

## WATERTON HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

### “Waterton Lakes Opera House”

(#12 on the 2018 History Walking Tour – 309 Windflower Avenue)



Date of construction: 1935-36 Builder/architect: Parks Branch Architectural Division

#### *Heritage character statement*

The cinema has long been a major component of the social fabric of the community. Known as the Brewerton Cinema when it opened in 1936, the building retains the original function to this day. It changed names to The Mayfair, The Center, The Alpine and now Waterton Lakes Opera House. The building is an excellent example of the typical park architecture of the time and has remained relatively unchanged. The massing, materials and architectural detailing contribute to the character of the town site.

A movie theater was first proposed for this town site in 1931 by a Mr. Brewerton from Cardston, Alberta. This was preceded by other proposals for the site including a grocery store, a hotel and a dance hall. The lot was disposed of in a public action in 1932 but construction did not begin until 1935.

The movie house was designed by the parks branch architectural division in a style and design representative of the architecture in the park at that time. The stone base is repeated in many other commercial and residential buildings in the town site. The upper half of the building displays the stucco and half timbering details that contribute to the character of the park. The west facade of the building, originally plain in design, has been detailed with half timbering similar to that exhibited on the front of the facade.

The building is very conspicuous due to its prominent location on a corner site and to its role as an important entertainment facility in the town site. The building both enhances and strengthens the character of the streetscape.

#### *Character defining elements*

The heritage character of the building is defined by the symmetry of the front facade, the choice of materials- field stone, stucco, and half timbering- the exposed rafters, the fenestration patterns, the center gable and the corner location.



1930s View of Windflower Avenue. Seen from left to right are: Glendall Foods, Delaney Food Market, Alpine Theatre.