

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, March 18, 2025
Subject	72 Gordon Street – Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 72 Gordon Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
 2. That the designation bylaw be brought before Council for approval if no objections are received within the thirty (30) day objection period.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

In November 2022, the Government of the Province of Ontario passed Bill 23 (amended by Bill 185), which made changes to the Ontario Heritage Act that will remove all non-designated properties from the Municipal Heritage Register on January 1, 2027. Heritage planning staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee have been reviewing properties on the Municipal Heritage Register for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council publish its intention to designate 72 Gordon Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The cultural heritage significance and heritage attributes of the property are described in this report.

Key Findings

The former Dominion Bakery/MacKey Bread Company building at 72 Gordon Street is listed as a non-designated built heritage resource on the City of Guelph's Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets at two or more of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value or interest as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22; see Attachment-1).

Heritage planning staff, in consultation with Heritage Guelph, have completed a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report and Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Staff have determined that the property meets five of the nine criteria used to determine cultural heritage value according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as

amended by O. Reg 569/22) under the Ontario Heritage Act. Therefore, the property merits individual heritage designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The key findings and recommendations of this report align with 2024-2027 Strategic Plan priority 6.1.4 to conserve our cultural heritage resources.

Future Guelph Theme

City Building

Future Guelph Objectives

City Building: Grow and care for our community space and places

Financial Implications

None.

Report

Location

The subject property is located on the southeast corner of Gordon and Surrey Streets. The legal description is Plan 8, Lot 149 & 155.

Statement of Significance

Lots 155 and 149 can be seen in the McDonald Plan of Guelph from 1828. The Plan shows that a creek flowed through both lots towards the Speed River. The creek is evident on all historic maps until the 1897 (revised 1907) Fire Insurance Plan, which depicts the diversion of the creek underground and shows lots 149 and 155 being used to store lumber.

The first structure to be built on lot 149 was the MacKey Bakery building, which is first seen on the 1922 (1929 Revised) Fire Insurance Plan. Lot 149 was sold to MacKey's Bread, owned by George Mackey, in 1928, for \$4000. By 1929 George MacKey owned eight industrial bakeries across Ontario including Kingston, Cobourg, Brantford, Windsor, Chatham, Wallaceburg, St. Catharine's, and finally, Guelph. George Mackey and his brothers had entered the bread business selling "products which enabled the baker to vastly improve the quality of bread then made" (Kingston Whig-Standard, July 14, 1928).

Figure 1: MacKey Bakery in 1929 (Guelph Civic Museum, 2005.22.1)



Mackey's Bread was at the cutting edge of the industrialization of bread production during the interwar period in Ontario. Prior to the arrival of Mackey's Bread in 1928, bread in the City of Guelph had been produced by the City's many small-scale bakeries. The Mackey's were so successful that the Whig-Standard reported that "in one year's time the business had increased by 400 percent – something unheard of before in the bread business." MacKey's was heavily affected by the economic hardships brought about by the Great Depression, yet the building continued as a bakery until it's the sale of the building to Wellington Motors in 1953, and then to Schnurr Electric, its current owners, in 1964.

Figure 2: Detail from an aerial photo from 1931. Visible is MacKey's Bakery (by this time occupied by Dominion Bakeries).



The structure at 72 Gordon Street is a 1-storey, flat roofed, red rug brick functional industrial building, split into 2 storeys on the south side. The structure was purpose-built in 1929 to house a commercial bakery and was commissioned by George MacKey of MacKey Bakeries, one of seven MacKey locations built at this time in locations across Eastern and Southwestern Ontario. The foundation is constructed of large aggregate, poured concrete and is rendered at ground level with a thin layer of stucco. A stepped parapet wall with concrete coping clad in metal runs the length of the Gordon and Surrey Street elevations. Two large chimneys protrude from the roof near Gordon Street above the location of the ovens indicated on the 1929 FIP.

The façade faces Gordon Street and contains eight bays divided by pilasters with corbelled heads and stepped plinths to recessed panels. The windows are the original steel sashes with divided lights or panes. The three southernmost bays on the façade contain an entryway and offices. The third bay to the north contains an entranceway at ground level, surrounded by modern plate glass. The right side also has street level storefront windows topped with a commercial sign. The roofline coping follows the stepped parapet wall, with a raised, decorative cap on each corner. The building sits on a concrete foundation faced with stucco and punctuated by small rectangular, steel sash basement windows. The north elevation, facing Surrey Street, contains three bays, also divided by pilasters with corbelled heads and stepped plinths to recessed panels. At the rear of the building is a red brick addition, likely added after 1960, as the 1960 Fire Insurance Plan indicates a wood-frame addition in this location. The addition is flat-roofed, and contains a loading dock and two small windows.

Figure 3: 72 Gordon Street (Google Maps, 2023)



Determination of Cultural Heritage Value

The red brick industrial building at 72 Gordon Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets five of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by 569/22. The subject building at 72 Gordon Street possesses design and physical value, historical and associative value, and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets Criterion 1 because it is a rare and representative example of the functional industrial building type from the interwar period. The 1929 construction is one of few extant factory buildings that showcase early twentieth-century industrial architecture in Guelph, and the last remaining example in this former industrial area.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets Criterion 4 because it has direct associations with the MacKey Bread Company, a company that made significant contributions to the development of the industrialization of bread production in Ontario.

The subject property meets Criterion 5 as it yields information that contributes to the understanding of the Guelph community because it is associated with the development of the food-production industry in Guelph.

Contextual Value

The subject property meets Criterion 7 because the property is important in defining, maintaining, and supporting the character of the Gordon and Surrey streetscapes.

The subject property meets Criterion 8 because the property is functionally, visually, and historically linked to the former industrial lands located to the south of the historic downtown core. The location further reflects the history of Gordon Street, Huron Road (now Waterloo Avenue), and the Grand Trunk Railroad as thoroughfares for the transportation of goods to nearby towns.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 72 Gordon Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- 1-storey flat roof building form
- Red rug brick exterior walls on the west elevation (facing Gordon Street), including pilasters with corbelled heads and stepped plinths to recessed panels
- Red rug brick exterior walls on the north elevation (facing Surrey Street) including pilasters with corbelled heads and stepped plinths to recessed panels
- Original window openings on the west elevation (facing Gordon Street) and the north elevation (facing Surrey Street)
- Stepped parapet wall on the west and north elevations

Consultations and Engagement

A letter was sent to the property owner dated September 19th, 2024.

A letter was sent to the property owner dated February 13, 2025.

At the [Monday, May 6, 2024 meeting of Heritage Guelph](#), the Committee passed the following motion:

- THAT Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 72 Gordon Street as outlined in the staff report dated May 6, 2024; and
- THAT Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 72 Gordon Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Ontario Regulation 9-06 Criteria for Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Departmental Approval

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