

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values. It meets four of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

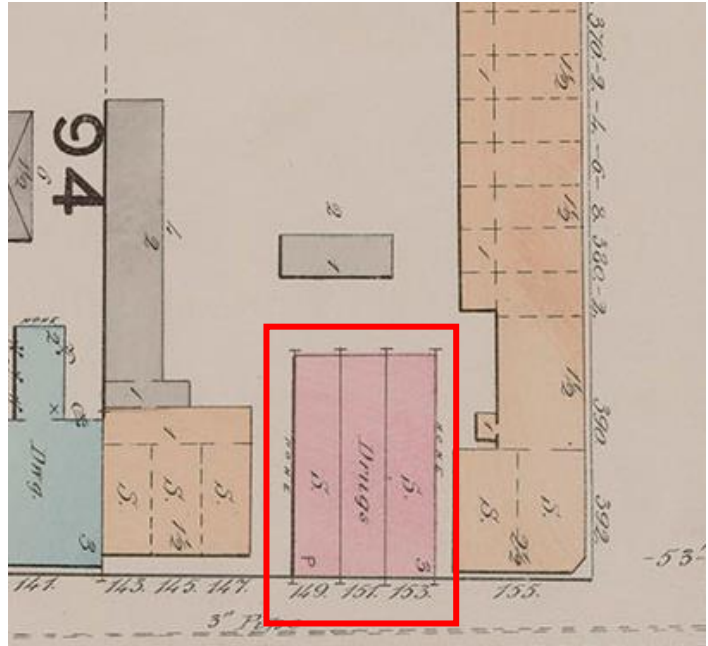
Criterion 1	
The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	Yes
Constructed circa 1875, the building at 149 Rideau Street has design value as a representative example of a late 19 th century Italianate commercial building on a main street in Ottawa. The Italianate style was popular from the 1830s until the 1920s in Canada and was frequently used in commercial buildings on main streets. The building at 149 Rideau Street features typical elements of the Italianate style, including its arched window openings hood moulding, a large cornice, and decorative brick detailing.	

Supporting Details

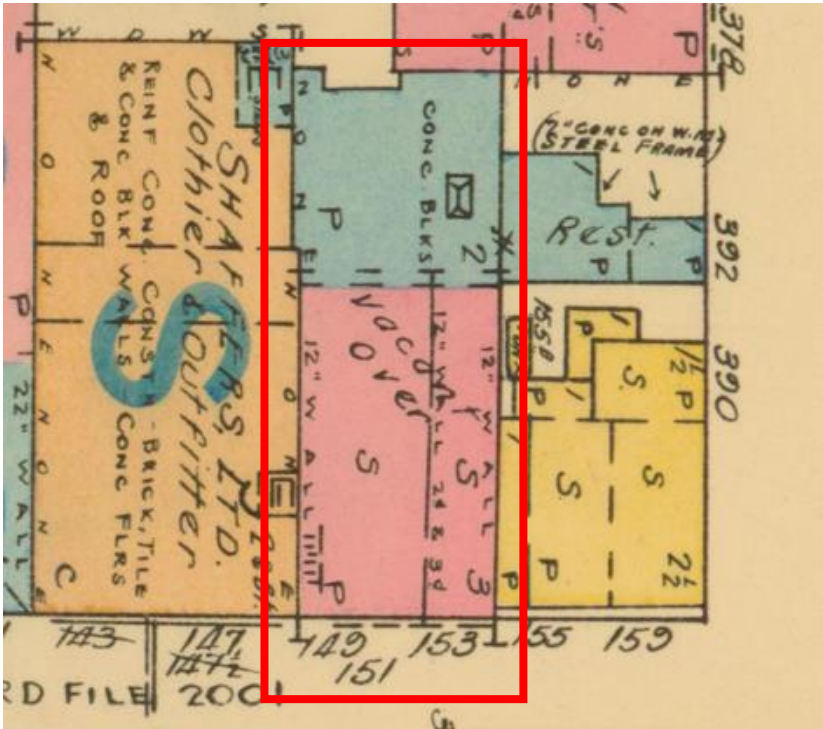
Description of Building

- The building located at 149 Rideau Street is a three-storey mixed-use building in the Italianate style constructed c. 1875.
- The building is brick-clad, originally red brick and is currently painted.
- The ground floor of the building has a recessed storefront with two entrances.
- Above the ground floor, the building features a symmetrical façade with six window bays of arched windows. The arched windows are narrow and tall, extending the nearly the entire height of the storey.
- Sets of two window bays are separated by pilasters extending from the top of the first storey to the building's cornice. The pilasters are topped with capitals. Between the second and third storey, the capitals are part of a simple stone stringcourse.
- The building's second and third storeys feature continuous hooded moulding over the arched windows.
- The top storey features a large, heavy brick cornice with dentils and large decorative brackets that extend from the pilasters.
- Originally, the ground floor at 149 Rideau Street featured three separate storefronts each with their own separate addresses—149, 151, and 153 Rideau Street.
- In 1918, George Bourne Sporting Goods, formerly Oulette's bicycles and originally located at 151 Rideau Street, expanded into 149 Rideau Street. In 1929, the store expanded into 153 Rideau Street, and the front of the store was renovated to create a cohesive store front.¹

¹ "Service with Sincerity,' Business Slogan of George Bourne," *The Ottawa Journal*, March 30, 1929.



1878 Fire Insurance Plan showing the building's original footprint and addresses.



1948 Fire Insurance Plan showing combined storefront and alterations including a unified storefront, and a rear addition.



149 Rideau Street outlined in red. *GeoOttawa*, accessed 2024.

Description of Architectural Style

The building at 149 Rideau Street is a representative example of the Italianate style used in a commercial building in Ottawa. The Italianate style was popular from the 1830s until the 1920s in Canada and was frequently used in commercial buildings on main streets.² Commercial Italianate buildings are often ornate and detailed, creating an effect of opulence which was a desired appearance used to promote commerce.³

The Italianate style was often used for low to mid-rise buildings (less than seven storeys) and typically featured flat roofs and brick detailing.⁴ The top of Italianate

² Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

³ "Commercial Italianate in Ontario," *OntarioArchitecture.com*, accessed April 2024.

⁴ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

buildings often feature large decorative cornices and cornice brackets—which were frequently made of stone or, for affordability, cast iron.⁵

Italianate style buildings typically incorporate classical elements in their design, including attached columns, exaggerated cornices, and arched pediments. Italianate style buildings are characterized by decorative, rhythmic, and symmetrical façades with evenly spaced openings.⁶ These buildings often feature large windows, and as such, are well suited for commercial use to display goods on the ground floor and provide light to office or residential space above.⁷

National and Local Context

The Italianate style came to Canada from England in the early to mid-nineteenth century.⁸ It was popular in residential dwellings and commercial buildings throughout the late nineteenth century. The Italianate style adapts architectural elements from Italian Renaissance villas and palazzo for modern purposes.⁹

The Italianate villa style, characterized by their square shape and towers, was used primarily in residential buildings in Canada, often in rural areas. The palazzo style is seen in commercial spaces on urban main streets across Canada. In both instances, the use of Classical design elements was meant to emphasize the owner's wealth.¹⁰ However, stylized Classical elements for palazzo style Italianate buildings were able to be cheaply mass-produced using cast iron or pressed metal. Relatively cheap and quick production methods of Italianate buildings led to an abundance of the style—particularly on commercial main streets across Canada.¹¹

Today, Italianate buildings can be found on virtually any nineteenth century main street across Canada.¹² In Ottawa, Italianate buildings can be found in Centretown on Bank Street and on Rideau Street.

⁵ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

⁶ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

⁷ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

⁸ Barbara A. Humphreys and Meredith Sykes, *The Buildings of Canada A guide to pre-20th-century styles in houses, churches and other structures* (Environment Canada Parks Service, 1980), 6.

⁹ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, "The Italianate Style," *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles – Second Edition* (Canada: Broadview Press, 2004), 81.

¹⁰ Barbara A. Humphreys and Meredith Sykes, *The Buildings of Canada A guide to pre-20th-century styles in houses, churches and other structures* (Environment Canada Parks Service, 1980), 6.

¹¹ "Italianate (1850-1900)", *OntarioArchitecture.com*, accessed March 2024.

¹² "Italianate (1850-1900)", *OntarioArchitecture.com*, accessed March 2024.



371 Bank Street, *Centretown Heritage Inventory Database*, accessed March 2024.



430 Bank Street (center building) is another example of an Italianate commercial building on a 19th century historic main street in Ottawa. *Centretown Heritage Inventory Database*, accessed March 2024.



107-115 Rideau Street, at the corner of Rideau and William Streets, is another example of an Italianate commercial building on Rideau Street. *Google Maps*, 2021.

Criterion 2	
The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	Yes
The property at 149 Rideau Street has design value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship for a commercial building on Rideau Street. This is demonstrated through the incorporation of a large dentilled cornice and continuous stone hood moulding over the arched windows. There are few examples of a commercial building with this level of craftsmanship on Rideau Street, making it unique in its streetscape.	

Supporting Details

The property at 149 Rideau Street displays a high degree of craftsmanship for an early commercial Italianate building on Rideau Street. Italianate architecture was often favoured for its ability to be mass-produced with cast iron or pressed metal. However, the property at 149 Rideau Street is composed entirely of brick and stone—implying a uniqueness that would have required skilled manual labour to create.

The building’s craftsmanship is displayed through its exaggerated dentilled cornice with oversized cornice brackets extending down into pilasters. A large cornice is typical of Italianate buildings, but ornate cornice brackets are unique to Ontario Italianate buildings.¹³

The continuous stone hood moulding over the arched windows is a defining element of the building. While ornate detailing on windows was typical of Italianate commercial buildings in Ontario, the continuity of the window moulding would have required significant skill and is unique for the style. There are few examples of a commercial building with this level of craftsmanship on Rideau Street, making it unique in its streetscape.

¹³ “Italianate in Ontario,” *OntarioArchitecture.com*, accessed May 2024.



Large cornice on 149 Rideau Street, *City of Ottawa*, 2024.



Continuous hooded stone moulding over the windows at 149 Rideau Street, *City of Ottawa*, 2024.

Criterion 3	
The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	No
Heritage staff have compared the building to others of similar age or typology, and consulted relevant secondary sources including newspaper articles and architectural history books. Staff's review concluded that this property exemplifies typical construction methods for buildings of its type. The property does not meet this criterion.	

Criterion 4	
The property 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.	No
While this property reflects the general theme of nineteenth century commerce on Rideau Street, it does not have a strong direct association with an event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community. The property does not meet this criterion.	

Criterion 5	
The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	No
Based on research conducted by Heritage Staff, the property does not yield information that contributes to the understanding of a community or culture. The property does not meet this criterion.	

Criterion 6	
The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	No
Research conducted did not reveal that this property is representative of the work of a known or significant architect, builder, designer or theorist. The property does not meet this criterion.	

Criterion 7	
The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	Yes
The building at 149 Rideau Street has contextual value as it is important in supporting and maintaining the character of Rideau Street— which has functioned as a commercial main street in Ottawa since the nineteenth century. Throughout the twentieth century, most of Rideau Street between Sussex Drive and Cumberland Street was occupied by commercial spaces. The building at 149 Rideau Street housed several typical main street businesses, including the George Bourne Sporting Goods store, which operated out of the building’s ground level storefront from 1918 until the mid-1960s. Today, the building at 149 Rideau Street continues to reflect Rideau Street’s history as a commercial main street in Ottawa.	

Supporting Details

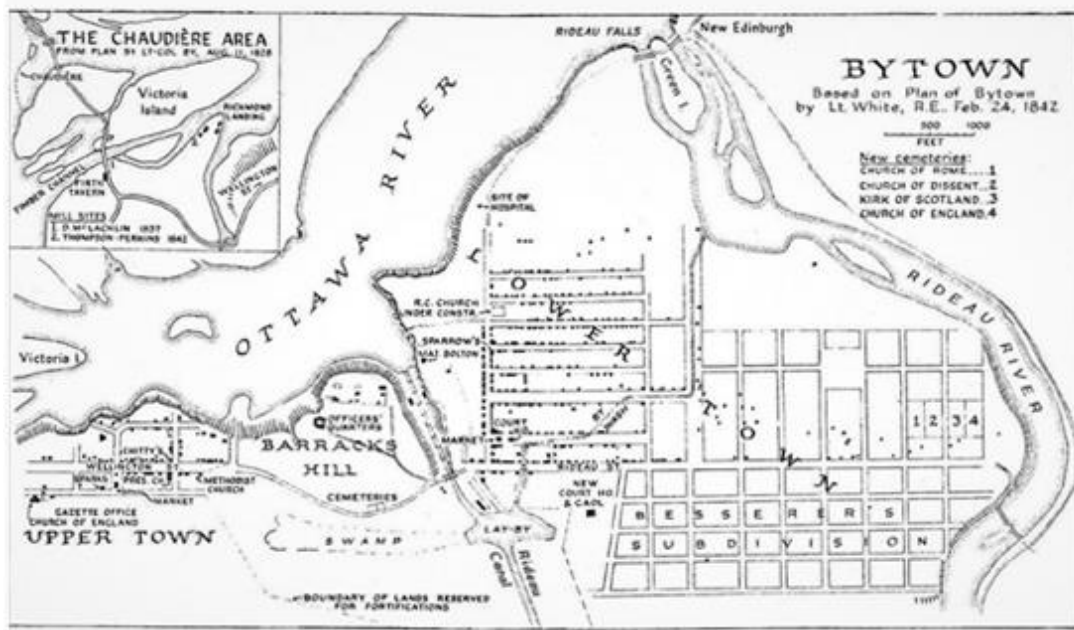
The building at 149 Rideau Street has functioned as a mixed-use building with commercial space on the first storey since it’s construction in 1875. The building is important in defining, maintaining, and supporting the character of Rideau Street— which has functioned as a commercial main street in Ottawa’s Lowertown since the 19th century.

History of Lowertown

Rideau Street is located in Lowertown, on the edge of the ByWard Market, in Ottawa’s downtown core. The ByWard Market and Lowertown are two of the earliest settlement areas in the city. Together, they are bounded by the Rideau Canal and Sussex Drive to the west, the Rideau Street commercial corridor to the south, also encompassing the Rideau Centre to Mackenzie King Bridge, and finally the Rideau River, meandering from the Ottawa River, collectively acting as both the eastern and northern boundary of the neighbourhood.

In 1826, lead by Colonel By and Thomas McKay, the entrance of the Rideau Canal was determined, and as such, the birth of Bytown. The street grid in the ByWard and Lowertown areas derives from the distribution of land in 1827 when Colonel John By laid out Bytown. Bytown was originally comprised of and divided into Lower Town and Upper Town. Upper Town was predominately occupied by English Protestants, many who worked as officers for the military, whereas Lower Town became home for many tradesman and canal workers.¹⁴

¹⁴ “Neighbourhood Heritage Statements - Lowertown,” *City of Ottawa*, 2017.



Map of Bytown, 1842, showing historic Lower Town and Upper Town. *The Historical Society of Ottawa*, accessed 2023.

A critical aspect of the economic and industrial development of both the ByWard and Lowertown neighbourhoods was the opening of the Rideau Canal in 1832. The Rideau Canal was constructed between 1826 and 1832 as part of a military strategy to establish an alternative route to the St. Lawrence River transportation corridor. Although built with the intent to protect Canada from American invasion, military control was relinquished as the threat subsided and the canal became predominately used for transportation of civilians, commercial goods, and natural resources; thereby increasing trade and spurring economic growth, and subsequently leading to the development of the area.

The construction of the railway through Ottawa's downtown core in 1854, and the expansions of Ottawa after the city was chosen as the national capital in 1857, also contributed to development. The construction of the Parliament Buildings just west of Sussex Drive in the 1860s resulted in an influx of public servants in the area, which gave way to the rise of commerce in the area specifically on Rideau Street and in the ByWard Market. Lowertown was an arrival point for many cultural groups including Irish, French Canadians and Ottawa's earliest Jewish community. Many of these new arrivals worked on the construction of the canal, while the Jewish community became prominent local shopkeepers, running businesses relating to food, clothing, second-hand goods, shoe repair, tailors, etc.

History of Rideau Street as a Commercial Main Street

Originally established as a corduroy road by Colonel John By in 1827, Rideau Street was the main route from Ottawa to Montreal.¹⁵ Rideau Street was originally intended to be a residential street due to its large lanes and lots. While Rideau Street east of King Edward Street remained a primarily residential street well into the 20th century, the west end of Rideau Street became a busy commercial street due to its proximity to transportation, services, the ByWard Market, and Parliament Hill.¹⁶

Further facilitating Lowertown's expansion was the construction of Ottawa's first large hospital, The Carleton Protestant General Hospital (now Wallis House, 589 Rideau Street), at the east end of Rideau Street in 1875.¹⁷ The 1891 construction of streetcar lines along Dalhousie, Rideau, and George Streets as well as Sussex Drive also greatly contributed to the expansion of residential and commercial development in the area, which was becoming home to an increasing number of public servants and the middle class. The rise of the middle class in Lowertown contributed to the success of large commercial stores on Rideau Street.

Since its construction in c. 1875, the building at 149 Rideau Street housed various local businesses including a plumber, a dressmaker, a druggist, a dry goods store, and briefly the newspaper offices for Ottawa French newspaper, *Le Temps*. From 1908 until the 1960s, the building's ground floor was partially, and later completely, occupied by George Bourne Sporting Goods. The top floors of the building were used as office space and apartments. Overtime, the ground floor has been modified to suit the needs of different tenants, but the building's continued mixed-used expression makes it an essential component of Rideau Street's traditional main street character.

Today, the first storey of 149 Rideau Street continues to be used as a commercial storefront. The building at 149 Rideau Street maintains and supports the character of Rideau Street as a historic and current commercial main street.

¹⁵ City of Ottawa Planning and Growth Management. "Uptown Rideau Street Community Design Plan," *City of Ottawa*, 2015, page 26.

¹⁶ City of Ottawa Planning and Growth Management. "Uptown Rideau Street Community Design Plan," *City of Ottawa*, 2015, page 26.

¹⁷ City of Ottawa Planning and Growth Management. "Uptown Rideau Street Community Design Plan," *City of Ottawa*, 2015, page 26.



Sussex Drive and Rideau Street, 1875.

Credit: Topley Studio Fonds/Library and Archives Canada/PA-012527



Storefronts on Rideau Street, 1878.

Credit: William James Topley/Library and Archives Canada/PA-027441



Rideau Street, looking west. 149 Rideau Street is visible amongst other storefronts, 1938.

Credit: Canada. Dept. of Public Works / Library and Archives Canada / PA-201612

Criterion 8	
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	Yes
<p>The building, along with neighbouring buildings 152 and 156-158 Rideau Street, historically functioned together as a commercial corridor in Lowertown since their construction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings are visually linked with each other due to their similar stylings featuring a two- to three-storey massing, brick-cladding, flat roofs, and ground level storefront with mixed-use space above. Today, each of these building's main storeys continues to function as a commercial space and supports retail and commercial activity on one of Ottawa's historic main streets.</p>	

Supporting Details

Today, Rideau Street continues to function as an important main commercial street in downtown Ottawa, with the Rideau Centre sitting at the heart of Lowertown. The Rideau Centre, which has frontage on Rideau Street, is a modern commercial landmark in Ottawa and is integrated into the historic commercial streetscape of Rideau Street. The building at 149 Rideau Street has consistently functioned as a commercial space within a hub of commercial activity in Lowertown. Thus, the property is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings.

From Sussex Drive to Cumberland Street, both the north and south sides of Rideau Street are characterized by the presence of commercial buildings. The building at 149 Rideau Street is part of a large grouping of remaining early commercial buildings on Rideau Street.

Some of the earliest commercial buildings on Rideau Street are situated on the block between Sussex Drive and Dalhousie Street. These properties include the Featherstone Building at 103-105 Rideau Street, constructed in 1869, which originally operated as a drugstore; 101 Rideau Street, constructed in 1871, originally used as a bookstore and later a dry goods store; and The Atwood building at 97-99 Rideau Street, constructed in 1908, originally an apartment building.¹⁸ All of these properties are designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

¹⁸ "The Atwood, 101 Rideau Street, and The Featherstone Building," *Heritage Ottawa*.



Facades of 97-99, 101, and 103-105 Rideau Street. *Heritage Ottawa*, accessed 2023.

Throughout the twentieth century, most of the block of Rideau Street between Sussex Drive and Mosgrove Street was occupied by large commercial spaces. In 1914, McKerracher-Wanless Limited, a large menswear store, opened at 41 Rideau Street in the Plaza Building on the northeast corner of Rideau Street and Sussex Drive. In 1945, the store became Henry “Macks” Limited, also a menswear store, before it moved to 151 Rideau Street in 1967. In 1949, the Woolworth’s Department Store opened at 47 Rideau Street between the Macks in the Plaza Building and Freiman’s at 73 Rideau Street. The Freiman’s department store existed at 73 Rideau Street in some capacity from 1902 to 1974. The building at 73 Rideau Street has been the Hudson’s Bay Company since 1974 and was integrated into the Rideau Centre in the 1980s.



41, 47, and 73 Rideau Street in 1957. Copyright: Andrew Newton Photographers Limited, *City of Ottawa Archives*, MG393-NP-48822-001, Item CA043955.

Other notable department stores on Rideau Street include The Charles Ogilvy Limited Department Store, which opened in 1907 on the south side of Rideau Street at the corner of Rideau and Nicholas Streets. Its façade is incorporated into the Rideau Centre today.¹⁹ In 1922, the J.A. Larocque Department Store opened at 169 Rideau, and is now called Mercury Court.²⁰

¹⁹ "Charles Ogilvy Limited Department Store," *Heritage Ottawa*, accessed January 2024.

²⁰ Robert Vineberg, "Remembering "The Store": a brief history of Larocque's Department Store," *Lowertown Echo de la Basse-ville*, November 5, 2020. Accessed December 2023.



Rideau Street and Nicholas Street, looking west and showing streetcars and Ogilvy's department store.

Credit: Topley Studio Fonds/Library and Archives Canada/PA-012905.

The building at 149 Rideau Street is situated just west of the intersection of Rideau and Nicholas Streets. It shares a streetscape with 155 Rideau Street, known as the Clegg-Feller Building, which is one of the oldest examples of commercial architecture in Ottawa and is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.²¹ On the south side of Rideau Street across from 149 Rideau Street, there are other historic storefronts, including 152 Rideau Street, which has operated as a mixed-use building since its construction in c.1885, and 156-158 Rideau Street, which is a commercial building constructed c.1918. These buildings are visually linked with each other due to their similar stylings featuring a two- to three-storey massing, brick-cladding, flat roofs, and ground level storefront with mixed-use space above. Today, each of these building's main storeys continues to function as a commercial space and supports retail and commercial activity on one of Ottawa's historic main streets.

²¹ "Clegg-Feller Building|Windsor Smoke Shop," *Heritage Ottawa*, accessed March 2024.



149 and part of 155 Rideau Street, on the north side of Rideau Street across from 152 and 156 Rideau Street. *City of Ottawa*, accessed 2024.



152 and 156 Rideau Street, on the south side of Rideau Street. *City of Ottawa*, 2024.

Criterion 9

The property has contextual value because it is a landmark

No

Response to Criterion

The property is not considered a landmark on Rideau Street, nor is it commonly referenced for the purposes of wayfinding.

Sources

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