

To PDCS re proposed designation of the Roxy Theatre as Municipal Heritage Property,

August 15, 2022.

The Saskatoon Heritage Society in its previous letter to City Council in February of this year wrote of how important the Roxy Theatre is to Saskatoon's cultural heritage. The Roxy is one of only five atmospheric cinemas left in Canada. Saskatoon used to have two such cinemas but sadly our beloved Capitol Theatre was demolished in 1979. Consequently, the role of the Roxy in Saskatoon's cultural identity becomes even more important.

The only way to protect our built heritage now and in the future is through designation as Municipal Heritage Property. Designation protects the property from demolition and from unauthorized changes to those critical elements which contribute to the heritage value of the building.

Unfortunately, heritage designation is often poorly understood. It is important to point out to any property owner that designation does **not** restrict the use of the building. It does **not** require it to be restored to its original purpose. It does **not** impede the sale of the building.

In the case of the Roxy Theatre, designation would need to include much of the interior, as it is the interior of the cinema proper which is key to its recognition as a prime example of an atmospheric cinema. Saskatoon has included interior elements in the designation of several of its heritage buildings – the lobby of the Broadway Theatre, the ground floor of Gustin House (minus the kitchen), the hammer beams of 3rd Avenue United Church and the church organ – so this would be nothing new.

Designation brings several advantages. Notably, a designated property becomes eligible for financial assistance for conservation work. Also, its profile is raised through its inclusion in the Saskatchewan Register of Heritage Property and in the Canadian Register of Historic Places

Most importantly, designation tells the community that this building is important - It emphasizes its uniqueness and historic significance. In the minds of the public, this building becomes one which must be cared for.

From a promotional point of view, I don't think a property owner could ask for anything better.

The Heritage Conservation Branch of the provincial government has several publications related to heritage designation. [Facts for Heritage Property Owners | Heritage Properties | Government of Saskatchewan; Municipal%2BHeritage%2BGuide 2020.pdf.](#)

In its "Municipal Heritage Property Designation Guide", it recognizes that, on occasion, misunderstandings may occur when designation is suggested. They offer the assistance or advice of their staff in such a situation.

We urge Administration to reach out to the Heritage Branch and to continue to have further conversations with the property owner of the theatre.

Submitted by Peggy Sarjeant on behalf of the Saskatoon Heritage Society