

# 3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## **THE HARTNEY CHAMBERS BUILDING 347 WEST PENDER STREET, VANCOUVER, BC**

### **Description of the Historic Place**

Hartney Chambers is an Edwardian-era masonry commercial structure, with an English Neoclassical influence evident in the red brick, stone and masonry detailing of the two main façades. It is located at the northeast corner of Homer and West Pender Streets, within a context of commercial buildings in the Victory Square area of a similar age and scale in downtown Vancouver.

### **Heritage Value of the Historic Place**

Constructed in 1908-09, Hartney Chambers is valued for its dignified Edwardian-era architecture. This commercial building, of modest height and size, is notable for its Neoclassical detailing. Embellishments such as pedimented windows, pilasters, block modillion cornice, and central pediment give the building a stylish, English appearance that would have been considered very progressive at the time.

This was an early local project by architect William F. Gardiner (1884-1951), who had arrived in Vancouver late in 1907. Just four months later he submitted the plans for the Victoria Block, located directly across West Pender Street from Hartney Chambers. His designs for Hartney Chambers, the Victoria Block, and for the Hutchinson Block, all date from this time period and are detailed with similar English stylistic references. Gardiner went on to establish a successful commercial and institutional practice, with a corporate clientele including banks, insurance companies, and automobile and service station companies.

Constructed as a commercial block with street level retail space and upper level offices, Hartney Chambers contributes to the continuity of the Victory Square area as an important commercial and retail district in Vancouver in the early twentieth century. Originally, Hartney Chambers housed a variety of professional offices, including William Gardiner's architectural office.

### **Character-Defining Elements**

Key elements that define the heritage character of the Hartney Chambers include its:

- corner location, built on a north facing slope and built to the property lines on all sides;
- contribution to the streetscape, as part of an unbroken streetwall with continuous retail storefronts on two façades;
- commercial form, scale and massing, as expressed by its three-storey (with basement) height and regular, rectangular plan;
- flat roof with raised parapets;
- masonry construction, as expressed in the two main façades, with pressed red brick cladding with stone detailing, and rear and side walls of common red brick;
- Neoclassical details, such as block modillions cornice (sheet metal) with frieze incorporating a centred open pediment; two-storey giant order pilasters; front entrance door frame surround with bracketed crown; segmental, pedimented third-storey centre window with bracketed sill; and second-storey centre window with pediment supported by scrolled brackets;
- additional exterior details, such as the chamfered corner with corner entrance, recessed central entry with double doors to upper storeys flanked by doorway to the eastern commercial space, black and white square porcelain tile entrance floor with Greek key design border, two recessed and panelled entrances facing Homer Street, sheet metal courses capping first, second and third-storey windows, carved stone cartouche within the pediment, and light well on east elevation; and,
- regular fenestration: double-hung one-over-one wooden-sash windows on second and third floors; ground floor plate glass display windows with hinged, operable (hopper) transom lights, and basement windows in the storefront bulkheads along the west elevation.