



# The Boardwalk

## CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



10310 – 102 AVENUE NW

### DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

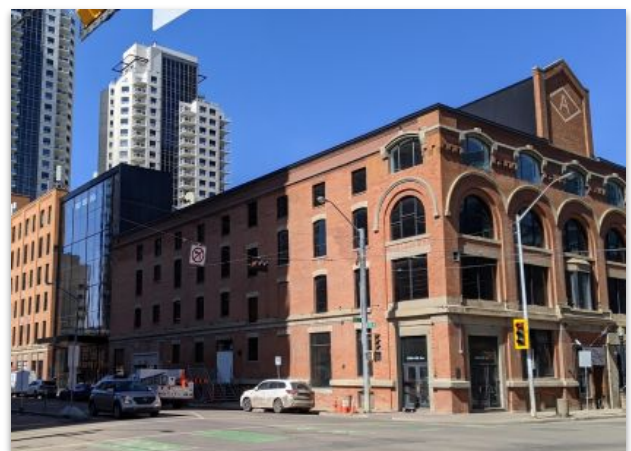
The Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse, also known as the Boardwalk Building, was built in three stages in 1910, 1928 and 1940. It is a massive Second Renaissance Revival structure located in Edmonton's Warehouse District, on the western edge of Downtown. This landmark building is defined by its sheer size, of massive arches springing along a solid streetwall of brick and stone. The structure was built as a warehouse backing onto a railway spur line, but has since served various commercial wholesale, retail and office functions.

### HERITAGE VALUE

The Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse / Boardwalk Building has special sentimental, landmark and historical value to Edmontonians as a major place of commerce in downtown Edmonton. While most recently, it has been a building of offices and classrooms though not as recently, it was a prominent collection of trendy boutiques presented as an urban festival market. Earlier in its life, the Boardwalk Building, then known as the Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse, was a centre of commerce and trade that established Edmonton as the major wholesale trading centre to an entire region. It was an anchor to what was Edmonton's Warehouse District. A place of industrial might, it processed goods unloaded directly from railroad cars onto chutes and large electric freight elevators, to be weighed on industrial Fairbanks Scales, then stored on upper floors constructed of solid wood.

The Boardwalk Building has significant historical value, with respect to the mercantile activities that this building was able to accommodate by way of the operating railway spur that ran to the immediate west, allowing railway cars direct access to the Boardwalk Building for deliveries and shipments to and from the world's major trading centres.

The Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse was a pinnacle of achievement for brothers Fred and James Ross, who were instrumental in Edmonton's growth from the late 1800s to the mid 1900s. The Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse is a grand interpretation of the Second Renaissance style. Its east façade presents itself as a chorus line of springing arches, a concept that has been held throughout its iterations. While built of local brick, the arches and lintels are lined with stone. The parapet cornice is detailed in corbelled brick. An ode to the 1928 owner, an elevator penthouse was constructed on the east façade with the letter "A" prominently displayed, referring to the Ashdown Hardware Company. Overall, the Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse displays an impressive façade to the street.





The Ross Brothers Limited Warehouse is built of local brick, with evidence – brick frogs – that they were produced by the JB Little Brickyard. The east and south facades display an abundance of limestone trim. The interior structure of the building is heavy timber, Douglas Fir. The floors are constructed of 2x6 Douglas Fir stacked upright and tightly adjacent to each other. They are built to carry heavy “warehouse” loads. Each of the 1910 / 1928 / 1940 wings were built with loadbearing brick walls on their north facades: these brick walls are exposed on the interior. As part of the buildout to accommodate classrooms in the late 1900s, north facing sawtooth clerestory skylights were installed to bring natural daylight into the interior spaces of the fourth floor.



## CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The character – defining elements of the property include, but are not limited to the:

The building’s construction and exterior features:

- + chorus line of “springing arches” with arched windows along 103rd Street;
- + corbelled brick cornice / parapet;
- + elevator Penthouse with “A”;
- + concrete beam above ground floor tenants, showing original loading docks;
- + local Edmonton brick with limestone trim; and
- + heavy timber construction with 2x6 plank flooring, stacked close together and upright.

Building’s interior features:

- + exposed brick walls;
- + exposed heavy timber construction; and
- + sawtooth clerestory skylights at fourth floor.

Contextual features:

- + anchor of Edmonton’s Warehouse District.

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