

BC Register of Historic Places (Mandatory)

Kitsilano Secondary School

Unique FPT Identifier

LOCATION

| Address # | Street | Community | Postal | Cadastral |
|-----------|------------------|-----------|--------|----------------|
| 2550 | West 10th Avenue | Vancouver | V6K2J6 | PID # 12033260 |

DESCRIPTION

Description The Kitsilano Secondary School site is comprised of: a joined complex of buildings built separately in the Kitsilano neighbourhood of Vancouver between 1911 and 1973; a playing field; a blacktop multiple games area; a blacktop parking area and driveway; and some formal landscaped areas in front of the 1911 building. The 1958 additions consist of 4 buildings: a three-storey classroom block adjacent to the 1926 building on the west side of the site; a one-storey changing room building and a two-storey gymnasium in the middle of the site; and a one-storey vocational shop building on the east side of the site.

Description of boundaries Kitsilano School is comprised of a large city block located at 2550 West 10th Ave in the Kitsilano area of Vancouver.

Heritage value The Kitsilano Secondary School site is important for its cultural, educational and aesthetic significance; in particular for its use of the Modernist design idiom in the 1958 additions and for its choice of that idiom to express the functional expansion of public education in the city's secondary schools.

Designed by chief Vancouver School Board Architect ED King, the 1958 additions are culturally important for their display of the Modernist ideals of standardized, functional and unembellished design that is dramatized by their close proximity to the highly ornamented 1911 and 1926 buildings on the site. In rejecting stylistic historicism and ornamental symbolism of these earlier school buildings, the 1958 buildings clearly embody the post-WWII sense of beginning anew.

Further cultural significance of the 1958 buildings lies in the site being a physical record of the declining need for adornment in building design, a reduced emphasis on substantial landscaping, and a new emphasis on blacktop as compared with design practices in the 1920s. The size and number of additions reflects the expanding suburban population and curriculum (including indoor gymnasias and vocational shops).

Other important cultural values of this school are: the combined memories and experiences of past students and teachers, the continued use of this site as a school complex from 1911 to the current day, and the continued use of its name: "Kitsilano".

In terms of the educational value of the site, the 1958 additions are important as a record of the building program that was needed to accommodate the great increase in school enrolment in that decade, resulting from the post-war boom in house construction in the Kitsilano area, greater expectations that young people should stay in school and graduate, and the Vancouver School Board's decision to combine the junior and senior school organizations. The 1958 facilities are also a record of the great financial commitment made by the governments of the day for universal public secondary education and programs for modern multi-use schools.

The aesthetic significance of the site lies in its use of the International Modern-style which was typical for Vancouver Secondary schools built at this time, and which reflects the Modernist ideals of uncomplicated concrete frame construction, a minimum of embellishment, and an external expression of internal functions, all reflecting the intention to provide clean and efficient spaces that embodied ideals of social mobility and equality

The school site as a whole is significant for being a neighbourhood landmark. Situated on a slight rise, it can be seen from a distance. Also important is its relationship to the neighbourhood and to the community centre across the street, which contributes to its value as a community meeting place that combines education and recreation.

Character-Defining elements

General
The name of the school site
Tradition of use as a school

Siting, Context and Landscape
Relationship of the 1958 buildings to the 1911 and 1925 buildings.
Relationship and orientation of the 1958 buildings to the site and the neighbourhood.

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Architectural Qualities

Expression of interior use in exterior form and detailing

Architectural Elements

Architectural elements of the 1958 alterations and additions such as:

Stair halls expressed on the exterior by window walls separated by minimal concrete spandrels with vertical relief detail

Flat roofs

Exterior walls with banks of aluminum windows

Simple unadorned painted concrete pier and spandrel classroom exterior wall construction

Landscape elements

Minimal landscaping of 1958 alterations, in contrast to substantial original landscaping

Functional Type

Contributing Resources

| Type | Era | # | Type |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|----------|
| Primary or Secondary School | Historic | 4 | Building |
| Primary or Secondary School | Current | | |

FORMAL RECOGNITION

| Statute | Enactment | Date |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Community Heritage Register | Resolution | 1993/12/15 |

COMMENTS and INFORMATION (not used by registrar)