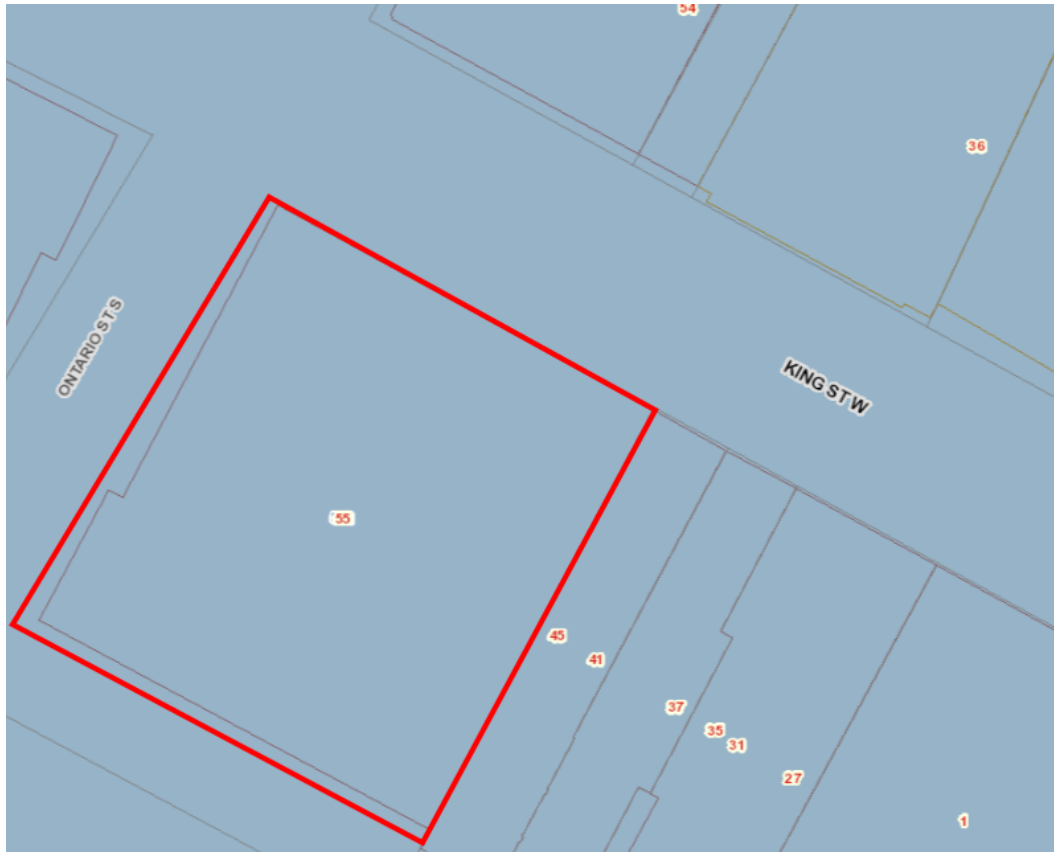


# STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## 55 King Street West



### Summary of Significance

Design/Physical Value

Historical/Associative Value

Contextual Value

Social Value

Economic Value

Environmental Value

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**Municipal Address:** 55 King Street West

**Legal Description:** Plan 381 Part Lots 6, 7 & 8 RP 58R-7410 Parts 1-13 & 16

**Year Built:** 1992

**Architectural Style:** Contemporary International

**Original Owner:** Truscan Realty Limited (Canada Trust Centre)

**Original Use:** Commercial

**Condition:** Good

### Description of Cultural Heritage Resource

55 King Street West is a 20<sup>th</sup> century 12 storey building built in the contemporary International style. The building is situated on a 0.46 acre parcel of land located on the south side of King Street West between Ontario Street and Queen Street in the Downtown Cultural Heritage Landscape of the City of

Kitchener within the Region of Waterloo. The principal resource that contributes to the heritage value is the commercial building.

### **Heritage Value**

55 King Street West is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.

### **Design/Physical Value**

The commercial building provides a strong example of the contemporary International architectural style, characterized by a sleek material palette, minimalist detailing, and urban scale, within a Canadian urban context. The building balances corporate functionality with architectural refinement while remaining visually distinct from the historic fabric, and contributing to modernization in the downtown. Overall, the building displays four key architectural elements. The first is the glass curtain wall construction system that offers an elegant, uninterrupted verticality while the use of tinted-blue glazing adds a corporate, contemporary tone. The second is the structural expression, which is overt, with the rhythmic precast framing hinting at the building's grid-base structure and thereby echoing the functionality of modernism. The third is minimal ornamentation, which is true to the International style where decoration is absent. Instead, interest is created through material contrast (glass versus stone), precise alignment of elements, and the quality of finishes. The last is the roofline, which is flat and understated, capped with a parapet, and a mechanical penthouse that is fully integrated within the building envelope, avoiding visual clutter. It is also interesting to note that the building that exists today represents only a part of the original architectural vision. A second building was to be built between Halls Lane and Charles Street with an 11 storey glass atrium above Halls Lane connecting the two buildings.

The design and physical values relate to the contemporary International architectural style of the building that is in good condition with many intact original elements. The commercial building features: a square plan; 12 storey height; a 3 storey podium base with multiple bays constructed of Orchidea Grey granite and azurite blue tinted glass that generally align with the height of historic buildings on King Street; building step backs from the podium begin at the fourth floor; building materials at the fourth floor and above are primarily glass with simple geometric lines; clock tower at the corner of King Street and Ontario Street; two domes on the 12<sup>th</sup> storey; and, etched glass panels on the interior of the front lobby that describe the history of the site.

#### **Front (North Elevation) King Street West Façade**

The front of the building faces King Street West and visually appears as a 3 storey podium of granite with six bays that generally align with the width and height of historic buildings on King Street West. The main entrance at the corner of King and Ontario Street is a 4 storey podium of granite that features full height glass doors and sidelights framed in brushed metal, the building name – “CANADA TRUST CENTRE” and the building number “55,” and a clock tower with a dome. Each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between. The building steps back from King Street West at each of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> storeys, which helps to reinforce the slender, modern profile. The 5<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storeys are dominated by a blue-tinted glass curtain wall system. The 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.

#### **Side (West) Façade (Ontario Street)**

The side of the building faces Ontario Street South and visually appears as a 3 storey podium of granite with 7 bays that generally align with the width and height of historic buildings on Ontario Street

South. The main entrance at the corner of King and Ontario Street is a 4 storey podium of granite that features full height glass doors and sidelights framed in brushed metal and a clock tower with a dome. Each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between. The 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storey of the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> bay are dominated by a blue-tinted glass curtain wall system. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> bays are generally horizontally and vertically separated by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between. The 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.

#### Side (East) Façade

The side of the building is partially obscured by adjacent development. Where visible, it mirrors the Ontario Street South façade.

#### Rear (South) Façade (Halls Lane)

The rear of the building faces Halls Lane with a 3 storey podium of granite that is 6 bays wide. Bay 1 through 5 are 12 storeys in height while bay 6 is only 2 storeys in height. Each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between. The 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storey of the 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> bay are dominated by a blue-tinted glass curtain wall system. The 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.

The design/physical value also demonstrates a high degree of technical achievement. A market brochure produced for the building indicates that:

*“The building incorporates state-of-the-art materials, technology, mechanical and safety systems. The all-air heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning installation is zoned for individualized comfort and control. Energy efficiency is maximized. Conditioned, fresh air is ducted through overhead air terminals. This feature, not found in most buildings, leaves the perimeter unobstructed and permits easy construction of soundproof and demising walls.*

*Light fixtures include energy saving electronic ballasts and octron fluorescent lamps. The lighting system is computer switched with touch-tone phone control access. For further operating cost reductions, a co-generator provides electricity to the building grid reducing the demand load charges on the Ontario Hyrdo Network.*

*Heat produced by the generator is used to keep Canada Trust Centre comfortable during the winter and to heat water year round. The energy management design has received Ontario Hyrdo endorsement and the building is considered one of the most energy-efficient anywhere in Canada. The technology ensures that energy costs will be held to a minimum in the future.”*

In addition, the building won a 1992 National Award for Energy Efficiency in the category of large buildings.

#### Historical/Associative Value

The historical/associative values relate to the direct association with the theme of banking and related organizations, including Waterloo County Loan and Savings Company, Waterloo Trust & Savings Company, Canada Trust, and TD Canada Trust.

The Waterloo County Loan and Savings Company was founded in 1913 and opened a Kitchener branch in 1914. Founding members included E.F. Seagram, of the Seagram Distillery family; Ford S. Kumpf and Thomas Hilliard, widely regarded as “Mr. Waterloo” and the “Grand Old Man of Waterloo”

for their substantial contributions to the community; and, Peter H. Sims, inventor of the lamp boiler. F.H. Schneider, of the Schneider's Meats family, also served on the company's board of directors. By 1922, the bank had opened their original head office (since demolished) at King Street West and Ontario Street South. The bank moved their head offices to 305 King Street West in 1964. The Waterloo Trust and Savings Company merged with Canada Trust in 1968, and Walter A. Bean served as Vice President and General Manager. Canada Trust's Midwestern Ontario Region was headquartered at the Canada Trust Centre starting in 1992. Canada Trust was acquired by TD in 2000.

It is also interesting to note that the following firms were involved in the design and construction of the building. The general contractor was The Jackson Lewis Company Limited which was a one of Canada's first general contractors based out of Toronto and became the centrepiece of present-day Aecon's business. The architect was Webb Zerafa Menkes Housden Partnership, which was founded in 1961 by four associates of the iconic Canadian architect, Peter Dickinson. The structural engineer was Quinn Dressell Associates, the mechanical engineer was The Mitchell Partnership Limited (Guelph), which is now known as BPA, and the electrical engineer was Mulvey & Banani International Inc.

### **Contextual Values**

The property has contextual value because it helps to define, maintain and support the character of the area using a 3 storey podium base with multiple bays constructed of granite and glass that generally align with the height of historic buildings on King Street West and Ontario Street South. The property also has contextual value because it is physically and historically linked to its surroundings. As noted above, the podium base is designed to fit into the existing Downtown streetscapes of King Street West and Ontario Street South. The building is historically linked to the site of the original headquarters of the Waterloo Trust and Savings Company in Kitchener.

### **Heritage Attributes**

The heritage value of 55 King Street West resides in the following heritage attributes:

- All elements related to the construction and contemporary International architectural style of the building, including:
  - location and orientation of the building;
  - all building elevations;
  - square plan, 12 storey height, and 3 storey podium base;
  - Orchidea Grey granite and azurlite blue tinted glass;
    - Front Façade (King Street West)
      - a 3 storey podium base with six bays constructed of granite and glass that generally align with the width and height of historic buildings on King Street;
      - the main entrance at the corner of King and Ontario Street is a 4 storey podium of granite that features full height glass doors and sidelights framed in brushed metal, the building name – “CANADA TRUST CENTRE” and the building number “55,” and a clock tower with a dome;
      - each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between;
      - the building steps back from King Street West at each of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> storeys

- the 5<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storeys are dominated by a glass curtain wall system;
  - building step backs from the podium begin at the fourth floor;
  - building materials at the fourth floor and above are primarily glass with simple geometric lines; and,
  - the 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.
- Side Façade (Ontario Street South)
    - 3 storey podium of granite with 7 bays that generally align with the width and height of historic buildings on Ontario Street South;
    - the main entrance at the corner of King and Ontario Street is a 4 storey podium of granite that features full height glass doors and sidelights framed in brushed metal and a clock tower with a dome;
    - each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between;
    - the 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storey of the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> bay are dominated by a glass curtain wall system;
    - the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> bays are generally horizontally and vertically separated by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between; and,
    - the 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.
  - Side Elevation (Interior Lot Line)
    - the 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storey of the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> bay are dominated by a glass curtain wall system;
    - the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> bays are generally horizontally and vertically separated by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between; and,
    - the 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes
  - Rear Elevation (Halls Lane)
    - 3 storey podium of granite that is 6 bays wide;
    - bay 1 through 5 are 12 storeys in height while bay 6 is only 2 storeys in height;
    - each bay of the podium is divided by granite with glazing and spandrel panels in between;
    - the 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> storey of the 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> bay are dominated by a glass curtain wall system; and,
    - The 12<sup>th</sup> storey is topped with two domes.
- etched glass panels on the interior of the front lobby that describe the history of the site.

## **References**

- Bunina, U., S. Burke, R. Haldenby and I. Suppa. (2021). *Inten-City: Walking Tour of Downtown Kitchener*. Retrieved on February 5, 2026 from [https://uwaterloo.ca/architecture/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/inten-city\\_walkingtourdowntownkitchener\\_2021.pdf](https://uwaterloo.ca/architecture/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/inten-city_walkingtourdowntownkitchener_2021.pdf).
- Canada Trust. (1968). *1968 Annual Report for the Huron and Erie Mortgage Corporation and the Canada Trust Company*. Retrieved on February 5, 2026 from <https://digital.library.mcgill.ca/images/hrcorpreports/pdfs/6/631216.pdf>.
- CBC/Radio-Canada. (2026). *Business: TD takeover of Canada Trust approved*. Retrieved on February 5, 2026 from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/td-takeover-of-canada-trust-approved->

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Region of Waterloo. (2021). *Stories from this Land*. Retrieved on February 5, 2026 from <https://regionofwaterloomuseums.ca/en/exhibits/waterloo-trust.aspx>.

Staebler, E. (1967). *A Brief History of Waterloo Trust Savings Company*.

## **Photographs**



Front Elevation (King Street West)



Side Elevation (Ontario Street South)



Rear Elevation (Halls Lane)



Main Entrance from King Street West

# CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION FORM

Address: 55 King Street West Recorder: Michelle Drake

Description: 1992, Contemporary International architectural style Date: November 17, 2025

(date of construction, architectural style, etc)

Photographs Attached:

Front Façade     Left Façade     Right Façade     Rear Façade     Details     Setting

<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<b>Heritage Planning Staff</b>
1. This property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	Yes
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	No
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. <i>* E.g. - constructed with a unique material combination or use, incorporates challenging geometric designs etc.</i>	Yes
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community. <i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i>	Yes
5. The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture. <i>* E.g - A commercial building may provide an understanding of how the economic development of the City occurred. Additional archival work may be required.</i>	No
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community. <i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i>	No

7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area. <i>* E.g. - It helps to define an entrance point to a neighbourhood or helps establish the (historic) rural character of an area.</i>	Yes
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings. <i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i>	Yes
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. <i>* within the region, city or neighborhood.</i>	No

Notes

<b>Additional Criteria</b>	<b>Heritage Planning Staff</b>
<b>Interior:</b> Is the interior arrangement, finish, craftsmanship and/or detail noteworthy?	Historic information is engraved in the glass panels of the lobby
<b>Completeness:</b> Does this structure have other original outbuildings, notable landscaping or external features that complete the site?	No
<b>Site Integrity:</b> Does the structure occupy its original site?  <i>* If relocated, is it relocated on its original site, moved from another site, etc.</i>	Yes
<b>Alterations:</b> Does this building retain most of its original materials and design features? Please refer to the list of heritage attributes within the Statement of Significance and indicate which elements are still existing and which ones have been removed.	Yes
<b>Alterations:</b> Are there additional elements or features that should be added to the heritage attribute list?	See architectural description drafted by Heritage Kitchener member, Ali Mahmoodi Sahba, in 2025.
<b>Condition:</b> Is the building in good condition?  <i>*E.g. - Could be a good candidate for adaptive re-use if possible and contribute towards equity-building and climate change action.</i>	Yes
<b>Indigenous History:</b> Could this site be of importance to Indigenous heritage and history? <i>*E.g. - Site within 300m of water sources, near distinct topographical land, or near cemeteries might have archaeological potential and indigenous heritage potential.</i>	Unknown
Could there be any urban Indigenous history associated with the property? <i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i>	Unknown

<b>Function:</b> What is the present function of the subject property? <i>* Other may include vacant, social, institutional, etc. and important for the community from an equity building perspective.</i>	Commercial
<b>Diversity and Inclusion:</b> Does the subject property contribute to the cultural heritage of a community of people?  Does the subject property have intangible value to a specific community of people? <i>* E.g.- Waterloo Masjid (Muslim Society of Waterloo &amp; Wellington Counties) was the first established Islamic Center and Masjid in the Region and contributes to the history of the Muslim community in the area.</i>	No  No

Notes about Additional Criteria Examined

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See architectural description drafted by Heritage Kitchener committee member, Ali Mahmoodi Sahba, in 2025.

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### **Recommendation**

**Does this property meet the definition of a significant built heritage resource, and should it be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act? (Does it meet two or more of the designation criteria?)**

N/A  Unknown  No  Yes

If not, please select the appropriate action for follow-up

- Keep on the Municipal Heritage Register
- Remove from the Municipal Heritage Register
- Additional Research Required

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

General / Additional Notes

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TO BE FILLED BY HERITAGE PLANNING STAFF:

Date of Property Owner Notification: \_\_\_\_\_