



**Planning Committee  
Electronic Meeting**

**Anderson Room, City Hall  
6911 No. 3 Road**

**Tuesday, July 22, 2025  
4:00 p.m.**

Pg. #      ITEM

**MINUTES**

*Motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on July 8, 2025 (distributed separately).*



**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE**

September 3, 2025, (tentative date) at 4:00 p.m. in the Anderson Room.

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

1. **AWARD OF CONTRACT 588F — PROVISION OF AUTOMATED BUILDING CODE AND ZONING REVIEW SOFTWARE**  
(File Ref. No. 08-4000-01) (REDMS No. 8078696)

**PLN-3**

**See Page PLN-3 for full report**

*Designated Speaker: James Cooper*

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) *That Contract 588F - Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software be awarded to SMARTreview, Inc. for a one-year term, for an estimated maximum total value of \$630,000, excluding taxes, as described in the report titled “Award of Contract588F - Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software”, dated July3, 2025 from the Director, Building Approvals; and*
- (2) *That the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager, Planning and Development, be authorized to execute the contract and all related documentation with SMARTreview, Inc.*

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2. **REFERRAL RESPONSE: STEVESTON HOTEL HERITAGE STATUS (12111 3RD AVENUE)**

(File Ref. No. 08-4200-09) (REDMS No. 8065100)

PLN-7

See Page PLN-7 for full report

*Designated Speakers: Judith Mosley & John Hopkins*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

*That the report titled “Referral Response: Steveston Hotel Heritage Status (12111 3rd Avenue)”, dated June 30, 2025, from the Director, Policy Planning, be received for information.*

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3. **MANAGER’S REPORT**

ADJOURNMENT

☐



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** July 3, 2025  
**From:** James Cooper, Architect AIBC **File:** 08-4000-01/2025-Vol  
Director, Building Approvals 01  
**Re:** **Award of Contract 588F — Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software**

### Staff Recommendations

1. That Contract 588F - Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software be awarded to SMARTreview, Inc. for a one-year term, for an estimated maximum total value of \$630,000, excluding taxes, as described in the report titled "Award of Contract 588F - Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software", dated July 3, 2025 from the Director, Building Approvals; and
2. That the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager, Planning and Development, be authorized to execute the contract and all related documentation with SMARTreview, Inc.

James Cooper, Architect AIBC  
Director, Building Approvals  
(604-247-4606)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b> 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

In September 2023, the City proposed to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) a suite of initiatives to streamline housing delivery under the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). The Automated Building Code review initiative, leveraging emerging software technology, was approved as part of a \$35,000,000 grant awarded to the City.

This report seeks Council approval to proceed to the development and implementation phase under a sole source contract, following a successful initial proof-of-concept phase.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #4 Responsible Financial Management and Governance:

*Responsible financial management and efficient use of public resources to meet the needs of the community.*

*4.2 Seek improvements and efficiencies in all aspects of City business.*

### **Analysis**

#### **Background**

In September 2023, Building Approvals proposed developing an innovative concept for utilizing technology to perform Building Code and Zoning reviews to provide faster building application reviews and shorter permitting times. Council approved staff to apply for CMHC funding, which was later approved under the Housing Accelerator Funding for \$717,414. Authorization to proceed was subsequently granted by Council as part of the 2024 proposed Capital Budget.

The City is currently under Contract 8318P - Planning Study for Automated Building Code Review Software with SMARTreview, Inc. to complete a proof-of-concept study demonstrating software programming that can automate plan review for both Building Code and Zoning criteria.

Request for Proposal (RFP) 8318P was originally posted to BC Bid and closed on November 5, 2024. Two proposals were received at the time and subsequently evaluated against predetermined criteria. Staff concluded that the proposal received from SMARTreview, Inc. was superior and offered the City the best overall value for money, as they had already digitized a building code (the International Building Code, which is very similar to the National Building Code of Canada, on which the BC Building Code is based).

As a result, SMARTreview, Inc. was able to demonstrate a viable commercial product that reviews digital drawings for compliance with building provisions. Staff subsequently executed a contract in May 2025 to complete the proof-of-concept study for \$86,400. The limited response from the market to the original RFP confirmed staff's prior assessment that there are very few commercially viable firms with the capability and skills to develop a potential product likely to satisfy the City's long-term objectives.

### Scope of Work

The City requires the expertise of an external service provider to develop and provide specific software to work with the City's permitting system to provide an automated Building Code and Zoning review tool that integrates with the multiple processes and requirements for permit issuance. Staff are actively facilitating the process through concurrent consultation with industry and internal stakeholders, with the objective of implementation by May 2026 to meet expectations for faster permitting.

The list of deliverables defining successful development and implementation is as follows:

1. Digitization of the BC Building Code to enable review by software for Building Code compliance.
2. Development of automated plan review software using Building Information Modelling to evaluate application drawings and documents for compliance with the BC Building Code for complex building types, emphasizing mid- and high-rise residential structures.
3. Development of concomitant software capabilities to review Zoning Bylaw criteria.
4. Develop specific operating criteria designed to work with the City's permitting system, its processes and the online portal to process permit applications.
5. Develop metrics to determine and monitor the effectiveness of the automation software on permitting processes.
6. Engage City staff from all departments that have review responsibilities for the permitting processes.
7. Engage industry to establish technical process requirements and procedures that promote user acceptance and their robust participation.
8. Design an implementation strategy to integrate the review process from multiple departments.
9. Develop operating procedures based on ease of use.
10. Implementation of artificial intelligence for continuous improvement of the system and capabilities of accepting a greater range of digital file types.
11. Provide training for City staff throughout the development and implementation phases.
12. Develop a maintenance and support services plan for ongoing operation.

### Rationale

Staff recommend proceeding with SMARTreview, Inc. for the systems development and implementation, rather than conducting another RFP process to determine the appropriate provider. The successful proof-of-concept study, using actual application drawings, established both technical capabilities to review complex plans for Building Code compliance and overall direction for process implementation within the City's permitting system. Continuing from this considerable progress provides for efficiency and confidence for an effective system.

Software systems capable of reviewing compliance with Building Code provisions are believed to be extremely rare worldwide, as demonstrated by the limited number of proponents responding to the initial RFP that concluded in November 2024. SMARTreview, Inc. was chosen based on having developed a commercially viable system and being first to digitize the International Building Code, which is very similar to the BC Building Code. Given their

July 3, 2025

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demonstrated capability, rare knowledge and skills, and the direction set by the successful proof-of-concept, staff are confident that proceeding with a sole source appointment is the best path forward.

### **Financial Impact**

Funding is available under the Council-approved 2024 Capital Budget Automated Plan Review AI Software for \$717,414, funded by the Housing Accelerator Fund.

### **Conclusion**

Staff recommend that Contract 588F - Provision of Automated Building Code and Zoning Review Software be awarded to SMARTreview, Inc. for the total cost of the initial one-year term estimated at \$630,000, exclusive of taxes.

Although industry has used Building Information Modelling technology in the past decades to advance standards for design and construction, jurisdictions to date have not taken advantage of the opportunities for enhanced regulatory reviews and permitting.

The City has embarked on a process to develop the first such system in any jurisdiction in North America using this technology, augmented with artificial intelligence to continually expand capabilities. Potentially, this represents innovation that will be transformative for jurisdictions throughout the region, province and country.



James Cooper, Architect AIBC  
Director, Building Approvals  
(604-247-4606)

JC:fa



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Planning Committee  
**From:** John Hopkins  
Director, Policy Planning

**Date:** June 30, 2025  
**File:** 08-4200-09/2025-Vol 01

**Re:** Referral Response: Steveston Hotel Heritage Status (12111 3rd Avenue)




### Staff Recommendation

That the report titled "Referral Response: Steveston Hotel Heritage Status (12111 3rd Avenue)", dated June 30, 2025, from the Director, Policy Planning, be received for information.

John Hopkins  
Director, Policy Planning  
(604-276-4279)

JH:jm

Att. 3

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>  Development Applications	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>  
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>  	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>  

## Staff Report

### Origin

The purpose of this report is to respond to Council's referral requesting staff's comments in response to a delegation made to Council on January 13, 2025 by Kanaris Demetre Lazos in regards to the heritage status of the Steveston Hotel (12111 3rd Avenue).

As part of the delegation, Mr. Lazos commented that it was a long process to achieve approval for changes to the protected heritage property, that the owner would like to demolish the hotel and rebuild a modern building, and that the restrictions and building characteristics were affecting business. Mr. Lazos requested removal of the heritage status from all of the property or from the 1948 addition (former Buck and Ear pub and hotel rooms above).

In response, Council passed the following motion:

*That the delegation and submission regarding the Steveston Hotel be referred to staff for comments.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

*Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.*

*6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.*

### Findings of Fact

The property at 12111 3rd Avenue, known as the Steveston Hotel, is a protected heritage property, under section 614 of the *Local Government Act*, within the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area, and is listed on the municipal heritage inventory. For protected heritage properties such as the Steveston Hotel, additional development on a property can be considered, based on the site's zoning, through a Heritage Alteration Permit and/or Heritage Revitalization Agreement. Development should be consistent with the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy and Steveston Area Plan, and with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

### Property Characteristics

The property is zoned "Steveston Commercial (CS2)". Permitted uses include hotel, office, retail and liquor primary establishment. Secondary uses include apartment housing.

The CS2 zone allows for a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0. The site area is 2,936 m<sup>2</sup> (31,603 ft<sup>2</sup>) and the existing floor area of the building is 1,168 m<sup>2</sup> (12,572 ft<sup>2</sup>). The FAR of the property is currently 0.4. A large portion of the property is used for surface parking to serve the existing hotel and restaurant business. The original 1897 hotel and the 1948 addition have a two-storey form while later additions and alterations at the rear are mostly one storey.



Recent Modifications:

Since 2015, under the current ownership, some exterior alterations have been made to the building including replacing the windows, exterior painting and roof renewal (with the assistance of a Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Grant of \$72,800 from the City of Richmond, disbursed in 2021). Heritage Alteration Permits (HAP) were issued for these works (in addition to building permit and other permits as required).

There have been nine HAPs issued since 2015:

1. HA 16-723477: To allow a reconfiguration of lot lines to create two new lots (Steveston Hotel and Steveston Courthouse sites) (HAP issued on September 11, 2017). The subdivision was completed in 2018.  
  
The Steveston Courthouse building on the adjacent site to the north, 12011 3rd Avenue, is also a protected heritage property within the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area and is additionally protected by a Heritage Designation Bylaw. There is an active rezoning application for the site that proposes relocation on the property and restoration of the historic Steveston Courthouse building, along with mixed use development of commercial and residential units in a new building. The application is currently under staff review and it would be presented to Council for consideration through a separate Report to Committee.
2. HA 17-766440: To allow the replacement of a window with a new entry door to provide a separate entrance to a restaurant in the hotel (HAP issued on June 12, 2017).
3. HA 17-776233: To allow the painting of a mural on the south elevation of the property as a Canada 150 project (HAP issued on July 10, 2017). The mural was commissioned at a cost of \$25,000, which was funded by the City of Richmond Public Art Program Reserve Fund.
4. HA 18-804880: To allow the replacement of all upper-storey windows (HAP issued on April 23, 2018).
5. HA 18-818781: To allow the installation of a new storefront door and replacement of two windows in the front (east) elevation (HAP issued on July 23, 2018).
6. HA 19-864567: To allow the exterior painting of the building in a different colour (HAP issued on August 8, 2019, under delegated authority).
7. HA 19-881148: To allow the replacement of the existing roof and to receive a grant request in the amount of \$72,800 to assist with the roof replacement (HAP issued on July 27, 2020). The grant represented 50% of the total cost, consistent with the Grant Program (Council Policy 5900).
8. HA 23-035279: To allow exterior alterations to the building and landscaping related to the conversion of the pub space into hotel suites (HAP issued on September 23, 2024).
9. HA 25-017139: To allow the reinstallation of the mural, *Arrival of the S.V. Titania*, on the south elevation of the building (HAP issued on June 25, 2025, under delegated authority). The mural is being commissioned at a cost of \$30,000, which will be funded from the City of Richmond Public Art Program Reserve Fund.

A Building Permit was issued on November 27, 2024 for the alterations to convert the pub space (B7 23-018585). The pub closed in May 2025 and work has begun on the alteration.

## **Related Policies & Studies**

### Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area

Steveston is a place with national significance in Canada's history. Historically, it was an important commercial fishing and cannery centre on the West Coast. Representative of British Columbia's natural resource-based development since the 1880s, of its economic, social and cultural story, and Richmond's earliest example of city planning, Steveston is also significant for the extent of its historic character and intrinsic heritage values. Flanked by two National Historic Sites, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery and Britannia Shipyards, Steveston Village and its heritage resources are part of the story and significance of both.

In 2009, the Steveston Area Plan was adopted to designate Steveston Village as a Heritage Conservation Area (HCA). Seventeen buildings, including the Steveston Hotel, and some landscape features are identified as protected heritage resources (Attachment 1). The Steveston Area Plan seeks to "conserve significant heritage resources throughout the Steveston area" and "conserve the identified heritage resources within the Steveston Village Node (e.g., as per the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy)". An in-depth heritage planning process was undertaken to research and define the Steveston Village HCA and identify the heritage resources to be protected and conserved. The objectives, heritage values and heritage character of the HCA and how the heritage resources contribute to it are set out in the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy.

The conservation of the individual identified heritage resources is a key component of the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy. While the unique character of Steveston Village has been appreciated and enjoyed by the community and visitors for many years, the establishment of the HCA in 2009 provided the tools to understand, protect and conserve its unique qualities for current and future generations. Conservation of the 17 protected buildings was considered essential for the conservation of Steveston Village to be effective overall.

All properties within the HCA are subject to the City's conservation requirements and applicable heritage policies and design guidelines. An HAP is required for exterior alterations to protected heritage buildings in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (Part 15) to help in retaining the heritage values and special heritage character of Steveston Village. For non-heritage properties in the SVHCA, new development requires a Development Permit (DP) and is guided by the development permit design guidelines in the Steveston Area Plan. Exterior alterations for non-heritage buildings also require a DP while changes to signs, exterior painting, patios and subdivision require an HAP.

### Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Grant Program

The Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Grant (SVHCG) Program (Council Policy 5900) was adopted by Council in 2009 as part of the implementation of the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy. The program aims to provide financial assistance to property owners, on

a cost-sharing basis, for conserving the exterior of the 17 protected heritage buildings, including the Steveston Hotel, in the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area, recognizing that the historic buildings make a significant contribution to the heritage character of Steveston Village. The grant program is funded by developer's contributions secured through rezoning applications. The SVHCG Program was most recently updated on January 27, 2025 to help facilitate more applications to the program.

An example of how the SVHCG program can support restoration of the protected heritage properties in Steveston Village is the restoration currently underway at 3711/3731 Chatham Street, the historic Steveston Methodist Church. Grants have been approved for both structural work (completed and grant disbursed 2021) and exterior restoration (approved 2024).

To date, the Steveston Hotel has received a grant of \$72,800 from the program to assist with roof replacement in 2021. Further funds remain available to support planning and conservation work.

#### The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2010, Parks Canada), pan-Canadian best-practice principles and guidance, is used as a guide in managing the protected heritage resources in Steveston Village and reviewing all SVHCG applications.

The *Standards and Guidelines* defines conservation as “all actions or processes aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of an historic place to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. This may involve Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, or a combination of these actions or processes.”

#### **Analysis**

The Steveston Hotel (originally known as the Sockeye Hotel) is a protected heritage property within the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area. It was identified as a potential heritage building in 1987 in the *Design Criteria for the Steveston Revitalization Area* (Sakamoto Guidelines) and was subsequently placed on the City's Heritage Inventory. When the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area was established by the City of Richmond Council in 2009, the Steveston Hotel was identified as a heritage resource to be protected and conserved, one of 17 historic buildings identified, including some landscape features (Attachment 1).

The Steveston Hotel was constructed in two main phases. The earliest part of the building, located at the northeast corner of 3rd Avenue and Moncton Street, was built in 1897 and the large addition to the north of it was added in 1947-48. A recently updated Statement of Significance is provided in Attachment 2. It identifies the heritage value of the property as the oldest commercial lodging establishment in Richmond and its continued use as a hotel since 1897, and its early and continuous role as a social and community gathering space. Additionally, it is valued as a vestige of the remarkable development of the Steveston townsite in the 1890s, and its association with two notable Vancouver-based architects.

While some exterior architectural elements and finishes have been covered over or altered, the historic form of the building is largely intact. The character-defining elements noted in the Statement of Significance include its corner location, use, form, scale, massing, wood-frame construction, design features such as the parapet, flanking pavilions and central entrance of the 1897-built hotel, the upper-storey fenestration of the 1948-constructed addition, and the rooftop flagpole.

There is opportunity to restore the historic hotel building and further develop the property in a form, density and use compatible with the conservation of the building that would enhance the heritage character of Steveston Village. This could be through a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA), a tool enabled by the *Local Government Act*. An HRA is a mutually beneficial arrangement that balances heritage conservation with development needs. It is a negotiated agreement between the property owner and the City that can provide non-financial incentives in exchange for exterior restoration and rehabilitation of the historic building. Incentives could include additional floor area and other zoning relaxations to help achieve heritage conservation, such as building height, parking, use, density and subdivision. An HRA has been successful in conserving and protecting the historic R.G. Ransford House (10700 Railway Avenue) while allowing for sensitive infill development on the site. The HRA varied zoning provisions to allow a compatible form of development and a parking format variance. It was agreed in 2022 and the development was recently completed.

How best to conserve and restore the historic hotel should be explored through a heritage planning process undertaken with a heritage professional and in collaboration with an architect experienced in heritage conservation projects, to develop a detailed heritage conservation plan and proposal for the site. This could include evaluation of the two main phases of historic development on the site. Staff are not aware that such a heritage planning process has been undertaken for the property to date. Any proposal should be guided by and consistent with the Steveston Village Conservation Strategy and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. Although this process would be led by the property owner, a Planning Project Grant from the SVHCG Program could assist with the cost of this planning stage. Staff can be available to support this process.

The SVHCG Program is available to support heritage planning and exterior conservation of the Steveston Hotel. The property has already received \$72,800 for roof replacement (disbursed in 2021 on completion of the work). Up to \$10,000 is available to provide up to 100% of eligible costs for planning projects, and up to \$177,200 remains available to provide up to 50% of eligible costs for conservation work.

If an HRA is proposed, an HAP application would also be required to authorize alterations to the protected heritage property and could be processed concurrently with the HRA and grant application.

Staff do not recommend any change to the property's status as a protected heritage property in the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area. The opportunity to restore the historic hotel building and further develop the property should be explored through a heritage planning process.

Discussion with Property Owner

Staff have met and discussed with the property owner representative, Sadru Ramji, and his associate, Kanaris Demetre Lazos, on a number of occasions to discuss the future of the Steveston Hotel, including following their delegation and Council's referral. Correspondence to the Director, Policy Planning was also received from Mr. Lazos (March 17, 2025) and Mr. Ramji (March 14, 2025) (Attachment 3). Both Mr. Ramji and Mr. Lazos have indicated that they would be interested in retaining the original portion of the Steveston Hotel (constructed in 1897) but would like to rebuild the portion that was added in 1948 (the former Buck and Ear pub) for rental residential apartment units. This would require the expertise of a heritage conservation specialist to undertake further analysis and provide conservation recommendations, as well as to provide input to development and design proposals for the site. An HRA and an HAP application would be needed to authorize exterior alterations to the protected heritage property and to enable any variances to the zoning to achieve the proposed redevelopment. Both the HRA and HAP would require Council approval.

**Financial Impact**

Not applicable.

**Conclusion**

This report responds to Council's referral requesting staff's comments in response to a delegation made to Council in regards to the heritage status of the Steveston Hotel (12111 3rd Avenue).

The Steveston Hotel at 12111 3rd Avenue is one of 17 protected heritage buildings in the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area. It has substantial heritage value and retains much of its historic form. It is an important heritage resource contributing to the heritage value and historic character of Steveston Village. There is potential to redevelop the property while retaining the historic building. How to conserve the heritage building through redevelopment should be explored through a heritage planning process and identification of a specific redevelopment proposal.

Staff recommend that this report be received for information.

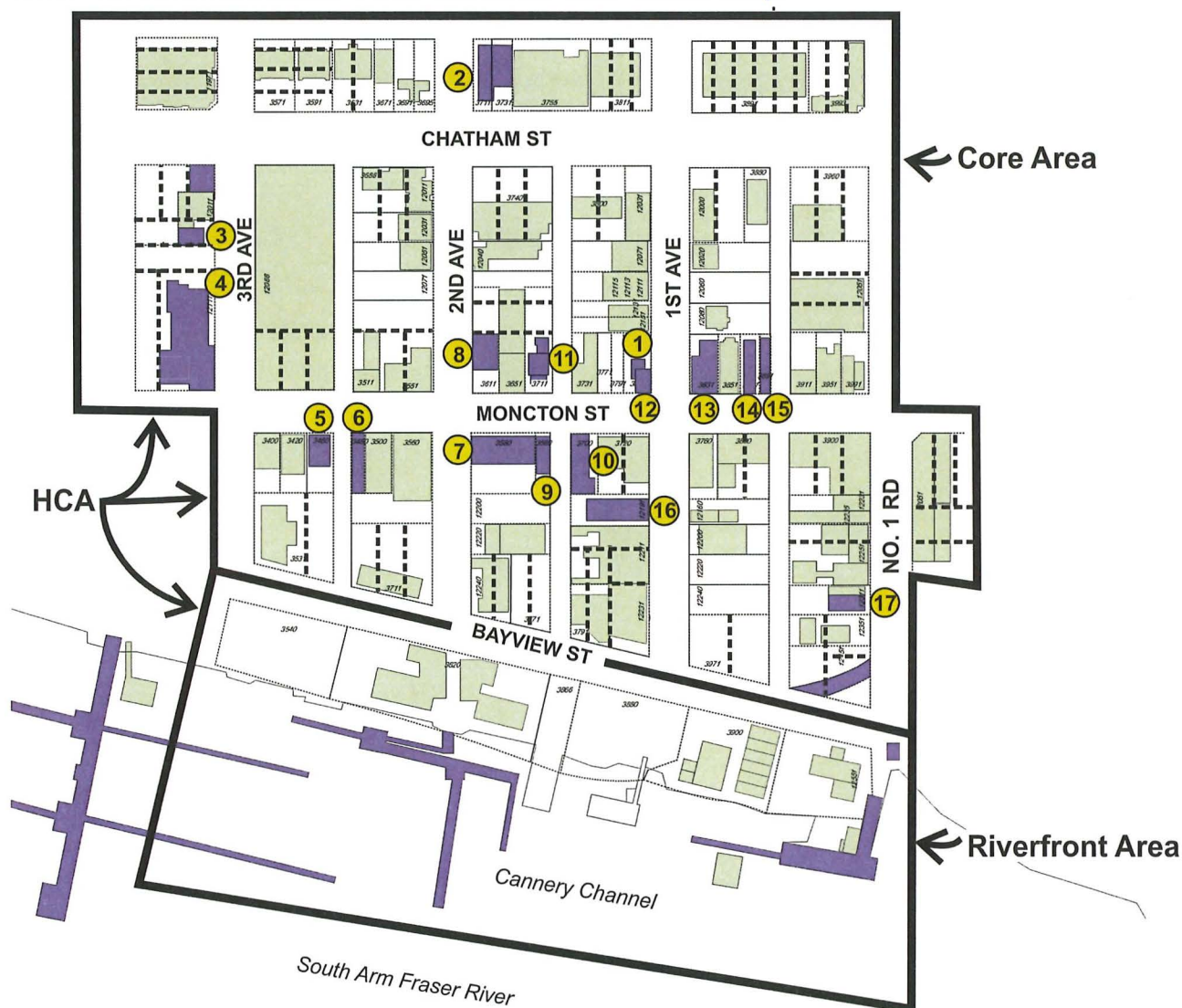


Judith Mosley  
Planner 2 (Policy Planning) – Heritage Planner  
(604-276-4170)




JM:cas

- Att. 1: Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area and Identified Heritage Resources  
2: Statement of Significance: Sockeye Hotel / Steveston Hotel (2025)  
3: Correspondence from Kanaris Demetre Lazos and Sadru Ramji

**Map 1: Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) – Resources and Modified 1892 Historic Lot Lines Map**



### LEGEND

	Non Heritage Building		Identified Heritage Resource		Historic Lot Lines
①	3811 Moncton St.: "Japanese Doctors'/Hospital Office" relocated from 4091 Chatham St.	⑦	3580 Moncton Street "Hepworth Block"	⑬	3831 Moncton Street "Ray's Drygoods/Budget Appliance"
②	3711/3731 Chatham Street "Steveston Methodist Church"	⑧	3611 Moncton Street "Marine Garage"	⑭	3871 Moncton Street "Bare Basics"
③	12011 3 <sup>RD</sup> Avenue "Steveston Courthouse"	⑨	3680 Moncton Street "Wakita Grocery"	⑮	3891 Moncton Street "Tasaka Barbershop"
④	12111 3 <sup>RD</sup> Avenue "Sockeye/Steveston Hotel"	⑩	3700 Moncton Street "Redden Net/ Atagi Building"	⑯	12191 1 <sup>ST</sup> Avenue "Japanese Buddhist Temple"
⑤	3460 Moncton Street "Dave's Fish & Chips"	⑪	3711 Moncton Street "Cannery Café"	⑰	12311 No 1 Road "Prickly Pear Garden Center"
⑥	3480 Moncton Street "Watsida Building/ Riverside Art Gallery"	⑫	3811 Moncton Street "Steveston Museum/Northern Bank"		

November 27, 2018



## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

RESOURCE NAME(S)	Sockeye Hotel; Steveston Hotel
ADDRESS	12111 3rd Avenue
MUNICIPALITY	City of Richmond
NEIGHBOURHOOD	Steveston
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Lot 2, Plan EPP65456
PARCEL IDENTIFIER (PID)	030-380-359
YEAR BUILT	1897; 1947-1948
ORIGINAL OWNER(S)	Henry (Harry) Lee
BUILDER	Michael M. Cunningham (1897); James Galloway (1947-1948)
ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	William E. Blackmore (1897); Ross A. Lort (1947-1948)

## CONTEMPORARY PHOTO



## DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC PLACE

The Sockeye Hotel is a cultural landmark located in the historic Steveston townsite at the western terminus of Moncton Street: the main commercial corridor through the community. Positioned on a corner property fronting 3rd Avenue, the Sockeye Hotel is characterized by its two-storey height, mid-century addition on its north side, and continuous use as a hotel since its construction. It remains as one of the oldest in-situ structures in the Steveston townsite.

## HERITAGE VALUE OF HISTORIC PLACE

The Sockeye Hotel is highly valued as the oldest commercial lodging establishment in Richmond, and for its continued use as a hotel since its construction in 1897. Beginning as a private club in 1895, in order to obtain a liquor licence to serve its members, the Sockeye Hotel was originally located in a structure immediately across 3rd Avenue. Its proprietor, England-born Henry Lee (1842-1908), a seasoned hotelier, commissioned the construction of the extant Sockeye Hotel in 1897 following changes in liquor licencing regulations by the local government. Built in 31 days and originally containing 16 rooms, a bar, and a dining hall, the Sockeye opened as one of Steveston's earliest hotels, supplementing the first hotel in Steveston: the Richmond Hotel, which was built in 1890. Lee operated the Sockeye until his passing in 1908, at which time his wife, Mary (b.1861) continued to own the property for several years before selling. Following the purchase of the hotel by Frederick Hayden (1861-1935) in circa 1924, the establishment was rebranded as the Steveston Hotel. Under the proprietorship of the Littlejohn family, beginning with Mary S. Littlejohn (1880-1965) in 1939, the Steveston Hotel was enlarged in 1948 through the extant addition on its northside, and the exterior of the 1897 building was modernized concurrently. Mary's son, Douglas Littlejohn (1912-1976), continued to own and operate the hotel until selling it in 1969.

The Sockeye Hotel is also valued for its early and continuous role as a social and community gathering space. During its early years, the Sockeye was marketed as a destination for cyclists heading south from Vancouver. Throughout the 20th century, community organizations made use of the hotel for events and meetings, such as the Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society who celebrated the enthronement of Emperor Taishō in 1915 here, and the Steveston Community Society who held their meetings here from the late 1940s into the early 1950s. As one of the few, if not the only, hotel and bar in Richmond during the Inter-war era and Second World War era, the Sockeye was an epicenter of after-hours activity and frequented by fishers and cannery workers, and has hosted long-term neighbourhood pubs, including the Buccaneer, and its successor, the Buck & Ear, for several decades.

The Sockeye Hotel is further valued as a vestige of the remarkable development of the Steveston townsite in the 1890s. This growth was a direct result of unprecedented salmon runs during that decade, prompting the construction of many canneries along the Steveston



waterfront and an influx of permanent and seasonal residents. When the Sockeye was completed in 1897, there were 14 operating canneries in the immediate vicinity, with the large, and adjacent Gulf of Georgia Cannery, having been completed in 1894.

The Sockeye Hotel is additionally valued for its association with two notable Vancouver-based architects, who designed both the original hotel, and its 1948 addition: William Blackmore (1841-1904) and Ross A. Lort (1889-1968), respectively. Blackmore was one of the first architects in the newly incorporated city of Vancouver, and designed many hotels, commercial blocks, churches, and residences during his time. For his Sockeye Hotel commission, his Late Victorian eclectic design featured a symmetrical two-storey building clad in wood drop siding, with flanking pavilions accentuated with oblique square corner oriel windows, continuous window sills and lintels, a cornice and parapet, chamfered entrances, and decorative scroll-cut embellishments. Lort began his professional career in Vancouver at the age of 17, with a focus on residential design. His stucco-clad design for the Sockeye Hotel addition originally expressed a Streamline Moderne style emphasizing its horizontality through courses of neon lighting and banding, and featured recessed entrances, round windows, and a large rounded-corner window and canopies.

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#### CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS


The elements that define the heritage character of the Sockeye Hotel include, but are not limited to its:

- location on the northwest corner of 3rd Avenue and Moncton Street within Richmond's Steveston townsite, and minimal setback from each road;
  - continuous use as a hotel with restaurant and bar since 1897;
  - commercial form, scale, and massing as expressed by its original symmetrical design with a rectangular, U-shaped plan; two-storey height; flat roof; and later 1948-constructed addition on north side with a rectangular plan, two-storey height, and flat roof;
  - wood-frame construction;
  - original design features including the parapet, flanking pavilions, and central entrance of the 1897-built hotel; and original upper-storey fenestration along the Third Avenue frontage of the 1948-constructed addition; and
  - other exterior features including a centrally positioned flag pole on the 1897-built hotel.
-

HISTORICAL IMAGE



CAPTION	View of the front elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	circa 1900
SOURCE	City of Richmond Archives 1977-19-25
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE	
	
CAPTION	Looking east along Moncton Street during a labour strike with the Sockeye Hotel visible on the left.
DATE	1900
SOURCE	Henry J. Woodside Library and Archives Canada PA-016346
COPYRIGHT	Library and Archives Canada

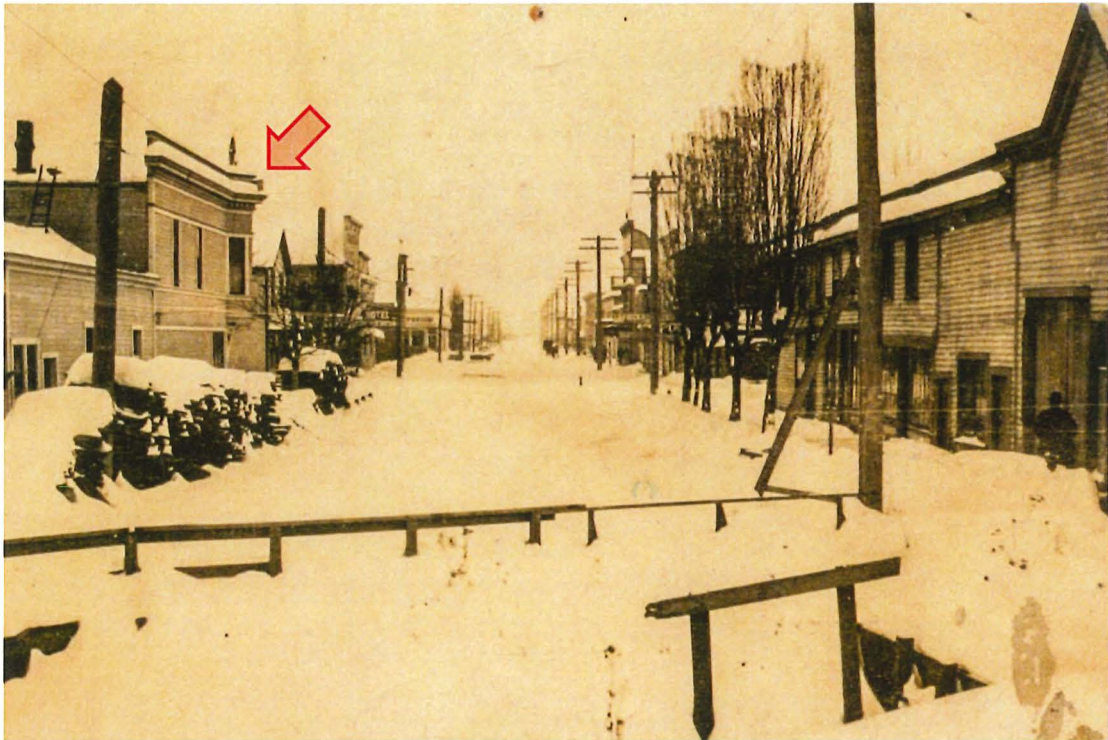


HISTORICAL IMAGE



CAPTION	View of the front elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	1908
SOURCE	Philip Timms City of Richmond Archives 1977-19-25
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE



CAPTION	Looking east along Moncton Street following a snowstorm with the Sockeye Hotel visible on the left.
DATE	1915
SOURCE	City of Richmond Archives 1987-104-18
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE



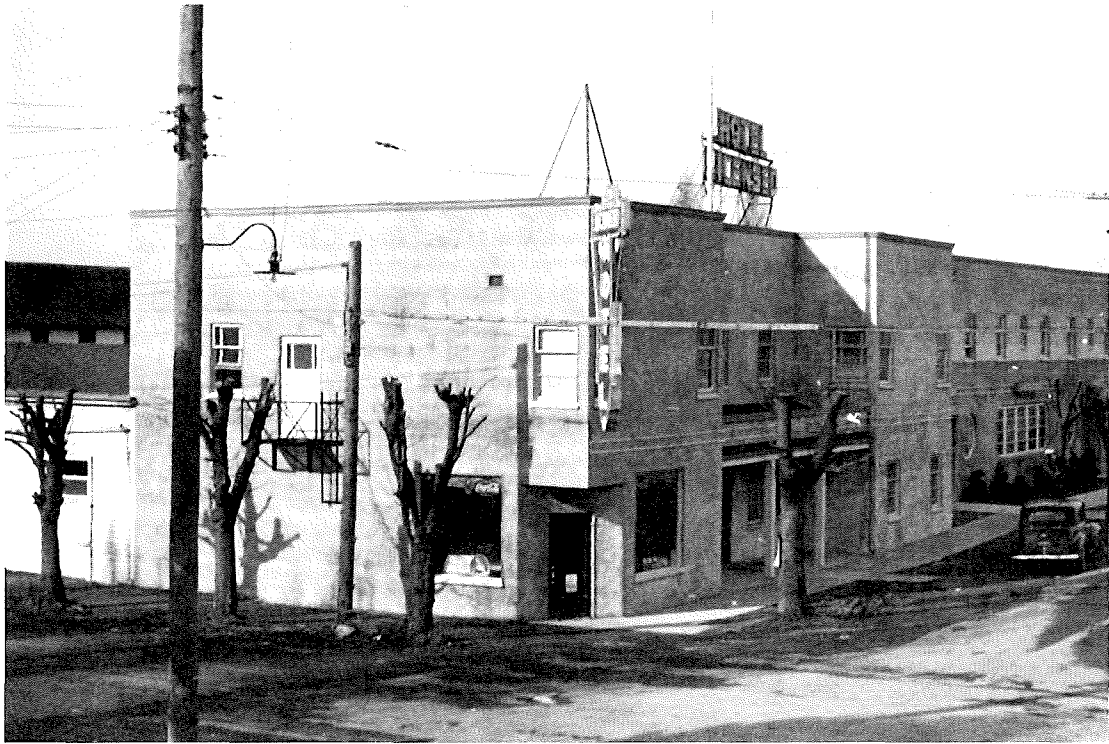
CAPTION	View of the front elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	1947
SOURCE	British Columbia Archives J-08678
COPYRIGHT	British Columbia Archives



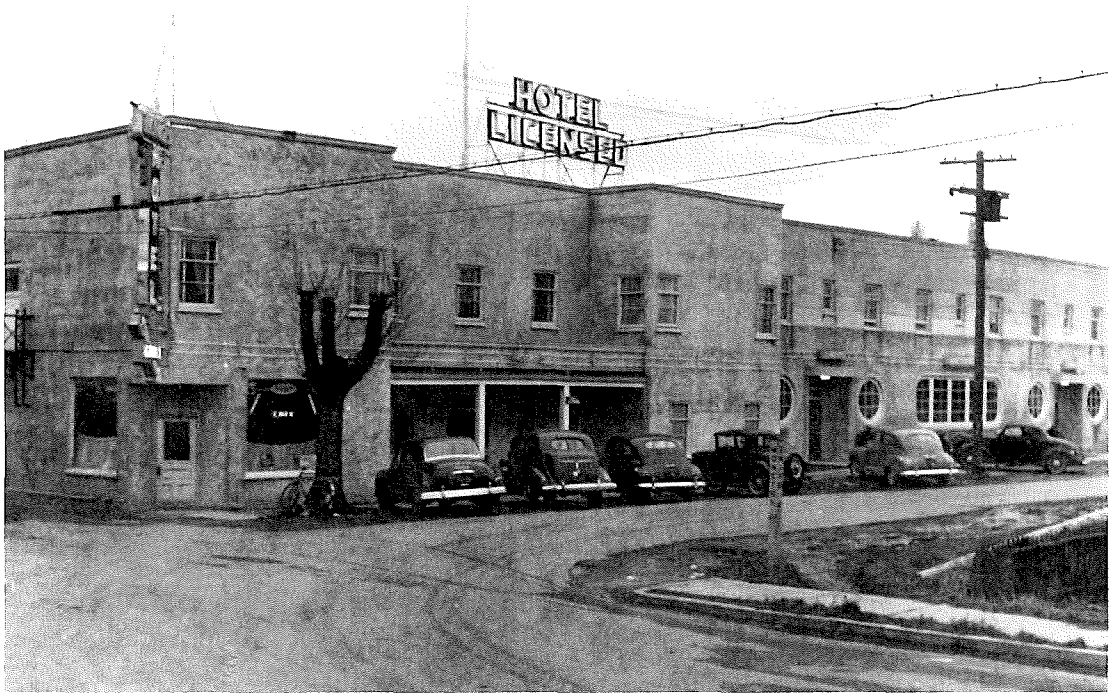
HISTORICAL IMAGE



CAPTION	View of the 1947-1948 addition on the north side of the Sockeye Hotel under-construction.
DATE	1947
SOURCE	City of Richmond Archives 1986-58-3
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE	
	
CAPTION	View of the Sockeye Hotel, and its 1947-1948 addition on the right.
DATE	1951
SOURCE	British Columbia Archives I-32960
COPYRIGHT	British Columbia Archives

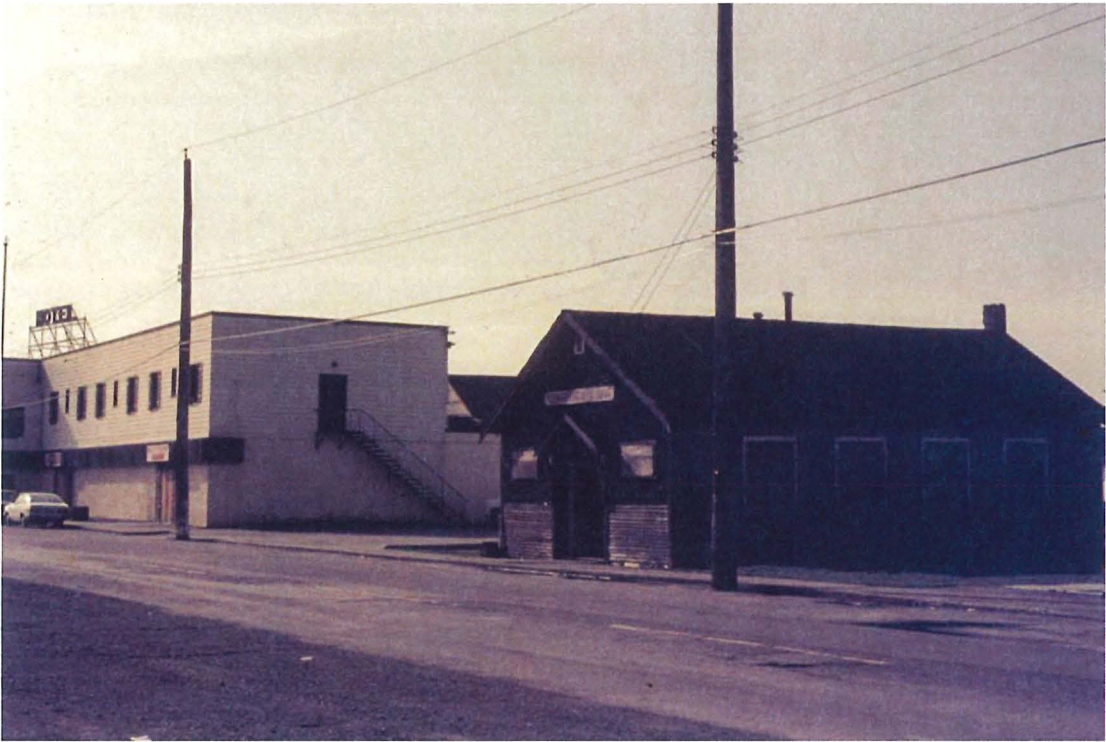


HISTORICAL IMAGE	
	
CAPTION	View of the Sockeye Hotel, and its 1947-1948 addition on the right.
DATE	1951
SOURCE	British Columbia Archives I-32960
COPYRIGHT	British Columbia Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE



CAPTION	Looking east along Moncton Street during Salmon Festival with the Sockeye Hotel visible on the left.
DATE	1962
SOURCE	Noel McConnell City of Richmond Archives 2017-36-1
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives

HISTORICAL IMAGE	
	
CAPTION	Looking southwest down 3rd Avenue with the 1947-148 addition to the Sockeye Hotel visible on the left.
DATE	1983
SOURCE	City of Richmond Archives 2008-39-1-147
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond Archives



SITE PHOTO



CAPTION	View of the front (centre) and south (left) elevations of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

SITE PHOTO



CAPTION	View of the front elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond



SITE PHOTO




CAPTION	Detail of the main entryway on the front elevation of the 1897-built portion of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

SITE PHOTO



CAPTION	View of the front elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond


SITE PHOTO	
	
CAPTION	View of the front (centre) and north (right) elevation of the 1948 addition of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond




SITE PHOTO




CAPTION	View of the north elevation of the 1948 addition to the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

SITE PHOTO	
	
CAPTION	View of later rear additions to the 1897-built portion of the Sockeye Hotel, from the rear laneway.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

SITE PHOTO	
	
CAPTION	View of the south elevation of the rear additions to the 1897-built portion of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond



SITE PHOTO	
	
CAPTION	View of the south elevation (right) of the Sockeye Hotel, with a partial view of its rear elevation (left-centre).
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

SITE PHOTO



CAPTION	View of the south elevation of the Sockeye Hotel.
DATE	August 1, 2024
SOURCE	Luxton
COPYRIGHT	City of Richmond

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**From:** Demetre lazos

**Sent:** March 17, 2025 3:31 PM

**To:** Hopkins, John ; Sadhu Ramji

**Subject:** Fwd: Steveston Hotel

You don't often get email from [demetrem99@gmail.com](mailto:demetrem99@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**City of Richmond Security Warning:** This email was sent from an external source outside the City. Please do not click or open attachments unless you recognize the source of this email and the content is safe..

Dear Mr. Hopkins good afternoon . As we discussed last week we would like to point out in writing that our goal is to remove the entire building from it s status as being a heritage building . This would be the ideal scenario for the owners .

We do understand that we want ( the owners are planning) to develop this property into a rental apartment building which will provide affordable housing to the area.

Having this building out of the heritage assignment, would make it much easier for the owner to provide designs for up to date standards in order to be able to compete with the ongoing developments with more modern designs around the Steveston Village and surrounding areas . As we pointed out to you last week, the old designs of the existing building makes it extremely hard for the owners to contact business as it is now and much more

Difficult , if not impossible ,to compete with the market and other similar business.

Our first and best option would be to remove the heritage designation from the building .

I m enclosing a letter directly from Mr. Ramji as well .

You may present these letters and our thoughts to the committee as soon as your next meeting and of coarse to the panel of councillors .

Let me know if you have any questions or if you need any additional input from our side.

Best regards.

Demetre



**525 W. GEORGIA STREET LTD.**

**7951 Bennett Road**

**RICHMOND.**

**BC V6Y 1N3**

**Tel 604 244 1416**

14<sup>th</sup>.March 2025

City Of Richmond,  
Heritage Department,  
Richmond.

Re:12111 3rd. Avenue  
Heritage Status.

Dear Mr. Hopkins,

Following our meeting, we would like you to put forward to the Council that Unit 120 , as per attached plan and the floor above was added to the Steveston Hotel, much later around 1969 and that part of the building should be alienated from the heritage status assigned to the older part of the building constructed before 1900 i.e Units 105,110 and 115. This would give us flexibility in planning and putting up a modern building with newer kind of façade that would enable us to compete with others.

We are planning in future to build rental apartment units replacing unit 120. We would appreciate it if you would present to the Council that we are seeking a change in the zoning for Unit 120 from CS2 to residential so that Unit 120 would only have rental residential apartments.

The older part of the building, comprising Units 105,110 and 115 would have heritage designation.

Please let us know if the Council is agreeable to the change as above.

Kind regards,

Sadru Rmji

