



### General Standards for Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration

Standard	Description
1	<p><b>Its intact and repairable character-defining elements are not to be substantially altered, removed or replaced.</b></p> <p><i>Comment: Currently, no elements on First Baptist Church will be altered, removed or replaced.</i></p> <p><b>Location, as one of its character-defining elements, is to be retained.</b></p> <p><i>Comment: First Baptist Church will keep its orientation facing Oxford Street and its setbacks intact, given that it is to be retained in situ.</i></p>
2	<p><b>Minimal changes have occurred over time, and where they have become Character-Defining Elements, will be retained.</b></p> <p><i>Comment: The changes that have occurred over time to First Baptist Church, such as an addition at the rear, have become Character-Defining Elements and are to be preserved. Changes that have occurred over time which have not become Character-Defining Elements, such as the rear addition, do not require restoration. They will be retained in full.</i></p>
3	<p><b>Adopt an approach calling for minimal intervention.</b></p> <p><i>Comment: This is the standard expected of this development. The relatively new age of this building and evidence of proper maintenance over time means that the only intervention that is required is for select repair to deteriorated elements on an as-need basis, as would be the case for any well-maintained building.</i></p>

Standard	Description
4	<p><b>Recognize a resource as a physical record of its time, place and use and do not create a false sense of history by adding other elements.</b>  <i>Comment: The physical records are to be retained, no other elements from other historic places are to be incorporated, and no features from this property that previously did not co-exist are to be combined.</i></p>
5	<p><b>Find a use requiring minimal or no change.</b>  <i>Comment: The historic spiritual, cultural, educational and social uses, a Character-Defining Element of each building, are proposed to be retained. Any minor changes (i.e. interior reconfiguration or other improvements) will not affect the exterior.</i></p>
6	<p><b>Protect and stabilize if necessary.</b>  <i>Comment: The building will be protected for the duration of the work.</i></p>
7	<p><b>Evaluate the condition of Character-Defining Elements to determine level of intervention required.</b>  <i>Comment: The condition of each Character-Defining Element will be assessed in further detail if and when work is required. The condition summary of this report is for general guidance purposes only.</i></p>
8	<p><b>Maintain Character-Defining Elements on an on-going basis.</b>  <i>Comment: The conservation and rehabilitation consisting of both repair and restoration will ensure that Character-Defining Elements are retained and maintained under approved standards.</i></p>
9	<p><b>Make any intervention to preserve Character-Defining Elements physically and visually compatible with the existing. Document all interventions.</b>  <i>Comment: Any interventions should comprise material to match while achieving a certain degree of subtle distinguishability, through design details. However, currently, no interventions are contemplated. Documentation of the entire project shall be a key part of the works (the approved drawings forming the approved DA) for future reference and on-going maintenance (see Section 8.3 of this Impact Statement).</i></p>



### Additional Standards Relating to Rehabilitation

Standard	Description
10	<b>Repair rather than replace Character-Defining Elements.</b> <i>Currently, no elements on First Baptist Church will be altered, removed or replaced.</i>
11	<b>Conserve heritage value and Character-Defining Elements when making any new additions, with the addition physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.</b> <i>Comment: No additions are proposed to the heritage building, and all exterior elements will remain intact, with the exception of isolated work to repair or replace material as necessary. The tower development, while notably larger than the heritage buildings, will be compatible and distinguishable by way of placement and separation, set on a separate parcel toward the south side of the site, with considerable open space, and will offer materials that complement the surrounding historic area while remaining highly distinguishable through colour, texture, and pattern of solid to transparent.</i>
12	<b>Create any new additions so that the form/integrity of an historic place is not impaired if the new work is removed later.</b> <i>Comment: No additions are proposed to the heritage building.</i>

The planning objectives of the proposed development meet the general objectives for Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration as outlined in the *Standards and Guidelines*.

### 8.2. SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work, as introduced in this section, brings a complete and integrated approach to a high level of conservation applying to First Baptist Church.

First Baptist Church will remain in situ. Its foundations will remain intact. It will undergo a minimal amount of work, pertaining primarily to repair of character-defining elements once a more detailed assessment of condition is completed. All exterior elements will be conserved and restored, with materials to match original (stone, brick, wood, etc.).

The elevations and floor plans outlining this scope of work is presented in Section 9.3 of this report.

### 8.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING PLAN

**Due to the overall good condition of the building, this section is presented as a “best practices” approach: future maintenance will be carried out on an as-needed basis, whenever and wherever work is required.**

A maintenance plan is critical to any development, whether heritage or new construction. Short-term and long-term targets need to be set for each element. A building that has undergone a higher degree of renovation, replication or repair is equally prone to the need for maintenance as compared to a building that has had more components retained and conserved. In particular, any errors or weaknesses in material or method should be identified in the early stages and corrected where necessary, so that accelerated deterioration does not take place.

Regularly scheduled maintenance ensures the longevity of any element, whether wood, stone, brick or other material. Water is essential to manage, as it is the singularly the most invasive and damaging to any building. Other forces such as sun-exposed wall faces, wind, ice and vermin affect building elements and the while the cost of maintenance on a regular basis may seem high, putting off this work inevitably leads to greater costs to restore, particularly for heritage buildings that often contain materials that are expensive, in short supply or need to be custom made.

By undertaking work on a routine basis, a sensitive approach to the cleaning treatment is the more likely outcome since dirt or other damage will not have had as much time to build up. The principle of any cleaning should be in accordance with *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* which specifies the gentlest means possible. In cases where the removal of dirt and other material is necessary on stucco, concrete or wood, a soft bristle brush without water is best, sweeping away the loosened material. The recommended approach for elements that require a more intensive cleaning is to use a soft bristle brush with warm water and a mild detergent. Pressure washing, sandblasting or any abrasive cleaning should not be used under any circumstances.

Inspections are a key element as part of the implementation of conservation measures and should be carried out by a qualified person or firm, preferably with experience in both phases of construction and in the assessment of heritage buildings. Heritage buildings can “disguise” certain conditions which only become apparent early in, or sometimes well into, the rehabilitation exercise. From this inspection, a report should be compiled that will include notes, sketches, and observations and to mark areas of concern: for example, conditions that were not apparent at the time of permit issuance, and mitigative measures.



The report need not be overly complicated, but must be thorough, clear and concise and address the component(s) of work that are underway for that reporting period (see Schedule below). Issues of concern, from the report, should be entered in a log book so that corrective action can be documented and tracked, and the heritage consultant in charge of the work must be duly informed and act upon any reports or recommendations.

These inspections should be conducted on a regular and timely schedule, addressing all stages of the exterior and site rehabilitation. An appropriate schedule for regular inspections and reports during the rehabilitation process would be a weekly reporting period, with a separate summary report for each of the major phases of work:

1. Initial assessment.
2. Securing of heritage building.
3. Repair or replication of character-defining elements.
4. Reinstatement of all elements – repaired and replicated.

Inspections may also occur more frequently on an “as-need” basis should an issue arise that needs more immediate attention, so as to not inadvertently delay the broader rehabilitation work.

The most potentially damaging element to heritage buildings is water, including frost, freezing and thawing, and rainwater runoff including pipes and ground water. Animal infestation is a secondary concern.

The most vulnerable part of any building is the roof, where water can enter in without warning. Roof repair and renewal is one of the more cost-effective strategies. Any leak, however minor it might be, needs to be taken seriously and may be a sign that other areas are experiencing the same, or that a more significant leak or water entry is imminent.

The following contains a range of potential problems specific to stone and brick-clad structures: water/moisture penetration, material deterioration and structural deterioration. This does not include interior inspections.

### **Exterior Inspection**

#### **Site and Foundation**

- ☒ Does water drain away from the foundation?
- ☒ Is there back-splash occurring?
- ☒ Is there movement or settlement of the foundation as illustrated by cracks or an uneven surface?
- ☒ Is there any evidence of rising damp?

#### Wooden Elements

- ☒ Are there moisture problems present?
- ☒ Is any wood in direct contact, or extremely close to, the ground?
- ☒ Is there any evidence of insect infestation?
- ☒ Is there any evidence of fungal spread or any other type of biological attack?
- ☒ Does any wood appear warped or cupped?
- ☒ Does any wood display splits or loose knots?
- ☒ Are nails visible, pulling loose or rusted?
- ☒ Do any wood elements show staining?

#### Exterior Painted Materials

- ☒ Is the paint blistering, peeling or wrinkling?
- ☒ Does the paint show any stains such as rust, mildew or bleeding through?

#### Windows

- ☒ Is any glass cracked or missing?
- ☒ Does the putty show any sign of brittleness or cracking, or has any fallen out?
- ☒ Does paint show damage by condensation or water?
- ☒ Do the sashes operate easily or if hinged do they swing freely?
- ☒ Does the frame exhibit any distortion?
- ☒ Do the sills show any deterioration?
- ☒ Is the flashing properly shedding water?
- ☒ Is the caulking connection between the frame and cladding in good shape?

#### Doors

- ☒ Are the hinges sprung or in need of lubrication?
- ☒ Are the latches and locks working freely?
- ☒ Is the sill in good shape?
- ☒ Is the caulking connection between the door frame and cladding in good shape?
- ☒ Is the glazing in good shape and held securely in place?
- ☒ Is the seal of the door in good shape?

#### Gutters and Downspouts

- ☒ Are any downspouts leaking or plugged?
- ☒ Do the gutters show signs of corrosion?
- ☒ Are there any missing sections of downspouts and are they securely connected to the gutters?
- ☒ Is the water being redirected away from the building to either in-ground drainage or rainwater catchment?



**Roof**

- ☒ Are there water blockage points?
- ☒ Is the leading edge of the roof wet?
- ☒ Is there any sign of fungus, moss, birds, vermin, insects, etc.?
- ☒ Are the shingles showing any advanced sign of weathering such as curling or exposure of sub-surface?
- ☒ Are any shingles loose or missing?
- ☒ Are the flashings well set?
- ☒ Are any metal joints or seams sound?
- ☒ Is there any water ponding present?

The owner(s) should retain an information file where inspection reports can be filed. This should also contain the log book that itemizes problems and corrective action. Additionally, this file should contain building plans, building permits, heritage reports, photographs and other relevant documentation so that a complete understanding of the building and its evolution is readily available to the owner(s), which will aid in determining appropriate interventions when needed. This information file should be passed along to any subsequent owner(s).

The file would include a list outlining the finishes and materials used. The building owner(s) should keep on hand a stock of spare materials for minor repairs.

The maintenance log book is an important tool that should be kept to record all maintenance activities, recurring problems and building observations and will assist in the overall maintenance planning of the building. Routine maintenance work should be noted in the maintenance log to keep track of past, and plan future activities. All items noted on the maintenance log should indicate the date, problem, type of repair, location and all other observations and information pertaining to each specific maintenance activity.

A full record will help to plan for future repairs and provide valuable information in the overall maintenance of the building and will provide essential information for the longer-term and serve as a reminder to amend the maintenance and inspection activities on an as-needed basis.

#### **8.4. PRECEDENTS**

The precedent for this undertaking includes St. Mark's Church at 5522 Russell Street, Halifax. However, a subtle difference is that development project involved construction of a mid-rise tower on the same property, whereas this proposal does not include any development on the parcel on which First Baptist Church is located. The approach to take follows *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* and is based entirely on those high-level principles following

preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of a building set within a cultural landscape.

## 8.5. INTERPRETATION AND COMMEMORATION STRATEGIES

Normally a Commemoration Plan is prepared as a result of the demolition of a building that is either formally recognized (i.e. legally protected or listed) or has known heritage values, for the purpose of educating the public, and owners or tenants of the building, of the early importance of the site and its evolution over time. Since First Baptist Church is being conserved and rehabilitated on the subject site, and no other buildings are being removed on its property, along with removal of the Parsonage on the neighbouring parcel to the south, a strategy for historical interpretation and commemoration, in the form of a Commemoration Plan or something similar, is not considered to be necessary here.

Pertaining to landscaping, a comprehensive high-quality landscape plan should be designed that will allow for the softening of the interface between First Baptist Church and the development to the south.

Pertaining to lighting and signage, no new signage or lighting for First Baptist Church is proposed as part of this DA.

## 9. APPENDICES

### 9.1. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Nova Scotia Archives – City Directories and Archival Photos
- Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Civic Address Finder
- Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Parks Canada, Second Edition, 2010
- Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950
- HRM Staff report to Heritage Advisory Committee, October 8, 2024, as a case to include 1300 Oxford Street in the Registry of Heritage Properties
- Research Report, 1300 Oxford Street, Halifax – Halifax Regional Municipality, September 2024
- Window Assessment Report, First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street, Halifax. FBM Architecture, February 2022



## 9.2. VITAL STATISTICS, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND CHURCH RECORDS

- Obituary, Francis Bruce Brown, *Toronto Star*, August 3, 1983
- The History of First Baptist Church, 1927-1977
- First Baptist Church of Halifax – A Road Less Travelled, October 2014

## 9.3. CITY DIRECTORIES

### McAlpine's Halifax City Directories for First Baptist Church (Granville Street and Spring Garden Road locations)

YEAR	STREET ADDRESS, BUSINESS, INDIVIDUAL	ALPHA LISTING
1874-1875	<i>Here Blowers street branches off</i> [Granville Street] 18 vacant lot Baptist church	REV. EDWARD M SAUNERS, Baptist, h 62 Queen
1882-1883	<i>Here Blowers street intersects</i> [Granville Street] 18 vacant lot Baptist church	REV EDWARD M SAUNERS, Baptist, h 28 Carlton
1886-1887	<i>Here Blowers street commences</i> [Granville Street] 18 vacant lot Baptist church	REV. EDWARD M SAUNERS, Baptist, h 28 Carlton
1887-1888	<i>Here Spring Garden Road intersects</i> [Queen Street] 119 Baptist vestry and school house  [Spring Garden Road] 17½ First Baptist Church <i>Here Queen street intersects</i>	REV. EDWARD M SAUNERS, D.D., Baptist, h 28 Carlton

### McAlpine's Halifax City Directories for 1290 Oxford Street (formerly 12 Oxford Street)

For the directories available until 1926-1927 (the latest available online), the only addresses on the west side of Oxford Street, beginning around South Street, are 2, 14, 20 and 24. From earlier years, and corresponding with Hopkins Atlas (1878) the estate of Sir Sanford Fleming was addressed as 14 Oxford Street despite it being set back a notable distance from Oxford. This is clearly not the same residence as is currently addressed as 1290 Oxford Street. The 1951 Fire Insurance Plan gives it the address of 12 Oxford Street which does not appear in any directory up to 1926-1927. The conclusion, based on this information, is that 1290 Oxford Street was in fact 12 Oxford Street, and not 14 Oxford Street, and as such was not constructed as early as 1915, as the records of Nova Scotia Property Assessment indicate. Without further

research on building permit records or other sources not available to the writer of this report, a firm conclusion cannot be made on its date of construction, except to say it was post-1927.

YEAR	STREET ADDRESS, BUSINESS, INDIVIDUAL	ALPHA LISTING
1912-1913	14 James Curtis 14 Sir Sanford Fleming	Directory not searched
1915-1916	14 Thomas O Critchley 14 Sir Sanford Fleming	Directory not searched
1916-1917	14 Vacant House	Directory not searched
1917-1918	14 Capt E Critchley	Thomas O Critchley captain h 14 Oxford
1919-1920	14 Capt E Critchley	Directory not searched
1926-1927	2 Percy R Levy 14 Mrs M L Wickwire 20 Daniel M Owen 20r James Wilde 24 Dr A Stanley MacKenzie	Directory not searched

#### 9.4. HERITAGE ASSESSEMENT – HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

The following heritage assessment was undertaken by the Halifax Regional Municipality as part of its decision to support the addition of First Baptist Church to the list of Registered Heritage Properties in September 2024.



## Age

1300 Oxford Street, Halifax, known as First Baptist Church, is located within the block bound by Coburg Road to the north, Oxford Street to the east, South Street to the south and Blenheim Terrace to the west. The church building located at this property will hereafter be referred to as simply the subject building.

First Baptist Church was formerly located on the northeast corner of Spring Garden Road and Queen Street and was destroyed by fire in March 1942 (Figure 1). For the next eight years, the congregation worshipped at St. Andrew's Church Hall on Coburg Road. In 1946, the principal officers of the Church planned for a new church building on Oxford Street, following the westward trend of Halifax's population. The church hired the architectural firm Bruce Brown & Brisley to design the new church (Figure 2). The cornerstone was laid by pastor Reverend Harvey L. Denton on November 13, 1948 (Figure 3). The church was dedicated on April 16, 1950 (Figure 4).<sup>1</sup>

The architectural drawings depict a large rear wing designed to accommodate the recreation hall, chapel, robing rooms, library, choir, and church parlour (Figure 19). However, this wing was not built in 1948 for unspecified reasons. It was not until 1957, when the congregation hired the Fundy Construction Company, that a rear wing was constructed which is now referred to as the Christian Education Wing. With some delay in millwork, the new wing was completed on May 5, 1958 and was designed to be compatible with the 1948 church building.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: Former First Baptist Church on Queen Street, Halifax, depicting fire aftermath<sup>2</sup>

**OXFORD** St. No. 18 APPLICATION FOR NEW BUILDING No. 34766

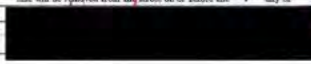
To the Inspector of Buildings, Halifax, N. S., 27 day of MAY 1948

Sir:-The undersigned hereby applies for a permit to build according to the following specifications and in accordance with the detailed plans and specifications submitted.

Location	OXFORD St. No. 18 - 1/2 side	W. between	CHURCH	St. and	2nd St.
Owner/Builder	BLANKFIRE GAS CO.	Builder	BLANKFIRE GAS CO.	Estimated Cost	\$20,000.00
Class	Material	Purpose of Building	CHURCH		
Size of main building	67 ft. front 165 ft. deep	Ft. in height	No. of Stories	Nearest part to Street line	20 ft.
Size of extension					
Foundation wall, material	CONC. Thickness 1 ft.	Chimney, how constructed	BRICK. 12x8		
Style of roof and material	FLAT - ASPHALT	No. of elevators and for what purpose			
What kind of fire stop is to be used?	Concrete	Date of permit from Halifax Board			

Permission is also applied for, to enclose that portion of the street in front of the proposed building extending into the street five ft.

The undersigned hereby agrees that all work on the said buildings shall be done in strict accordance with the laws and ordinances of the City of Halifax and also with the conditions printed on the back of the permit which have been read by the applicant and that every alteration will be reported from the street on or before the 1 day of June 1949 on which date the permit expires.

 Applicant  
J. H. McNamee

Scanned with CamScanner

Figure 2: Building permit for the subject building, 1948<sup>3</sup>



Figure 3: Cornerstone with 'A.D. 1948' Inscription (17 July 2024)





Figure 4: The opening Sunday of First Baptist Church, April 16, 1950<sup>1</sup>

## Historical or Architectural Importance

### Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

#### Halifax's Baptist Church Community

The congregational history of Halifax's First Baptist Church is woven deeply into the history of Halifax, and Nova Scotia in its entirety, and can be traced back to 1827.<sup>1</sup>

In 1824, when Nova Scotia was a dependent colony of the British Empire, a small group of 16 parishioners from St. Paul's Episcopal Church felt compelled to leave their church. A recent vacancy in the rectorship had been filled by an appointee chosen not by the congregation, but by the King, the Head of the Church of England. This lack of autonomy prompted the group to meet in each other's homes for prayer and discussion, seeking a denomination that respected their desire for independence. After much consideration and advice from Newton Baptist Theological Institution in Massachusetts, the group decided to form a Baptist Church. They purchased land on Granville Street and constructed a stone chapel, which was opened for public worship on September 30, 1827, as Granville Street Baptist Church (Figure 5). A year later, the church joined the Nova Scotia Baptist Association, significantly contributing to the growth and development of the Baptist denomination in the Maritime Provinces. The church also played a prominent role in the founding of Acadia College (later Acadia University) and established foreign mission work in the 1870s.<sup>1,4</sup>

When the Granville Street church building became too small for the congregation, a new church was constructed, in the Gothic Revival style, at Spring Garden Road and Queen Street, with its opening service held on April 10, 1887. Following a new Act of Incorporation, the church was renamed from Granville Street Baptist Church to The First Baptist Church (Figure 6 and Figure 7). In the years that followed, the church thrived. By 1914, the year World War I began, membership numbers reached 378. With Halifax serving as a military center, the church supported the war effort by offering its hall as a club room for soldiers and sailors in collaboration with south-end churches and the YMCA<sup>1,4</sup>.



Figure 5: 1878 Hopkins Halifax Atlas, showing the Baptist Church on Grantville Street.



Figure 6: 1918 H.B. Pickins Map, showing the First Baptist Church on Spring Garden Street.



Figure 7: First Baptist Church on Spring Garden Street, designed in the Gothic Revival style, and Dr. Arthur Crawley Chute. 1890s<sup>3</sup>

In 1917, a catastrophic explosion occurred when two ships collided in Halifax Harbour, resulting in the largest human-made explosion of the time. Approximately two thousand people were killed in the Halifax Explosion by debris, fires, and collapsing buildings, while nine thousand others were injured. Despite considerable damage to the church, repairs were swiftly completed, and the church hall was immediately made available to the Rhode Island Hospital unit and the YMCA, and as a clothing depot with supplies provided by the T. Eaton Company in Toronto<sup>1,4</sup>.

In the years that followed, the church experienced growth and prosperity, as beloved ministers, committed leaders, and an active congregation welcomed members of other denominations into a "church fellowship" to worship together. In 1935, the church initiated joint summer services with St. Matthew's United Church, a collaboration that proved highly satisfactory. September 1939 marked the outbreak of World War II, during which many young men from the congregation left to serve overseas.<sup>1,4</sup>

On March 21, 1942, the First Baptist Church on Spring Garden Road, then 56 years old, was destroyed by fire. Despite the many challenges posed by wartime conditions, the congregation enthusiastically decided to rebuild. St. Andrew's United Church generously provided quarters for the congregation for the next eight years while the new church on Oxford Street was under construction. On April 16, 1950, the new church building, now named First Baptist Church of Halifax, opened at its new location on Oxford Street.<sup>1,4</sup>





Figure 8: Spring Garden Road First Baptist Church during the fire, March 21, 1942<sup>1</sup>

The new building was constructed in the Neo-Gothic style and had a seating capacity of 600 people. The church hall, stage, and classrooms were located under the sanctuary.<sup>1,4</sup> A three-tier Casavant Pipe Organ Opus 1994 was installed in 1950 and restored by Casavant in 1984. The interior of the sanctuary showcased excellent craftsmanship, with detailed trim on the doors, and oak ceiling, railings, and pews. The floors were hardwood, with carpeting in the aisles. Twenty stained glass windows of varying sizes were installed, several of which were memorial windows gifted by families in honour of members who had provided great service to the church over the years.

The church congregation remained vibrant during the eight years they met at St. Andrew's Church, and membership continued to grow after the new church opened. Within five years, the congregation grew to 911 members: 666 residing in the city, 141 non-residents, and 104 fellowship members. Recognizing the need for additional space to accommodate Christian education, general church activities, and administration, the church decided in 1956 to build a Christian Education wing. This new wing included an Assembly Room, a Primary Classroom, a Crèche, a Rumpus Room, a main kitchen, a church parlour with a small kitchen, a Board room, a Music Room, the Senior Minister's Office, and small rooms for Archives, the Library, and the Communion Room. A successful fundraising campaign was launched, and on May 4, 1958, the new Christian Education Wing was opened during the morning worship service, bringing the total square footage of the church to nearly 33,000.<sup>1,4</sup>

Since that time, church membership has experienced a decrease, reducing the need for further expansion. A wide variety of community groups, as well as film crews, rehearsing musical groups, and other volunteer organizations, use the available space. Two new projects were generously funded and completed in 2012, the year of the church's 185th anniversary: an elevator was installed between the three levels of the Christian Education wing to improve accessibility, and a financial gift was offered to New Horizons Baptist Church to aid in the construction of a church development project for their members.<sup>1,4</sup>

### Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

Designed by Ontario architect Francis Bruce Brown, the subject property is an example of the Neo-Gothic style (1900-1945). The style is characterized by its grand size, symmetric facades and monochromatic stone or brick exterior finishes. The style borrows design elements from the Gothic Revival style that was prevalent from 1830 to 1900<sup>6</sup>, which reflects the style of the previous First Baptist Church, built in 1887 and lost in 1942.

Size and the absence of polychrome clearly differentiate Neo-Gothic from the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival. The compositional organization and grandness of design are often likened to Beaux-Arts Classicism, while the decorative details and forms are derived from Gothic prototypes, primarily from the English Perpendicular Gothic and to a lesser extent the Early English Gothic style. Rather than imitate the historical, there is the intention to expand the spatial organization of the earlier Gothic styles. While historical references remain evident in details, the new composition adapts to the different requirements of the twentieth century, resulting in a highly formalized building that is distinguishable from its nineteenth-century predecessors by sheer size, the lack of asymmetrical or picturesque quality, and uniform, almost monochromatic exterior finishes<sup>6</sup>.

The subject building displays many Neo-Gothic elements. The elevations are articulated by a series of wall buttresses. Large windows are glazed with traditional tracery but utilize modern construction practices. The windows are divided horizontally by storey. Doors and windows are topped with a pointed arch. A square tower without spires is the only feature piercing the otherwise flat roofline. Stone finish covers all exterior walls.<sup>6</sup>

The subject building is a representative example of a mid-twentieth century Neo-Gothic style church.

## Significance of Architect or Builder

### Architect

The architects of the subject building were Francis Bruce Brown and E.F. Ross Brisley from Ontario.<sup>7</sup> Halifax architect Allan F. Duffus served as the supervising architect.<sup>8</sup>

#### Francis Bruce Brown

Francis Bruce Brown (1899-1983) was a distinguished Canadian landscape painter and architect, recognized for his substantial contributions to ecclesiastical architecture. Born in Toronto, he was the son of architect John Francis Brown (1866-1942). Brown served in the Canadian Forces during World War I, including service in Siberia. Upon his return to Toronto in 1919, he pursued studies in architecture at the University of Toronto, where he graduated with honours in 1923 with a Bachelor of Architecture, followed by a Master of Architecture in 1925. His talent as a delineator was evident during his studies, and many of his student drawings are preserved at the University of Calgary.<sup>9</sup>



Brown was awarded a travelling scholarship that allowed him to study at the Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts in France from 1923 to 1924. He subsequently joined his father's architectural firm, John Francis Brown, in Toronto, and became a full partner in 1926. After his father's death in 1942, he formed a new partnership with E.F. Ross Brisley, creating the firm Bruce Brown & Brisley, which later included his son Douglas Brown in 1962, becoming Brown, Brisley & Brown. This firm was renowned for designing over 100 churches across Canada, reflecting a commitment to the modern Gothic styles, which distinguished Brown's work from the classical revival and modern styles prevalent among his peers<sup>9</sup>.

As an architect, Brown devoted much of his career to the design of Protestant churches, succeeding his father as the Architectural Consultant to the Home Mission and Church Edifice Boards of the Baptist Convention in Ontario and Quebec. Notable achievements include the Divinity College and Chapel at McMaster University in Hamilton, completed in 1950, which earned him an honorary doctorate from the university in 1958. Brown also held prestigious positions such as President of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada from 1964 to 1965, Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. In addition to his architectural prominence, Brown also pursued landscape painting, encouraged by his good friend, Alfred Joseph Casson, a member of the Group of Seven.<sup>9,10</sup>

Francis Bruce Brown retired in 1972, and his son Douglas took over the firm. He died in Toronto on July 30, 1983, leaving behind a legacy of ecclesiastical architecture that spans the country. The Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary holds a significant collection of his original drawings and slides, documenting his work and the evolution of his firm from 1946 to 1972.<sup>11</sup>



Figure 9: Weston Park Baptist Church, designed by Francis Bruce Brown, is a Toronto Designated Heritage Property.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Allan Ferguson Duffus

Dr. Allan Duffus (1914-1997) was a distinguished architect and preservationist, deeply committed to the architectural heritage of Nova Scotia. Born in Halifax, he was the son of Colonel Allan W.



Duffus and Gwen Duffus. Dr. Duffus' illustrious career in architecture began after completing his education at King's College School in Windsor, followed by studies in pre-engineering at Dalhousie University and degree in architecture from McGill University. In 1946, Dr. Duffus established his architectural practice, becoming a founding partner of the firm Duffus, Romans, Kundzins, and Rounsefell Ltd. Throughout his career, he was responsible for a broad range of projects across Nova Scotia. His work included residences, churches, academic institutions, offices, and institutional buildings. Notable projects include: the Nova Scotia Museum (1970), Library at Kings College (1991), and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (1981) in Halifax. He also oversaw the completion of the east front of the Cathedral of All Saints, demonstrating his expertise in ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>13,14</sup>

A dedicated advocate for heritage conservation, Dr. Duffus played a pivotal role in restoring and preserving historic structures. His firm successfully restored Halifax's Historic Properties, which revitalized the old waterfront area. Among his restoration projects, he notably led the restoration of the Robertson Hardware Building, which became part of the Maritime Museum complex (Figure 11). Dr. Duffus' contributions extended beyond architectural design to leadership roles in heritage preservation organizations. As a long-serving member and past president of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, and a founding member of the Landmarks Commission of Halifax, he was a passionate force in the field of restoration. His service as Governor of Heritage Canada from 1974 to 1979 further highlights his national impact on preservation efforts. Dr. Duffus was also a published author, co-authoring *Thy Dwellings Fair* and contributing to *More Stately Mansions*, which focused on the architectural heritage of Nova Scotia's churches. His dedication to preserving historic buildings was evident in his successful efforts to save the Scott Manor House in Bedford.<sup>14</sup>

Upon his retirement in 1980, Dr. Duffus transitioned to consulting in conservation, where he continued to work on notable projects such as the restoration of Greenwood Cottage in Sherbrooke and the Windsor Junction Railway Station. From 1984 to 1991, he acted as a special consultant, contributing to the conservation of significant landmarks, including Province House, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Old Town Clock on the Citadel, and St. George's Church<sup>14</sup>. His professional excellence earned him numerous accolades, including the Nova Scotia Association of Architects Lifetime Achievement Award, an honorary fellowship with the American Institute of Architects, and an honorary Doctor of Engineering from the Technical University of Nova Scotia (TUNS). He was also a Fellow and past president of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, as well as the Nova Scotia Association of Architects<sup>14</sup>.



Figure 10: Portrait of Dr. Allan Ferguson Duffus



Figure 11: Dr. Allan Duffus led the Robertson Hardware Building restoration project, which became part of the Maritime Museum complex. Photo taken in 2009.

#### **Builder**

Brookfield Construction Company

**HALIFAX**

Planning & Development – 1300 Oxford Street, Halifax, NS

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The Brookfield Construction Company constructed First Baptist Church in 1948, and was a pivotal force in shaping the architectural landscape of Halifax and beyond. Founded in the mid-19th century by English civil engineer John Brookfield (Figure 12), the company was among the first in Nova Scotia to establish a general contracting firm that integrated various building trades under one roof. This approach not only revolutionized the local construction industry but also set a standard for future enterprises<sup>15</sup>.

John Brookfield's early works included significant military installations such as Fort Clarence, York Redoubt, and the Citadel Barracks, which were part of the extensive fortifications of Halifax - one of the largest military projects in the British Empire at the time. His son, Samuel M. Brookfield, succeeded him and expanded the company's portfolio to include many of Halifax's most iconic structures. These projects included the Academy of Music (later known as the Majestic Theatre), the Halifax Post Office, the MT&T Building, and the YMCA. Religious architecture was also a significant part of their work, with Samuel overseeing the construction of All Saints' Cathedral and St. Andrew's United Church<sup>15</sup>.



Figure 12: Portrait of John Brookfield



Figure 13: Old Post Office (Art Gallery of Nova Scotia), one of the representative projects of Brookfield Construction Company

Beyond Nova Scotia, the Brookfield Construction Company made notable contributions to the reconstruction efforts following the Great Fire of 1892 in St. John's, Newfoundland. This included the rebuilding of the Anglican Cathedral in St. John's. Additionally, the company constructed the Bank of Nova Scotia building in Saint John, New Brunswick.<sup>15</sup>

By the time the First Baptist Church was constructed in 1948, the Brookfield Construction Company was under the management of the Roper family, who had taken the helm in the early 20th century. Henry Roper, a skilled carpenter who joined the company in 1892, quickly rose through the ranks and became the company's manager by 1907. His leadership was marked by a commitment to excellence and innovation, which he passed on to his son, Harry Leamon Roper.



Harry took over as president in 1956, having already played a significant role in the company for many years. Under the Ropers' leadership, the company continued to thrive, undertaking major projects such as the Victoria General Hospital Nurses Residence, the Halifax Vocational School, and Queen Elizabeth High School.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 14: Portrait of Henry Roper



Figure 15: Portrait of Harry Leamon Roper

The influence of the Brookfield and Roper families extended well beyond the construction industry. Samuel M. Brookfield, before the company's transition to Roper management, was a prominent civic leader and philanthropist, while the Ropers also made substantial contributions to the community. Harry Roper was actively involved in the Halifax Construction Association, chaired various committees, and served as president of the Canadian Construction Association. Both families were known for their philanthropic efforts and their involvement in various social causes, leaving a lasting impact on Halifax's civic and cultural life.<sup>15</sup>

## Architectural Merit

### Construction Type or Building Technology

The construction of the church incorporates a combination of reinforced concrete columns, steel beams, and wood, reflecting the hybrid construction methods characteristic of mid-twentieth century architecture.

Architectural and construction drawings confirm that the structural framework primarily consists of reinforced concrete. The concrete columns, reinforced with steel bars, provide strength and durability. Wide flange steel beams are utilized to support long spans and offer structural support for wooden elements, such as floors and roofs. This approach leveraged steel's high strength-to-weight ratio for spanning long distances, while wood was employed for cost-effectiveness and ease of construction. Additionally, concrete and masonry walls infilled between the columns can bear loads. These walls are finished with stucco on the interior and stone on the exterior.<sup>7,8,16</sup>

This combination of steel, concrete, and wood was common in mid-twentieth-century construction as it balanced structural strength, cost efficiency, and ease of assembly. The use of steel in construction dates to the late 19th century and was initially applied in bridge construction. As steel gained prominence in construction, traditional load-bearing masonry walls became unnecessary, prompting a redesign of the building envelope. Masonry cladding was employed to mimic the aesthetic quality of the traditional material while reducing the load on exterior walls and allowing for increased floor space within the building<sup>17</sup>.

The use of steel and concrete was common for larger institutional buildings like schools or churches since the mid-twentieth century.

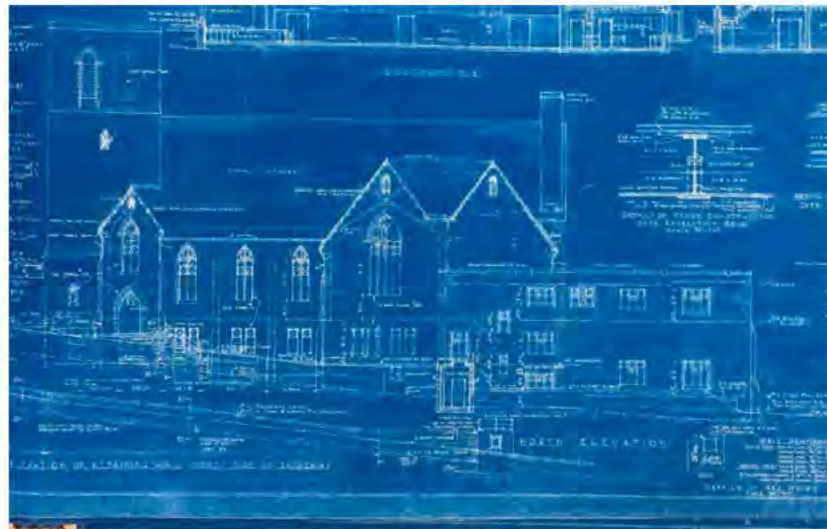


Figure 16: North elevation drawing, Bruce Brown & Brisley, 1948-1949<sup>7</sup>





Figure 17: West elevation drawing, Bruce Brown & Brisley, 1948-1949<sup>7</sup>



Figure 18: South Elevation, Bruce Brown & Brisley, 1948-1949<sup>7</sup>

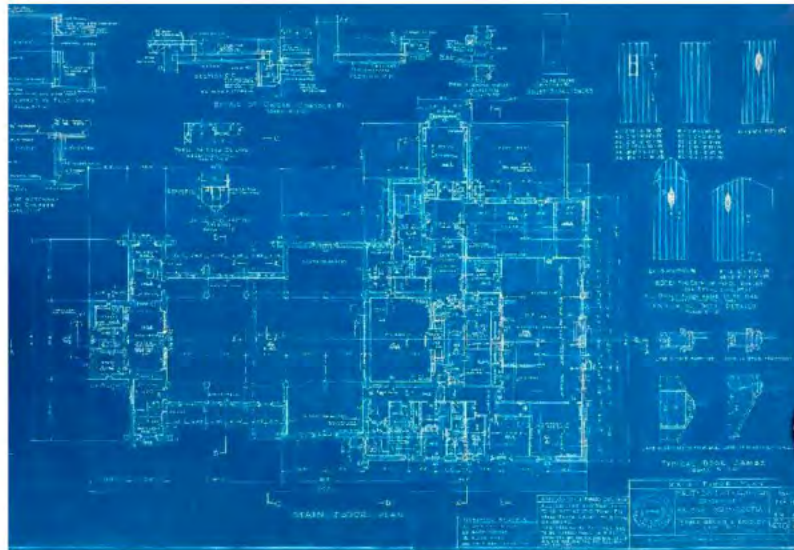


Figure 19: Main Floor Plan of First Baptist Church, Bruce Brown & Brisley, 1948-1949<sup>7</sup>

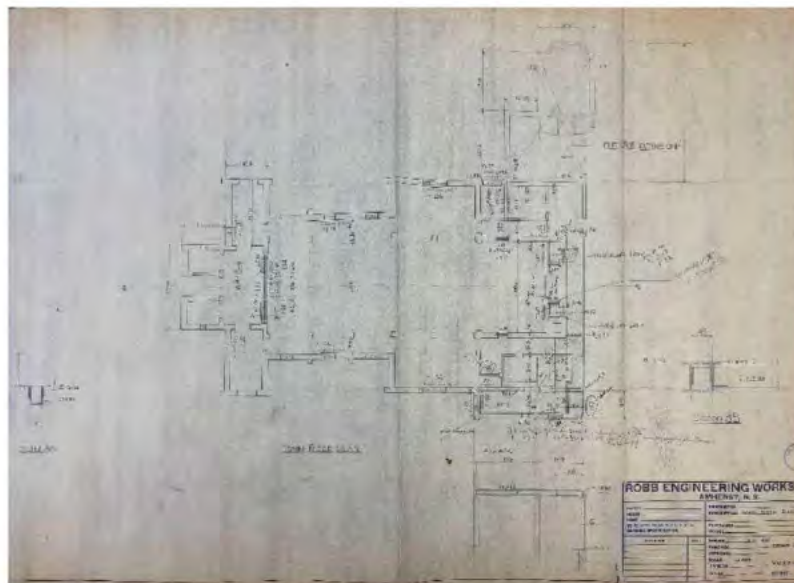


Figure 20: Main floor construction plan, showing the rear wing is removed from the construction plan, 1948<sup>16</sup>



## Style

The institutional building at 1300 Oxford Street was constructed in the Neo-Gothic style (see Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era).<sup>6</sup>

The character defining elements of 1300 Oxford Street include, but are not limited to:

- Square tower with:
  - twin Gothic louvres framed with sandstone on the top level;
  - large Gothic window framed with tracery sandstone on the middle level; and
  - Gothic entranceway framed with sandstone and transom with tracery, above a large door;
- The church hall with stone cladding, sandstone surrounding fenestration and a large gable roof;
- The rear wing with stone cladding, sandstone surrounding fenestration, and a gabled hall;
- Cross gables with entranceways near the front of the building and larger cross gables near the middle of the building;
- Gothic windows with tracery framed with sandstone on the upper level and paired vertical windows on the lower level;
- The stained glass memorial windows and liturgical windows;
- Wood exterior doors with stone surroundings and wrought iron hinges;
- Stone and sandstone buttresses;
- Rough-cut stone cladding;
- Copper downspouts; and
- Granite pavers leading to the main entrance.



Figure 21: South and east elevations (July 17, 2024)



Figure 22: East elevation (July 17, 2024)



Figure 23: North elevation of original portion (July 17, 2024)





Figure 24: West elevation (Christian Education Wing addition, July 17, 2024)



Figure 25: Gable with an entry door and Gothic window (July 17, 2024)



Figure 26: Detail of a stone buttress and copper downspouts (July 17, 2024)

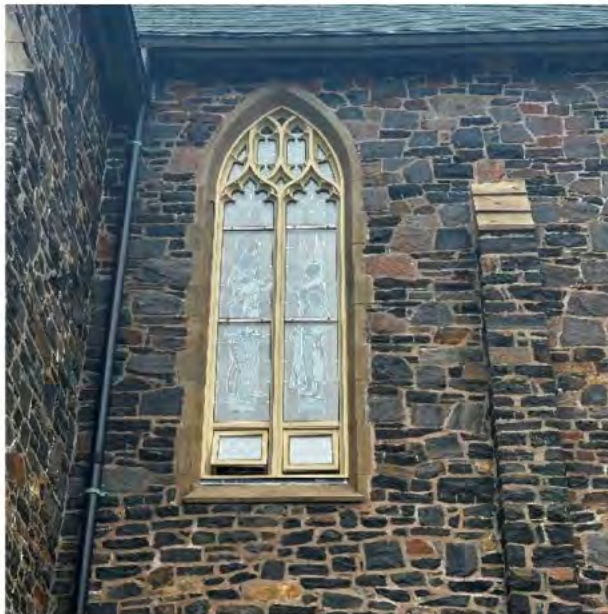


Figure 27: A liturgical window with stained glass and tracery (July 17, 2024)



## Architectural Integrity

The architectural integrity of the subject building remains notably high in terms of character defining elements and no significant alterations are evident. The church building maintains most Neo-Gothic building features, such as stone and sandstone buttresses, stained-glass windows with pointed arch stone surrounding, and stone cladding.

The Christian Education Wing addition was constructed in 1958 and is connected to the rear of the original church. The three-storey addition has a flat roof and is slightly lower in height than the gable roof of the church. The exterior material used in the addition closely matches the texture and colour of the original church structure, helping maintain a degree of visual harmony between the two sections. For example, the exterior wall adopted rough-cut stone cladding matching the wall of the original building. The windows' surroundings are also made of sandstone as the original windows but in a more austere form with fewer gothic elements.

A substantial rear wing was included in the original architectural design that was never built. In 1957, the church hired the original architect firm, Bruce Brown & Brisley, to adjust their rear wing design. Compared with these drawings, the Christian Education Wing respected the initial design's layout, massing and style. The wing in the 1948 drawings is a rectangular structure with a flat roof, topped by an L-shaped hall featuring a crossed gable roof on its south end (Figure 16 and Figure 19). The current Christian Education Wing retains the overall rectangular shape but simplifies the L-shaped hall into an I-shaped hall with a gable roof. While the locations and number of windows have been adjusted, their design remains faithful to the original concept. The Christian Education Wing respects the church's original architectural design and can be considered a character-defining element.

## Relationship to Surrounding Area

The subject building is located on the west side of Oxford Street, neighbouring a two-storey parsonage on the south parcel. The surrounding area is predominately mid-rise residential buildings with a blend of institutional structures closer to the Dalhousie University campus across the street. The railway crossing to the west separates the subject building from a low-density neighbourhood.

The massing and scale of the subject building are modest yet distinguishable within the residential and university context. The church's scale is smaller than the large university buildings but larger than individual residential homes, making it a transitional structure between the two in terms of scale. The roofline of the church and the height of the tower breaks up the western skyline of Oxford Street and introduces a variation in form. The church's stone exterior contrasts with the neighbouring residential buildings while complementing the stone facades of structures on the Dalhousie University campus. In conclusion, the subject building serves as a transitional architectural element within its environment, harmonizing with both residential and institutional surroundings.





Figure 28: The subject building denoted by a red arrow and the surrounding area, 2024

## 9.5. MCLEAN HERITAGE PLANNING AND CONSULTING – CURRICULUM VITAE

### Highlights of Qualifications

Drawing from 26 years of experience in public sector heritage planning and land development with the City of Surrey and City of Vancouver, Hugh McLean established his heritage consultancy in 2021. He serves clients in the public and private sector, and prepares reports covering a range of heritage scenarios: evaluating a building for addition to a heritage register, values-based historic research and architectural assessment as part of Statements of Significance, assessment of building condition and preservation strategies, restoration and rehabilitation as part of Conservation Plans, and higher-level strategies for potential incentives using an array of planning tools including legal protection and agreements. This requires interest-based negotiation to achieve heritage conservation, and familiarity with and application of, relevant legislative provisions, policy, zoning, guidelines and *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places*.

### Consultancy Project Summary (partial) – 2021-2024

#### Principal, McLean Heritage Planning and Consulting

- **City of White Rock, Statements of Significance for P'Quals (White Rock), The Pier and the Train Station, 2023-2024**
- **5522 Russell Street, Halifax:** Heritage Impact Statement to determine the conservation strategies as part of a new residential development on the same property
- **City of Chilliwack, Heritage Interest Inventory Review:** Assess current heritage buildings and update as a first step towards creating a Heritage Register
- **203 Pembina Street, New Westminster:** Conservation Plan for a historic oak tree proposed to be retained as part of a new residential development
- **86 Ochterloney Street, Dartmouth, NS:** Heritage Impact Statement to assess the degree of retention for two historic buildings and rationale for removal of one other building as part of a multi-use commercial-residential tower development
- **3560 Moncton Street, Richmond:** Design Consultation for a new multi-use development situated in the Steveston Heritage Conservation Area
- **Duncan City Hall, 200 Craig Street, Duncan:** Conservation Plan and Roof Replacement Strategy as part of seismic upgrades, window restoration and slate roof replacement
- **Elmwood Hotel, 5185 South Street, Halifax, NS:** Heritage Impact Statement for the “best practices strategy” to determine the appropriate degree of higher-density redevelopment and conservation in the context of Halifax’s “Old South Suburb” Heritage Conservation District
- **Ray’s Dry Goods, 3831 Moncton Street, Richmond:** Conservation Plan including condition assessment for retaining a small commercial building with a boutique hotel addition, situated in the Steveston Heritage Conservation Area



- **Sandwich Manor, 276 Sandwich Road, Courtenay:** Heritage Strategy Report to assess potential incentives and planning tools to conserve a historic house within a commercially-zoned area
- **Anglican Church of the Epiphany, 10553 148 Street, Surrey:** Heritage Assessment of a church including reincorporation of select character-defining elements into a new development
- **Mackenzie Residence, 5418 184 Street, Surrey:** Heritage Interiors Study, with recommendations to maximize the conservation of the interior elements of this legally-protected house
- **Dolman Residence, 1611 Cedar Crescent, Vancouver:** Heritage Assessment of proposed exterior rehabilitation to a legally-protected residence within the First Shaughnessy Heritage Conservation Area
- **Cobalt Hotel, 917 Main Street; Angeles Rooms, 927 Main Street, Vancouver:** Statements of Significance for two SRO buildings in the Downtown Eastside

#### **Previous Experience**

##### **2001 to 2006; 2008 to 2020: Heritage Planner, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, City of Vancouver**

- Negotiation of Heritage Revitalization Agreements and heritage designation as part of development applications, with incentives based on merits of restoration, adaptive re-use and financial analysis; presentation of reports to Council at Public Hearing
- Managing all aspects of Statements of Significance (SoS) with staff and heritage consultants, chair of the SoS/VHR Subcommittee; management of heritage SoS projects including RFP and contracts, securing provincial funding, coaching of consultants
- Oversee the upgrade to the City of Vancouver's Heritage Register Evaluation system
- Coordination with Province to place Statements of Significance on Canadian Register
- Management of Transfer of Density database, By-law updates and Heritage Register database
- Design of biennial Heritage Awards program
- Liaison to Heritage Commission, Gastown Planning Committee and Shaughnessy Design Panel
- Issuance of heritage alteration permits including conditions for heritage clearance
- Management of plaque program, updates to heritage website, administrative bulletins

##### **2006 to 2008: Planner, Central Area Planning, City of Vancouver**

- Design and implementation of a consultant's historical/cultural review of Paueru Gai (Powell Street) in the context of themes, community values, potential for zoning incentives, including community outreach and development of an interactive website
- Department representative to Oppenheimer Park planning process
- Policy and ODP review for Downtown Eastside and review and input on local initiatives such as the new Strathcona Library

**1994 to 2001: Planner, City of Surrey**

- Project management of rezoning and subdivision applications including negotiation of Heritage Revitalization Agreements as the staff member responsible for the heritage program
- Updated heritage, transportation and parks provisions of the Official Community Plan
- Established Surrey's Heritage Register: evaluation of buildings and owner consultation

**Other Relevant Roles**

Vancouver Heritage Foundation Granting Committee, 2013 to present

Collaborator – Landscapes of Injustice, University of Victoria, 2013 to 2020

Board Member, BC Association of Heritage Professionals, 2019 to present

**Education**

Master of Arts, Community and Regional Planning

University of British Columbia, 1988

Bachelor of Environmental Studies, Urban and Regional Planning

University of Waterloo, 1984

**Professional Membership**

Full Member - Canadian Institute of Planners / Planning Institute of British Columbia

Professional Member - Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals

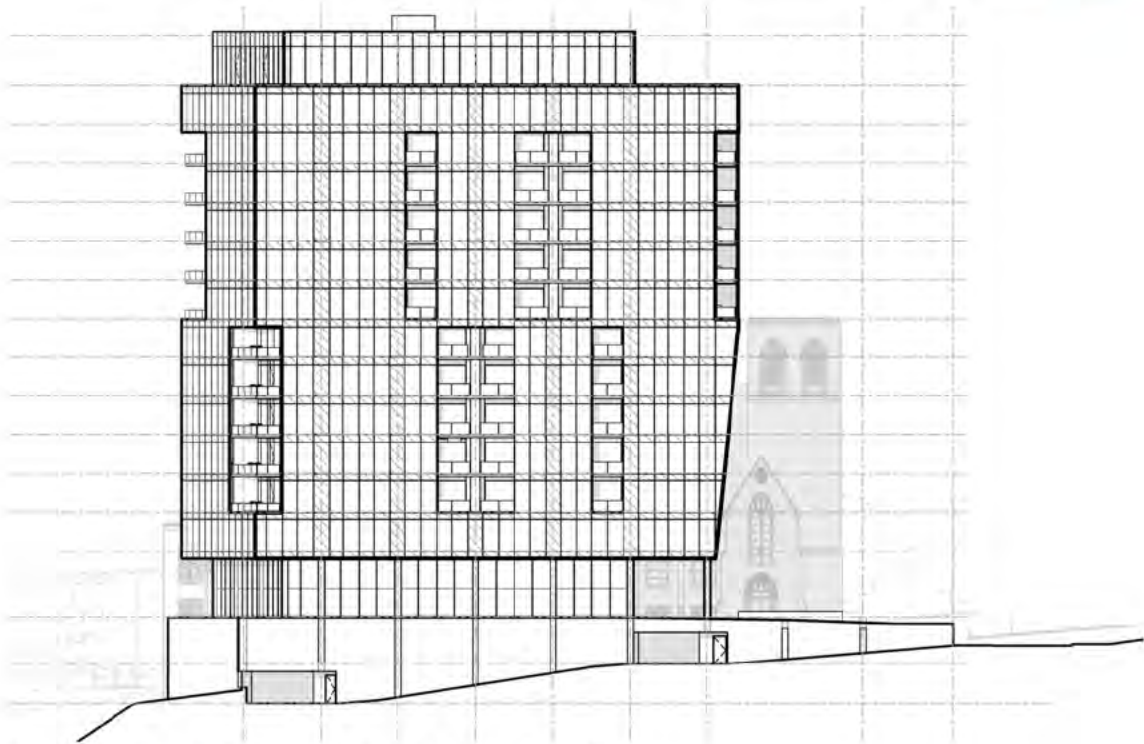
**Awards**

Canadian Institute of Planners, Murray Zides Award for Planning Excellence

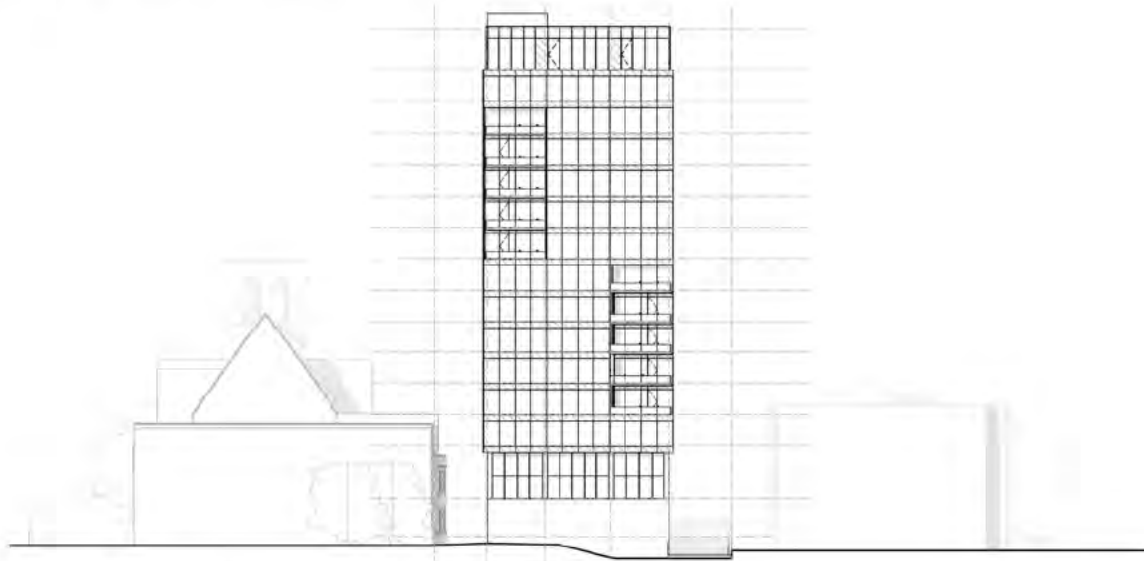
Grand Prize - City of Surrey Official Community Plan, 1997



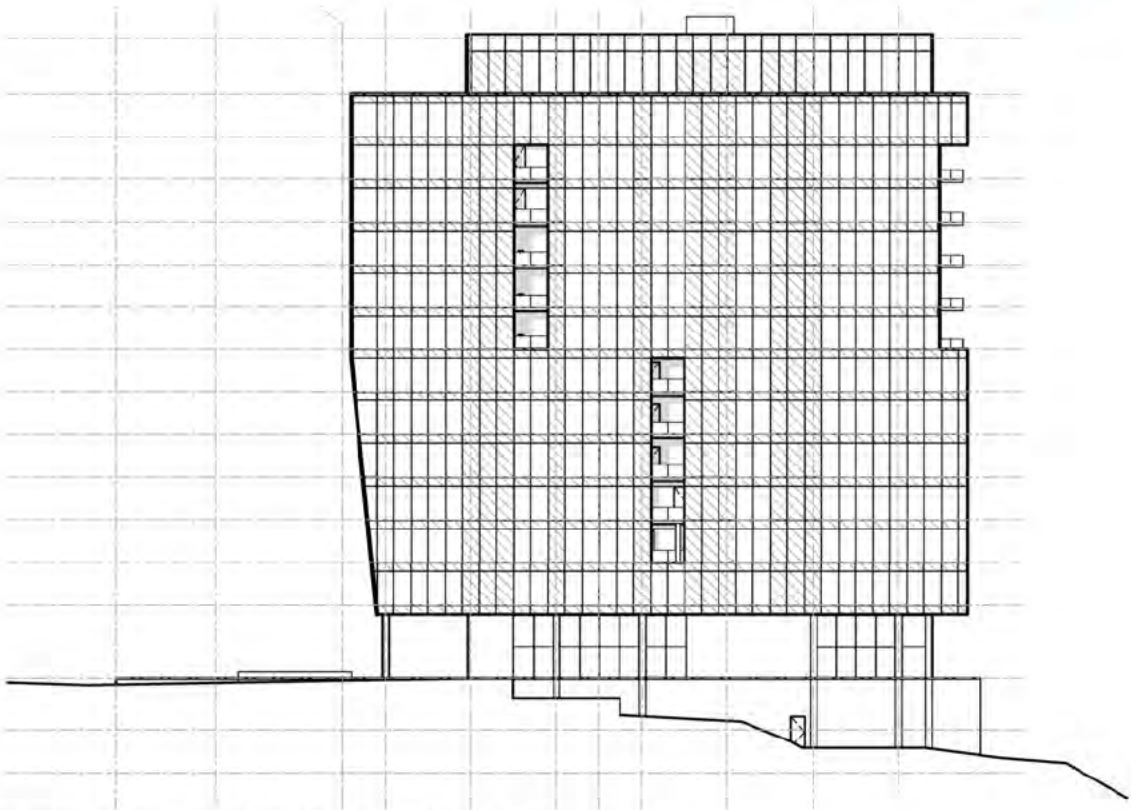




**Figure 41: 1300 Oxford Street – South Elevation**  
Source: FBM Architects



**Figure 42: 1300 Oxford Street – Rear Elevation**  
Source: FBM Architects



**Figure 43: 1300 Oxford Street – North Elevation**  
Source: FBM Architects

## 9.7. LANDSCAPE PLAN



**Figure 44: Landscape Plan – 1300 Oxford Street**  
**Source: Vollick McKee Petersmann and Associates Ltd.**





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