WATSON & MCGREGOR BUILDING

645-651 JOHNSON STREET, VICTORIA, BC

CONSERVATION PLAN

FEBRUARY 2018

DONALD LUXTON
AND ASSOCIATES INC

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Johnson Street, showing the Watson & McGregor Building with vertical signage that reads "Furniture", 1977.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

HISTORIC NAME:	Watson & McGregor (Hardware & Plumbing) Building
CIVIC ADDRESS:	645-651 Johnson Street
ORIGINAL OWNER:	Watson & McGregor
ORIGINAL ARCHITECT:	A. Maxwell Muir
ORIGINAL BUILDER:	Parfitt Brothers
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:	1909

The Watson & McGregor Building is a significant historical resource addressed at 645-651 Johnson Street, in the Old Town District of downtown Victoria. The building has been subject to numerous interventions over its lifespan, resulting to subsequent loss of some of its exterior character-defining elements. Despite these alterations, the building has maintained the overall integrity of its historic form, scale and massing, its historic street facade along Johnson Street, and the original fenestration pattern at the upper levels, including surviving wood window assemblies.

A redevelopment scheme for this property is proposed, including the adjacent historic Morgan Block to the east, addressed at 1314-1324 Douglas Street. The overall redevelopment scheme has been prepared Merrick Architecture, which include, but not limited to, the following interventions: retention of the historic structure, and preservation of the historic front facade along Johnson Street; rehabilitation of the side elevation to the east by physically connecting with the adjacent Morgan Block; rehabilitation of storefronts in a manner that is consistent with the historic character of the Watson & McGregor Building; preservation of the upper floor windows; and, restoration of missing parapet elements based on available archival documentation. This document should be read in conjunction with the architectural drawing set prepared by Merrick Architecture.

This Conservation Plan is based on Parks Canada's *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. It outlines the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation that will occur as part of the proposed development.

2.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

Watson McGregor Building, circa 1913
[Collection Nancy Davis; Hallmark Society Files]

WATSON & MCGREGOR BUILDING

The building was constructed for the hardware and plumbing business of Watson & McGregor, and is described in a contemporary account:

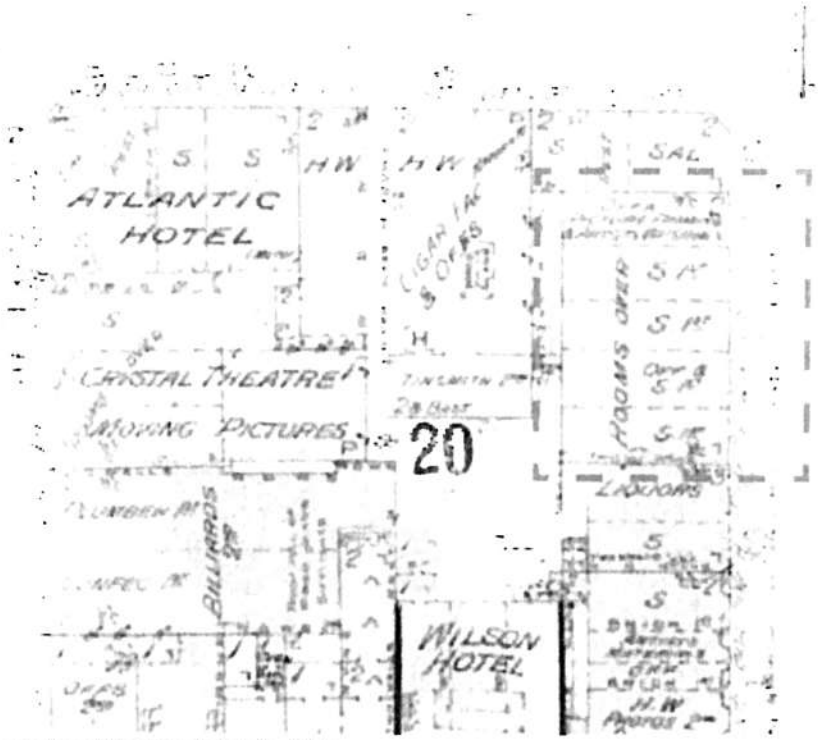
> *NEW BUILDING FOR WATSON & MCGREGOR.*
> *Up-to-date Store in course of Erection on Johnson Street*
> *Work is now well in hand on the new structure being erected by Watson and McGregor on Johnston street, located on the site of their present building. The building will cost $8,000, and will be completely occupied by the firm. The ground floor of the two storey structure will be utilized as a store, while the sheet metal works will be housed on the top floor. A plumber's shop will be located in the rear. The office of the firm will be situated in a mezzanine floor at the back of the establishment.*
> *The building will be of brick throughout. The frontage being composed of silica brick with ornamental ironwork. The first galvanized iron window frames and sashes ever used in Victoria will be installed, and these will also be put in at the B.C. Electric store now being constructed on Pembroke street. The contractors being engaged on the work are Parfitt Bros., the woodwork being done by Moore and Whittington.*
> *-From* Victoria Daily Colonist, *June 2, 1909, page 6.*

The building was designed by local architect Alexander Maxwell Muir (1860-1922). Muir's original 1909 scheme shows a far more elaborate façade than was actually built.

Proposed Watson and McGregor Building, A. Maxwell Muir, architect, 1909. [Preliminary Version]

Top: Map of the City of Victoria - 1889

Bottom, Left: "A Plan of the Town of Victoria Shewing Proposed Improvements," [ca. 1852]. Cartographer: Joseph Despard Pemberton.
The Fort Victoria Graveyard is visible, upper left, at the edge of the Johnson Street Ravine.
[Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Archives of Manitoba HBCA G.2/38]



Fire Insurance Map of the City of Victoria - 1911

THE ARCHITECT: ALEXANDER MUIR

[Retrieved from Madoff, Pamela, "Building the West: The Early Architects of British Columbia." pages 178-179]

The story of A. Maxwell Muir follows the familiar path of a young man in pursuit of a bright future. An accomplished architect and a meticulous businessman, he designed more than fifty buildings in B.C. during an active career that spanned only twenty years and was compromised by poor health. Born in Glasgow, Scotland on February 19, 1860, he was the son of Alexander Muir and Mary Margaret Maxwell, and great grandson of Sir William and Lady Maxwell. He graduated from Glasgow University with separate diplomas as a civil engineer and architect. Some of his perspective plans on the Clyde were exhibited in the Intercolonial Exhibition at Edinburgh, Scotland. He immigrated to the U.S. and worked his way from coast to coast. After his arrival in the United States, Muir settled in Troy, New York for two and a half years. He then moved on to a position with William Parson & Sons of Topeka, Kansas, who were engaged in the construction of many public schools and civic buildings throughout the state.

Studio Portrait of Minnie and Alexander Muir [Madoff Collection; courtesy Ron Weir]

Design work on the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego and employment with the Southern Pacific Railway brought Muir to the west coast and to what would become his final professional destination, Victoria, in 1889. Upon his arrival Muir took up residence at the YMCA and was soon employed by John Teague, one of Victoria's most successful architects. While in Teague's employ Muir drew plans for the Victoria City Market building on Cormorant Street, and likely worked on the Royal Jubilee Hospital, additions to City Hall, and extensions to First Presbyterian Church. Teague's practice was flourishing, and by 1892 Muir had established his own office, likely to take advantage of the large amount of work available.

Despite the general economic malaise, Muir remained busy with commercial and residential projects. He soon won a number of major commissions, including the Board of Trade Building in Victoria and the first court houses in Vernon, 1892-93, and Nelson, 1893. He also entered, unsuccessfully, the 1892 competition for the new Parliament Buildings; all entries were required to use a nom-de-plume and Muir's was "Patience." His elegant Vernon Public School, 1893, is likely the oldest surviving brick school in the province. In 1897 Muir designed the Kamloops Jail and in 1898 was involved in the development scheme for the Hotel Texada, later known as the Marble Bay Hotel, on Texada Island. The twenty-six room hotel was set on an acre of land on a bluff overlooking the water, surrounded by building lots. The first three hundred purchasers were eligible to win the hotel in a raffle draw. The hotel was completed but few lots were sold and the raffle was never held.

In 1899, now with a reasonably successful architectural practice, Muir married Minnie Hartley Swanwick, a member of Metchosin's pioneering

Weir family. She had been married previously and divorced; her one child died as a result of a reaction to a vaccination. In 1901 they built a house, Bremhill, in Victoria's Jubilee neighbourhood and two years later they built a modest house, Hartley Hall, on land in Metchosin that Minnie had received from her mother. Their daughter, Robina, was born in 1904, followed by a son, William, in 1907.

Precisely at the time that Muir's family responsibilities were growing, his practice was struggling to survive. Muir continued to design modest commercial buildings including the Chemainus Hospital, 1903 and the Burnside Fire Hall, 1908, but more significant commissions eluded him. Muir assigned the blame for his lack of work specifically on the success enjoyed by F.M. Rattenbury, declaring that he "had done more local work in this city during the last ten years than any other man." Although he continued to participate in architectural competitions he saw little success. In 1901, in a letter to the local newspaper, he publicly attacked the awarding of a commission to Rattenbury to design a new high school. "I think," he wrote, "that my plans should have placed first." In 1903 he again lost out to Rattenbury for the commission to design the Strathcona Addition and Isolation Ward for the Royal Jubilee Hospital. In the same year a bitter battle erupted over the hiring of an architect to design the new Carnegie Library. A group of architects, which included Muir (but not Rattenbury) petitioned City Council requesting that one of their group be chosen for the commission. In a letter to City Council Muir suggested that Rattenbury had made enough money, by virtue of circumstance rather than talent, over the years and should retire and leave the field to the less fortunate.

During this same period, a board of arbitration was appointed to look into cost overruns on Government House, another of Rattenbury's projects. The board included Muir, whom Rattenbury described as both a personal and professional opponent. Struggling to support his family at a time when his commissions were at an all-time low, he felt unbounded bitterness towards Rattenbury. Muir's feelings against Rattenbury may also have been coloured by his own scrupulous attention to financial matters. He was once the president of a company involved in oil explorations in Alberta. It was not a limited company and some of his investors suggested that he water down the dividends that were issued to shareholders. He refused. Coincidentally, accidents began to occur at the site. Muir, as president, was held financially responsible and his insistence on paying these debts contributed to his financial downfall.

A staunch Presbyterian, Muir sometimes acted as a lay minister and, in 1892, donated plans for the East Fernwood Mission Sunday School for the Christian Endeavour Society of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, now converted to a residence which still stands on Redfern Street in Victoria. He was also a member of the Vancouver and Quadra No. 2 Chapter of the Masonic Temple where he functioned as secretary and was responsible for the founding of many of the lodge's charitable activities, including the Widows' and Orphans' Fund.

With little work coming his way the Muirs moved back and forth between Victoria and Vancouver. In 1917 the Muirs were back in Victoria. Mrs. Muir was the proprietor of the Minerva Confectionery which was known for its fruit-shaped fondant candies. Muir was listed in the directory as a candymaker. Muir also suffered increasing health problems, described as "creeping paralysis," undoubtedly neurological degeneration caused by ALS, later known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. He died in Vancouver August 1, 1922, aged sixty-two. His widow survived him by twenty years, modestly supporting herself as a stenographer.

3.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

WATSON & MCGREGOR BUILDING
645-651 JOHNSON STREET, VICTORIA, BC
(Retrieved from historicplaces.ca)

Description of the Historic Place
The Watson & McGregor Building is a two storey, brick commercial building on Johnson Street, in Victoria's Old Town. The front facade has three bays, with one original brick pilaster on the ground floor east side, original sheet metal cornice above the storefront level, three groups of three double-hung windows on the upper floor, and brick sidewalls.

Heritage Value of the Historic Place
The Watson & McGregor Building possesses heritage value because it has qualities that maintain the heritage character of Victoria's historic downtown. Its three-bay composition and consistent use by a wide variety of commercial enterprises since its construction in 1909 are integral to its heritage value, as these elements add diversity to both the scale and use of the commercial streetscape on the outer perimeter of Victoria's Old Town District. Its construction as a hardware and plumbing enterprise also illustrate the working character of the downtown and the nature of the business that were conducted in the area.

The Watson & McGregor Building is also an example of the commercial work of local architect A. Maxwell Muir, and demonstrates the Classical Revival influence that had become popular for commercial buildings during the boom years of the Edwardian era. The alleyway to the west side of the building provided access that serviced businesses in the block, illustrating the pattern of secondary pathways and courtyards that is characteristic of Victoria's Old Town.

Character-Defining Elements
The character-defining elements of the Watson & McGregor Building include its:

- location on Johnson Street in Victoria's Old Town, with an adjacent alley to the west;
- continuous commercial use;
- commercial form, scale and massing as expressed by its two-storey scale, symmetrical three-bay design, placement on the front property line, and flat roof;
- masonry construction, including front façade tan brick with brown mortar, and common red-brick side walls with segmental-arched window openings;
- Classical Revival design influence, evident in its tripartite articulation, symmetry, continuous window heads and sills in the upper floor bays, and projecting cornices; and
- original upper floor double-hung wooden sash windows in the front facade.

4.0 CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

4.1 STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The Watson & McGregor Building is a significant historical resource in the City of Victoria. The Parks Canada's *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* is the source used to assess the appropriate level of conservation and intervention. Under the *Standards & Guidelines*, the work proposed for the Watson & McGregor Building includes aspects of preservation, rehabilitation and restoration.

> ***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 Watson & McGregor Building should be based upon the Standards outlined in the *Standards & Guidelines*, which are conservation principles of best practice. The following ***General Standards*** should be followed when carrying out any work to an 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 ongoing 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.

4.2 CONSERVATION REFERENCES

The proposed work entails aspects of preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of the exterior of the Watson & McGregor Building. The following conservation resources should be referred to:

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Parks Canada, 2010.

National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services. Preservation Briefs:

Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings.

Preservation Brief 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings.
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/2-repointing-mortar-joints.htm

Preservation Brief 3: Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings.
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/3-improve-energy-efficiency.htm

Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings.
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/6-dangers-abrasive-cleaning.htm

Preservation Brief 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows.
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm

Preservation Brief 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork.
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/10-paint-problems.htm

Preservation Brief 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts.

Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns.

Preservation Brief 24: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches.

Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible.

Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings.

Preservation Brief 41: The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront.

Preservation Brief 47: Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings.

4.3 GENERAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The primary intent is to preserve the existing historic structure, while undertaking a rehabilitation that will upgrade its structure and services to increase its functionality for commercial and residential uses. As part of the scope of work, character-defining elements will be preserved, while missing or deteriorated elements will be restored. A redevelopment scheme for this property has been prepared Merrick Architecture.

The major proposed interventions of the overall project are to:

- retain the historic structure, and preserve the historic front facade along Johnson Street;
- rehabilitate the side elevation to the east, and physically connect with the adjacent historic Morgan Block;
- rehabilitate the storefront in a historically appropriate manner based on existing archival photos, as possible;
- preserve the upper floor windows, and repair in-kind as required; and,
- restore missing parapet elements.

Any proposed addition to the historic building and all new visible construction will be considered a modern addition to the historic structure. The *Standards & Guidelines* list recommendations for new additions to historic places. The proposed design scheme should follow these principles:

- Designing a new addition in a manner that draws a clear distinction between what is historic and what is new.
- Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic place. In either case, it should be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and colour, yet be distinguishable from the historic place.
- The new additions should be physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the preserved historic façade.

An addition should be subordinate to the historic place. This is best understood to mean that the addition must not detract from the historic place or impair its heritage value. Subordination is not a question of size; a small, ill-conceived addition could adversely affect an historic place more than a large, well-designed addition.

Additions or new construction should be visually compatible with, yet distinguishable from, the historic place. To accomplish this, an appropriate balance must be struck between mere imitation of the existing form and pointed contrast, thus complementing the historic place in a manner that respects its heritage value.

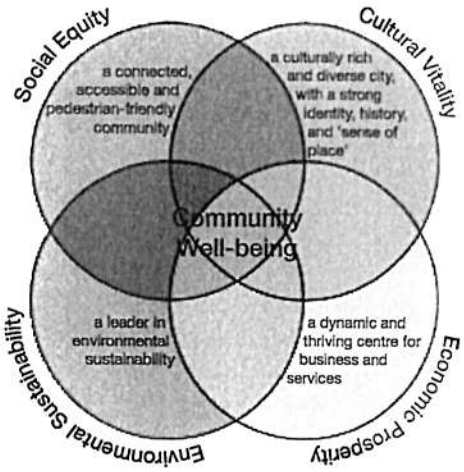
4.4 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Heritage conservation and sustainable development can go hand in hand with the mutual effort of all stakeholders. In a practical context, the conservation and re-use of historic and existing structures contributes to environmental sustainability by reducing solid waste disposal, saving embodied energy, and conserving historic materials that are often less consumptive of energy than many new replacement materials.

In 2016, the Federal Provincial Territorial Ministers of Culture & Heritage in Canada (FPTMCHC) published a document entitled, *Building Resilience: Practical Guidelines for the Retrofit and Rehabilitation of Buildings in Canada* that is "intended to establish a common pan-Canadian 'how-to' approach for practitioners, professionals, building owners, and operators alike."

The following is an excerpt from the introduction of the document:

> *[**Building Resilience**] is intended to serve as a "sustainable building toolkit" that will enhance understanding of the environmental benefits of heritage conservation and of the strong interrelationship between natural and built heritage conservation. Intended as a useful set of best practices, the guidelines in **Building Resilience** can be applied to existing and traditionally constructed buildings as well as formally recognized heritage places.*
>
> *These guidelines are primarily aimed at assisting designers, owners, and builders in providing existing buildings with increased levels of sustainability while protecting character-defining elements and, thus, their heritage value. The guidelines are also intended for a broader audience of architects, building developers, owners, custodians and managers, contractors, crafts and trades people, energy advisers and sustainability specialists, engineers, heritage professionals, and officials responsible for built heritage and the existing built environment at all jurisdictional levels.*



Four Pillars of Sustainability [CityPlan 2030 - City of Norwood Payneham & St. Peters]

Building Resilience *is not meant to provide case-specific advice. It is intended to provide guidance with some measure of flexibility, acknowledging the difficulty of evaluating the impact of every scenario and the realities of projects where buildings may contain inherently sustainable elements but limited or no heritage value. All interventions must be evaluated based on their unique context, on a case-by-case basis, by experts equipped with the necessary knowledge and experience to ensure a balanced consideration of heritage value and sustainable rehabilitation measures.*

Building Resilience *can be read as a stand-alone document, but it may also further illustrate and build on the sustainability considerations in the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.*

4.5 ALTERNATE COMPLIANCE

The Watson & McGregor Building may be eligible for heritage variances that will enable a higher degree of heritage conservation and retention of original material, including considerations available under the following municipal legislation.

4.5.1 BRITISH COLUMBIA BUILDING CODE

Building Code upgrading ensures life safety and long-term protection for historic resources. It is important to consider heritage buildings on a case-by-case basis, as the blanket application of Code requirements do not recognize the individual requirements and inherent strengths of each building. Over the past few years, a number of equivalencies have been developed and adopted in the British Columbia Building Code that enable more sensitive and appropriate heritage building upgrades. For example, the use of sprinklers in a heritage structure helps to satisfy fire separation and exiting requirements. Table A-1.1.1.1., found in Appendix A of the Code, outlines the "Alternative Compliance Methods for Heritage Buildings."

Given that Code compliance is such a significant factor in the conservation of heritage buildings, the most important consideration is to provide viable economic methods of achieving building upgrades. In addition to the equivalencies offered under the current Code, the City can also accept the report of a Building Code Engineer as to acceptable levels of code performance.

4.5.2 ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACT

The provincial Energy Efficiency Act (Energy Efficiency Standards Regulation) was amended in 2009 to exempt buildings protected through heritage designation or listed on a community heritage register from compliance with the regulations. Energy Efficiency standards therefore do not apply to windows, glazing products, door slabs or products installed in heritage buildings. This means that exemptions can be allowed to energy upgrading measures that would destroy heritage character-defining elements such as original windows and doors.

These provisions do not preclude that heritage buildings must be made more energy efficient, but they do allow a more sensitive approach of alternate compliance to individual situations and a higher degree of retained integrity. Increased energy performance can be provided through non-intrusive methods of alternate compliance, such as improved insulation and mechanical systems. Please refer to the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* for further detail about "Energy Efficiency Considerations."

4.6 SITE PROTECTION & STABILIZATION

It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure the heritage resource is protected from damage at all times. At any time that the building is left vacant, it should be secured against unauthorized access or damage through the use of appropriate fencing and security measures. Additional measures to be taken include:

- Are smoke and fire detectors in working order?
- Are wall openings boarded up and exterior doors securely fastened once the building is vacant?
  Have the following been removed from the interior: trash, hazardous materials such as inflammable liquids, poisons, and paints and canned goods that could freeze and burst?

The historic structure should be protected from movement and other damage at all times during demolition, excavation and construction work. Install monitoring devices to document and assess cracks and possible settlement of the masonry façade.

5.0 CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A condition review of the Watson & McGregor Building was carried out during a site visit in July 2017. The review was limited to visual inspection of the exterior of the historic building from the ground floor level. Further investigation may be required to assess the overall condition and structural integrity of other existing character-defining elements in areas that were inaccessible during the preliminary site visit.

The recommendations for the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic resource are based on the site review and archival documents that provide valuable information about the original appearance of the historic building.

The following chapter describes the materials, physical condition and recommended conservation strategy for the Watson & McGregor Building based on Parks Canada *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

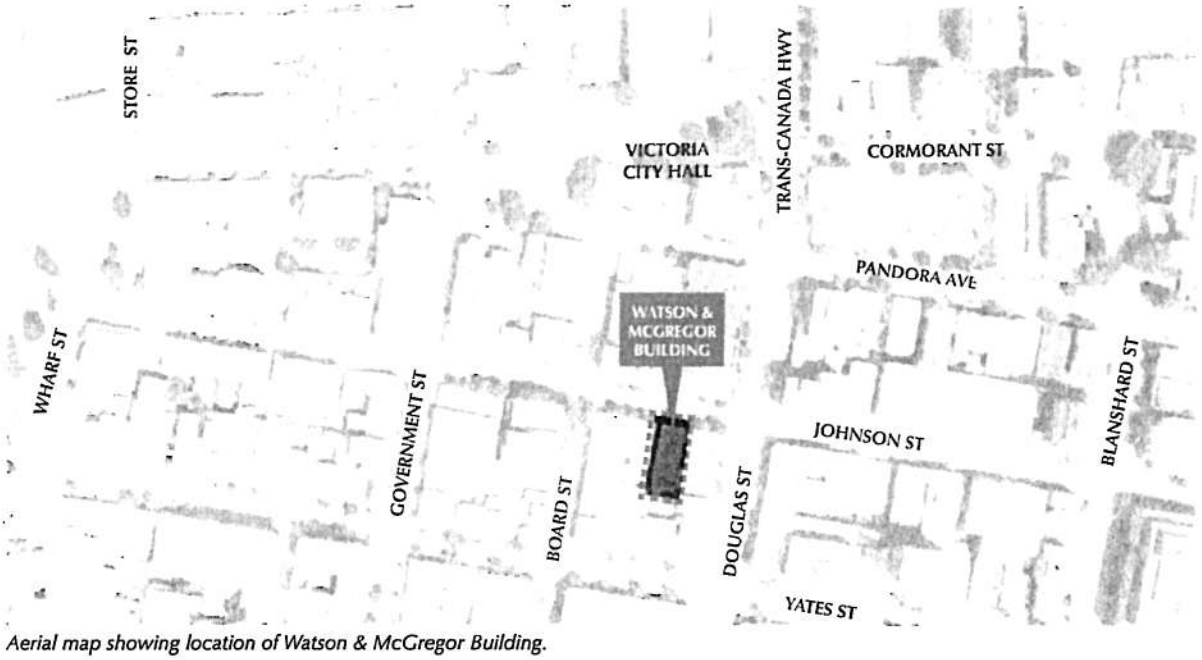
5.1 SITE

The Watson & McGregor Building is addressed at 645-651 Johnson Street, at the Old Town District in downtown Victoria. It was built to the front, side, and rear property lines with no setback, with a laneway to the west, and the historic front facade oriented to the north along Johnson Street. All heritage resources within the site should be protected from damage or destruction at all times. Reference Section 4.6: Site Protection for further information.

As part of the proposed redevelopment scheme, the site will be rehabilitated by physically connecting the Watson & McGregor Building with the adjacent historic Morgan Block.

Conservation Strategy: Preservation

- Preserve the original location of the building. All rehabilitation work should occur within the property lines.
- Retain the main frontage along Johnson Street.
- Design of the new infill addition should be "physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to, and distinguishable from the historic place", as recommended in **Standard 11**.



Aerial map showing location of Watson & McGregor Building.

5.2 OVERALL FORM, SCALE & MASSING

The Watson & McGregor Building retains its original commercial form, scale and massing, as expressed by: its double-storey height; tripartite symmetry of its historic front facade; and low-slope roof structure.

The original overall form, scale, and massing of the Watson & McGregor Building contributes to the historic character of the building, and enhances the streetscape of the historic Old Town District in downtown Victoria, and should be preserved.

Conservation Strategy: Preservation

- Preserve the overall form, scale and massing of the building.
- The historic front façade should be retained.

Top (right) and bottom: Photos showing partial front and side (laneway) elevations, as viewed from Johnson Street.

5.3 EXTERIOR MASONRY WALLS

The Watson & McGregor Building features masonry construction, as characterized by: tan brick units at the front façade, with brown mortar; and common red-brick at side walls, including surviving segmental-arched window openings. The exterior brick walls along the laneway to the west has been painted at some point in time.

Archival photos indicate that the existing brick columns of the storefront are not original, with the exception of the easternmost column that appears to be contiguous with the exterior masonry wall on the upper level. Further investigation is required to determine if any original storefront elements are extant beneath the later brick columns.

Along the historic front facade, the tan bricks appear to be in fair condition, with signs of weathering caused by water ingress and moisture saturation, as evidenced by efflorescence, staining and discolouration, organic growth, and brick spalling. Other notable signs of deterioration include stepped cracking and mortal loss in localized areas.

Similar deteriorating conditions were noted along the side elevation to the west, in addition to peeling of paint. Further assessment is required to determine the feasibility of removing the existing paint finish, which may include abatement of hazardous materials, without causing significant damage to the brick face underneath.

Conservation Strategy: Preservation

- Preserve the brick whenever possible, and replace in kind brickwork that is too deteriorated for safe use.
- Undertake complete condition survey of condition of all brick surfaces.
- Cleaning, repair and repointing specifications to be reviewed by Heritage Consultant.
- All redundant metal inserts and services mounted on the exterior walls should be removed or reconfigured.
- Any holes in the brick should be filled or replaced to match existing.
- Overall cleaning of the brick on the exterior walls should be carried out. Do not use any abrasive methods that may damage the fireskin surfaces. Use a soft natural bristle brush and mild water rinse. Only approved chemical restoration cleaners may be used. Sandblasting or any other abrasive cleaning method of any kind is not permitted.
- Determine whether or not it is feasible to remove the paint and expose the original brick. Undertake test samples for paint removal in an inconspicuous area using only approved restoration products. If paint removal is determined to be feasible, prepare removal specification. If not, prepare to repaint.
- Repoint the brickwork by raking out loose mortar material to a uniform depth. Take care that the arises of the brick are not damaged. Work should only be undertaken by skilled masons. Do not use power tools to cut or grind joints; hand-held grinders may be used for the initial raking of horizontal joints after test samples have been undertaken and only if approved by the Heritage Consultant. Repoint mortar joints with new mortar that matches existing in consistency, composition, strength, colour and pointing profile; note the finely tooled profile of the original mortar joints.
- Retain sound exterior masonry or deteriorated exterior masonry that can be repaired.

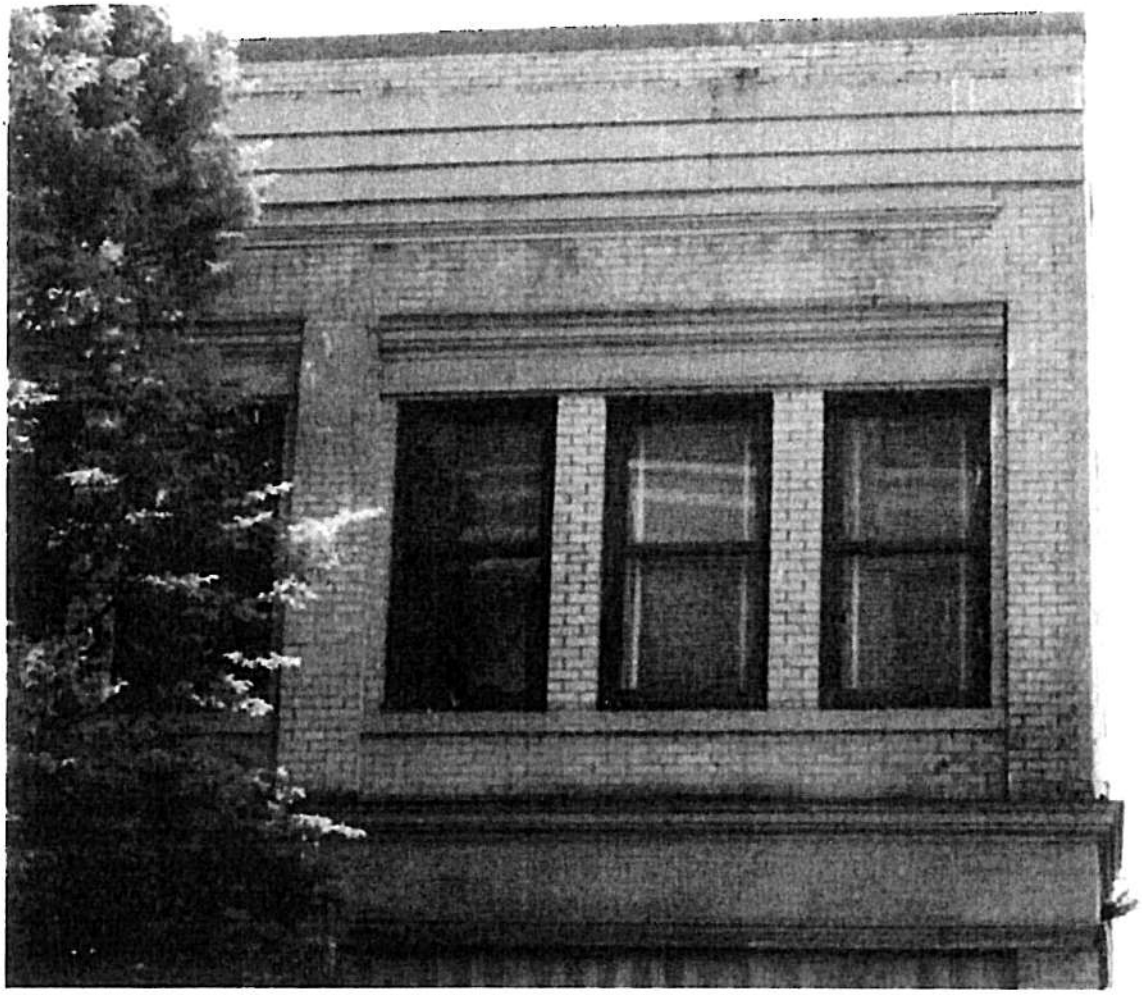
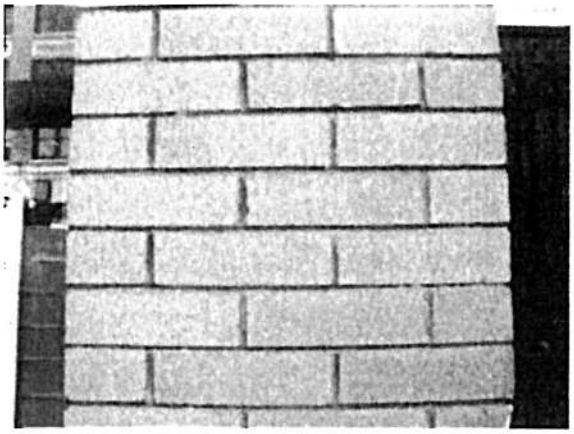


Photo showing partial exterior masonry wall above the storefront. Note typical deterioration of masonry wall.



Detail photo of westernmost masonry column, as seen from the front.

Photo showing storefront return, and partial masonry wall along the laneway elevation to the east; note tilework at the storefront transom that are not original and should be removed.

5.4 ARCHITECTURAL METALWORK

The Watson & McGregor Building originally featured a large, projecting metal cornice along the parapet level of the historic front facade, with partial return along the laneway elevation to the west. The original parapet cornice is no longer extant, and has been subsequently replaced with overlapping horizontal bands of unsympathetic flat, metal flashing that does not contribute to the historic character of the building.

The lower street facade features a modest storefront cornice with a continuous signband, similarly including a partial return along the laneway elevation to the west. All efforts should be made to restore the missing cornices and storefront signband based on archival photos.

Conservation Strategy: Restoration

- Remove unsympathetic cornice replacements, and restore missing metal cornices with historically appropriate profile based on archival photos, as possible.

Detail photo showing project metal cornice at parapet level, and the storefront cornice with signband at the lower street facade, circa 1913 [Collection Nancy Davis; Hallmark Society Files]

- The current attachment of all sheet metal cornices should be inspected, and should be re-anchored as appropriate.
- Repair and stabilize deteriorated architectural metal elements by structural reinforcement or correction of unsafe conditions, as required, until any additional work is undertaken. Repairs should be physically and visually compatible.
- The sheet metal work will be cleaned and prepared for repainting. Apply appropriate primer for galvanized surfaces. Paint in historically appropriate colour, based on colour schedule prepared by Heritage Consultant.

5.5 FENESTRATION

Windows, doors and storefronts are among the most conspicuous feature of any building. In addition to their function — providing light, views, fresh air and access to the building — their arrangement and design is fundamental to the building's appearance and heritage value. Each element of fenestration is, in itself, a complex assembly whose function and operation must be considered as part of its conservation.
– Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

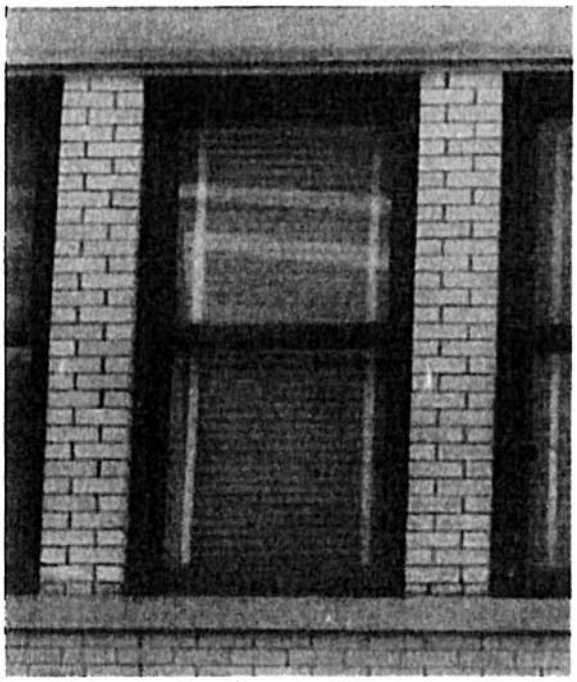
5.5.1 WOOD WINDOWS & TRIMS

The historic front facade of the Watson & McGregor Building features original window openings, with continuous window heads and sills above the storefront, and characterized by double-hung wooden sash windows that appear to be original. The existing window assemblies along the side and rear elevations were inaccessible during the initial site visit, and further investigation is required to determine if any original wood window assemblies are extant, and to assess their condition.

Based on the initial visual review from the ground level, the existing wood windows appear to be intact and in good to fair condition that show varying degrees of deterioration. Further review and assessment are required to confirm the existing condition of each assemblies, and to determine the appropriate extent of conservation work required.

Conservation Strategy: Preservation

- Inspect for condition and complete detailed inventory to determine extent of recommended repair or replacement.
- Retain existing window sashes; repair as required; install replacement matching sashes where missing or beyond repair.
- Preserve and repair as required, using in kind repair techniques where feasible.
- Overhaul, tighten/reinforce joints. Repair frame, trim and counterbalances.
- Each window should be made weather tight by re-puttying and weather-stripping as necessary.
- Retain historic glass, where possible. Where broken glass exists in historic wood-sash windows, the broken glass should be replaced. When removing broken glass, the exterior putty should be carefully chipped off with a chisel and the glazier's points should be removed. The wood where the new glass will be rested on should be scraped and cleaned well, and given a coat of linseed oil to prevent the wood from absorbing the oil from the new putty. The new glass should be cut 1/16-1/8th smaller than the opening to allow for expansion and irregularities in the opening, to ensure the glazing does not crack due to natural forces. Window repairs should be undertaken by a contractor skilled in heritage restoration.
- Replacement glass should be visually and physically compatible with existing.
- Prime and repaint as required in appropriate colour, based on colour schedule devised by Heritage Consultant.



Typical existing condition of double-hung wood sash window at upper level.

5.5.2 STOREFRONTS

None of the existing storefront assemblies at the lower street facade are original. The transom windows have been covered with unsympathetic tiles, similar to the ones on the storefront bulkhead/ baseplate, all of which do not contribute to the historic character of the Watson & McGregor Building.

As part of the overall rehabilitation scheme, the new rehabilitated storefronts will be considered a contemporary addition, and should be designed in a sympathetic manner that is consistent with the historic character of the heritage resource.

Conservation Strategy: Rehabilitation

- Reinstate a rehabilitated wooden storefront system. Reference the historic design as noted in archival images and original architectural drawings. The design of the rehabilitated storefronts should resemble the original historic precedents.
- Integrate commercial signs and new lighting systems as required.
- Provide new accessible entryways for the ground floor, as required.

5.6 SIGNAGE

Commercial signs are an integral feature of historic commercial buildings. Different types of signs were fabricated in traditional materials with painted or three-dimensional letters, including fascia signs, projecting signs and painted window signs. Signs often reflect the ethnic history of a neighborhood and its character, as well as the social and business activities carried within it, and it is important to preserve or commemorate these markers of the building's social and economic history.

Conservation Strategy: Rehabilitation

When considering new signs on a heritage building, the design should be in accordance with the Parks Canada *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, which states that "new signage should be compatible with the building in terms of size, scale, material, style and colour. In addition, new signs should not obscure, damage or destroy character-defining elements of the building".

- New signs can be inspired by historical signs on the building, signs from an earlier era or contemporary materials that are sympathetic to the building.
- Sign fixings or hangers should be carefully attached to the building in the least intrusive

Detail photo showing original storefront configuration, circa 1913. [Collection Nancy Davis; Hallmark Society Files]

manner possible. On masonry walls, consider attaching into mortar rather than brick face.
- Signs were historically illuminated with front lighting.
- Future tenant signage must conform to applicable bylaws.

5.7 EXTERIOR COLOUR SCHEDULE

Part of the Restoration process is to finish the building in historically appropriate paint colours. On-site sampling has not been completed, and further investigation is required to determine the feasibility of paint removal on brick face. A preliminary colour scheme has been developed by the Heritage Consultant as a place-holder, based on site information and historical precedent.

The final colour scheme will be based on a colour palette that will be determined by sampling. Onsite testing will be carried out once access is available, and paint samples assessed by microscopic analysis in order to reveal the original colour scheme of the structure. If paint cannot be removed from the brick, it will also be repainted.

Conservation Strategy: Investigation
- Determine an appropriate historic colour scheme for exterior painted finishes.

PRELIMINARY COLOUR TABLE: WATSON & MCGREGOR BUILDING, 645-651 JOHNSON STREET, VICTORIA, BC

Element	Colour*	Code	Sample	Finish
Storefronts, Wood Window Frames & Sashes	Comox Green	VC-19		High Gloss
Window Sills, Cornices, & Parapet Cap Flashings	Haddington Grey	VC-15		Semi-Gloss

*Paint colours matched from Benjamin Moore's *Historical Vancouver True Colours*

6.0 MAINTENANCE PLAN

A Maintenance Plan should be adopted by the property owner, who is responsible for the long-term protection of the heritage features of the Watson & McGregor Building. The Maintenance Plan should include provisions for:

- Copies of the Maintenance Plan and this Conservation Report to be incorporated into the terms of reference for the management and maintenance contract for the building;
- Cyclical maintenance procedures to be adopted as outlined below;
- Record drawings and photos of the building to be kept by the management / maintenance contractor; and
- Records of all maintenance procedures to be kept by the owner.

A thorough maintenance plan will ensure the integrity of the Watson & McGregor Building is preserved. If existing materials are regularly maintained and deterioration is significantly reduced or prevented, the integrity of materials and workmanship of the building will be protected. Proper maintenance is the most cost effective method of extending the life of a building, and preserving its character-defining elements. The survival of historic buildings in good condition is primarily due to regular upkeep and the preservation of historic materials.

6.1 MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

A maintenance schedule should be formulated that adheres to the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. As defined by the *Standards & Guidelines*, maintenance is defined as:

> *Routine, cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary to slow the deterioration of a historic place. It entails periodic inspection; routine, cyclical, non-destructive cleaning; minor repair and refinishing operations; replacement of damaged or deteriorated materials that are impractical to save.*

The assumption that newly renovated buildings become immune to deterioration and require less maintenance is a falsehood. Rather, newly renovated buildings require heightened vigilance to spot errors in construction where previous problems had not occurred, and where deterioration may gain a foothold.

Routine maintenance keeps water out of the building, which is the single most damaging element to a heritage building. Maintenance also prevents damage by sun, wind, snow, frost and all weather; prevents damage by insects and vermin; and aids in protecting all parts of the building against deterioration. The effort and expense expended on an aggressive maintenance will not only lead to a higher degree of preservation, but also over time potentially save large amount of money otherwise required for later repairs.

6.2 PERMITTING

Repair activities, such as simple in-kind repair of materials, or repainting in the same colour, should be exempt from requiring city permits. Other more intensive activities will require the issuance of a Heritage Alteration Permit.

6.3 ROUTINE, CYCLICAL AND NON-DESTRUCTIVE CLEANING

Following the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, be mindful of the principle that recommends "using the gentlest means possible". Any cleaning procedures should be undertaken on a routine basis and should be undertaken with non-destructive methods. Cleaning should be limited to the exterior material such as concrete and stucco wall surfaces and wood elements such as storefront frames. All of these elements are usually easily cleaned, simply with a soft, natural bristle brush, without water, to remove dirt and other material. If a more intensive cleaning is required, this can be accomplished with warm water, mild detergent and a soft bristle brush. High-pressure washing, sandblasting or other abrasive cleaning should not be undertaken under any circumstances.

6.4 REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENT OF DETERIORATED MATERIALS

Interventions such as repairs and replacements must conform to the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. The building's character-defining elements – characteristics of the building that contribute to its heritage value (and identified in the Statement of Significance) such as materials, form, configuration, etc. - must be conserved, referencing the following principles to guide interventions:

- An approach of minimal intervention must be adopted - where intervention is carried out it will be by the least intrusive and most gentle means possible.
- Repair rather than replace character-defining elements.
- Repair character-defining elements using recognized conservation methods.
- Replace 'in kind' extensively deteriorated or missing parts of character-defining elements.
- Make interventions physically and visually compatible with the historic place.

6.5 INSPECTIONS

Inspections are a key element in the maintenance plan, and should be carried out by a qualified person or firm, preferably with experience in the assessment of heritage buildings. These inspections should be conducted on a regular and timely schedule. The inspection should address all aspects of the building including exterior, interior and site conditions. It makes good sense to inspect a building in wet weather, as well as in dry, in order to see how water runs off – or through – a building. From this inspection, an inspection report should be compiled that will include notes, sketches and observations. It is helpful for the inspector to have copies of the building's elevation drawings on which to mark areas of concern such as cracks, staining and rot. These observations can then be included in the report. The report need not be overly complicated or formal, but must be thorough, clear and concise. Issues of concern, taken from the report should then be entered in a log book so that corrective action can be documented and tracked. Major issues of concern should be extracted from the report by the property manager.

An appropriate schedule for regular, periodic inspections would be twice a year, preferably during spring and fall. The spring inspection should be more rigorous since in spring moisture-related deterioration is most visible, and because needed work, such as painting, can be completed during the good weather in summer. The fall inspection should focus on seasonal issues such as weather-sealants, mechanical (heating) systems and drainage issues. Comprehensive inspections should occur at five-year periods, comparing records from previous inspections and the original work, particularly in monitoring structural movement and durability of utilities. Inspections should also occur after major storms.

6.6 INFORMATION FILE

The building should have its own information file where an inspection report can be filed. This file 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, which will aid in determining appropriate interventions when needed.

The file should also contain a list outlining the finishes and materials used, and information detailing where they are available (store, supplier). The building owner should keep on hand a stock of spare materials for minor repairs.

6.6.1 LOG BOOK

The maintenance log book is an important maintenance 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.

Each log should include the full list of recommended maintenance and inspection areas noted in this Maintenance Plan, to ensure a record of all activities is maintained. A full record of these activities will help in planning future repairs and provide valuable building information for all parties involved in the overall maintenance and operation of the building, and will provide essential information for long term programming and determining of future budgets. It will also serve as a reminded to amend the maintenance and inspection activities should new issues be discovered or previous recommendations prove inaccurate.

The log book will also indicate unexpectedly repeated repairs, which may help in solving more serious problems that may arise in the historic building. The log book is a living document that will require constant adding to, and should be kept in the information file along with other documentation noted in section ***6.6 Information File***.

6.7 EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE

Water, in all its forms and sources (rain, snow, frost, rising ground water, leaking pipes, back-splash, etc.) is the single most damaging element to historic buildings.

The most common place for water to enter a building is through the roof. Keeping roofs repaired or renewed is the most cost-effective maintenance option. Evidence of a small interior leak should be viewed as a warning for a much larger and worrisome water damage problem elsewhere and should be fixed immediately.

6.7.1 INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following checklist considers a wide range of potential problems specific to the Watson & McGregor Building, such as water/moisture penetration, material deterioration and structural deterioration. This does not include interior inspections.

EXTERIOR INSPECTION

Masonry

- ☐ Are moisture problems present? (Rising damp, rain penetration, condensation, water run-off from roof, sills, or ledges?)
- ☐ Is spalling from freezing present? Location?
- ☐ Is efflorescence present? Location?
- ☐ Is spalling from sub-florescence present? Location?
- ☐ Need for pointing repair? Condition of existing pointing and re-pointing?
- ☐ Is bedding mortar sound?
- ☐ Are there cracks due to shrinking and expansion?
- ☐ Are there cracks due to structural movement?
- ☐ Are there unexplained cracks?
- ☐ Do cracks require continued monitoring?
- ☐ Are there signs of steel or iron corrosion?
- ☐ Are there stains present? Rust, copper, organic, paints, oils / tars? Cause?
- ☐ Does the surface need cleaning?

Wood Elements

- ☐ Are there moisture problems present? (Rising damp, rain penetration, condensation moisture from plants, water run-off from roof, sills, or ledges?)
- ☐ Is wood in direct contact with the ground?
- ☐ Is there insect attack present? Where and probable source?
- ☐ Is there fungal attack present? Where and probable source?
- ☐ Are there any other forms of biological attack? (Moss, birds, etc.) Where and probable source?
- ☐ Is any wood surface damaged from UV radiation? (bleached surface, loose surface fibres)
- ☐ Is any wood warped, cupped or twisted?
- ☐ Is any wood split? Are there loose knots?

- ☐ Are nails pulling loose or rusted?
- ☐ Is there any staining of wood elements? Source?

Condition of Exterior Painted Materials

- ☐ Paint shows: blistering, sagging or wrinkling, alligatoring, peeling. Cause?
- ☐ Paint has the following stains: rust, bleeding knots, mildew, etc. Cause?
- ☐ Paint cleanliness, especially at air vents?

Windows

- ☐ Is there glass cracked or missing?
- ☐ If the glazing is puttied has it gone brittle and cracked? Fallen out? Painted to shed water?
- ☐ Is there condensation or water damage to the paint?
- ☐ Are the sashes easy to operate? If hinged, do they swing freely?
- ☐ Is the frame free from distortion?
- ☐ Do sills show weathering or deterioration?
- ☐ Are drip mouldings/flashing above the windows properly shedding water?
- ☐ Is the caulking between the frame and the cladding in good condition?

Roof

- ☐ Are there water blockage points?
- ☐ Is there evidence of biological attack? (Fungus, moss, birds, insects)
- ☐ Are flashings well seated?
- ☐ Are metal joints and seams sound?
- ☐ Is there rubbish buildup on the roof?
- ☐ Are there blisters or slits in the membrane?
- ☐ Are the drain pipes plugged or standing proud?
- ☐ Is water ponding present?

6.7.2 MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

INSPECTION CYCLE:

Daily

- Observations noted during cleaning (cracks; damp, dripping pipes; malfunctioning hardware; etc.) to be noted in log book or building file.

Semi-annually

- Semi-annual inspection and report with special focus on seasonal issues.
- Thorough cleaning of drainage system to cope with winter rains and summer storms
- Check condition of weather sealants (Fall).
- Clean the exterior using a soft bristle broom/ brush.

Annually (Spring)

- Inspect concrete for cracks, deterioration.
- Inspect metal elements, especially in areas that may trap water.
- Inspect windows for paint and glazing compound failure, corrosion and wood decay and proper operation.
- Complete annual inspection and report.
- Clean out of all perimeter drains and rainwater systems.
- Touch up worn paint on the building's exterior.
- Check for plant, insect or animal infestation.
- Routine cleaning, as required.

Five-Year Cycle

- A full inspection report should be undertaken every five years comparing records from previous inspections and the original work, particularly monitoring structural movement and durability of utilities.
- Repaint windows every five to fifteen years.

Ten-Year Cycle

- Check condition of roof every ten years after last replacement.

Twenty-Year Cycle

- Confirm condition of roof and estimate effective lifespan. Replace when required.

Major Maintenance Work (as required)

- Thorough repainting, downspout and drain replacement; replacement of deteriorated building materials; etc.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH SUMMARY

HISTORIC NAME: Watson & McGregor (Hardware & Plumbing) Building
ADDRESS: 645-651 Johnson Street
ORIGINAL OWNER: Watson & McGregor
ARCHITECT: A. Maxwell Muir
BUILDER: Parfitt Brothers
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1909

ORIGINAL LEGAL DESCRIPTION
- Lots 430 & 431, Block 2, approx. 46' wide by 86' deep.

BUILDING PERMIT
- #1128: May 13, 1909; Watson & McGregor; 1 building; brick; 2 stories; Stores; 4 rooms; $8,000.
- #2954: September 1, 1911; Watson & McGregor; 1 building; brick; 1 storey; 3 rooms; $2,500.

VICTORIA CITY HALL PLANS
- March 1909, A. Maxwell Muir, for Watson & McGregor; 6 sheets (show a different façade than now exists)

PLUMBING PERMIT
- #33: Previous Building – Hotel for Hugh Doane
- #457: Thomas Nicholson – NE 430
- #2150; August 15, 1905: Previous building for Miss M. Doane.
- #4206:
- #4235: March 10, 1909: Watson & McGregor; Stores & Offices
- #7444: July 2, 1914: Thomas Nicholson Pt. 430.

DIRECTORIES
- 1910 Henderson's BC Gazetteer & Directory, Page 1343: Watson (George) & McGregor (Wm) hardware & plumbing 624 Johnson

NEWSPAPER REFERENCES
- Victoria Daily Colonist, June 2, 1909, page 6: New Building for Watson & McGregor.

PUBLISHED REFERENCES
- Pamela Madoff, entry on A. Maxwell Muir; Building The West: The Early Architects of British Columbia. Vancouver. Talonbooks, 2nd Ed., 2007.