This building embodies the following heritage values as described in the *Historical Resources By-law, 55/2014* (consolidated update July 13, 2016):

(a) This structure was built in 1945, a late addition to Winnipeg’s downtown warehouse district;

(b) It was associated for many years with Dominion Electric Company and then Hemisphere Importers;

(c) It was designed by local architectural firm Green Blankstein Russell;

(d) It utilizes foundation and superstructure walls from an older warehouse built 1901-1906;

(e) It is located on one of the warehouse district’s most important and intact thoroughfares, Princess Street; and

(f) Some elements of the building’s original exterior are present.
Winnipeg in the early 1890s was, although few realized it, on the verge of a spectacular era of growth, development and maturity that would create, by World War I, a large, modern city with all the amenities. But this comprehensive growth followed patterns established decades earlier and resulted in specific districts within city boundaries even after this frenzied period of growth.

The real estate and construction boom of the early 1880s was intimately connected to the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) around Winnipeg and onto the western prairies. Land prices in the small capital city skyrocketed, the population soared and solid brick structures began replacing the small wooden shacks that dotted the mud streets. This development led to the creation of specific districts within the city – residential, commercial and industrial – and their related building-types. ¹ The huge advance in land prices along Main Street north of Portage Avenue necessitated the replacement of the earlier residential development with large commercial structures. Investors chose to locate near one of the most important buildings, City Hall, from which came assistance in advancing both singular business interests and those of the community at large.

Commercial interests, both local and from Eastern Canada, were quick to locate in this area. The city rapidly assumed the role of wholesale hub for all of Western Canada, partially because of its central location and partially because of the preferential freight rates negotiated with the CPR that made it cheaper for manufacturers to ship their goods to Winnipeg, unload them and then send them west to the growing markets on the prairies. Companies like G.F. and J. Galt Company, Stobart, Eden and Company and J.H. Ashdown were all organized and carrying on business prior to the CPR boom. The bust of 1882, while it seriously affected some parts of the local economy, did not have a devastating effect on the wholesale sector. This was mainly as a result of the expanding regional base of the wholesalers as settlement increased on the prairies and demand for goods grew. The areas east and west of Main Street, however, were undeniably

developing as the warehouse district, slowly through the 1880s and 1890s and then rapidly after 1900 (Plates 1 and 2) and Princess Street was one of the district’s main thoroughfares.

In 1893, the Canadian Rubber Company of Montreal, PQ purchased a lot on the east side of Princess, just south of the G.F. and J. Galt Warehouse that had been built six years earlier. Canadian Rubber, which grew dramatically in Western Canada in the early 20th century on the strength of the manufacture and sale of fire hoses, automobile tires and footwear, immediately started construction on a 3-storey brick and stone warehouse on a raised foundation (Plate 3), #89 Princess Street. In 1906, an additional two storeys were added.

Immediately south of this building, the boot and shoe wholesale firm of Kilgour-Rimer also built a brick and stone warehouse (#87 Princess Street), in 1901. The company had been founded in the 1870s and was one of the city’s largest firms of its type by 1900. The new building was four storeys in height and cost $18,000 to complete. As was the case with so many other warehouses in the district, increased business required an expansion of its facilities; in 1906, an addition was built on the south side and two storeys were added to the original building, bringing the structure to six storeys.

By 1910 then, this entire block of Princess Street, from McDermot Avenue to Bannatyne Avenue, was filled with large warehouses, employing dozens of Winnipeggers (Plate 4). But the block would continue to evolve. In October 1928, the Canada Rubber Building was gutted by fire and according to City of Winnipeg records, was demolished to grade and the basement

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2 Manitoba Free Press, June 14, 1893, p. 11.
3 City of Winnipeg Building Permit (below as BP), #628/1906. Cost of construction was $12,000, architects were A. and W. Melville, contractors were Davidson Brothers.
5 Manitoba Free Press, December 6, 1906, p. 25; and BP #1784/1906, cost of construction was $25,000.
6 Winnipeg Free Press, October 13, 1928, pp. 1 and 3 and October 15, 1928, p. 7.
filled in. The former Kilgour-Rimer Block, 87 Princess Street, was reduced from six storeys to three in 1936 and the interior renovated for the new owner/occupant.

In 1945, a new three-storey building was completed, extending north and recladding the existing structure at #87 Princess Street to create the Dominion Electric Building (Plate 5).

**STYLE**

The 1945 reconstruction/redesign would be considered a reduced International Style building, one of many in downtown Winnipeg. The style dates to the early 1930s but its widespread popularity throughout Europe and North America did not occur until after 1950. The style is seen as a reaction to the historically based styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The age of machines created a desire for a new aesthetic, one that fully utilized the new construction materials and technologies, especially steel framing and reinforced concrete. Architects could design buildings without the need for load-bearing exterior walls – these elements became “curtains” covering the steel/concrete structural system and could be constructed almost entirely of glass if desired. Through its use of hard, angular edges, severely plain surfaces, large areas of glass and square or rectangular modules, the style stressed material and proportionality over ornamentation.

**CONSTRUCTION**

This building’s structure is a unique blend of original and new – the four foundation walls and the first three storeys of the exterior walls of the 1901 building remain intact with a 11.6-metre addition (built in 1945) on its north side (see Appendix I for construction information). The solid brick walls

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7 City of Winnipeg Assessment Record, Roll No. 609471-12-2 (PC 50). Below as AR.
9 BP #3106/1945.
of the superstructure are 66.0 centimetres thick in the 1901 building and 43.2 centimetres in the addition. The three-storey building has 24.7 metres of frontage on Princess Street and is 27.8 metres in width, resting on a 66.0-centimetre rubblestone foundation.\textsuperscript{11} The former north exterior wall of the 1901 building was retained and used as an interior wall (Plate 6) with openings cut through on all upper floors.\textsuperscript{12} The front and south façades are clad in “cement stucco”,\textsuperscript{13} the common clay brick of the rear façade is exposed.

**DESIGN**

The building’s main (west) façade features a centrally-located entrance set in a wide, unadorned concrete frame with a smaller entrance at the south end. The upper floors are designed with rectangular windows of varying widths (in the 1901 section) and equal widths in the addition. The openings are slightly recessed with wide, plain spandrels and transoms windows. The roofline is flat and finished with concrete copping.

The north wall is covered by the neighbouring building, the south is partially covered, the upper floors uninterrupted, stuccoed and include painted signage (Plate 7). The rear (east) façade was designed with arched windows, raised basement windows and two raised loading doors (south section) and large, square-headed windows and a raised double loading door (north section) – Plate 8.

Major changes to the building in the early 2000s have meant the replacement or removal of many of the original window units on the front (Plates 9 and 10) and rear (Plate 11) façades and adding a metal hood to the main entrance (Plate 12). The roof has also been partially removed to create balconies.

\textsuperscript{11} AR.
\textsuperscript{12} “Architect’s Plans,” #3106/1945, City of Winnipeg.
\textsuperscript{13} Loc. cit.
INTERIOR
The 1945 building featured public and private office space, repair rooms and shipping and receiving areas on the ground floor (Plate 13), offices and factory area on the second floor (Plate 14) and open warehouse space on the top floor (Plate 15). The building had two elevators and two sets of stairs serving the upper floors.

Today, the building has been completely converted into office and residential space with underground parking in the basement (Plates 16 and 17), although the rear loading area exhibits original elements including the door and flooring (Plate 18).

INTEGRITY
The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition for its age. The building’s main exterior facade, specifically its windows, has seen significant changes with its conversion to a mixed use office/residential building.

STREETSCAPE
This structure is located in the heart of the Exchange District National Historic Site (EDNHS). It has been part of the Princess Street streetscapes for many decades (Plate 19). Because all buildings within the EDNHS are essential parts of their historic streetscapes, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 60 points.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS
The 1945 work was designed by the local firm of Green Blankstein Russell. This firm had been established in 1932 and grew to be one of the most influential designers in Winnipeg, now operating as Stantec (see Appendix II for biographical information). It has received 20 points from the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.
PERSON/INSTITUTION
Tenants of the newly built structure were the Dominion Electric Company and Great West Electric and Radio Company. By the late 1970s, Dominion Electric was gone, replaced by Hemisphere Importers (the building was renamed the Hemisphere Building – the name is found in the transom window above the main entrance) – Plate 20. In the 1980s and 1990s, it was occupied by several tenants, including Blizzard Publishing, Actors Showcase and Manitoba Theatre for Young People. ¹⁴

In 2002, the building was converted into a mixed-use structure. The ground floor held office space and a residential unit, the second floor held seven apartment and the top floor five suites. Part of the roof was also removed to create balconies. ¹⁵ In 2014, a mural was painted on the lower portion of the south wall (Plate 21).

EVENT
There is no known significant historical event connected with this building.

CONTEXT
This building bridges many of the development phases of Winnipeg – from its original construction during the 1890s as the City’s warehouse district grew and evolved, to its expansions during the first decade of the 20ᵗʰ century when the City was undergoing its major, sustained economic boom, to its reconstruction in the 1940s as the world economy began to come out of the Great Depression at the end of World War II. Its recent conversion into office/residential space is another development phase of downtown Winnipeg’s history that the Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building is a part of.

LANDMARK
This unassuming block is located on a busy downtown street but would not be a well-known structure to most Winnipeggers.
APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report

Assessment Record

Building Address: 87 Princess Street (87-89 Princess)

Building Name: Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building [former Kilgour-Rimer Blk. (#87) & Canada Rubber Bldg. (#89)]

Original Use: warehouse Current Use: mixed use Roll No. (Old): 609471 (10110)

Municipality: 12 Ward: 2 Property or Occupancy Code: 50


Location: east side between McDermot & Bannatyne avenues

Date of Construction: 1945 (with some elements of 1893 and 1901 buildings)

Construction Type: Brick; concrete; stucco; rubblestone foundation Storeys: 3

HERITAGE STATUS: ON NOMINATED LIST

Building Permits (Plans available: [CS] City Storage):

SEE NEXT PAGE

Information: (two buildings = 84 x 91)
- Front stucco from grade on old brick & stone – bal. common brick
  #87- 43 x 90 x 52 + = 203,580 cu. ft.
- Wall Thickness – 26” – 17” Brick, common wall – 17” brick
- Basement – 26” rubble stone
- Original building built 1901 – 2 storeys added in 1906 (reduced to 3 storeys in 1936)
- Permit 1347/1936 – new roof on old 4th floor, flooring 1 & 2
- #89 – orig. building Can. Rubber (1893) partly destroyed by fire in 1928. Demo’d to ground level and basement filled 1933
- 38 x 90 x 52 = 177,480 cu. ft.
- Wall Thickness – 17” brick, basement - 26” rubble stone
- 1946 – new from ground up except N & S walls and stone fnd’n
- 1961 – Building good condition – no major structural changes
- 1971 – “Good condition” – fully utilized
- 1996 - Good structural condition – building mostly vacant

---PRINCESS STREET---
Building Permits (Plans available: [CS] City of Winnipeg Storage; [HBRD] Historical Buildings & Resources Committee files):

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<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>PLANS</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>4 storeys - 25 x 90 (#87)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>2-storey addition (#89)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>2-storey addition to original building &amp; 5 storey addition (#87)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1347</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>3 storeys removed (#87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3106</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>Alterations &amp; addition (new #87)</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>70591</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sprinkler</td>
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<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>4386</td>
<td></td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>Office &amp; warehouse alterations</td>
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<td>7453</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,900</td>
<td>Interior alterations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>232787</td>
<td>HBRC</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
<td>Convert warehouse into lower level parkade, main floor commercial/office, 2nd and 3rd floor residential condominiums</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>114654</td>
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<td>Construct accessible washroom</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>336726</td>
<td></td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>Interior alterations to ground floor commercial space</td>
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Green Blankstein Russell Associates

This Winnipeg firm was formed in 1932 as Green and Blankstein, its principals being two Winnipeg-born and University of Manitoba Architecture graduates Lawrence John Green (1899-1969) and Cecil Nathan Blankstein (1908-1989). They were joined in 1934 by two other University of Manitoba graduates, G. Leslie Russell (1901-1977) and Ralph C. Ham (1902-1942) and became Green Blankstein Russell Ham. With Ham’s death in 1942, they renamed the firm Green Blankstein and Russell, later GBR Architects, before being acquired by Stantec in 2004.

The firm started slowly, given the economic realities of the time, design modest structures in Winnipeg and Manitoba. It came to the fore in the 1940s with their design of the Wildwood Park subdivision, the first planned residential garden suburb in Western Canada.16 Other larger commissions followed, the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, 561 Wellington Crescent (1949) and Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba (1951) being two of the notable designs. The library would be one of many modern structures designed by the firm to grace the Fort Garry campus of the university.

The firm’s submission in 1954 in a national competition for Ottawa’s National Gallery of Canada won first place and although the structure was never built, it did underline the talent of GBR’s architects and led to many large contracts – the Norquay Building (Plate 39), 401 York Avenue (1959) and the Great West Life Building, 60 Osborne Street (1959) being two of the best examples.

The company’s influence continued to grow, with the design of the now demolished Winnipeg International Airport, 2000 Wellington Avenue (1964) and the joint work on the Manitoba Cultural Centre (Centennial Concert Hall, the Museum of Man and Nature and the Planetarium) in 1968.

16 Winnipeg Architecture Foundation website, 2013.
A partial list of important buildings designed by the firm includes:

Winnipeg Auditorium (Manitoba Archives Building), 200 Vaughan Street (1932 as part of a consortium of architects)
Park Theatre, 698 Osborne Street (1936)
McKenzie Seed Warehouse, Brandon, MB (1944)
Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street (1945)
Wildewood Park and residential development (1946)
Norwood United Church, 160 St. Mary’s Road (1947)
Mall Medical Building, 300 Memorial Boulevard (1948)
Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, 561 Wellington Crescent (1949)
St. Boniface Hospital addition, Tache Avenue (1950)
Nordale School, Birchdale Avenue (1952)
Main Post Office, 266 Graham Avenue (1954)
Shaarey Zedek School, Lanark Street (1955)
Dayton Building, 323 Portage Avenue (1955)
Transcona Collegiate, 1305 Winona Street (1955)
Marymound School, 442 Scotia Street (1957)
Campbell’s Soup Plant, Portage la Prairie (1958)
St. George’s Anglican Church, 168 Wilton Street (1958)
Polo Park Shopping Centre, Portage Avenue (1958)
Assiniboia Downs, 3975 Portage Avenue (1958)
University of Manitoba, Allen Physics Laboratory Building, Parker Chemistry Laboratory Building and Armes Lecture Building (1958-1961)
St. Paul’s College and Chapel, 70 Dysart Road, University of Manitoba (1958)
Norquay Building, 401 York Avenue (1959)
University of Winnipeg (Ashdown Hall, Graham Hall and Manitoba Hall), 515 Portage Avenue (1960s)
Wheat Board Building, Main Street (1960)
Mutual Life of Canada Building (Red Cross Building), Portage Avenue (1960)
Windsor Park Collegiate, 1015 Cottonwood Road (ca.1961)
Winnipeg City Hall and Administration Building, 510 Main Street (1962-1965)
St. Andrew’s College, 29 Dysart Road, University of Manitoba (1963)
Franciscan Fathers Monastery, 211 Edmonton Street (1963)
Winnipeg Winter Club, 200 River Avenue (1964)
Winnipeg International Airport, 2000 Wellington Avenue (1964) – demolished
Grace Hospital, 300 Booth Drive (1964-1967)
National Trust Building, 250 Portage Avenue (1965)
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, 737 Bannerman Avenue (1966)
Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church, 510 River Avenue (1967)
Centennial Cultural Centre, 555 Main Street (1967-1968 as part of consortium of architects)
St. George Romanian Orthodox Church, 121 Harvard Avenue East (1978-1983)
Pantages Theatre, 180 Market Avenue (1991 expansion)
Winnipeg Hydro Substation No. 2, 263 York Avenue (1991)
Plate 1 – Looking south along Arthur Street from Bannatyne Avenue into the heart of Winnipeg’s warehouse district west of Main Street, ca.1905. (Courtesy of the Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg- Views c1905-2.)
Plate 2 – Princess Street, looking north from Bannatyne Avenue, ca.1912. (Archives of Manitoba, “Winnipeg- Streets- Princess- 16,” N9659.)
Plate 3 – Princess Street, looking north from McDermot Avenue, ca. 1903. #1- G.F. & J. Galt Warehouse, 103 Princess Street, built 1887; and #2- Canada Rubber Company Building, 89 Princess Street, built 1893. (Archives of Manitoba, “Winnipeg-Views 133/387,” N3249.)
Plate 4 – Winnipeg Fire Atlas, Vol. II, Sheet 202, 1923. The entire block (arrow) is filled with large buildings: #1- 85 Princess Street, Kilgour-Rimer Building (used as rental space); #2- 87 Princess Street, Kilgour-Rimer Block; #3- 89 Princess Street, Canada Rubber Company Building; #4- 103 Princess Street, G.F. & J. Galt Warehouse. (Courtesy of City of Winnipeg Archives.)
Plate 5 – Dominion Electric Building, 87 Princess Street, “Front Elevation,” 1945. (City of Winnipeg, Plan No. 3106/1945.)
Plate 6 – Painted signage formerly on the exterior north wall of 87 Princess Street, now interior south wall of retail space, 89 Princess Street, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)

Plate 7 – Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, south façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 8 – Dominion Electric Building, 87 Princess Street, “Rear Elevation,” 1945. (City of Winnipeg, Plan No. 3106/1945.)
Plate 9 - Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, front (west) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

Plate 10 - Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, detail of front (west) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 11 - Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, rear (east) façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 12 - Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, main entrance, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 13 – Dominion Electric Building, 87 Princess Street, “First Floor Plan,” 1945. (City of Winnipeg, Plan No. 3106/1945.)
Plate 15 – Dominion Electric Building, 87 Princess Street, “Third Floor Plan,” 1945. (City of Winnipeg, Plan No. 3106/1945.)
Plate 16 – Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, north side ground floor office space, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 17 – Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, front desk, north side ground floor office space, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 18 – Dominion Electric (Hemisphere) Building, 87 Princess Street, rear loading area and elevator, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)

Plate 19 – Princess Street looking south from Bannatyne Avenue, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 20 – Hemisphere Building, 87-89 Princess Street, 1978. (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 21 – New mural by artists Kenneth Lavallee, Dany Reede, Takashi Iwasaki and Natalie Baird, no date. (Reproduced from http://www.themuralsofwinnipeg.com, Mural #51, no date.)