

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

BUILDING A1, COLLINS BAY PENITENTIARY, KINGSTON, ON

FHBRO number: **01-096**
DFRP number: **09441**
Resource name: **Administration Building (A1)**
Address: **Collins Bay Institution, 455 Bath Road, Kingston, ON**
FHBRO status: **“Recognized” Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1931-43**
Designer: **Department of Justice**
Original function: **Administration Building**
Current function: **Unchanged**
Modifications: **Storeroom added to basement (1958); interior layout completely modified, exterior fire escapes built at east and west ends, central sallyport closed and converted to control center (1967-68); new windows installed (1979-80); new screens installed (1982-83); entryway made universally accessible and new one-storey entrances along south side converted to windows; and, new one-storey visitors’ area/office added to southwest corner (1998).**
Custodian: **Correctional Services Canada**

Reasons for Designation

The Administration Building is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

The Administration Building is associated with the Canadian justice system and the development of a system of corrections as a response to a need for a graduated tier of penalties to enforce the law. The Administration Building is also associated with the establishment of reformatories for young offenders within the justice system. The construction of the Administration Building marked the beginning of the second significant phase of non-agricultural development in Kingston Township which was also characterized by the construction of grain elevators in the 1930s and the arrival of Canada Industries Limited in the 1940s.

Architectural value:

In the context of an architectural style, the Administration Building is a very good example of a late Canadian Chateau style building and is one of the most impressive in-house designs produced by the Department of Justice. A four-storey building with a steeply pitched roof pierced by dormers at regular intervals, corner towers, an elaborate cornice line and a rich, exterior surface treatment, the Administration Building was built by prison labour and is the only remaining prison building in the Chateau style in Canada.

Environmental value:

The Collins Bay Institution is located in the middle of an open expanse of land and is surrounded by an eclectic mix of buildings. The Administration Building is centrally located along the north wall of the Collins Bay Institution, and together with the security towers, it reinforces the institutional character of the prison. Visible from the surrounding roads, the Administration Building’s scale, distinctive architecture and bright red roof make it a conspicuous and familiar landmark with in the city and the region.

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Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of the Administration Building should be respected:

Its role as an illustration of the development of a system of corrections as a response to a need for a graduated tier of penalties to enforce the law is reflected in:

- the Chateau style which is associated with the institutional character of federal buildings of the period.

The building's late Chateau style and high quality exterior materials and craftsmanship as manifested in:

- the scale and symmetrical composition of this rectangular, four-storey building which consists of a narrow central entry bay flanked by tourelles or corner towers, slightly recessed five-bay stone wings terminated with modest tourelles, and projecting two-bay pavilions at the ends of the wings which feature more substantial tourelles;
- the distinctive and complex silhouette of the steeply pitched, metal clad, red roof pierced with regularly spaced dormers, turrets, and tourelles at the wing ends, all of which are capped with decorative finials; and,
- the rich detailing and textures of the exterior elevations which feature an elaborate cornice line, random coursed rusticated limestone walls accented by smoothly dressed string courses, quoins, corbels, and window and door surrounds.

The manner in which the building reinforces the institutional character of the prison setting as evidenced in:

- its prominent central location along the public face (north wall) of the Collins Bay Institution;
- the contrast of the building's scale and style with the eclectic mix of buildings in the surrounding neighbourhood; and,
- its visibility from the surrounding roads due to its distinctive style and bright red roof making it a familiar landmark within the city and the region.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information contact FHBRO.

November 2002