

# Staff Report



Development Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Heritage Kitchener

**DATE OF MEETING:** June 3, 2025

**SUBMITTED BY:** Garrett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,  
519-783-8922

**PREPARED BY:** Michelle Drake, Senior Heritage Planner, 519-783-8909

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** Ward 10

**DATE OF REPORT:** May 13, 2025

**REPORT NO.:** DSD-2025-242

**SUBJECT:** Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-011  
122 Frederick Street (The Registry Theatre)  
Repairs to Carved Limestone Parapet and Capstones

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## RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 33 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-011 be approved to permit the repair of the carved limestone parapet and capstones at The Registry Theatre on the property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street, in accordance with the supplementary information submitted with the application, subject to the following conditions:

1. That samples of existing mortar and proposed mortar, and the detailing of the capstone joints, be reviewed and approved by Heritage Planning staff prior to commencing repointing;
2. That the methods and design details associated with installing a drip edge, if required, along the full width of the capstones be reviewed and approved by Heritage Planning staff prior to installing a drip edge; and further,
3. That methods to repair or replace masonry (if damaged during work) be reviewed and approved by Heritage Planning staff prior to commencing work to repair or replace masonry.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present Heritage Planning staff's recommendation for the proposed repair of the carved limestone parapet and capstones at The Registry Theatre on the subject property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street.
- The key finding of this report is that the repair of the carved limestone parapet and capstones will follow recognized heritage conservation practices to ensure that there will be no negative impacts to the heritage attributes of the subject property.
- There are no financial implications associated with this report.

- Community engagement included consultation with the City's Heritage Kitchener committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

## BACKGROUND:

The Development Services Department is in receipt of Heritage Permit Application HPA2025-IV-011 seeking permission to repair the carved limestone parapet and capstones at The Registry Theatre (the former County of Waterloo Registry Office), at the subject property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street. The subject property is owned by the City of Kitchener.



**Figure 1.0 Location Map – 122 Frederick Street (The Registry Theatre)**

## REPORT:

The subject property is located on the west side of Frederick Street between Weber Street East and Spetz Street, within the Civic District Cultural Heritage Landscape. The Registry Theatre (the former County of Waterloo Registry Office) was built in 1939 by Dunker Construction. The building is an outstanding example of Art Deco architecture. The subject property is individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Designating By-law 91-115 designates the property as being of historic and architectural value being comprised of all elevations and rooflines of the exterior and the front lobby of the interior. Designating By-law 91-115 identifies the following exterior heritage attributes:

- All elevations and rooflines;
- Limestone parapets;
- All window openings, limestone spandrels, lintels and sills, and metal muntins;
- Main entrance, including limestone steps, light standards, double-leaf bronze and glass doors, shaped and decorated lintel, limestone architrave and mosaic with County of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Galt crests/seals.

As a result, issuance of a Heritage Permit is required to carry out alterations to the building, including repairs which may impact the heritage attributes.

### *Proposed Alterations*

The applicant is proposing to repair the carved limestone parapet and capstones on the front façade (Frederick Street) of The Registry Theatre. This includes four (4) large carved limestones located above the front entrance with the words “REGISTRY OFFICE – COUNTY OF WATERLOO” on the front elevation of the building.



**Figure 2.0 Front Elevation – 122 Frederick Street (Google, 2024)**

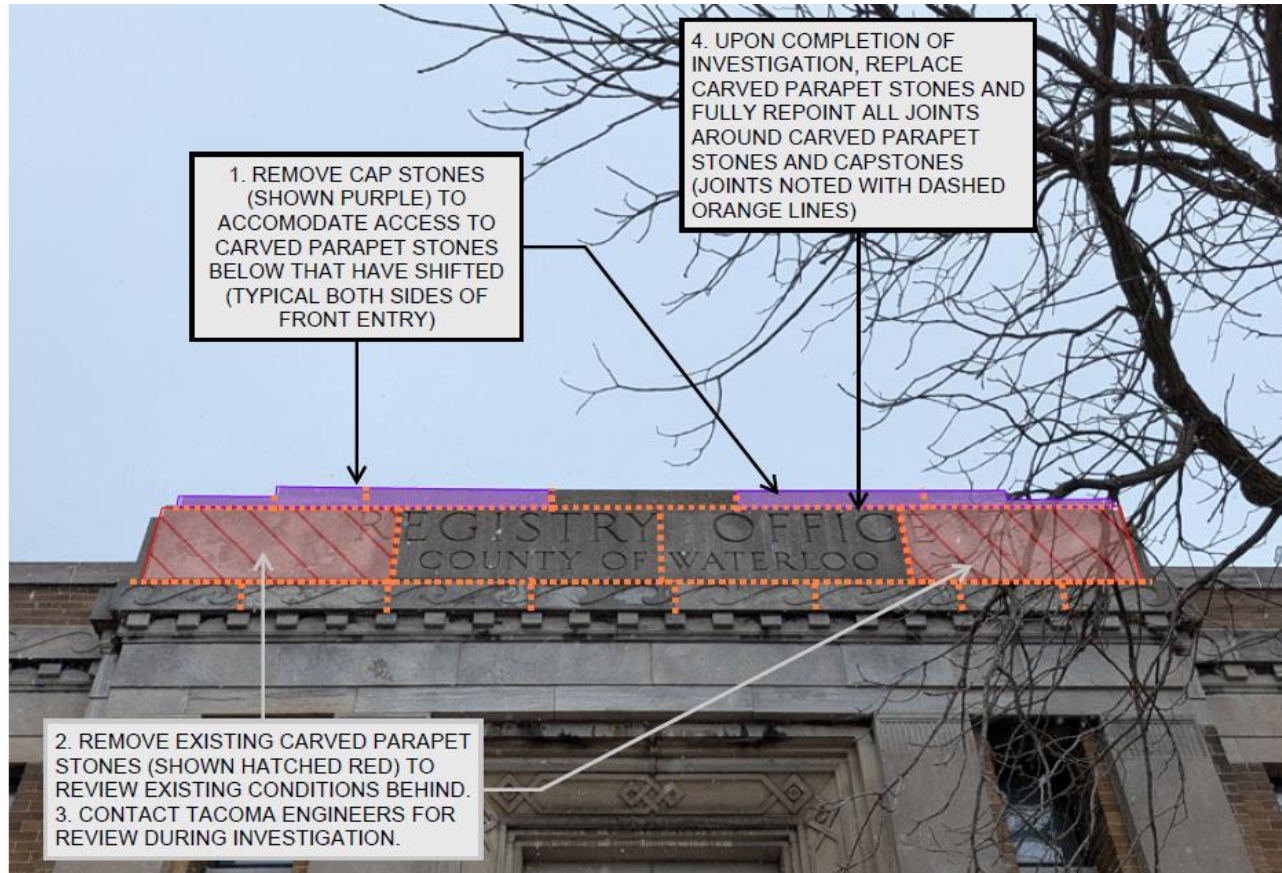
The reason for the repair is that:

1. the stone with the first letter “R” of “REGISTRY” has moved outwards from the façade by approximately 10 mm at the top, and approximately 5 mm at the bottom;
2. the stone with the letter “E” of “OFFICE” has moved outwards from the façade;
3. the horizontal mortar joint between the capstone and the limestone parapet is cracked and open along portions of its length;
4. the capstone on the inside face of the parapet does not have a proper drip edge; and,
5. the sealant on the capstone joints is firm and detaching and peeling from the stones.

In general, the scope of work will involve the systematic removal of the parapet stones and capstones to investigate the condition of the parapet wall. Followed by the replacement/resetting and repointing of parapet stones and capstones. Drawing S1 labelled “*Carved Parapet Stone Investigation*” prepared by Tacoma Engineers and dated May 2, 2025 and attached to the Heritage Permit Application, provides a detailed description of the scope of work. In general, this detailed description addresses: the documentation of each stone; the removal and storage of stones; the type of mortar to be used for repointing (King HLM 350 VC Series or King 1-1-6 Cream VC Series or approved



alternate); the methods to mix the mortar; the equipment to be used for the removal of existing mortar; the qualification requirements for the individual completing the masonry repairs; the steps to repoint the existing stone mortar joints; and, the equipment to be used in the repointing process.



**Figure 3.0 Limestone Parapet Investigation – 122 Frederick Street (Tacoma, 2025)**

The Federal “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada” provides the following recommended guidelines for masonry repairs:

- Retaining sound and repairable masonry that contributes to the heritage value of the historic place;
- Repairing masonry by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration, such as disintegrating or cracked mortar, loose bricks, or damp walls;
- Removing deteriorated or inappropriate mortar by carefully raking the joints, using hand tools or appropriate mechanical means to avoid damaging the masonry;
- Using mortars that ensure the long-term preservation of the masonry assembly, and are compatible in strength, porosity, absorption and vapour permeability with the existing masonry units. Pointing mortars should be weaker than the masonry units; bedding mortars should meet structural requirements; and the joint profile should be visually compatible with the masonry in colour, texture and width;
- Duplicating original mortar joints in colour, texture, width and joint profile;
- Replacing in kind extensively deteriorated or missing parts of masonry elements, based on documentary and physical evidence;
- Repairing masonry by patching, piecing-in or consolidating, using recognized conservation methods. Repair might include the limited replacement in kind, or

replacement with a compatible substitute material, of extensively deteriorated or missing masonry units, where there are surviving prototypes. Repairs might also include dismantling and rebuilding a masonry wall or structure, if an evaluation of its overall condition determines that more than limited repair or replacement in kind is required; and,

- Replacing in kind an irreparable masonry element, based on documentary and physical evidence.

The Provincial “Eight guiding principles in the conservation of built heritage properties” provides the following recommended principles:

- Repair/conservate rather than replace building materials and finishes except where absolutely necessary. Minimal intervention maintains the heritage content of the built resource;
- Repair with like materials. Repair to return the resource to its prior condition, without altering its integrity; and,
- With continuous care, future restoration will not be necessary. With regular upkeep, major conservation projects and their high costs can be avoided.

In reviewing the merits of this application, Heritage Planning Staff note the following:

- The subject property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- Drawing S1 labelled “*Carved Parapet Stone Investigation*” prepared by Tacoma Engineers and dated May 2, 2025 was prepared by Emily Van Riesen who is an intern with the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP);
- The proposed repairs to the carved limestones and capstones will extend the life of the parapet;
- The stones will be documented to ensure proper reinstallation;
- The steps to remove, store and protect the stones until they are reinstalled have been outlined and are in keeping with good conservation practice;
- The type of mortar (lime based with a compressive strength that does not exceed that of the existing mortar and masonry) to be used and the methods to mix the mortar are in keeping with good conservation practice;
- The equipment (e.g., hand chisels, pneumatic chisels, limited use of mini grinders, mortar saws) to be used for the removal of existing mortar are designed to minimize damage to the stones (Note: Concrete chipping hammers shall not be used. If mortar saws are used, grinders shall not be used);
- The masonry work (cutting out and repointing) shall be completed by qualified masons having at least five (5) years documented experience, and shall have completed at least three (3) projects of comparable size and scope within the last five (5) years;
- The steps to repoint the mortar joints have been outlined and are in keeping with good conservation practice;
- All masons shall use identical pointing tools to match the profile and details of the existing joints;
- The masonry repairs are in keeping with the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines and the Provinces Guiding Principles referenced earlier in this report;
- Heritage Planning staff will review and approve the proposed mortar, the detailing of the proposed capstone joints, the methods and design details associated with installing a drip edge (if required) on the capstones, and the methods to repair or

replace masonry (if damaged during work), to ensure that they follow good conservation practices, including the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines and the Province's Eight Guiding Principles; and,

- The repairs of the carved limestones and capstones will not adversely affect the character of the property nor the façade of the building.

In accordance with the Heritage Permit Application form, the approval of any application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* shall not be a waiver of any of the provisions of any by-law of the City of Kitchener or legislation, including, but not limited to, the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Zoning By-law. In this regard, Heritage Planning staff note that a Building Permit is required to undertake this work.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

CONSULT – The Heritage Kitchener committee has been consulted regarding the Heritage Permit Application.

### **PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

- Ontario Heritage Act
- CSD-16-042 (HPA-2016-IV-009 – 122 Frederick Street)
- DSD-2025-192 (HPA-2025-IV-005 – 122 Frederick Street)
- DSD-2025-193 (HPA-2025-IV-006 – 122 Frederick Street)

**APPROVED BY:** Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services Department

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-011