

# Lowertown East Our Disappearing Heritage



*Source: Quebec Provincial Archives*

*Dedicated to the 1,500 families of Lowertown East  
who were dislocated as a result of urban renewal schemes in the 1960's.*

*Submitted to:*  
**The Lowertown Community Association, and  
Bruyère Street Task Force**

*By long-time and proud residents of Lowertown, Ottawa:*  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

This report is a review of the value of heritage buildings left in an area of east Lowertown in downtown Ottawa. The impetus for this report was a recent proposal by a local development firm to demolish four heritage buildings in this area. This proposal alerted the local residents to a large gap in the City of Ottawa's heritage designations in this area. Considered in isolation, the historical and cultural value of these buildings could easily be overlooked. However, taken within the greater context of this area's history, these buildings represent something of much greater value. While the report focuses on all of Lowertown East, these four heritage buildings are also a focus of the report. This report will demonstrate the reasons for which all of the heritage buildings in the area should be protected under more rigorous heritage designations.

The report is divided into three main sections including the Background, Main Arguments and Analysis, and Closing. The Background includes a description of the proposed development and a discussion of intensification. This is followed by an explanation of the geography and history of Lowertown, Lowertown East, and the section where the proposed development would take place. The results of an inventory taken of heritage buildings and styles in Lowertown East are also presented. This is followed by an explanation of the current levels of heritage designation in Lowertown. Finally, the background section closes with a closer look at the history of the four heritage buildings threatened with demolition.

The Main Arguments and Analysis section contains the reasons for which the current buildings threatened with demolition should be saved. It includes an explanation of the cultural heritage represented by these buildings (French, Irish, Jewish), the urban renewal saga, an explanation of the rarity of these buildings in terms of how many are left, and the City of Ottawa's own heritage principles. This is followed by a closing section with a conclusion, options, and recommendations. As mentioned, this report serves two purposes: to consider options for the four heritage buildings currently threatened with demolition and recommendations for the broader context of Lowertown East's heritage buildings.

## **2.0 Background**

### ***2.1 Development Proposal***

In December 2010, a notice went out indicating that Claridge Homes was proposing two developments in Lowertown. The plan included redeveloping a site that currently has three buildings, 316, 318 and 324-334 Bruyère Street, to accommodate an eight-storey residential condominium building. The plan also included redeveloping an adjoining property at 321 St. Andrew with three new townhouses. The plan has since changed and now encompasses all of the above buildings as well as 317-319 St. Andrew. The plan is now proposing a 5-storey building, which still requires a zoning by-law amendment to permit the increased height.

## 2.2 Intensification

The City of Ottawa continues to grow and the new mantra is intensification. While it was impossible to locate any mention of this word in the main body of the City's Official Plan, a definition was included in the glossary as follows: *intensification means that the density of development, measured in households or employment per hectare, increases.* Note that this does not necessarily mean tall buildings. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation describes intensification as follows:

*For the last 50 years, typical development patterns in Canada on greenfield lands have resulted in the loss of farmland and natural areas, rising car dependency, traffic congestion and infrastructure costs that many municipalities lack the resources to pay for. One of the ways municipalities have sought to address these issues is through residential intensification, i.e., encouraging housing development in existing urban areas where infrastructure and transit services are already in place.<sup>1</sup>*

In Ottawa, where intensification is causing much friction, it is clear that a delicate balance needs to be found between the extreme of sprawl and extreme intensification. The City of Ottawa's growth plan currently calls for 51,000 new households within the Greenbelt by 2031. Do we continue to drain municipal finances and allow for precious farmland to be destroyed by building sprawling and unsustainable suburbs? At the other extreme, do we expect to dictate that everyone must live in massive alienating apartment blocks? Striking a balance between a city like Los Angeles (sprawl city) and a place like Manhattan, New York (very dense), is more likely to be the result of this new movement.

Finding a balance is challenging and it is important not to overlook other goals, such as the protection of a city's heritage. The challenge is that as property values go up, it becomes more and more difficult for owners to care for their heritage buildings. Eventually, due to increasing taxes, it can become financially impossible for owners of heritage buildings to refuse the ever-more lucrative offers from property developers. For example, a heritage building on Bolton Street in the Lowertown West Heritage Conservation District received an offer of \$700,000 with the intention of demolishing this building and replacing it with a low-rise condominium complex. While the owners did not take this offer, increasing property taxes and the challenge of maintaining an old house are growing more and more difficult.

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<sup>1</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. March 2011. Internet. Available: [http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/su/sucopl/sucopl\\_001.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/su/sucopl/sucopl_001.cfm).

## Photos – Historic “Workmans” Houses on Guigues Street, East Lowertown (Yesterday and Today)



*Source: NCC Collection,  
Library and Archives Canada*



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

The real challenge for the City of Ottawa is finding ways to encourage creative and appropriate intensification. The eight-story building that was proposed by Claridge Homes is far beyond the zoning in place for this block of Bruyère Street. It represents an extreme interpretation of intensification for this particular section of Lowertown. However, the question becomes: at what cost are we willing to allow intensification? The originally proposed tower would have been six stories higher than houses directly next to the site and on the same block. Would this kind of development be acceptable if it were being proposed next door to homes in the suburbs? Even more importantly, have we forgotten our heritage in the rush to build a bigger city? Hopefully, we, as citizens of the City of Ottawa, are insuring that developers are building with the City’s heritage principles in mind as well.

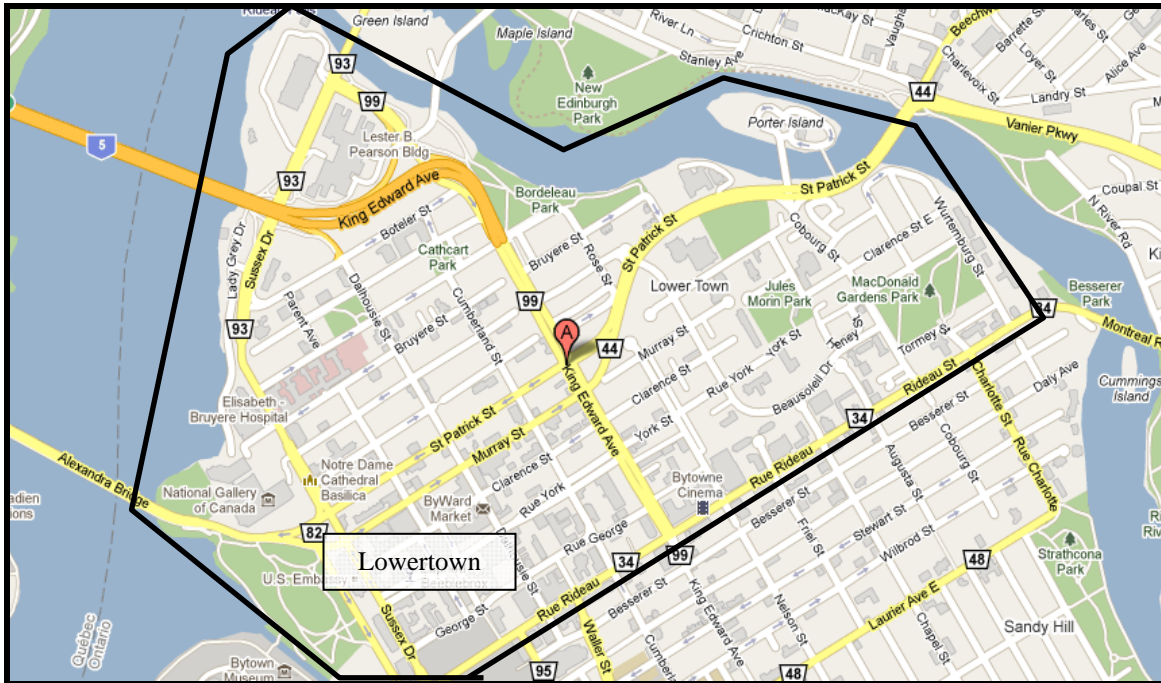
### **2.3 Lowertown**

#### **2.3.1 Geography**

Lowertown is located on the east side of downtown Ottawa. It is bordered by the Ottawa River to the north, the Rideau River to the east, Rideau Street to the south, and the Rideau Canal to the west. Lowertown’s geography is commonly referred to as having three distinct areas: the Byward Market, Lowertown West, and Lowertown East. Three visually distinct areas also exist in Lowertown East, but have no formal names. The following maps and aerial views lay out the geographic landscapes of the neighbourhood.



## Map – Lowertown, Ottawa



Source: Google Maps

Over the years, King Edward Avenue has acted as the main bisection of Lowertown into two areas commonly called Lowertown West, which includes the Byward Market, and Lowertown East. This division has become even more pronounced over the past few decades due to the destruction of the tree-lined boulevard on King Edward Avenue in the 1960's. The ongoing damage caused by a major truck route that uses this residential street is evident and has physically divided the community.

## Aerial Photo – Lowertown West and Lowertown East, Ottawa



Source: Google Maps Street View



A further division was created by the City of Ottawa through the opening of the St. Patrick Street Parkway in the 1970`s. This street further divided Lowertown East into two separate areas. To the north of the St. Patrick Street Parkway and east of King Edward Avenue, a small isolated section of Lowertown has evolved over the years and is fondly called the “Wedge” by some of its residents. Sometimes, it is also referred to as the Bordeleau Park community.

Besides the Wedge, the rest of Lowertown East includes two other visually and socio-economically distinct areas. One of these areas is the one bordered by the St. Patrick Street Parkway to the north, King Edward Avenue to the west, Rideau Street to the south and Cobourg Street to the east. This is an area that has been marked by high poverty rates since the earliest days of the neighbourhood and used to be referred to as the “Lower” Lowertown by some long-time residents in Lowertown West. It also had a very strong industrial presence in the first half of Lowertown’s history. Its main park, Anglesea Square (Jules Morin Park) is featured in a famous Canadian novel, Angel Square.

### **Aerial View – the “Wedge,” the “Lower” Lowertown, and “English” Lowertown**



*Source: Aerial Photo, Google Maps Street View*

The third distinct area in Lowertown East is the area to the east of Cobourg Street and north of Rideau Street. This area was the last part of Lowertown to be developed and includes a high number of large “English” cottage-type homes. The area was often seen as the “English” section of Lowertown, and has tended to have middle to higher income residents. Sir Robert Borden, former Prime Minister of Canada, resided in this area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were a number of Protestant medical institutions in the area. This community also includes a park called Macdonald Gardens (Borden Park).

### 2.3.2 History of Lowertown

Lowertown is one of the first two founding communities of Ottawa. It was laid out on Crown land in 1826 by Colonel John By. Two communities were laid out in accordance with instructions from Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-in-Chief of the Canadas at the time. Lowertown was established to the east of the Rideau Canal in the lower of two plateaus and was the site of a cedar swamp. To the west, on the higher of the two plateaus, and the site of a large forest, Uppertown was established. The land in Lowertown was divided according to a Georgian style of town planning and remained virtually unchanged until the destructive measures taken during urban renewal in the 1960's and 70's.

By was also tasked with building the Rideau Canal between Ottawa and Kingston between 1826 and 1832. A large number of Irish made up the workforce that built the Rideau Canal. Meanwhile, French-Canadians made up the majority of timber workmen in the Ottawa area.

From the very beginning, there was a distinct separation between Lowertown and Uppertown. This was based on ethnicity, religion and economic status. Protestants in Uppertown were given leases "in perpetuity" and built high quality buildings, while property in Lowertown was only leased for periods of 30 years. The majority of Ottawa's Catholic French and Irish lived in Lowertown. The limited leases were not lifted until as late as the 1860's. Despite this separation, Irish, French, English, and Catholic and Protestant tensions were commonplace in these early years.

In 1855, Bytown was renamed Ottawa and incorporated as a city. In 1857, Ottawa, then 40,000 strong, was chosen as the capital of the Province of Canada by Queen Victoria. The construction of the Parliament buildings in the 1860's brought a flood of new business and this was followed by 550 politicians and civil servants relocating from Quebec City.

**Photo – St. Patrick Street at King Edward Avenue (ca. 1920)**



*Source: McClaughlin Collection, Library and Archives Canada*



The rest of Lowertown's history is that of the French, and, to a lesser extent, Irish and Jewish communities. Over the next century, Lowertown was the centre of French-Canadian life in Ottawa, and many moments in that community's history were played out in Lowertown. The multiple institutional buildings that still stand in Lowertown, especially Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica and St. Anne's Church, are a testament to this historically devout Catholic and French community. An Irish presence was certainly also felt and centered around St. Brigid's Church. Finally, while a smaller percentage of Lowertown population, the majority of the Jewish community's life was also centred in Lowertown where no less than three Jewish synagogues stood.

By 1951, it was estimated that 10,000 people were living in Lowertown.<sup>2</sup> However, this number might only be referring to Lowertown West, because another source had identified Lowertown East in 1968 as having 9,400 people alone. In either case, by the late 1960's and 70's, many families and the Baby Boomers were moving to the suburbs. During this period, Lowertown experienced growing social problems including prostitution, homelessness and, later, drug addiction. Many city policies had the effect of causing even greater social upheaval in the area than warranted during this period. Urban renewal, which consisted of the systematic destruction of Lowertown East both physically and sociologically, was seen as a great injustice brought on community by the City for many years during and after its implementation.

Other government interventions also took their toll. There was the failed attempt to build a destructive freeway through Lowertown and Sandy Hill in the 1960's, which resulted in the destruction of King Edward Avenue, once a grand tree-lined boulevard at the centre of Lowertown. King Edward was designated a temporary truck and commuter route to appease the City's transportation planners. Meanwhile, the National Capital Commission, with its utopian vision of the capital, went on a rampage expropriating hundreds of properties along Sussex Avenue and other sections of Lowertown. What was not preserved was demolished all in the name of the greater good of building the capital. In all this upheaval, one wonders what value was placed on property rights or the dignity of long-time residents and their families.

By 1986, estimates placed the population of Lowertown at 3,000.<sup>3</sup> A Diaspora of sorts had taken place and the face of Lowertown had drastically changed. The 1990's and early 2000's have demonstrated that Lowertown is turning a new leaf. Condo towers are going up in greater numbers on vacant properties. Streets are being revitalized. Lowertown West and the Byward Market were given historic district status and many older buildings have been restored. Property values continue to sky-rocket. Lowertown has a very bright future ahead of it as one of Ottawa's premier downtown communities.

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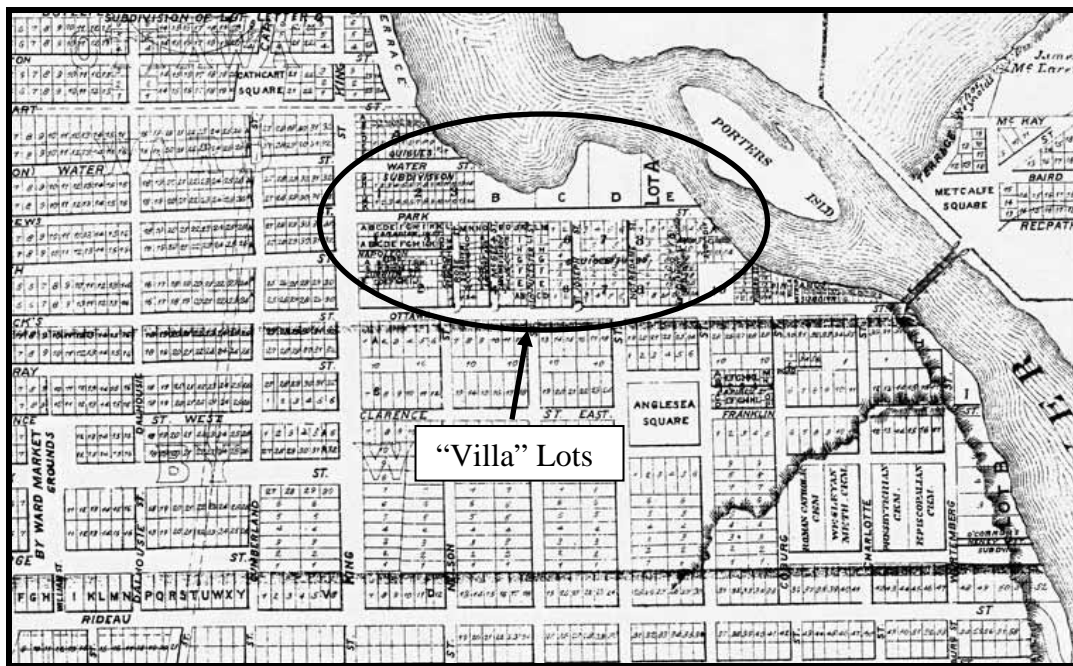
<sup>2</sup> Capital Neighbourhoods. March 2011. Internet. Available: <http://capitalneighbourhoods.ca/english/lowertown/story-348.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> Capital Neighbourhoods. March 2002. Internet. Available: <http://capitalneighbourhoods.ca/english/lowertown/story-348.aspx>.

### 2.3.3 History of Lowertown East

Lowertown East has a common history with Lowertown West. However, the “Lower” Lowertown, as it was often referred to by its western cousin, was different in many respects. When the land was laid out in this part of the neighbourhood, a special subdivision, referred to in the old property assessments as the “Villa” lots was created. These special half-lots, which are visible in the following historic map, were likely created by Bishop Guigues, who was an important land owner in the area. It is possible that this was an early form of social housing. By subdividing regular lots into two, it was possible for poorer residents to obtain property. Not surprisingly, a number of undesirable features were located in this area, including a ditch that once ran along King Edward Avenue (the Bywash), an isolation hospital for contagious illnesses on the near-by Porter’s Island, a landfill where the present-day Bordeleau Park is located, and heavy, but small, industrial businesses.

Map – Lowertown, circa 1880



Source: Unknown

To a certain degree, Lowertown East was a truly “mixed-usage” and high-density community where every corner seemed to have a business. Much like the rest of Ottawa at the time, especially the lower to middle income areas, it was common to mix businesses, institutions and homes all within the same neighbourhood. This was not only convenient and pedestrian friendly, but essential, since automobiles were not commonly used until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sadly, much of the mixed uses and pedestrian environment were compromised by City of Ottawa planning policies in the 60’s and 70’s that favoured cars and separating out land uses rather than walk-able and liveable communities.

Lowertown East was also an important staging area for newcomers to Ottawa and immigrants to Canada. Even in 1968, a quarter of residents had lived in the area for less than a year.<sup>4</sup> This seems to indicate that, while there was a large well-established community, many others used Lowertown East as a transition to other neighbourhoods in Ottawa. To this day, a large component of Lowertown East is an on-going succession of newly arrived immigrants who are often housed in the plethora of social housing units in the area. These immigrants often move on to better and brighter futures as they pursue their new lives in Canada. This is not much different from the Jewish community's story, which will be described in greater detail below.

Throughout its history, Lowertown, and especially Lowertown East, were often given unfair reputations. While the area was less affluent than Uppertown, it was home to many of Ottawa's politicians, doctors, teachers, lawyers and other professionals. Many people, who grew up in Lowertown, went on to be great successes. The area has also been the subject of no less than three authors, including the critically acclaimed authors Norman Levine and Brian Doyle. Author Doris Lee-Momy, who grew up on King Edward Avenue in Lowertown East in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, wrote fondly of the people who lived there:

*“To some, [Lowertown]... might have evoked thoughts of a disreputable neighbourhood bounded by seedy hotels, slovenly homes, a refuge for the downtrodden, a haven for shady characters. But Lowertown's true worth was well known to those whose home it was, generations of honest, hard-working families who grew up and lived in its “ambiance.”*<sup>5</sup>

### 2.3.4 Three Lowertown Architectural Styles

There are generally three sorts of historic residential architecture in Lowertown. Between the years of 1845 and 1865, small “cottage”-like “workmans” houses were built. These buildings varied in length and height, but essentially had the same characteristics. They were inspired by “La maison Québécoise,” a French-Canadian style of housing mainly predominant in Quebec between the years of 1780 and 1920. A typical workman's house consisted of one and a half storeys, built of log or squared timber, with a slanted gable-sided roof (see photo below). Many of these buildings would have likely first been built with casement windows on the first storey and dormers on the second, with transoms above and small ornamented covers over the doors. These were simple buildings, but served as one of the earliest forms of housing in Lowertown.

The second form of residential architecture typical of Lowertown is the gable-fronted house. These buildings tended to be single-family dwellings when first built. Most are two storeys, include varying forms of ornate verandas and cornices, and have brick or wood veneers. These buildings would have been built between roughly 1865 and 1900.

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<sup>4</sup> Gelinas, Pierre, et al. **The Lower Town Project**. Ottawa: St. Paul University, 1968.

<sup>5</sup> Lee-Momy, Doris. *Farewel, My Bluebell (A Vignette of Lowertown)*. Ottawa: Robitaille-Lee Publishers, 1998.

**Photo – A Workman’s House Restored, Lowertown**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

The third predominant form of historic residential architecture in Lowertown is the flat-roofed home. These buildings typically had a brick veneer, and elaborately ornate wooden porches and cornices. They were built between the 1880’s and 1950’s and are the most predominant type of the three architectural styles still found in the neighbourhood. Typically, these buildings are found in singles or doubles and are two storeys; however, there are also multiple-unit and multi-storey exceptions.

**Photo – Gable-Fronted House**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

**Photo – Flat-Roofed House**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*



### 2.3.5 Building Inventory

A survey of the remaining heritage houses in Lowertown East was undertaken for the purpose of this report. The stock of housing reviewed included all buildings east of King Edward Avenue and west of Cobourg Street. Approximately 128 heritage buildings remain. This accounts for roughly 10% of the buildings in Lowertown East, while the rest would be more modern buildings. Of these 128 buildings, approximately 78 of them are flat-roofed houses (1880-1950), 8 are large gable-fronted (1865-1900), 19 are varying styles of cottage-like workman's houses (1845-65), and 20 are miscellaneous and more unique architectural examples (1845-1950). More than half the buildings would have had brick facades, while the remainder would have originally had wood veneers. Several significant institutional and commercial buildings also remain in the area.

### 2.3.6 Heritage Protection Rules and Lowertown

The Ontario Heritage Act allows for two kinds of heritage designation to protect buildings. Under Part IV of the Act, buildings can be individually designated. Under Part V, groups of buildings can be designated and are referred to as heritage conservation districts. In 1993, Lowertown West was designated a heritage conservation district. Strangely, Lowertown East was completely ignored. Despite the fact that many of the buildings on the east side of King Edward Avenue were of similar character to the rest of Lowertown, the line was drawn directly in the middle of King Edward Avenue. Anything to the west of that line was included, and mostly everything to the east was excluded. The Byward Market was also designated a heritage district around the same time.

The Ontario Heritage Act also requires that the City of Ottawa keep a register of properties of cultural heritage value. The houses at 321 St. Andrew, and 324-334 Bruyère are on the list; however, the house at 316 Bruyère is not.<sup>6</sup> The Ontario Heritage Act allows for “a municipality to include on the register property that is not designated but considered by the municipal council to be of cultural heritage value or interest.” The house at 316 Bruyère Street should be considered for inclusion in the register.

The house at 316 Bruyère Street might have been overlooked due to its current appearance. However, an accompanying guide to the Act also states that “Using physical condition as a determining factor in whether or not to list a property on the register is not advised... this may not be affecting its cultural heritage value or interest.”<sup>7</sup> Most importantly, the guide also notes that “no final decisions about the cultural heritage value or interest of a property on the register should be made without undertaking further historical research.” While this report has attempted to provide an in-depth look at the history of the current heritage properties threatened with demolition, it would appear that the City of Ottawa must also do additional work to ensure a fulsome assessment.

The City of Ottawa's Heritage Reference List also uses categories to rate the value of heritage buildings. It should be noted that the descriptions below are based on the 1989

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<sup>6</sup> The house at 317-319 St. Andrew is likely on the Heritage Reference List as well, but this has not been confirmed.

<sup>7</sup> Heritage Property Evaluation. Ontario Ministry of Culture. Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2006.

list, since the current list it is not readily available on the City of Ottawa's website. The City uses four categories. Category one is for prime heritage buildings and based on their architectural and/or historical value. Category two buildings are responsible for the overall heritage character of an area. Category three buildings are those that contribute to the heritage "identity" of an area. Category four buildings tend to have no value, but are located in a heritage or proposed district. The differences between the first three categories are quite unclear as defined in the 1989 list and would benefit from more clear definitions.

A "heritage overlay" is another tool to protect heritage buildings in Ottawa. An overlay is an additional layer of regulation that takes precedence over the underlying zoning. Over the years, the former and current City of Ottawa has used a provision in the zoning bylaws that allows for the designation of heritage buildings as being in a "heritage" overlay. The buildings do not need to be in a heritage district or individually designated to be zoned as heritage overlay. It can be used to discourage demolition of heritage buildings by limiting any new development to their current height and dimensions. It should be noted, however, that a heritage overlay does not have as much power as individual or district heritage designations made under the Ontario Heritage Act.

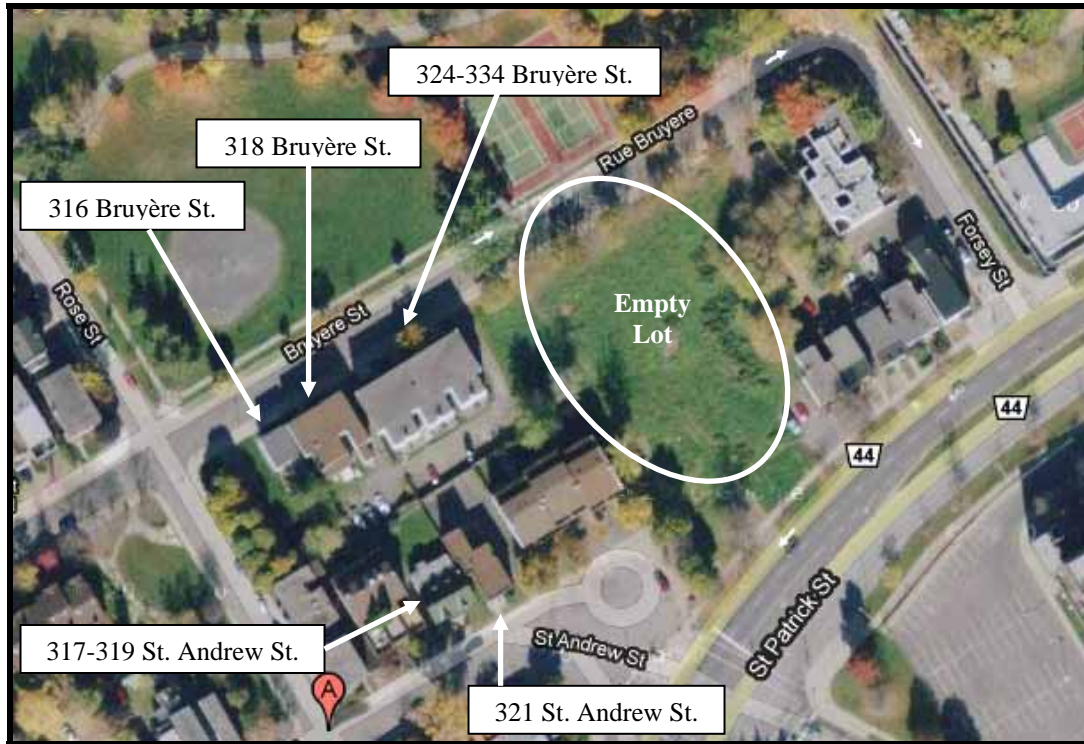
### **2.3.7 The "Wedge"**

As mentioned, the "Wedge" is the area bordered by King Edward Avenue, the St. Patrick Street Parkway, and the Rideau River. It comprises approximately five residential city blocks, which are all composed of densely built homes and townhouses. The average height of the buildings in this area is two storeys. King Edward Avenue Park, owned by the National Capital Commission, and Bordeleau Park, owned by the City of Ottawa, are both located in this area. The old Good Shepherd Convent is located at one end of the "Wedge" and is now the Chinese Embassy. The area was also home to Ottawa's first black family and Ottawa Mayor E. A. Bourque.

Many of the streets in this area are reflective of its heritage. For example, Bruyère Street is named after the French-Catholic nun, Mother Elizabeth Bruyère, who was the founder of the Sisters of Charity of Bytown. She opened the first hospital in Ottawa and the first bilingual school in Ontario. Guigues Street is named after Ottawa's first French-Catholic Bishop, Joseph-Bruno Guigues (1805-1874), who immigrated to Canada in 1844 from France. He is remembered as having fought strongly for French-Canadian rights including Catholic education. He also helped encourage the development of many of Lowertown's long-time social institutions and organizations.

One of the five blocks in the Wedge is the proposed location of the Claridge development. Other than the four heritage buildings and one newer building slated for demolition, there are approximately 30 other residential units on the block, most of which are townhouses. Half of the block has also been dominated for over a decade by an empty lot mid-block. This property is owned by the Iraq government and no observable efforts have been made to encourage development of this derelict property. Instead, ironically, buildings that are already built have been threatened with development.

## Aerial View – Buildings Proposed to be Demolished by Claridge



Source: Aerial Photo, Google Maps Street View

### 2.4 Occupant histories

The occupants, from over the years, of the four heritage buildings slated for demolition represent a true cross-section of the resourceful and resilient groups that made this river area of Lowertown East such a vibrant community. The "Brennan" house was built and occupied for many decades by working people of Irish descent. The "Gauvreau" rowhouse was built with money acquired by a descendant of one of the first Quebec inhabitants who used the land by the Rideau River first to build a hide and pelt business and then to build an income-generating rowhouse. The "Gauvreau-Bodovsky" house, built by the Gauvreau family, saw ownership transferred in 1921 to a Jewish family who for more than 50 years contributed to the commercial and cultural life of Lowertown. Finally, the "Ouellette" house was occupied by working-class French-Canadian families over the years and once included a convenience store.

#### 2.4.1 The "Brennan" House (316 Bruyère Street)

The smallest and most modest of the four heritage buildings is likely the most valuable one as well. The small house at 316 Bruyère is quite possibly the oldest building left in Lowertown East, having been built approximately 140 years ago. The property was sold by Ottawa's first Catholic bishop, Guigues, to William Brennan, an Irish immigrant and labourer, in 1866, and remained in the Brennan family until 1955.

The Brennan house is representative of the many “cottage” like “workman’s” houses that would have existed in this section of Lowertown East over the years. According to the old fire insurance plans, 316 Bruyère was a one and a half-storey house for much of its lifetime. This means that it would have had a wood shingled roof likely with dormer windows. The following two photographs depict what 316 Bruyère would have looked like (approximately) before being altered in later years and a photograph of 316 Bruyère as it appears today. The doors and windows were likely in the same location as they are today, and would have represented a variation of the house depicted in the St. Patrick Street photo. It is one of only 5 buildings left in Lowertown East that would have had side gabled roofs. Oddly, despite the rarity of this building, it does not appear on the City of Ottawa’s Heritage Reference List. With proper care, 316 Bruyère could be rehabilitated to its former self.

**Photo - House on St. Patrick Street  
(since demolished)**



*Source: Unknown*

**Photo - The “Brennan” House,  
316 Bruyère Street (after alterations)**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

Not long after buying the property, William Brennan built a house at 316 Bruyère Street. At the time, the street was actually called "Water" Street, because it ran along the Rideau River. The house was on one side of Water Street and the river was on the other side. Over the years, the city filled in a portion of the river and eventually created a park, which is known today as Bordeleau Park.

According to the 1881 Census, William (65 years old) was living with his wife Anilaina (56), and two sons, Alfred James (23), and William (19). It's not clear whether or not William and Anilaina had other children, but given their age in 1881, it is likely that they might have had others. William senior was listed as a labourer, Alfred James was a plumber and William junior was a printer. According to the 1891 Census, Anilaina had



passed away and William was then living with his son Alfred James and daughter-in-law, Mary Jane. Mary Pinard (nee: Burgess), Mary Jane's widowed mother, was also living with them.

Alfred James, who went by the name "James," was married to Mary Jane Pinard, who appears to have been a near-by neighbour. He passed away in 1917 at age 53, and Mary Jane Brennan inherited the house. Mary Jane remarried to James Losty and moved to 140 Cobourg Street, which was a few blocks away in Lowertown. Mary Jane continued to rent the house at 316 Bruyère and also did considerable benevolent work in Ottawa acting as the president of the women`s auxiliaries at Immaculata High School and the Ottawa General Hospital. She was noted in the newspaper as volunteering as late as 1949. She would have been about 80 years old by that time.

In October of 1955, Mary Jane Losty (first marriage: Brennan, nee: Pinard) passed away at around the age of 87. James Losty (1867-1955) had already departed the world only a few months before in May. It appears that Mary Jane had no children with either husband as there is no mention of them in her final will. She did, however, leave money to distant relatives and her 316 Bruyère property to a close friend, Lea Carriere. Lea sold the house in 1958 and lived until 1999 in Vanier. Following the departure of the Brennan`s, the house at 316 Bruyère was inhabited by a number of different French-Canadian families throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **2.4.2 The “Gauvreau” Rowhouse (324-334 Bruyère Street)**

This six-unit rowhouse, constructed circa 1910 on land reclaimed from the Rideau River, now exists as a unique example of its type. It is the only 6-unit rowhouse of this style anywhere in Lowertown East, the last of these larger rowhouses. The City of Ottawa has listed this building in its Heritage Reference List.

**Photo – 324-334 Bruyère Street (present day)**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

A 1911 tax assessment for Emery Gauvreau indicates that the total assessment for the 99 by 99 foot property was \$5,400, a significant amount for the time. Early fire insurance plans show a brick exterior. The building retains most of its early exterior features, including multiple windows looking over the river; the decorative cornice along the roof; the columns on the balconies; and, the ornately carved wooden front doors. It is representative of the flat-roofed form of historic residential architecture found in Lowertown.

Over the years, the rowhouse's occupants were a cross-section of the French-Canadian families that lived in Lowertown. While the owner, Emery Gauvreau, and members of his family lived there for several decades starting in 1923, other long-time residents included the Blais's (circa 1910-1930), the Nadeau's (circa 1923-1941) and as well as many others. Currently, one unit is occupied by members of the Lapierre family who moved there in the 1940's. Long-term and short-term renters included public servants and labourers, multi-generational families and families sub-renting rooms for income.

### **2.4.3 The "Gauvreau/Bodovsky" House (321 St. Andrew Street)**

Several sources indicate that there was a residence at this address and this location as far back as 1873. It is on the City of Ottawa Heritage Reference List. Fire insurance plans and tax assessments indicate that the building was enlarged and bricked by 1911. At this time, Emery Gauvreau was the owner and occupant of 321 St Andrew as well as the builder and owner of the 6-unit rowhouse on the river side of his property. He was the son of the first owners, Francois-Xavier and Dorothe Gauvreau, and had success as a butcher and a seller of hides and pelts.

**Photos - Will & Kate Bodovsky in front of 321 St. Andrew (ca. 1940)**



*Source: Bodovsky Family*

**Photo - 321 St. Andrew (present day)**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

The two-story brick house has the typical flat-roof of many single residential buildings in the area but has detailed decorative brick work at intervals along the front and side walls and over the windows. The above photographs show 321 Bruyère Street before and after it was altered. It originally had a large porch that wrapped around the left side and provided access to a second doorway. The original porch and its Roman columns can be seen in the black and white photograph. The brick façade was later covered up with red paint and the porch was removed. The Star of David, an important symbol representing Jewish identity, is ornately carved into the wooden frames above all the windows and remains a feature of this building to this day.

The Stars of David were added to the house after Wolf Bodovsky purchased the house and half of the original 321 St Andrew property from Emery Gauvreau in 1920. As a butcher, Wolf Bodovsky stored meat in the large refrigerator behind the house. From this time until the 1970's, the house was occupied by active members of the Jewish community in Ottawa. The Bodovsky name was associated not only with the wholesale butcher shop in the Byward market but also with various efforts to raise funds for a new synagogue and community centre. Their three daughters attended York Street Public School and Lisgar Collegiate and were active in various community events. A memoir of one of the daughters, Sylvia Kershman, tells of her years in Lowertown and is available at the Ottawa Jewish Archives. It provides insight on the Jewish community's presence in Lowertown East and the Byward Market. Some of the Bodovsky's grandchildren went on to be professionals including a lawyer and an orthodontist.

#### **2.4.4 The “Ouellette” House (317-319 St. Andrew Street)**

The “Ouellette” house is another quite valuable example of the workman's houses left in Lowertown East. Based on the old phone directories and fire insurance plans, the building appears to predate 1875 and puts it in the same range as the Brennan house as being one of the oldest buildings in the area.

The Ouellette house is representative of the many “cottage” like “workman's” houses that would have existed in this section of Lowertown East over the years. The old fire insurance plans confirm that 317-319 St. Andrew has always been a one and a half-storey house. As the historic photo below shows, the building had wood shingles and a front porch. It was a variation on the typical workman's house with two A-shaped windows on the second floor. Similar houses have been observed in historic photos of the area, but have since been demolished. This particular style is likely the last of its kind. With proper care, 317-319 St. Andrew could be rehabilitated to its former self.

Francis-Xavier Ouellette, a tinsmith, and his wife Josephine, bought the house from the Gauvreau family in 1878. The two of them were in their mid twenties and had just had a daughter. Other children followed in later years. Francis-Xavier passed away around 1900 and left his wife with the house. Josephine Ouellette died in 1938 and land registry records indicate that 317-319 St. Andrew Street stayed in the Ouellette family until 1942 when the building and the land was separated from a Water Street (Bruyère Street) triplex property and sold by Josephine's family to a Marie Jeanne Mantha.

**Photo – 317-319 St. Andrew Street  
(ca. 1940)**



*Source: Bodovsky Family*

**Photo - 317-319 St. Andrew Street  
(Present day)**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

Following her husband's death, Josephine had built a rental-income generating triplex property (318/320/322 Water Street) along the river behind the house. By 1899, the Ottawa Directory lists her at 322 Water Street, which is the first year that a house is listed at that address. As mentioned earlier, part of the Rideau River was filled up to create the current Bordeleau Park. After her death, descendants of Josephine replaced the original 318/320/322 Bruyère triplex with newer apartment-style low-rise – the current 318 Bruyère Street – and continued to occupy one unit and rent out the others until the 1990's.

**Photo – Ouellette Family Members  
Josephine is on the right (ca. 1930)**



*Source: Ouellette Family*

A number of other French-Canadian families lived at 317-319 St. Andrew Street throughout the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Of particular note are Elzear and Valeda Favreau, who operated a convenience store out of one side of the property. It has not been determined how long they owned the store, but it was operating as late as the 1980's. One of their sons, Private Gerald Favreau, was killed in action during World War II and is buried in a Canadian war cemetery in Italy.



## 3.0 Main Arguments and Analysis

### 3.1 Ottawa's Working-Class French and Irish Communities

Lowertown East was unique from Lowertown West in that it was a truly working class neighbourhood. A large portion of Lowertown West was dominated by the Byward Market, and much of its residential housing stock was more advanced than the housing in Lowertown East. Generally, the homes in Lowertown West were more frequently upgraded and much better maintained than those in Lowertown East. This reflected a slightly higher socio-economic class in the west. This is part of the reason why Lowertown West was able to avoid, with some effort, the urban renewal schemes of the 1960's and 70's.

The Villa lots are an especially unique part of Lowertown East's heritage. These smaller lots allowed for the poorest of Ottawa's home buyers to obtain property. The size of the lots also resulted in the construction of smaller homes, which were very unusual to Lowertown. These smaller cottage-like "workman's" houses represented the working class people of Ottawa. In this case, most of these people were French and some Irish Canadians.

#### **Photo – A Lowertown Community Gathering in Bingham Playground (ca. 1920)**



*Source: Dostaler Family*

According to a study from 1968, The Lower Town Project, most of Lowertown East's population was French-Canadian. This remained the case throughout Lowertown East's history up until that point. In 1961, the population of the neighbourhood was composed of 80% French-Canadians and 90% Catholics.<sup>8</sup> The percentage difference was likely attributed to Irish-Canadian Catholics, like the Brennan's, also living in the neighbourhood. In 1963, almost 50% of the population was composed of trades people, 6% labourers, and 20% government employees. The average salary was one third that of the City of Ottawa average.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> McClelland, Michael, et al. Lowertown West Conservation District Study. Ottawa. Report, May 1993.

<sup>9</sup> McClelland, Michael, et al. Lowertown West Conservation District Study. Ottawa. Report, May 1993.

As alluded to earlier by author Doris Lee-Momy, Lowertown was a special place for many people despite its low socio-economic status. St. Patrick Street was its main street and St. Anne's Church was the centre for most of the community and from which many of the neighbourhood's original social services were organized. Even the academic researchers in the 1968 study, The Lower Town Project, were well aware of this community vibrancy and noted "The dominant impression of Lower Town East is of an old established neighbourhood with a strong sense of community, a familiar and friendly place known and loved by the residents." Despite all the poverty in the area, the 1968 study describes very strong personal ties between neighbours and members of the community. The value of these relationships could never have been estimated. However, they were a testament to the strength of this predominantly French-Canadian and Catholic community.

Regulation 17 is an example of one of many culturally significant events of French-Canadian culture that was primarily centred in Ottawa's Lowertown. Passed in 1912 by the Ontario provincial government, it essentially was an attempt at assimilating the French-Canadians educated in provincially-funded schools. Ottawa was a major French-Canadian community in Ontario and much of the battle played out in this city, especially in Lowertown. The province was never able to fully implement the directive, but left Franco-Ontarians bitter towards the Ontario English "establishment" for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was a story of minority rights whose roots are deep in the cultural history of Lowertown.

**Photo – Protesting Regulation 17, French-Canadians  
at Anglesea Square in Lowertown East (ca. 1912)**



*Source: Centre for Research on French Canadian Culture<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup> Le Droit. Université d'Ottawa, CRCCF, Fonds Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario (C2), Ph2-142a, Internet. Available: [http://www.crcf.uottawa.ca/exposition\\_virtuelle/collection\\_fonds\\_archives/document.php?id=110](http://www.crcf.uottawa.ca/exposition_virtuelle/collection_fonds_archives/document.php?id=110).

### **3.2 Ottawa's First Jewish Community**

Lowertown East was the home of Ottawa's first Jewish community. While not the majority of residents in the area, this Jewish presence was strong. Ottawa's Jewish population grew from 20 in 1881 to 3,000 by 1914. Most were from the Russian empire and many were escaping pogroms, which were often state-sponsored murder of Jews. Lowertown East was the home of the majority of Ottawa's Jews up until the 60's and 70's. It was also the site of three of the Jewish community's synagogues.

Many Jewish newcomers settled in Lowertown East due to affordable housing and its proximity to the Byward Market. Later dominated by Jewish merchants between both world wars, the Byward Market was a good source of goods for peddling, an important Jewish occupation since the middle ages (as a result of discrimination in many other occupations). Members of Ottawa's Jewish community owned many famous businesses in Lowertown, including Freiman's Department Store (Ottawa's first department store), Caplan's Department Store, and also founded businesses such as the Loeb IGA grocery chain empire.

**Photo – Jewish Synagogue on King Edward Avenue at Murray  
(Demolished by the City of Ottawa)**



*Machzikei Hadas Congregation (1906) – started in a softdrink factory on Murray Street and then moved to corner of King Edward and Murray; “Peddler’s” synagogue  
(Source: Ottawa Jewish Archives)*

**Photo - Lorry Greenberg (1981)**



*Source: Ottawa Jewish Archives*

Mayor Lorry Greenberg (1975-78), a Jewish resident of Ottawa, grew up in Lowertown and was quoted as saying the following about Urban Renewal:

*“Renovations of the market appear to be a repetition of the sad events surrounding urban renewal in Lower Town. Too many pseudo-experts intermingled their opinions with pressurized city officials to create one of the worst fiascos the municipality has ever known.”*

*- Ottawa Citizen, Feb. 15, 1977*

**Photo – The Jewish Community (1964)**



*The sod-turning for a Jewish seniors' lodge in Lowertown East. Mayor Charlotte Whitton is the person on the left holding the shovel. (Source: Ottawa Jewish Archives)*

The house at 321 St. Andrew is representative of the historical Jewish presence that existed in Lowertown East throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. At this time, it is difficult to determine whether any of the other former residences of the Jewish community still exist in Lowertown East. It is quite likely that 321 St. Andrew is one of the last of these buildings. Given the history of this building, and its place as part of Ottawa Jewish history, it is important to consider preserving it. Its demolition would diminish the heritage of Lowertown East.

### **3.3 Urban Renewal Saga (1968-1982)**

Urban renewal was a popular term used in the 1950's, 60's and 70's to refer to fixing rundown neighbourhoods. In Canada, it was a response to a social concern about adequate housing for Canadians. The original intention was to replace severely sub-standard housing in urban areas often referred to as "blighted" housing.

Unfortunately, the policy of urban renewal was often taken to an extreme. Many long-established communities were demolished without much regard for the wishes of those who lived there. Many homes, which did not constitute the definition of truly "sub-standard" buildings were expropriated and demolished. People affected by expropriations, in some cases, were forced to fight for their communities through legal action. They often lost.

At the time, a similar urban renewal scheme took place in Africville, Nova Scotia. This community was a predominantly black community. Its residents were expropriated, and their community demolished. Recently, the City of Halifax formally apologized for this act.

One of the greatest scars left on Lowertown is that of Urban renewal in Lowertown East. The common belief of many residents was that a well-established French community in a city that was still predominantly controlled by Anglophones was subjected to Urban renewal. Former city Councillor, Georges Bédard, was part of one of the 1,400 families that were kicked out of Lowertown East. To many, Urban renewal in Lowertown East was a catastrophe of urban proportions. The following quotes are samples of stories that appeared in the Ottawa Citizen in later years:

*"... the program is still bitterly resented by long-time residents and community activists, who describe the results as a "disaster," a "fiasco," and the single most influential event in the history of Lowertown." (Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 26, 1987)*

*"... You can't talk much of Lowertown today without talking about that monumental mistake," says Marc Laviolette, who grew up in Lowertown and is now alderman for the area. The neighbourhood you see today is not even a shadow of what used to be. The sense of community that was there when I was a boy was almost completely wiped out. We know better. Today we respect heritage and we don't try to destroy a milieu people are used to." (Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 26, 1987)*

*"... the people were nice. We worked hard. We did the best we could. I had so many friends." And remaining residents like Therien were left with only scrapbooks and memories." (Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 26, 1987)*



“... il y avait des injustices qui étaient commises à l’égard des Canadiens-Français de la Basse-Ville.” (Maurice Pagé, Le Droit, Nov. 7, 2008)

In a related plan to build a highway through Lowertown East, author Doris Lee-Momy’s grandmother was expropriated in the 1960’s by the City of Ottawa at the age of 88. She had lived on King Edward Avenue in Lowertown East for 53 years. Another elderly neighbour of hers, also expropriated, was emotionally distraught and her health deteriorated completely. These were some of the victims of the new forms of urban planning. Others, like Mrs. Thérien were left only with memories of the community they had lost. In a sick twist, after demolishing most of the buildings in one section of Lowertown East (King Edward at Cathcart), the plan for a highway failed, and the land was offered back to its previous owners by the City of Ottawa. No one took up the offer.

In her book, Farewell, My Bluebell, Doris-Lee Momy reflected on the consequences of urban renewal in Lowertown East:

*“The age of industrialization shows no mercy nor does it harbour any sentiment for things precious to the human heart. To relegate the memory of numerous households with the sweep of a crane to a mere pile of rubble, places no value on the lives within nor on the lives of those whom they have touched. I have endeavoured to pay them a modicum of tribute in the hope, perhaps, of instilling in succeeding generations, a renewed sense of pride in a beloved community, knowing that it has not been forgotten.”*

Despite their weaknesses, the citizens of Lowertown East fought back. Many legal battles ensued as residents brought forward complaints to the Ontario Municipal Board. In some cases, there were some successes; however, the majority of Lowertown’s community was uneducated, poor, and politically unconnected. They were unprepared and unable to overcome the forces of an “establishment” that had already condemned the community. Despite efforts by its residents to save the neighbourhood from urban renewal, it was too late. Three levels of government, without consultation, had already decided what was best for them.

The people who once lived in Lowertown East are slowly passing away into history. Very little remains of this working class district’s original buildings. Despite the huge loss of Lowertown East’s heritage, a few homes were saved in the 70’s. Realizing the mistake made, the City of Ottawa’s municipal council put a stop to urban renewal. While it was too late to save most of Lowertown East’s built heritage, Lowertown West was spared.

The buildings that remain in Lowertown East are a testament to what took place. They are the remnants of a once vibrant and well-established working class community of French, Irish, and Jewish Canadians. The remaining buildings also represent the struggle against a failed urban planning policy that had no regard for human dignity. Urban renewal resulted in the destruction of a community that had developed over a hundred

years. It broke friendships and relations that had been built up over generations and left a bitter taste in the hearts of Lowertown's residents for decades. The fact that most heritage buildings in Lowertown East are not protected by the City's heritage policies only serves to further reinforce a sense that the City of Ottawa has very little regard for this more humble part of its history. Are we a city that only celebrates the rich and famous of the past, or are we a community that respects all aspects of our heritage, no matter how humble they might have been?

### **3.4 Few Buildings Remain**

One argument that must be made for Lowertown East is that so few heritage buildings remain. Estimates have placed the number of buildings lost to the urban renewal schemes of the 1960's and 70's at between 700 and 1,000 buildings. Many others were lost for other reasons as well. The fact remains that the City of Ottawa hastened the loss of heritage buildings in Lowertown East. The same City now places much more value on heritage and has a responsibility, especially for Lowertown East, to consider what is left and how it can be preserved. The building inventory shows that a number of residences remain. However, when one considers what has been lost, then it becomes clear that there are very few heritage buildings left.

### **3.5 City Policies Protect Heritage Buildings**

The City of Ottawa's policies on heritage should be applied in this particular case. A city's policies reflect its values and the City of Ottawa has a number of policies affecting heritage buildings. According to the City's website:

*“The City of Ottawa's heritage is one of its most important assets. Preserving our unique heritage is a key to defining our identity, and promotes a sense of community and understanding of our roots. It is up to all of us as a community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to appreciate the colourful saga of our collective story.”*

This general statement is a positive reflection of our City's general belief in the importance of heritage.

The Official Plan, the City of Ottawa's planning bible, is even more prescriptive about what is to be done with heritage buildings. According to the Official Plan, “Familiar landscapes and heritage buildings will be maintained despite on-going change.” Under the Strategic Directions section, and one of four categories of heritage resources, buildings fall into the following category:

*“**Built heritage** includes buildings, structures and sites that contribute to our understanding of our heritage and are valued for their representation of that heritage. They may reveal architectural, cultural, or socio-political patterns of our history or may be associated with specific events or people who have shaped that history. Examples include buildings, groups of buildings, dams and bridges.”*

The Official Plan outlines numerous policies that the City of Ottawa has in regards to protecting heritage buildings as summarized here:

- Groups of buildings, cultural landscapes, and areas of the city will be designated as Heritage Conservation Districts under Part V of the Heritage Act;
- **The City will give immediate consideration to the designation of any cultural heritage resources under the Heritage Act if that resource is threatened with demolition;**
- In areas of resource potential, any application for development will be supported by an archaeological resource assessment to ensure that the City’s conservation objectives are met;
- The City will maintain a current and publicly accessible database of cultural heritage resources;
- The City will recognize the cultural heritage policy infrastructure outlined by the preceding policies, and will allocate the necessary financial resources to ensure its maintenance and preservation, thereby ensuring that development occurs in harmony with, and respect for, unique and irreplaceable cultural heritage resources.<sup>11</sup>

The Ontario Heritage Act clearly states the case for the designation of heritage buildings in Lowertown East. A portion of the Act, available in Appendix A, notes that a building can be designated if it meets one or more of a number of criteria including a property that *“has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method”* or *“has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community”* A number of the facts raised in this report fit this description.

One could argue that the four heritage buildings currently threatened with demolition and the others left in Lowertown East should be protected under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Brennan and Ouellette houses at 316 Bruyère and 317-319 St. Andrew are rare examples of “workmans” cottage-like houses and are examples of only a few of the original “Villa” lot homes left in Lowertown East. The Gauvreau rowhouse at 324-334 Bruyère is a rare style, since it is the last six-unit and largest heritage row house in Lowertown East. While other examples of the architecture at 321 St. Andrew are more commonly found in Lowertown East, the stars of David carved above its windows mark it as one of the last remnants of Jewish heritage in Lowertown.

All four buildings can be associated with urban renewal, a key historical event, since they are among the last of the buildings left in the wake of the urban renewal saga. This single

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<sup>11</sup> Several other policies listed pertained to the City’s legal and financial responsibilities to protect heritage buildings. These have been included in Appendix B.

event was of great significance to the community, albeit a very negative one. These buildings represent the struggle of Lowertown East to protect their community and that which remains is a reminder of this event.

## **4.0 Closing**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

The houses slated for demolition under the Claridge proposal represent a cross-section of Lowertown's French, Irish and Jewish heritage. They are also an example of the earliest working class people's homes in Ottawa. These homes tend to be rarer, because history has a tendency to overlook the ordinary. With the disappearance of more and more heritage buildings such as these in this community, the importance placed on the buildings that remain grows. These wooden and brick houses, and the varied occupations of their residents, demonstrate the resiliency of a community that has existed over 150 years.

Despite many challenges, such as religious, linguistic, socio-economic discrimination, these various communities thrived in Lowertown East. Nevertheless, the application of urban renewal on the neighbourhood and its residents showed little regard for a community that took generations to build. As a result, many lives were shaken and relationships broken. Most of Lowertown East's heritage buildings were destroyed. Very few remain. To add to the insult, heritage buildings currently in Lowertown East are not very well protected. They have not received full consideration or application of the current heritage designations available.

The bright news is that the City of Ottawa values heritage and it has an opportunity now to make right so much wrong that was done to this section of Lowertown, Ottawa, and its people. Surely the buildings that are left in Lowertown East need to be preserved.

### **4.2 Options for the Current Buildings Threatened**

As concluded, the four heritage buildings currently threatened with demolition should be saved. In this case, there are generally three options available to accomplish this. However, under all options, efforts should be made to ensure rehabilitation of all four buildings to their former designs.

The first option would be to stop any kind of development from taking place with these properties and to protect their current designs, heights and dimensions. However, recognizing that Lowertown is an ever-changing place, and that new development is welcome, other alternatives are available. The next two options do not preclude development by a developer.

The second option would be for Claridge to consider incorporating the four buildings into the design of its development. This has been successfully done in many cases in other parts of Lowertown and Ottawa. The building proposed for Bruyère Street could be adjusted and built around 316 and 324-334 Bruyère. Meanwhile, rather than demolishing

317-319 and 321 St. Andrew, the new building would be built in the back of these two buildings. In both cases, the design of the new Claridge building should complement the designs of the earlier forms of architecture represented by these buildings. As a concession for saving the heritage buildings, consideration could be given to allowing Claridge to develop all the way to Rose Street using the small underutilized corner “parkette”.

A third option would be a more compromised version of the second option to incorporate the buildings in a new design. Consideration could be given to moving 316 Bruyère to the underutilized “parkette,” owned by the City of Ottawa, at the corner of Bruyère. 317-319 St. Andrew could be moved to the other “parkette” on the southwest corner of Rose and Bruyère. One or both could even serve as small community “club houses” or commercial buildings. While it is less appropriate to move heritage buildings from their original locations, the parkettes are only a few metres away from one of the buildings. Meanwhile, 324-334 Bruyère Street could be dismantled and reassembled as part of the façade of the new building being proposed. Finally, the house at 321 St. Andrew could also be dismantled and incorporated into the façade of the new building proposed. Alternatively, the design of the St. Andrew façade could reflect the original design of the building at 321 St. Andrew Street.

As demonstrated in the three options above, many alternatives are available. A number of the ideas raised within each option could be mixed and matched with ideas under other options to produce an acceptable final proposal. Claridge has an opportunity to demonstrate that it is a good corporate citizen in this case. Based on these options, the company could propose a development that incorporates the current buildings and/or their facades, and their architectural heritage. All other issues aside with this development, this kind of compromise is encouraged and would be highly regarded as a win-win situation for the City of Ottawa, the local community, and the developer.

### **4.3 Recommendations for All of the Lowertown East**

In addition to the options presented for the currently threatened heritage buildings in Lowertown East, the following recommendations are also being made regarding the rest of building in the area by the report authors to City Council:

- That the City of Ottawa enact, as it has in the past, an interim control zoning bylaw that puts a moratorium on demolition of heritage buildings in Lowertown East until an appropriate assessment is undertaken of the remaining buildings’ heritage value;
- That the City of Ottawa place 316 Bruyère Street immediately on its Heritage Reference List in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act;
- That the City of Ottawa, recognizing the additional facts raised in this report, increases the heritage category ranking of each of the buildings in Lowertown East from a level 3 to 2;



- That the City of Ottawa, again recognizing the additional and serious facts raised in this report, considers immediately extending the current Lowertown Heritage Conservation District boundaries to include all of Lowertown;
- That the City of Ottawa, considering the options proposed, encourage Claridge and future developers to recognize the importance of heritage buildings in Lowertown and work creatively to incorporate them into new developments. Further, that the City encourage developers to respect the architectural traditions of Lowertown in the designs of its proposed developments in the area to further enhance and complement the historic nature of this district;
- That the City of Ottawa undertake a study to outline the new challenges to preserving heritage in Ottawa and the effects of intensification on heritage conservation. Further, that the study considers the effectiveness of current heritage policies affecting the protection of heritage buildings, education of owners, regulation of appropriate maintenance of these buildings, and the provision of real financial incentives to encourage long-term preservation of the City’s built heritage.
- Finally, that the City of Ottawa, undertake to commission a study of the effects of the urban renewal scheme of the 1960’s and 70’s on Lowertown and its people to determine whether or not undue hardships were brought upon this community. In essence, to put to rest the accusations that the actions of the City of Ottawa were or were not an injustice and begin to heal wounds that have affected this community for a generation.

**Photo – Restored “Workman’s” House, 276 Bruyère Street**



*Source: Google Maps Street View*

*“Great leaders will be remembered and recorded in history for all posterity to read, but who will remember the ordinary folk who maintained Lowertown’s spirit from generation to generation? Our vital links with the past should mean a better understanding of who we are and what we are...”*

*-Doris Lee-Momy, Farewell, My Bluebell*

## **APPENDIX A – ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT (EXCERPT)**

### **Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act**

#### **Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

##### **Criteria**

- 1.** (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 29 (1) (a) of the Act.
- (2) A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:
  1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
    - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
    - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
    - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
  2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
    - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
    - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
    - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
  3. The property has contextual value because it,
    - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
    - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
    - iii. is a landmark.

## **APPENDIX B – CITY OF OTTAWA HERITAGE POLICIES**

### **Policies Pertaining to Heritage Buildings (Excerpt)**

- The City will maintain a heritage grant program for owners of designated heritage properties, in accordance with City Council’s Handbook for the Administration of the Heritage Grant Program, and may participate in financial aid programs of other levels of government or of non-governmental organizations.
- The City may participate in the development of heritage resources through acquisition, assembly, resale, joint ventures, tax credits, tax exemptions, or other forms of involvement that will result in the sensitive conservation, restoration, and/or rehabilitation of those resources.
- The City will utilize its maintenance and occupancy by-laws to facilitate the maintenance and conservation of heritage resources, and to ensure that the application of these by-laws is not detrimental to their conservation.
- The City will administer the Building Code and other related codes and regulations to permit maximum conservation and re-use of heritage resources while still ensuring the health and safety of the public.
- The City will recognize the cultural heritage policy infrastructure outlined by the preceding policies, and will allocate the necessary financial resources to ensure its maintenance and preservation, thereby ensuring that development occurs in harmony with, and respect for, unique and irreplaceable cultural heritage resources.

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