

1. **Designation of Porter's Island Bridge under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act***
Désignation du pont de l'île Porter aux termes de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*

Committee Recommendation

That Council issue a Notice of Intention to designate Porter's Island Bridge under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value, attached as Document 5.

Recommandation du Comité

Que le Conseil émet un avis d'intention de désigner le pont de l'île Porter aux termes de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, conformément à la Déclaration de la valeur du patrimoine culturel, présentée en pièce jointe comme document 5.

Documentation/Documentation

1. Manager's report, Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department, dated April 29, 2021 (ACS2021-PIE-RHU-0014)

Rapport du Gestionnaire, Services des emprises, du patrimoine et du design urbain, Direction générale de la planification, de l'infrastructure et du développement économique, daté le 29 avril 2021 (ACS2021-PIE-RHU-0014)

2. Extract of draft Minutes, Built Heritage Sub-Committee, May 11, 2021

Extrait de l'ébauche du procès-verbal, Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti, le 11 mai 2021

**Built Heritage Sub-Committee
Report 21
May 26, 2021**

2

**Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti
Rapport 21
Le 26 mai 2021**

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Built Heritage Sub-Committee / Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti
May 11, 2021 / 11 mai 2021**

**and Council / et au Conseil
May 26, 2021 / 26 mai 2021**

**Submitted on April 29, 2021
Soumis le 29 avril 2021**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:
Court Curry,**

Manager / Gestionnaire,

**Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services / Services des emprises, du
patrimoine et du design urbain**

**Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department / Direction
générale de la planification, de l'Infrastructure et du développement économique**

Contact Person

Personne ressource:

**Ashley Kotarba, Planner II / Urbaniste II, Heritage Planning Branch / Planification
du patrimoine**

613-580-2424, 23582, Ashley.Kotarba@ottawa.ca

Ward: RIDEAU-VANIER (12)

File Number: ACS2021-PIE-RHU-0014

**SUBJECT: Designation of Porter's Island Bridge under Part IV of the *Ontario
Heritage Act***

**OBJET: Désignation du pont de l'île Porter aux termes de la partie IV de la *Loi
sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario***

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Built Heritage Sub-Committee recommend that Council issue a Notice of Intention to designate Porter’s Island Bridge under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value, attached as Document 5.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Conseil d’émettre un avis d’intention de désigner le pont de l’île Porter aux termes de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l’Ontario*, conformément à la Déclaration de la valeur du patrimoine culturel, présentée en pièce jointe comme document 5.

BACKGROUND

Porter’s Island Bridge is located in Lowertown East and connects Porter’s Island to St. Patrick Street. The bridge was constructed in 1894 over the Rideau River as the main access to Porter’s Island, which served as an isolation site. The bridge was designed by City engineer Robert Surtees using a pin-connected Pratt-through-truss, a rare surviving bridge building system.

With urban renewal in Lowertown during the 1950s and 1960s and the construction of a new, wider bridge, the original Porter’s Island Bridge became superfluous. By the 1990s, the City deemed the bridge to be redundant, closing it in the winter months, and later closing it permanently. Today, the bridge is closed, however it holds an Enbridge gas line, providing service to the island.

Porter’s Island Bridge was added to the City’s Heritage Register in 2017, recognizing its cultural heritage value. The Lowertown Community Association submitted a request to designate the bridge under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2018. An Impact Assessment Report was commissioned by Dillon Consulting in 2019 which provided three options for the bridge. These include: 1) Decommissioning, 2) Maintaining the current functionality, or 3) Reinstating the pedestrian crossing. In consultation with Infrastructure Services, Heritage Planning staff agree that maintaining the current functionality is a suitable option. Should Council designate this structure, the ensuing completion of a heritage conservation plan will provide the information required to determine where the reopening of the bridge to pedestrian use could be prioritized within the overall infrastructure renewal program.

This report has been prepared because designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* must be approved by City Council.

DISCUSSION

Recommendation 1

The Official Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement and the *Ontario Heritage Act* all provide policy direction related to the designation of individual properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Official Plan

The Official Plan has policies related to heritage in Section 2.5.5.2, Cultural Heritage Resources. These policies provide for the identification and designation of individual buildings under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*:

Section 2.5.5.2 states that, “Individual buildings, structures and cultural heritage landscapes will be designated as properties of cultural heritage value under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*”.

Provincial Policy Statement (2020)

Section 2.6.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) contains the following policy regarding the protection of cultural heritage resources: “Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.”

Ontario Heritage Act

Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* provides municipalities with the authority to designate properties of cultural heritage value. Section 29(4) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* sets out the process for the designation of individual buildings. It requires that Council consult with its municipal heritage committee and that the official notice served on the owner shall contain a description of the property and its heritage attributes as well as a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property. The Notice of Intention to Designate must also be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the community. Document 5 contains the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for this site.

Ontario Regulation 09/06

Regulation 09/06 (see Document 3) sets out criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It states that:

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 ... These criteria are organized into three groups; design or physical value, historical or associative value and contextual value.

Through research and evaluation, staff have determined that the Porter's Island Bridge meets all three criteria outlined in Ontario Regulation 09/06. A brief analysis of each of the criteria is provided below and more detailed information is attached in the Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form (see Document 4).

Design or Physical Value

Porter's Island Bridge meets the criteria for design value as a rare Canadian example of a double-span Pratt-through-truss bridge. Patented in 1844 by American bridge builder Thomas Pratt, the Pratt truss is a highly efficient type of truss with a single diagonal in each panel, vertical panel posts, inclined end posts, and parallel top and bottom chords. The Pratt truss was widely used in wooden truss bridge construction in North America and was later adopted for metal truss bridges used on railways and roads. The Porter's Island Bridge is an important reminder of historic bridge building methods used in Canada in the 19th century.

Historical Value

Porter's Island Bridge meets the Historical of Associative Value criteria as an example of a structure associated with Robert Surtees, the Dominion Bridge Company and public healthcare in Ottawa.

Porter's Island Bridge is of historical value as a representative work of City engineer Robert Surtees. Surtees is noteworthy in Ottawa for his designs including the Carleton County General Protestant Hospital (Wallis House), the Carleton County Court House, and the Minto Bridges. Porter's Island Bridge's historical value also lies in its ties to the Dominion Bridge Company, an important bridge building company in the late 19th century and 20th century. Based originally in Lachine, Québec, the Dominion Bridge Company's plant was considered the largest and best-equipped machine shop on the continent. Porter's Island Bridge also has historical value as a link to healthcare on

Porter's Island. The bridge was the main access across the Rideau River to Porter's Island until the 1960s. The island was first used as a quarantine site in 1894 with the creation of an isolation hospital. The island would continue to serve as an isolation site for much of the early 20th century. The island has since been used for emergency housing during the Great Depression and after the Second World War, making the bridge pivotal in the continued usage of the island for 70 years. A new bridge was built in 1964 to coincide with the construction of a senior's residence on the island.

Contextual Value

Porter's Island Bridge meets the criteria for contextual value because it is physically, functionally and historically linked to its surroundings, telling the story of Porter's Island through its historical function of carrying people and goods to the island.

Conclusion

Porter's Island Bridge meets all three criteria in Ontario Regulation 09/06 for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The bridge has design value as an excellent surviving example of a Pratt-through-truss bridge, has historical value for its association with Robert Surtees, the Dominion Bridge Company and healthcare needs on Porter's Island, and has contextual value landmarking its connection to its function as an access to the island. For these reasons, staff recommend that Council issue a Notice of Intention to designate the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

The bridge is owned by the City of Ottawa, and meetings have been held with Infrastructure Services to discuss the designation and its implications. Any alterations would require a heritage permit.

The Lowertown Community Association submitted the designation request and were notified of this report. They have provided the following comments:

“The Lowertown Community Association is very pleased to see this historic bridge getting recognition. For more than a century, it carried Ottawa residents for health, military, recreational and other activities. We look forward to a time

when it can again be accessible as a valued and functional heritage site for the community.”

Heritage Ottawa was notified of the proposed designation.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR

Councillor Fleury provided the following comment:

“I am so pleased the day has come to recognize the history and importance of Porter Island Bridge.

The Porter Island Bridge has a long and fascinating history, and I encourage everyone to read this report to learn all about it.

From its initial need to get segregate individuals through the pandemic at the time, smallpox, to the island's current use as a place where we have a long-term care home and retirement home, this bridge offers a rare connection to both our past and our future in this City.

I am proud and impressed with the Lowertown Community Association heritage members' dedication in seeing this request for designation. I can recall the early conversations we had with community leaders, management and residents of the Rockcliffe Retirement Residence to discuss the status and importance of this bridge.

From research, to on-site meeting, to writing – the community volunteer efforts should not go unnoticed but instead highly recognized. It is this type of community effort that saves and highlights Ottawa's great history.

From the survey, "This bridge is an extremely rare example of a pin-connected truss bridge in Ontario,"

How lucky are we to have such a rare piece of history right in Lowertown?

We are privileged to have such a heritage-rich area, but with this privilege comes the responsibility to ensure designation and recognition are not the only efforts we take.

I see the heritage designation of the Porter Island Bridge as the first step towards rehabilitating the currently closed passageway. I am hopeful that with proper designation, we can take those next steps to invest to ensure its protection and reopen it for community access. Knowing this next step is a huge one, I intend to make sure

this designation is not the end of the story for this bridge. I intend to ensure rehabilitation of this bridge and safe crossing can once again become a reality for residents of the island and visitors alike.

Ottawa is rich with heritage. Every designated building or landmark help tell its history and our story as a community and City. And now, with this designation, the story of this historic Rideau River link to Porter Island is finally part of it.”

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendations.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risks associated with this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Future repair, rehabilitation or replacement of this bridge, once designated, will have to follow conservation strategies in accordance with the municipal and provincial guidelines for heritage structures. These guidelines identify several conservation and mitigation options, in order of priority, that are regarded as appropriate in conserving heritage bridges. While the use of this approach ensures that heritage concerns, and appropriate mitigation options, are considered, this eventually will increase the cost of renewal. The bridge with its unique steel truss construction, would not meet the requirements of the current Canadian Bridge Design code for a pedestrian use without a major modification and is not a preferred strategy. If designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, it is estimated that the bridge, with its current use, can survive another 75 years with at least three major rehabilitations, with estimated lifecycle rehabilitation costs increasing by \$1M to a total estimated cost of approximately \$3M in 2020-dollar value.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are outlined in the above Asset Management Implications section.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priorities:

- HC4 - Support Arts, Heritage and Culture

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 Photos

Document 3 Ontario Regulation 09/06

Document 4 Heritage Survey Form

Document 5 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Document 6 Dillon Consulting Long-term Strategy Review and Decommissioning Impact Study

DISPOSITION

Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Infrastructure and Economic Development Department to prepare the Notices of Intention to Designate. Council and Committee Services to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust (10 Adelaide Street East, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1J3) of Council's decision to issue Notices of Intention to Designate Porter's Island Bridge ~~910 March Road~~ under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Heritage Planning Branch, Planning Infrastructure and Economic Development Department to ensure publication of the Notices of Intention to Designate in the newspaper according to the requirements of Section 29 the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

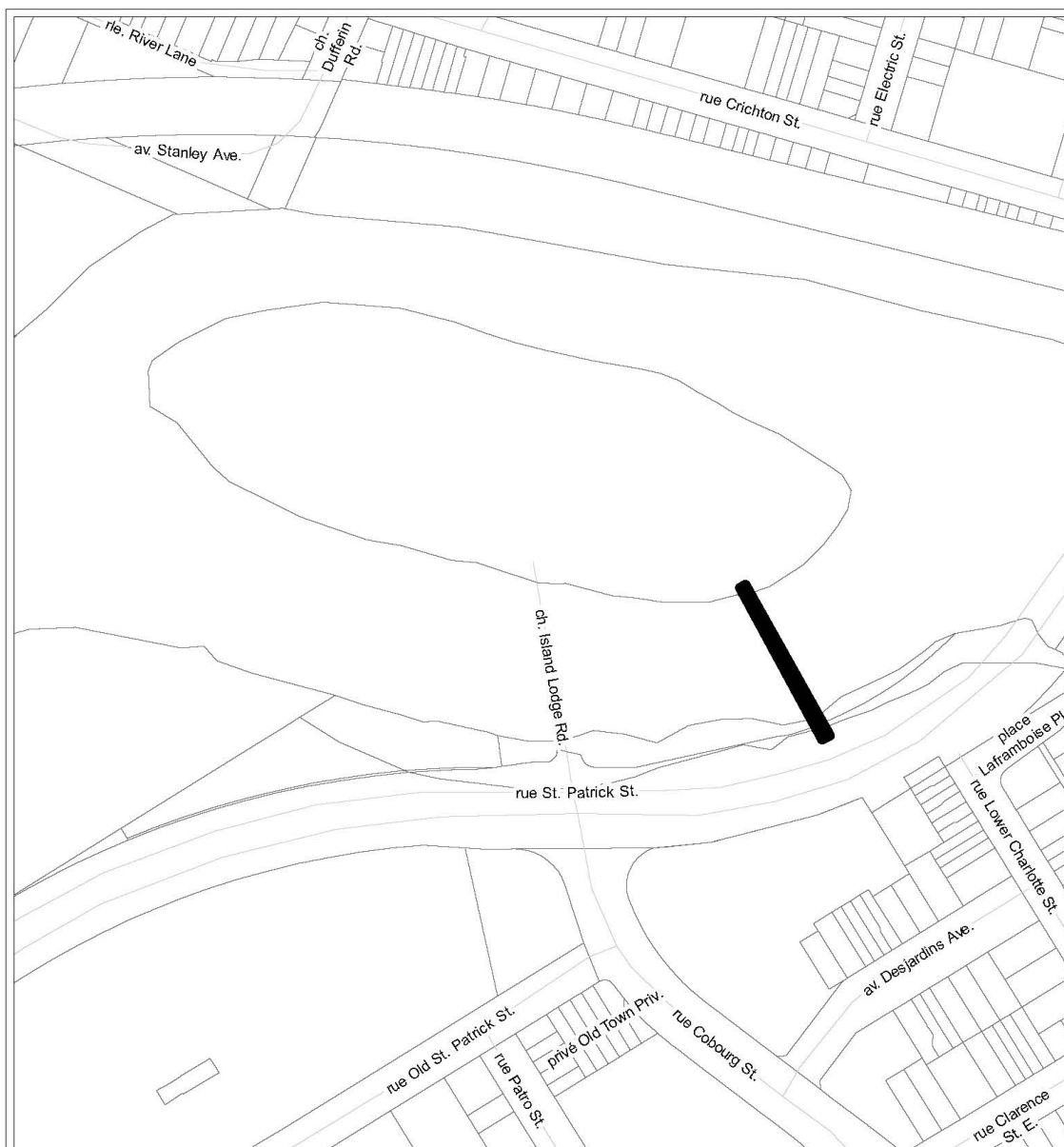
If the City Clerk does not receive any Notices of Objection within thirty days of the publication of the Notices of Intention to Designate, Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department, to coordinate a survey of the property to more precisely describe the land included in the designation according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value.




Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department to prepare the Designation By-laws, under the authority of the approval of this report and Legal Services to submit to City Council for enactment. Council and Committee Services to cause a copy of the by-laws together with a statement explaining the Cultural Heritage Value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property, to be served on the owner of the property and on the Trust.

Legal Services to cause a copy of the by-laws, together with a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property to be registered against the properties affected in the property land registry office. Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department to ensure publication of the notice of the by-law in the newspaper according to the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Pursuant to the *Delegation of Authority By-law* (By-law No. 2020-360), Schedule "C", Section 7, the City Clerk has authorized the correction of a minor error in this report. The error referenced an incorrect municipal address in the disposition of the report. The Built Heritage Sub-Committee Report 21, published on May 21, 2021, includes the corrected disposition.

Document 1 – Location Map



		LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION ZONING KEY PLAN / SCHÉMA DE ZONAGE	
D09-01-PORT	21-0336-D	 Porter Island Bridge	
I:\CO\2021\Zoning\PorterIslandBridge			
<small>©Parcel data is owned by Teranet Enterprises Inc. and its suppliers. All rights reserved. May not be produced without permission. THIS IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY.</small>			
<small>©Les données de parcelles appartient à Teranet Entreprises Inc. et à ses fournisseurs. Tous droits réservés. Ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation. CECI N'EST PAS UN PLAN D'ARPENTAGE.</small>			
REVISION / RÉVISION - 2021 / 04 / 08			

Document 2 – Photos



Porter's Island Bridge, view looking east, 2018. Source: City of Ottawa



Porter's Island Bridge, view looking along bridge, 2018. Source: City of Ottawa



Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 1968



Porter's Island Bridge, view looking south, 1968. Source: Lowertown Community Association.



Aerial photo, 1928. Source: GeoOttawa.

Document 3 – Ontario Regulation 09/06

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

Consolidation Period: From January 25, 2006 to the [e-Laws currency date](#).

No amendments.

This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.

Criteria

1. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 29 (1) (a) of the *Act*. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (1).
- (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. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

Transition

2. This Regulation does not apply in respect of a property if notice of intention to designate it was given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the *Act* on or before January 24, 2006. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 2.

Document 4 – Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form

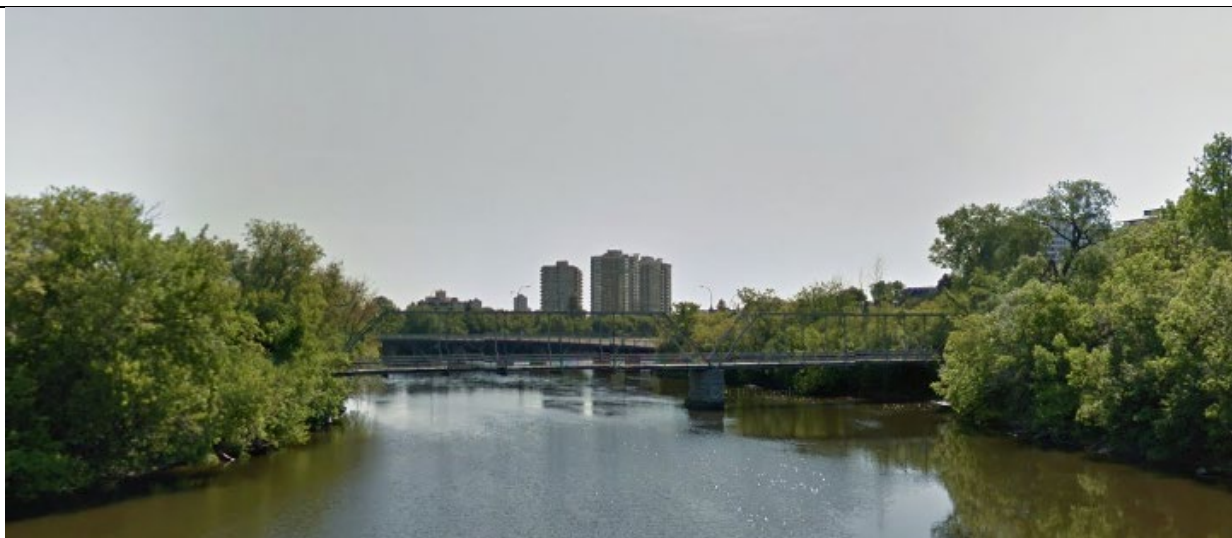
HERITAGE SURVEY AND EVALUATION FORM		Prepared By: Ashley Kotarba, Avery Marshall and the Lowertown Community Association	
		Month/Year: April 2021	
Address	SN 013260; Bridge to Porter Island over the Rideau River.	Building name	Porter’s Island Bridge; Porter Island Bridge; Porters Island Pedestrian Bridge.
Construction date	1894	Original owner	City of Ottawa



View of Porter’s Island Bridge looking east, 2017. Source: City of Ottawa.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE/ INTEREST		
	Yes	No
Design Value	X	
Historical Value	X	
Contextual Value	X	

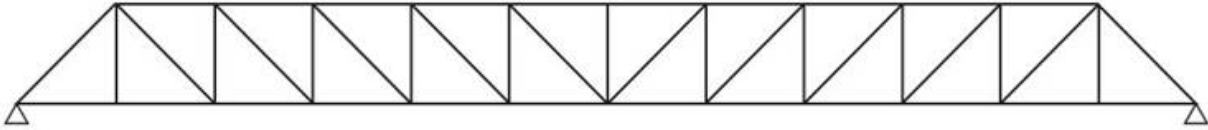
	A property may be designated under Section 29 of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> if it meets one of more of the above criteria. Ontario Regulation 09/06
Design or Physical Value	



Top Left: View of Porter's Island Bridge looking east. Source: © Google 2019.

Top Right: Detail, Porter's Island Bridge, 2017. Source: City of Ottawa.

Architecture	YES	NO
Is the property a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Porter’s Island Bridge is a double-span pin-connected Pratt-through-truss bridge connecting to Porter’s Island over the Rideau River. Built in 1894, this bridge features a steel superstructure, stone masonry piers, and a timber deck.</p> <p>Porter’s Island Bridge is a rare surviving example of the Pratt-through-truss bridge type. Pratt-through-truss bridges were built using a Pratt truss. The Pratt truss is a triangular truss design: Vertical posts (also called members or beams) connect with diagonal posts sloped toward the center of the bridge, creating a rigid structure. On Porter’s Island Bridge, the connection of vertical and diagonal posts was made using metal pins.</p> <p>According to HistoricBridges.org, Porter’s Island Bridge is extremely rare:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“This bridge is an extremely rare example not only of a pin-connected truss bridge in Ontario, but as a multi-span example. It is also noted for its excellent historic integrity with the only noteworthy alteration observed being the replacement of the original lattice railings with pipe railing on the bridge span. Single panels of original lattice railing remain attached to the end posts”.</p> <p>The bridge’s structural steel components were recoated in 1984. Masonry and timber received minor rehabilitation in 1998. The structure is currently closed to the public and is in poor to fair condition. It carries an active Enbridge gas main onto the island.</p>		
Craftsmanship/Artistic merit	YES	NO
Does the property display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Porter’s Island Bridge was a typical bridge of its time period.		
Technical/Scientific merit	YES	NO
Does the property demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Pratt Truss, image by Pau, Hazmat2, distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic license.

The Pratt truss employed on Porter’s Island Bridge was developed, and patented in 1844, by an American bridge builder, Thomas Pratt, of Boston. It was, and is, a highly efficient type of truss with a single diagonal in each panel, vertical panel posts, inclined end posts, and parallel top and bottom chords.



The pin-connected Pratt truss was easy to erect on site with unskilled labour, was highly economical compared to the contemporary riveted truss bridges being built in Europe, and the pinned connections precluded bending stresses being transmitted through the structure. However, the pin-connected truss bridges were not as rigid as the later riveted truss bridges. With heavy traffic, the pins of the pin-connected metal truss bridges would wear over time which resulted in bridges that rattled and vibrated.

The Pratt truss was widely employed initially in wooden truss bridge construction in the United States and Canada, and was adopted subsequently for metal truss bridges –for the wrought iron, pin-connected bridges of the late 19th century, as seen in Porter’s Island Bridge, and for the mild steel, riveted truss bridge structures that were

introduced first on Canadian railways and subsequently on Canadian highways and municipal roads during the early decades of the 20th Century.

The spans of Porter's Island Bridge were designed, and the truss members fabricated at the Dominion Bridge Company plant in Lachine, Quebec, for shipping to Ottawa where the spans were erected on site by raising the truss members and driving the pins. It is possible in viewing the pin connections, to see clearly how the individual bridge members were connected during the erection of the bridge by the bridge company erection crew.

Summary

Porter's Island Bridge is a double-span pin-connected Pratt-through-truss bridge connecting to Porter's Island over the Rideau River. Built in 1894, this bridge features a steel superstructure, stone masonry piers, and a timber deck. Very few single-span, wrought iron, pin-connected Pratt truss bridges exist in Canada today, and a double-span bridge, such as Porter's Island Bridge, is rare.

As a rare example of a pin-connected Pratt-through-truss bridge, Porter's Island Bridge is an important reminder of the historic bridge-building methods employed in Canada in the 19th century.

Sources



Dillon Consulting Limited. Long-Term Strategy Review and Decommissioning Impact Assessment Study – Porters Island Pedestrian Bridge, 2019.

Lowertown Community Association, "Application for Heritage Designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Porter's Island Bridge", 2018.

"Porter's Island Bridge,"

<http://historicbridges.org/bridges/browser/?bridgebrowser=ontario/porter/> Accessed October 19, 2019.

Pratt Truss, accessed 2019, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pratt_truss.svg

Historical and Associative Value		
Date of Construction (Factual/Estimated)		1894
 <p>Porter's Island Bridge plaque, 2011. Source: © Nathan Holth and Rick McOmber.</p> <p>Ottawa, Ont.—The City Engineer has been ordered to prepare plans and specifications and ask for tenders for an iron bridge with a 12-ft. roadway and two spans to connect the city with Porter's Island. The length is about 250 ft.</p> <p>Excerpt from the 1893 Railway Gazette call for tenders.</p>		
Historical Associations Does the property have direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity organization or institution that is significant to a community?		YES NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		

Left: Porter's Island Bridge, 1920s. Source: Library and Archives Canada.

Right: Porter's Island Bridge, view looking south, 1968. Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.



Left: Topley photograph of smallpox tents on Porter's Island. Source: Library and Archives Canada.

Right: Aerial photo, 1928. Source: GeoOttawa.

As the main point of access to Porter's Island, the bridge has played a crucial role in telling the history of the island. As a remnant of the island's earliest uses, the bridge yields information about the island's role in public health, social services, recreation, and military defense.

Health, and more specifically isolation for contagious diseases, was the prime motivator for building the bridge to connect Porter's Island to the rest of Ottawa. The island was annexed to the City in 1888 in the midst of an active debate over an appropriate site for a municipally run hospital.

In 1893, the provincial government passed legislation giving local boards of health the power to issue debentures to raise money for the erection and equipment of contagious disease hospitals. Around 1910, the Board of Health, along with city council and residents, continued the discussion about finding a site for a permanent smallpox hospital. Porter's Island was the chosen location. Later that year, tents were set up to accommodate the growing number of smallpox patients. Francis Conroy Sullivan designed the Hopewell Smallpox Hospital, a facility that still had many smallpox cases into the 1920s.

The bridge to the island meant that when the buildings were not used to isolate people during epidemics, they could be easily accessed and occupied as living space. During the Great Depression in Ottawa many of the unemployed and dependents on government assistance occupied the buildings on Porter's Island for shelter - a scenario that was repeated in 1946 when many veterans were unable to find housing for their families after the War.

An anticipation for War-time medicine resulted in the City's Board of Control permitting the federal government's Department of National Defence to adapt the existing hospital to military use in September 1939 on the island. The bridge served to access the No. 5 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, an active service unit of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. Its 106-bed unit employing nursing sisters and other medical personnel was an active spot until it closed after four years of operation. National Defence retained the island until 1945, using it for the Army Provost Corps' (military police) barracks. After the War, some families continued to live on the island in the barracks well into the 1950s.

In 1961, the future of Porter's Island Bridge changed as new senior residences were built over the next fifty years. The original bridge was retained while building the new Island Lodge for seniors, a geriatric facility for long-term care, and a new parallel bridge was constructed shortly afterward. Other retirement homes would follow.

Over the years Porter's Island went through many changes:

- 1888 Lands of Porter's Island are annexed to City of Ottawa
- 1894 Porter's Island serves as a quarantine site for contagious diseases
 - 1894 Isolation hospital, administration building and four cottages are built on the island. These buildings were designed by George Stalker
 - 1912-13 A permanent smallpox hospital is built, designed by Francis Conroy Sullivan. The hospital is separated from the rest of the island by a stone wall.
- 1906 Landfill begins operation on Porter's Island
- 1920s Athletic fields are established

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1930s Porter’s Island is used for emergency housing during Depression years • 1939 A military hospital and police barracks operate on the Island • 1946 Porter’s Island is used for emergency housing for returning veterans and their families • 1950s Hospital building is converted to offices for City’s recreation department • 1964 The first senior’s residence (former Allen House) is constructed on the eastern half of the island • 1964 A new bridge aligned with Cobourg Street is built to service the senior’s residence • 1972 The second senior’s facility (Bradford House) is constructed on western half of the island • 2005 and 2008 Garry J Armstrong long term care home and Chartwell Rockcliffe Retirement Residence open 		
Community History	YES	NO
Does the property yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Construction of Porter’s Island Bridge in 1894 was an important change for the Lowertown and New Edinburgh communities. A bridge linking the island to the mainland meant a century of change to an island that otherwise would remain uninhabited land. The bridge was the key factor in establishing an important aspect of the community’s social history, in particular the history of medicine and health. The bridge has important historical associations with the communities’ local military history due to its use as a link to the barracks and hospitals built for the Second World War.</p> <p>It endured decades of vehicle traffic, horse drawn and motor. It provided access for pedestrians from 1894 to 1996. It permitted the development of some of Ottawa’s most significant municipal institutions. The hospitals were a major aspect to history of health care, and the later senior homes continue to add to Ottawa’s social fabric.</p>		

The bridge has intangible and associative values for the people who were dislocated after the Lowertown East urban renewal. In the 1950s, there were homes lining the Rideau river and the road leading to the bridge.

Representative Work	YES	NO
Does the property demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, building, designer or theorist who is significant to a community?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

City engineer, Robert Surtees prepared the tender for and supervised the construction of Porter’s Island Bridge. Born in Yorkshire, England in 1835, Surtees emigrated to Hamilton, Ontario in 1856 after completing his apprenticeship as a civil engineer. In 1860 he moved to Ottawa and opened a civil engineering office in New Edinburgh. By 1865, he expanded to repertoire to include architectural services. These included the Carleton County Court House (1870-1871), and the Carleton County General Protestant Hospital (1873-1877), both designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. In 1875 Surtees was appointed as City engineer, leading the expansion to the City’s waterworks and coordinating the work on the nearby Minto Bridges.

In addition to Surtees, Porter’s Island Bridge also reflects the work of the Dominion Bridge Company. The spans of Porter’s Island Bridge were designed, and the truss members fabricated, at the Dominion Bridge Company plant in Lachine, Quebec. The Dominion Bridge Company was an important bridge building company active from the late 19th into the 20th century. The company’s original plant was located in Lachine, Québec. The Lachine plant produced large quantities of steel structures. Steel was in high demand due to the Canadian rail boom and the growth of urban street cars. Built in 1883, the Lachine plant was considered to be the largest and best-equipped machine shop on the continent.

The Dominion Bridge Company had contracts across Canada and internationally. Its major works in Ottawa include the Alexandra Bridge, 1898-1900; Union Bridge (Chaudière Crossing), 1919; Galetta Railway Bridge, 1893; and the Minto Bridges, 1900.

Two former Ottawa City mayors of are also associated with the bridge and island: Napoleon Champagne, who advocated for a community use of the bridge, urging his counterparts on City Council to consider using the island for a municipal park, and

Charlotte Whitton, who promoted the use of Porter’s Island as a site for the care of the elderly.

Summary

The Porter’s Island Bridge is inextricably linked to the history of Porter’s Island and its role in public health, social services, recreation and military defense. It is associated with City engineer Robert Surtees and is representative of the work of the Dominion Bridge Company.

Sources

Dillon Consulting Limited. Long-Term Strategy Review and Decommissioning Impact Assessment Study – Porters Island Pedestrian Bridge, 2019.

Fire Insurance Plan, 1901 and 1912.

GeoOttawa, Aerial photo, 1928.

Lowertown Community Association, “Application for Heritage Designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Porter’s Island Bridge”, 2018.

Railroad Gazette, “Bridge Building,” December 29, 1893.

Ottawa Journal, “Claimed the Motion was Sprung,” December 20, 1893, page 1.

Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada: 1800-1950, “Ewart, John Albert”
<http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1562>

Accessed October 16, 2019.

Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada: 1800-1950, “Stalker, George Frederick” <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/2222>

Accessed October 16, 2019.

Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada: 1800-1950, “Sullivan, Francis Conroy” <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1341>

Accessed October 16, 2019.

Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada: 1800-1950, "Surtees, Robert"

[Surtees, Robert | Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada](#)

Accessed April 8, 2021

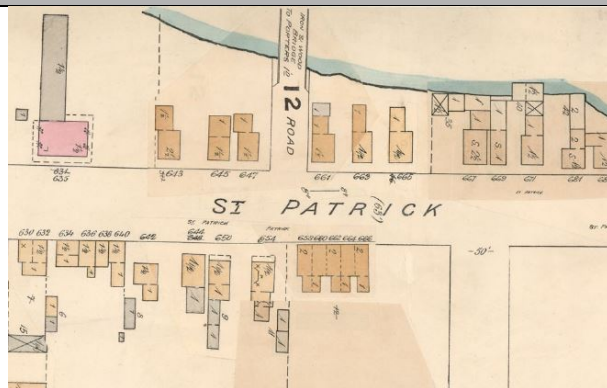
Lowertown Community Association, "Application for Heritage Designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Porter's Island Bridge", 2018.

Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec. Usine Dominion Bridge Company.

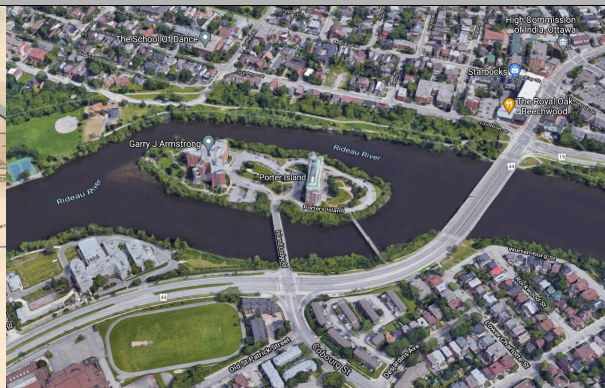
<http://www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca/rpcq/detail.do?methode=consulter&id=191122&type=bien#.Xa9sBEZKjcs>

Accessed Oct 22, 2019.

Contextual Value



Left: Fire Insurance Plan, 1901



Right: Google Earth, 2020

Community Character

Is the property important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of the area?

YES NO

Porter's Island Bridge connected Porter's Island with the mainland. It offered a local connection between Porter's Island and the communities of Lowertown and New

Edinburgh, but its location between the two neighbourhoods means that it does not play a significant role in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of the area.		
Context	YES	NO
Is the property physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Porter’s Island Bridge is physically, functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It is one of a number of bridges crossing the Rideau River and is the earliest of two bridges connected to Porter’s Island. Porter’s Island Bridge is one of the oldest remaining bridges in Ottawa and may be the oldest steel bridge in the city. This bridge tells part of the story of Porter’s Island through its historical function carrying people and goods to the island.		
Landmark	YES	NO
Is the property a landmark?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
While Porter’s Island Bridge well-known in Lowertown the dense vegetation around the bridge make it hard to see from the road. It is located on St. Patrick Street, and is most easily seen from the parallel bridge along Island Lodge Road, as well as the Rideau River Pathway.		
Summary		
The construction of the Porter’s Island Bridge in 1894 was one of the most important changes for the Lowertown and New Edinburgh communities. It defined and continues to maintain the heritage character of the area. The bridge is known locally, however is not a landmark in the city.		
Sources		
Dillon Consulting Limited. Long-Term Strategy Review and Decommissioning Impact Assessment Study – Porters Island Pedestrian Bridge, 2019.		
Lowertown Community Association, “Application for Heritage Designation under Part IV of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> : Porter’s Island Bridge”, 2018.		

Document 5 – Statement of Cultural Heritage Value – Porter’s Island Bridge

Description of Property- Porter’s Island Bridge

Porter’s Island Bridge is a double span steel bridge, constructed in 1894 that connects St. Patrick Street to Porter’s Island over the Rideau River in Lowertown east.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The cultural heritage value of the Porter’s Island Bridge is found in its design value as a rare example of a Pratt-through-truss bridge, for associations with City engineer Robert Surtees and the Dominion Bridge Building Company, and links to the history of Porter’s Island.

Porter’s Island Bridge has design value as a rare Canadian example of a double-span Pratt-through-truss bridge. Patented in 1844 by American bridge builder Thomas Pratt, the Pratt truss is a highly efficient type of truss with a single diagonal in each panel, vertical panel posts, inclined end posts, and parallel top and bottom chords. The Pratt truss was widely used in wooden truss bridge construction in North America and was later adopted for metal truss bridges used on railways and roads. The Porter’s Island Bridge is an important reminder of historic bridge building methods used in Canada in the 19th century.

Porter’s Island Bridge has historical value as a representative work of City engineer Robert Surtees. Surtees is noteworthy in Ottawa for his designs including the Carleton County General Protestant Hospital, the Carleton County Court House, and the Minto Bridges. Porter’s Island Bridge’s is also associated with the Dominion Bridge Company, an important bridge building company in the late 19th century and 20th century. Based originally in Lachine, Québec, the Dominion Bridge Company’s plant was considered the largest and best-equipped machine shop on the continent.

Porter’s Island Bridge was the only connection across the Rideau River to Porter’s Island until the 1960s and has historical value as part of the history of Porter’s Island and its role in public health, social services, and war efforts in the first half of the 20th century. Annexed by the City of Ottawa in 1888 and soon connected by the Porter’s Island Bridge, the island was first used as a quarantine site in 1894 with the construction of an isolation hospital for contagious diseases, a role that would continue until after the Second World War. The island was also used for emergency housing during the Great Depression, for a military hospital during the Second World War, and

housing for returning veterans and their families after the war. The bridge was pivotal in the continued usage of the island for 70 years.

Porter's Island Bridge has contextual value because it is physically, functionally and historically linked to its surroundings, telling the story of Porter's Island through its historical function of carrying people and goods to the island.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key elements that embody the heritage value of Porter's Island Bridge include its:

- Two-span pin-connected steel Pratt-through-trusses
- Stone masonry piers and abutments
- Timber decking
- Remaining lattice railing attached to the end posts
- Location connecting Porter's Island to St. Patrick Street