

Dominion Grocery Company Ltd.



Date of Construction	1913-1914
Address	517E North Railway Street SE
Original Owner	Dominion Grocery Company Ltd.
Architect	Lussier Construction Co.
Contractor	Lussier Construction Co.
Neighbourhood	River Flats
Legal	7410468;67;2
Historic Legal	58552;67;8-12

Description of Historic Place

The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is an irregular plan, two-storey with full-height basement brick building in the Medicine Hat neighbourhood of River Flats. The building is located at the corner of North Railway Street and Pringle Street SE facing the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks on the edge of a residential area. The front façade of the building is accented with single and double assembly windows, sandstone banding, and a prominent sandstone door surround.

Heritage Value of Historic Place

The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse, built between 1913 and 1914, is valued for its association with the early 20th century industrial development of Medicine Hat's River Flats neighbourhood. The availability of abundant natural gas resources, and proximity to the CPR rail yards significantly influenced the development and layout of the River Flats neighbourhood. Local industries positioned their factories and warehouses near

railway sidings in order to allow for the easy shipping and receiving of materials and goods. Residential neighbourhoods for the workers of the clay works, foundries, glass works, and greenhouse industries were established in proximity to the factories and warehouses resulting in a formulaic neighbourhood plan mirrored along the east side of CPR rail line. The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. is a component of a historic group of early industrial and commercial buildings in the neighbourhood, and reflects the optimistic growth and development prior to the outbreak of the First World War. The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd.'s two-storey brick warehouse was designed and built by Lussier Construction Co. for the cost of \$25,000. The irregular shape of the building, particularly the curved east façade was dictated by a CPR siding that serviced this warehouse, as well as others located to the northwest of the site. Its functional design facilitated the storage and shipment of goods for transport via the CPR by the presence of multiple loading bays on three façades, and unobstructed interior space.

The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is also valued for its continuous use as a commercial structure in the River Flats neighbourhood. The warehouse was purpose-built for the Dominion Grocery Co Ltd. and was used as their primary facility from 1914 to 1929. The building was also used for a period of time to store lumber on the second floor, and its practical design included the high ceilings and second storey access to facilitate this function. Over the decades the building has housed a variety of companies as evidenced by the multiple ghost signs on the building's exterior; such businesses include Macdonalds Consolidated, Medicine Hat Building Supplies Co, Advance Distributors, and Anderson Music.

Built as a utilitarian warehouse with associated office space, the Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is significant for its dual-function vernacular architecture. The two-storey red brick building features a decoratively detailed front façade with multiple single and double window assemblies, distinctive sandstone banding, and ornate sandstone trim around the front entry, all of which garner a sense of prosperity to the public. The north, west, and south façades of the building are less detailed and more utilitarian

in design. Each of these façades possesses runs of segmental arch windows permitting an abundance of light to penetrate the interior space. Additionally, the east and north façades possess multiple double door loading bays for movement of goods.

Dominion Grocery, shortly after construction

Esplanade Archives, Medicine Hat, Alberta.
0350.0059.



Character-Defining Elements - Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. (517E North Railway Street SE)



- Location at the corner of Pingle Street SE and North Railway Street in an industrial context in the River Flats neighbourhood in the City of Medicine Hat



- Location set back from the road, facing the CPR main rail line



- Form, scale, and massing as expressed by its: two-storey height with full height basement; irregular rectangular plan; flat roof



- Masonry construction including: concrete foundation; red brick with light mortar; sandstone sills and mould lintels; moulded sandstone door trim at the front entry



- Utilitarian design including: runs of windows on the first and second storeys; multiple loading bays; limited ornamentation on non-public façades



- Original fenestration including: segmental arch multi-light fixed wooden-sash windows with wooden-sash storm windows; segmental arch multi-light fixed wooden-sash windows with multi-light wooden-sash storm windows; segmental arch 6-over-6 single-hung wooden-sash windows with wooden-sash storm windows; single-light single and double assembly windows with transom and aluminum storm windows; double door wooden doors; single panel front entry with single light glass transom

- Additional exterior details such as multiple ghost signs on the north and south façades



Statement of Integrity - Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. (517E North Railway Street SE)**Applicable Significance Criteria***This site is significant because...***Theme / Activity / Cultural Practice / Event** ☒ Yes ☐ No

-The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is valued for its association with the early 20th century industrial development of Medicine Hat's River Flats neighbourhood and reflects optimistic growth and development prior to the outbreak of the First World War (**Theme Value – City Development in Medicine Hat**).

-The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is also valued for its continuous use as a commercial structure in the River Flats neighbourhood (**Theme Value – Managing Growth in Medicine Hat**).

Institution / Person ☐ Yes ☒ No**Design / Style / Construction** ☒ Yes ☐ No

-Built as a utilitarian warehouse with associated office space, the Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is significant for its dualistic vernacular architecture. The front (public) façade evokes a sense of prosperity and permanency to current and potential clients, while the remaining façades are utilitarian in design (**Theme Value – Built in Medicine Hat**).

Information Potential ☐ Yes ☒ No**Landmark / Symbolic Value** ☐ Yes ☒ No**Period of Significance**

1906 to 1913 Pre- First World War, Age of Optimism
1914 to 1918 First World War

Chronology of Alterations

Post 1920s - Removal of stepped brick parapet and capping
Replacement of some original wooden-sash windows

Aspects of Integrity**LOCATION** ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The location of the building on North Railway Street has not changed.

DESIGN ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The overall design of the building has been maintained with the exception of the replacement of a few windows and removal of stepped brick parapet and capping.

ENVIRONMENT ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The building continues to be located in an industrial neighbourhood, in close proximity with the CPR main branch line.

MATERIALS ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The authentic materials of the building remain intact, except for some fenestration.

WORKMANSHIP ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The building's exceptional quality of the workmanship is evident in its materials and detailing.

FEELING ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The building conveys a strong historical sense.

ASSOCIATION ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

The association of the building has remained unaltered.

Statement of Integrity continued on next page...

Statement of Integrity - Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. (517E North Railway Street SE)

Statement of Integrity

Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. maintains all the aspects of integrity necessary for it to convey its significance / heritage value.

The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. building is in fair to poor condition with its original form, scale, and massing intact. The building exhibits settlement issues through the presence of stepped cracks extending from the foundation through the load bearing brick walls to the cornice at multiple locations around the building. The brick itself is significantly damaged at locations, particularly on the non-North Railway Street façades. The brick is stained, missing, spalling, and/or crumbling as a result of a variety of factors such as moisture issues, mechanical damage, and past interventions. A later applied parging, of unknown purpose, on the lower third of the east façade is failing, exposing the underlying brick. Multiple locations on the north, east, and south façades have been damaged likely due to 'parking practices' around the building as significant portions of the damage align with car and truck bumper heights. This aspect could potentially be managed through the installation of bollards. All façades of the building exhibit mortar loss. The Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse has maintained its original fenestration with the windows on the north, east, and south façades maintaining their original wooden-sash windows and wooden storm windows. The windows along North Railway Street have been replaced, and the replacement windows reconfigured to limit light penetrating the building. Ghost signs on the north and south façades are evident and efforts should be undertaken to conserve these unique historical elements. The most noticeable alteration to the building was the removal of the stepped brick parapet and capping on the front façade, which has significantly altered the appearance of the building from the street. It is strongly recommended that a Conservation Plan be instituted to address the resource's current condition and aid in mitigating further damage.


Additional Images - Dominion Grocery Company Ltd.

The north corner of the Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. showing its curved northeast facade (left)



Donald Luxton & Associates
August 2013

Heritage Evaluation Form - Dominion Grocery Company Ltd. (517E North Railway Street SE)

 Medicine Hat The Gas City Heritage Evaluation Form	Site Number	Category B
	Community District River Flats	
	Designation	

Site Name(s): Dominion Grocery Company Ltd.			
Municipal Address: 517E North Railway Street SE		Date of Construction:	Y 1913-14
Consultant(s): Donald Luxton & Associates Inc.		Evaluation Date:	Y 13 M 05 D 16
Heritage Committee: Heritage Resource Committee			
Heritage Planner: Chris Reddy			
		Total	
		60	

History (H)	E	VG	G	F	P		(H) SCORE
H.1 Associations/Patterns			X			10	20
H.2 Age		X				10	

Comments: H.1 Elizabeth Street School is valued as an excellent example of an intact historic Medicine Hat school built before the First World War as a component of a city-wide school building program that was initiated in 1909 by the city's School Trustees.
H.2 Constructed in 1912/1913.

Architecture (A)	E	VG	G	F	P		(A) SCORE
A.1 Style/Type/Design		X				20	20
A.2 Designer/Builder			X			5	
A.3 Construction Technology			X			5	
A.4 Interior Details					X	0	
A.5 Alterations			X			-10	

Comments: A.1 Built as a utilitarian warehouse with associated office space, the Dominion Grocery Co. Ltd. warehouse is significant for its dual function vernacular architecture.
A.2 Architect – Lussier Construction Co., Contractor – Lussier Construction Co.
A.3 Building constructed using red pressed brick with sandstone detailing.
A.4 Undetermined interior elements.
A.5 Alterations to windows and stepped brick parapet and capping on front façade have been removed.

Urban Context (C)	E	VG	G	F	P		(C) SCORE
C.1 Landmark/Character		X				10	20
C.2 Streetscape/Landscape	X					15	

Comments: C.1 The building is a highly identifiable neighbourhood landmark.
C.2 The building's architecture varies from the surrounding streetscape.