

89-19

Jasper National Park  
**Municipal Library Building**  
Jasper, Alberta

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Jasper Municipal Library, formerly the R.C.M.P. Detachment Building, was built in 1926 by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to designs by the Architectural and Town Planning Division of the National Parks Branch, under W.D. Cromarty. It initially served as the Sub/District Headquarters for the Jasper R.C.M.P. detachment. In 1974, the building was acquired by Parks Canada, who lease it to the local library. Environment Canada Parks Service is the custodial department. See FHBRO Building Report 89-19.

### **Reasons For Designation**

The Jasper Library was designated Recognized as a result of its historical association with the R.C.M.P., the quality of its design and materials, and the characteristics of its environment.

The building was the first purpose-built R.C.M.P. detachment quarters within the National Parks system, and one of the oldest in Canada. The R.C.M.P. served an important role within the parks as both a police force and a symbol of Canada. The establishment of Jasper as a Canadian National Railways divisional point in 1925 produced a rapid increase in the town's population and a building boom. The decision to erect the new R.C.M.P. building was prompted by the need for better facilities in keeping with Jasper's enhanced status.

The library building is a very good, early example of the rustic Tudor Revival style favoured by the Architectural Division during the late 1920s and 1930s. Sited diagonally on a prominent corner in the center of town, it is a well-known landmark.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Jasper Library resides in its architectural style and use of materials, and its relationship to its historic setting.

The library, while essentially a two-storey hipped-roof structure, exemplifies the picturesque nature of the Tudor Revival style. The rectangular plan is enlivened by a projecting entrance bay, while the irregular massing of the facades -through the use of dormers, gables and a tall projecting chimney - and the use of a variety of materials - stuccoed walls, fieldstone foundation and chimney, wood-casement, multi-paned windows and cedar shingles - are characteristic of the style.

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Jasper National Park  
**Municipal Library Building (Continued)**

While the interior has undergone significant modification, two fieldstone fireplaces remain. The building

retains its original exterior form and fabric. The sympathetic addition of a main entrance wheelchair ramp has left the character of the facade intact. Since the irregularity of massing and the use of a variety of natural materials are key elements defining the character of the building, these should be carefully preserved.

The park-like character of the site, with trees, lawns and flower-beds, is original. The building helped establish the architectural motif for others constructed in the town centre during the 1930s. Its attractive appearance and its prominent location make it a highly visible landmark, and the relationship of the building to its site and to surrounding structures in the same style should be maintained.