

## **164 and 166 Isabella Street - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

**Date:** October 2, 2025

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

**Wards:** 13 - Toronto Centre

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value according to the Statement of Significance, found in Attachment 1, which includes a description of heritage attributes.

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are located on the north side of Isabella Street between Sherbourne Street and Huntley Street in the North St. James Town neighbourhood. A location map and current photograph of the heritage property are found in Attachment 2.

Constructed in 1887 by builder James Hewlett, the properties are a pair of large semi-detached red-brick residences that appear as a single grand residence. Designed in a late-nineteenth century vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style, the red brick clad structure features symmetrically organized gabled bays with an elaborate steeply pitched roofline.

Staff have determined that the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street have cultural heritage value and meet 3 of the Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, if it meets two or more of the nine criteria.

The properties were both listed on the City's Heritage Register on January 15, 1991.

On August 18, 2025, the City received Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Site Plan Control applications related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street, along with the adjacent Part IV designated property at 168 Isabella Street, with a 69-storey residential building

containing 660 units. The proposed development will integrate the historic structures into the new residential building.

Since the above noted development applications have been made to the City, a Prescribed Event under the Ontario Heritage Act may occur on this property.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance for 164 and 166 Isabella Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 1, to the report, October 2, 2025, from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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City Planning confirms there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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City Council included the subject properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register on January 15, 1991.

## **POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS**

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### **Provincial Plans and Policies**

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

Further, the policies and definitions of the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) identify the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage evaluation and heritage conservation will be implemented.

[Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009)

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

## Official Plan

The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime and provides policies to guide decision making within the City. It contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making. The Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

## COMMENTS

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### Evaluation Analysis

The following evaluation analysis is based on the comprehensive research conducted on the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street (see Attachment 3) and provides the rationale for the recommendations found in this report.

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street each meet the following 3 out of 9 criteria:

**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**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street have design and physical value as a representative example of pair of semi-detached residences designed in a late-nineteenth century vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style to appear as a grand single-family residence. The combination of cross gabled bays featuring decorative bargeboards and brackets, pedimented dormers with decorative woodwork, and complicated roofline are hallmarks of the Gothic Revival style. Symmetrically organized around a shared central bay, the principal elevation of the two properties presents the unified appearance of a single structure.

### **The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are important in defining, supporting, and maintaining the predominant late-nineteenth century residential character of the surrounding area bounded by Sherbourne, Selby, Huntley, and Isabella Streets where an eclectic mix of late-nineteenth century architectural styles continue to define the streetscape today.

### **The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to their surroundings. Designed to appear as a grand single-family residence, the properties were constructed during the period when the surrounding area emerged as an upper-class neighbourhood in late 19th century. The properties, along with the adjacent properties at 168 Isabella Street and 556 Sherbourne Street to the east, anchor the northwest corner of Sherbourne and Isabella Streets.

See Attachments 1, 2 and 3 of this report for the Statement of Significance; Location Map and Photograph; and Research, Evaluation & Visual Resources pertaining to the property at 164 and 166 Isabella Street, as all of these documents are integral to the recommendations made in this staff report.

### **Prescribed Event Status**

As of July 1, 2021, Section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days of a "Prescribed Event".

A Prescribed Event is a point of time when the application for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application has been deemed complete and the City Clerk provides notice of that complete application to the public in accordance with the Planning Act. The Prescribed Event is not the date a development application is deemed complete or when an application is made to the City. A Prescribed Event, including any prescribed exceptions, are defined under O. Reg 385/21.

If a new or subsequent Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application is submitted on the same property, the Prescribed Event date is reset to the new date the City Clerk issues notice to the public of the new or subsequent complete application.

As of January 1, 2023, should a property be subject to an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application that would trigger a Prescribed Event, the property must be listed in the heritage register prior to the Prescribed Event in order to designate a property under Section 29(1.2)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This requirement does not apply to a Prescribed Event that has occurred prior to January 1, 2023.

On August 18, 2025, the City received Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Site Plan Control applications related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street, along with the adjacent Part IV designated property at 168 Isabella Street, with a 69-storey residential building containing 660 units. The proposed development will retain portions of the historic structures which will be relocated towards the front of the property and incorporated into the new residential building.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties to determine how a heritage property is proposed to be conserved. Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance. An HIA was prepared by GBCA Architects and was submitted on August 14, 2025.

The subject properties are adjacent to the property at 168 Isabella Street which was designated under Part IV of the OHA by City Council on February 4, 1991.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Staff have determined that the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street meet 3 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. As such, each property merits designation and staff recommend that Council support the designation of each property to conserve its cultural heritage value.

The Statement of Significance: 164 and 166 Isabella Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 1 to this report comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jason Thorne  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)

Attachment 2 – Location Map and Current Photograph

Attachment 3 – Research, Evaluation & Visual Resources

**164 AND 166 ISABELLA STREET  
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**Description**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are located on the north side of Isabella Street between Sherbourne Street and Huntley Street in the North St. James Town neighbourhood. Constructed in 1887 by builder James Hewlett, the properties are a pair of large semi-detached residences that appear as a single grand residence. Designed in a late-nineteenth century vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style the properties feature symmetrically organized gabled bays and steeply pitched complicated roofline.

**Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

**Design and Physical Value**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street have design and physical value as a representative example of pair of semi-detached residences designed in a late-nineteenth century vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style to appear as a grand single-family residence. The combination of cross gabled bays featuring decorative bargeboards and brackets, pedimented dormers with decorative woodwork, and complicated roofline are hallmarks of the Gothic Revival style. Symmetrically organized around a shared central bay, the principal elevation of the two properties presents the unified appearance of a single structure.

**Contextual Value**

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are important in defining, supporting, and maintaining the predominant late-nineteenth century residential character of the surrounding area bounded by Sherbourne, Selby, Huntley, and Isabella Streets where an eclectic mix of Victorian-era architectural styles continue to define the streetscape today.

The properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street are physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to their surroundings. Designed to appear as a grand single-family residence, the properties were constructed during the period when the surrounding area emerged as an upper-class neighbourhood in late 19th century. The properties, along with the adjacent properties at 168 Isabella Street and 556 Sherbourne Street to the east, anchor the northwest corner of Sherbourne and Isabella Streets.

**Heritage Attributes**

**Design or Physical Value**

Attributes that contribute to the physical value of the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street as a pair of semi-detached residences designed in a late-nineteenth century

vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style to appear as a grand single-family residence:

- their scale, form and massing with red brick cladding and complicated rooflines with steep two-storey roof with slate shingles
- the east, west, and south elevations with their three-storey gabled bays with decorative woodwork including carved wooden bargeboards and brackets
- the two-storey oriel window on the west elevation's rectangular bay
- the central chimney above the central gable on the principal elevation
- the symmetrically organized window openings with stone sills and lintels on the principal (south) elevation and stone sills with brick voussoirs on the east and west elevations
- the pedimented dormers with decorative woodwork at the principal (south) elevation
- the raised entrance on the principal (south) elevation at 166 Isabella Street with interior vestibule double wooden doors and glass transom
- the raised entrance facing Isabella Street on the west elevation at 164 Isabella Street
- the stone verandah foundations at 164 Isabella Street

### **Contextual Value**

Attributes that contribute to the value of the properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street in defining, supporting, and maintaining the predominant late-nineteenth century residential character of the surrounding area and being physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to their surroundings:

- their scale, form, and massing as a pair of late-nineteenth century semi-detached residences
- their siting and orientation on the north side of Isabella Street and shared setback with 168 Isabella Street and 556 Sherbourne Street
- their legibility as a pair of grand semi-detached residential structures
- the material palette typical of Victorian Era buildings, including red brick with stone and wood detailing
- the complicated roofline with prominent cross gables, dormers, and two-storey oriel window at the west elevation

**LOCATION MAP AND CURRENT PHOTOGRAPH  
164-166 ISABELLA STREET**

**ATTACHMENT 2**



This location map is for information purposes only. The exact boundaries of the property are not shown. The red outline marks the location of 164-166 Isabella Street (City of Toronto iView Mapping, annotated by Heritage Planning, 2024).



164-166 Isabella Street (Heritage Planning, 2024).

**164-166 ISABELLA STREET**

In undertaking this research and evaluation, we recognize that the area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.



Figure 1: Principal (south) elevation of 164-166 Isabella Street (Heritage Planning, 2025).

## 1. DESCRIPTION

164 ISABELLA STREET - John Holderness House 166 ISABELLA STREET - Henry J. Larking House	
ADDRESS	164-166 Isabella Street
WARD	13 - Toronto Centre
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	North St. James Town
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1887
ORIGINAL USE	Residential
CURRENT USE* (*This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law	Residential
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	James Hewlett (Builder)
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See section 3
LISTING DATE	January 15, 1991

## 2. ONTARIO REGULATION 9/06 CHECKLIST:

### CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The following checklist identifies the prescribed criteria met by the subject properties at 164 and 166 Isabella Street for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if the property meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "√" if it is applicable to the property.

### 164 ISABELLA STREET

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.	√
2.	The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	N/A
3.	The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	N/A
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.	N/A
5.	The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	N/A
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.	N/A

7.	The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8.	The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9.	The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.	N/A

### 166 ISABELLA STREET

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.	✓
2.	The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	N/A
3.	The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	N/A
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.	N/A
5.	The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	N/A
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.	N/A
7.	The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8.	The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9.	The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.	N/A

### 3. RESEARCH

This section of the report describes the history, architecture, and context of the property. Visual resources related to the research are located in Section 4. Archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Section 5 (List of Sources).

#### INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

For time immemorial, Toronto has been home to Indigenous peoples. Ojibway oral histories speak of Ice People, who lived at a time when ice covered the land.<sup>1</sup> Following the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago, small groups of Indigenous peoples moved from place to place, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Over millennia, they adapted to dramatically changing environmental conditions, developing and acquiring new technologies as they did

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<sup>1</sup> With thanks to Philip Cote for the reference to Benton-Banai, Edward, *The Mishomis book: The voice of the Ojibway* (Indian Country Press, 1985), p. 26.

so. Waterways and the lake were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and shorelines and nearby areas were important sites for gathering, trading, hunting, fishing, and ceremonies. Long-distance trade moved valuable resources across the land.

After maize and squash were introduced to Southern Ontario, by approximately 500 CE, horticulture began to supplement food sources. By 1300 CE, villages focused on growing food became year-round settlements surrounded by crops. These villages were home to ancestors of the Huron-Wendat Nation, who would continue to occupy increasingly larger villages in the Toronto area and beyond. These villages were connected to well-established travel routes which were part of local and long-distance trail networks, including the Carrying Place trails on the Don, Rouge and Humber rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. Beads made from seashells from the eastern seaboard were found at the Alexandra site in North York, which was a community of 800-1000 people in approximately 1350.

By 1600, the Wendat had formed a confederation of individual nations, and had concentrated most of their villages away from Lake Ontario, in the Georgian Bay area. Following contact with French explorers and missionaries in Southern Ontario in the early 1600s, European diseases decimated First Nations. Competition for furs to trade with Europeans and the desire to replenish numbers through absorption of captives, among other factors<sup>2</sup>, contributed to the Beaver Wars, which after 1640, saw the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expand into Southern Ontario, dispersing the Wendat. Within the boundaries of today's Toronto, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy then occupied villages on the Carrying Place trails on the Humber and Rouge Rivers from approximately the 1660s to the 1680s.

In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy chose to leave their village in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York. As evidenced by the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the 1701 Nanfan Treaty, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Haudenosaunee continued to have an interest in the resources of the area.

Anishinaabe people from the Lake Superior region then moved into the Toronto area. While the Wendat and Haudenosaunee people lived in year-round villages surrounded by crops, the Anishinaabe people continued to live primarily by seasonally moving across the land to hunt, fish and gather resources that were available at a specific time, including migrating birds and maple syrup. To the west of Toronto, the Anishinaabe people became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. To the east, they became known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama and the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island.<sup>3</sup>

In 1787, as the British began to prepare for an influx of colonists into the area following the American Revolution, the British Crown negotiated the Toronto Purchase with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to obtain title to the land. The flawed and poorly documented agreement was invalidated, and Treaty 13 was negotiated in 1805 for

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2 <https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/chapter/chapter-5-colonial-wars-looking-east>; Gary Warrick, "The Aboriginal Population of Ontario in Late Pre-history," in Munson and Jamieson, eds., *Before Ontario: The Archaeology of a Province* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), p. 72.

3 Mississaugas of the Credit, "The History of Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation." n.d.

lands now including much of the City of Toronto. In 1923, the Governments of Ontario and Canada signed the Williams Treaties for over 20,000 km<sup>2</sup>, including portions of eastern Toronto, with seven First Nations of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama) and the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha and Scugog Island).

The Mississaugas, Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, or the Wendat did not traditionally regard land as a commodity to be sold. Following the Toronto Purchase, the British government quickly set out to survey the land into lots which were either sold or granted into private ownership of settlers. In 2010, the Government of Canada settled the Toronto Purchase Claim with the Mississaugas of the Credit after agreeing that the Mississaugas were originally unfairly compensated. In 2018, the Williams Treaties First Nations settled litigation about land surrenders and harvesting rights with the Governments of Canada and Ontario.

The City of Toronto remains the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is also covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with seven Mississaugas and Chippewa First Nations.

## **i. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the properties which are the basis for determining historical or associative value of Criteria 4, 5 or 6 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

### **Upper Jarvis Neighbourhood**

The history of the Upper Jarvis neighbourhood began with the granting of thirty-two 100-acre park lots by John Graves Simcoe, first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada. Spanning from present-day Queen to Bloor Streets, the long (6,660-ft), narrow (660-ft), lots were granted to Simcoe's closest friends and colleagues as a reward for their military service and dedication to the Crown.<sup>4</sup> As the population of Toronto grew towards the mid-nineteenth century, owners of these park lots began to subdivide and sell off their lands, allowing for the city to develop and grow.<sup>5</sup>

The north-south thoroughfares of Jarvis and Sherbourne Streets were the result of the gradual subdivision and residential development of these park lots – which eventually spread north from Queen to Bloor Street. The surrounding lands were first subdivided and sold as parcels beginning in the 1850s, finally being sold off as house lots in the early 1870s. Between the late 1870s and 1890s the upper stretches of Jarvis and Sherbourne Streets became a wealthy enclave for Toronto's elite – a precursor to the early twentieth-century development of the Rosedale neighbourhood to the north.<sup>6</sup>

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4 Patricia McHugh, 1985, p.150.

5 Ibid.

6 Patricia McHugh, 1985, p.150.

Along with the large mansions constructed for Toronto's wealthiest families, elegant terraces and semi-detached residences were also constructed.

### **164 and 166 Isabella Street**

On December 18, 1885, builder James Hewlett purchased part of Lots 40, 43, 44, and 45, registered Plan 132a, on the north side of Isabella Street between Huntley and Sherbourne Streets.<sup>7</sup> In 1887, he constructed two-semi detached residences on the property, which were given the addresses of 142 and 144 Isabella Street.<sup>8</sup> The properties were designed to appear as a single large residence, with each one a mirror image of the other. That same year, James Hewlett sold 142 Isabella Street to hotel proprietor John Holderness and 144 Isabella Street to Margaret Maria Larkin. In 1889, the properties were renumbered 164 and 166 Isabella Street.

Between 1897 and 1911, 164 Isabella Street was owned and occupied by prominent jeweller and businessman Harry Ryrie who, along with brother and fellow jeweller James, founded the eponymous Ryrie Brothers in 1897. As a jewellery retailer, Ryrie Brothers was known for its fine collection of diamonds and other jewels as well as silverware, glassware and china. As the chief buyer for the company, Harry travelled extensively, with news reports documenting purchases of jewels and art from around the world.<sup>9</sup> In 1905, Ryrie Brothers amalgamated with jeweller Henry Birks and Sons, renaming its Toronto stores as Ryrie-Birks Limited. While residing at 166 Isabella Street, Harry Ryrie undertook significant renovations, including the addition of a supper room on the fourth floor running the full length of the house.<sup>10</sup> Based on a review of fire maps, it was likely during this time that the front entrance was relocated from the east side of the principal (south) elevation to the side (west) elevation with the extension of the verandah and the enlargement of the side bay-and-gable, to which a fanciful two-storey oriel window was added.

Originally constructed as a pair of semi-detached single-family residences, by the mid-1950s both properties had been converted into lodging houses, advertising housekeeping rooms for rent in the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star*. Between 1961 and 1965, two one-storey front additions were constructed on the principal elevation and a two-storey rear addition was constructed to the rear of 194 Isabella Street above an existing one-storey ell.<sup>11</sup> By the 1970s both properties had been converted into bachelor apartments with a combined total of 38 units.<sup>12</sup>

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7 Ontario Land Registry, p52; *Might Directories Ltd*, 1900.

8 *Might Directories Ltd*, 1908.

9 Multiple announcements regarding Harry Ryrie's travels were noted in the Social sections of both the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* in between 1890 and 1917.

10 *The Globe*, February 11, 1911, p 9.

11 Aerial images show the properties without front additions in 1960 and with front additions in 1965. Aerial images for the years 1961-1964 were not available.

12 Based on a review of classified advertisements in the *Toronto Star* between 1968 and 1975 and *The Globe and Mail*, 18 Feb 2016: B8.

## ii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining design or physical value of Criteria 1, 2 or 3 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The properties at 164-166 Isabella are a representative example of a pair of late-19th century upper-class semi-detached residences designed in a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style. Constructed in 1887, the properties were designed to appear as a grand single-family residence.

By the mid-19th century, the Gothic Revival style emerged as the most influential of the revivalist styles in Canada. With notable examples including Canada's Parliament Buildings (1859), Toronto's St. James Cathedral (1853) and St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica (1848), the style is characterized by pointed arch windows, rib vaulted ceilings, buttresses, steeply pitched roofs, and an overall emphasis on height.<sup>13</sup> The Gothic Revival style had a significant influence on mid to late-nineteenth century vernacular residential architecture in Ontario, most notably the Ontario Cottage and Bay-and-Gable. In vernacular residential architecture, late-nineteenth century elements of Gothic Revival included lancet or pointed windows, steep gables and decorative barge boards,<sup>14</sup> while larger residences often included complicated rooflines, towers and projecting bays.

Set back from Isabella Street and rising four-storeys, the red-brick clad structure features a complicated steeply pitched two-storey roofline with seven three-storey gabled bays extending across the principal and side elevations featuring decorative bargeboards and brackets. Designed as mirrored images of one another, the properties originally featured paired entrances accessed by a one-storey verandah running across the width of the principal (south) elevation.

### Principal (South) Elevation

The principal Isabella Street facing (south) elevation is eight bays wide and is organized around a wide central bay comprising the east side of 166 Isabella Street and the west side of 164 Isabella Street. Wrapping around the southeast corner at 166 Isabella Street and southwest corner at 164 Isabella Street are matching three-sided rectangular bays placed at a 45-degree angle to the structure. All three bays rise three storeys and feature cross-gables with decorative bargeboards, while the gables above the southeast and southwest bays also feature decorative two-tiered arch brackets in their peaks. A chimney above the central gable marks the common party wall between the two properties.

The fenestration at the principal elevation features flat headed openings with stone lintels and sills. Two c.1960s one-storey additions obscure most of the first storey of both properties save for the central and northwestern windows on the southwest corner bay at 164 Isabella and the heavily modified front entrance and northeast window of the

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<sup>13</sup> Ontario Heritage Trust.

<sup>14</sup> City of Toronto, 2021, p34.

southeast corner bay at 166 Isabella Street. Inside the altered entrance to 166 Isabella Street is the original raised double entrance with carved wooden doors and transom.

The southeast and southwest corner bays feature windows on all three sides at the first and second storeys and a single window at the gabled third storey. At the second storey the central bay features a matching pair of wide-set windows at the second story below a close-set pair at the gabled third storey.

Between the central bay and the southeast corner bay at 166 Isabella Street is a single window at the second storey below a third storey gabled dormer window with decorative pediment and brackets. While 164 Isabella Street retains a matching dormer at the third storey, the second storey window was removed and replaced with a decorative terracotta brickwork panel. This alteration likely occurred between 1897 and 1911 during the alterations undertaken by Harry Ryrie. At an unknown date, a small, shed dormer was added at the fourth storey to 166 Isabella between the third storey dormer and central gable.

### **East Elevation (166 Isabella Street)**

The fenestration on the east and west elevations features flat headed openings with brick voussoirs and stone sills. After the southeast corner bay, the east elevation of 166 Isabella features a rectangular three-storey bay with a cross-gable containing a single east facing window at each storey. This is followed by a three-storey canter-bay with windows on all three sides at the first and second storeys below a cross-gable with east facing window. The northern section of the east elevation, towards the rear, features a side entrance and window at the first storey, two windows at the second storey and a shed dormer at the third and fourth storey.

### **West Elevation (164 Isabella Street)**

After the southwest corner bay, the east elevation of 166 Isabella features a three-storey rectangular bay containing a south facing entrance with east facing window at the first storey below a two-storey octagonal oriel window at the second and third storey. Both the cross-gable and oriel window are clad in scalloped shingles. This is followed by a three-storey canter-bay with windows on all three sides at the first and second storeys below a cross-gable with east facing window. The northern section of the west elevation, towards the rear, features a side entrance and window at the first storey, two windows at the second storey and a shed dormer at the third and fourth storey.

### **Rear (north) elevation**

The rear (north) elevation features a two-storey jerkinhead roof, a combination of partially altered fenestration with brick voussoirs and later window and door openings, an exterior steel fire escape, a one-storey ell on the northwest corner at 166 Isabella Street, and a one storey ell with a c.1960s two-storey enclosed stairwell addition across the western two-thirds of northwest corner at 164 Isabella Street.

### iii. CONTEXT

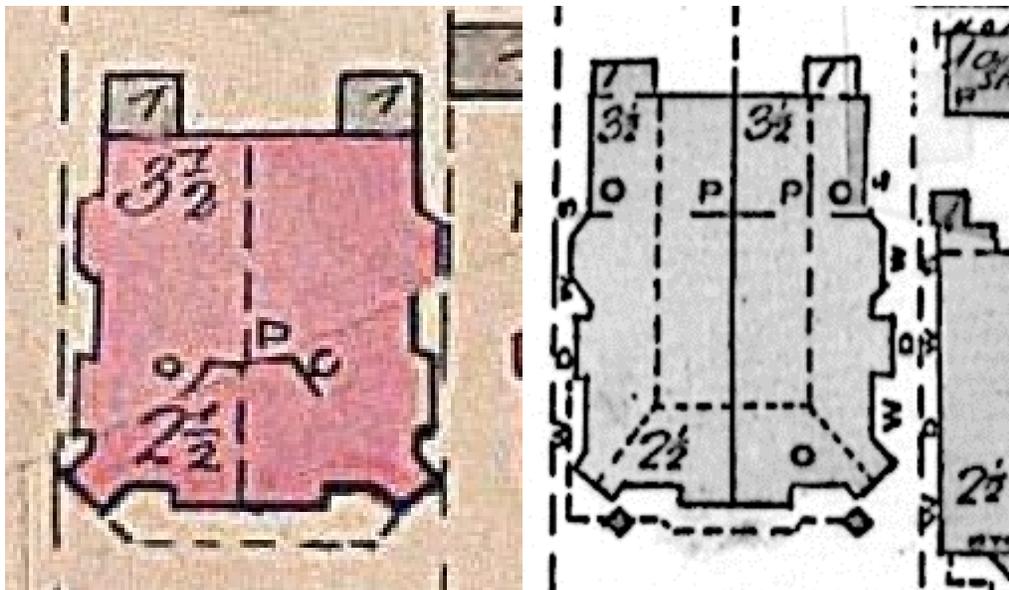
The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining contextual value of Criteria 7, 8 or 9 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The subject properties are located mid-block on the north side of Isabella Street between Huntley Street and Sherbourne Street in the North St. James Town neighbourhood. The properties are adjacent to a c.1953 stripped classical primary school building followed by a modern four storey office building to the west at the corner of Huntley Street. To the east, the properties are adjacent to a Part IV designated c.1887 residential property at 168 Isabella Street followed by a listed c.1890 residential property at 556 Sherbourne Street which houses the Hotel Isabella. Together the properties at 164-168 Isabella Street and 556 Sherbourne Street anchor the northwest corner of Sherbourne and Isabella Streets.

The subject properties form part of an area bounded by Selby Street to the north, Sherbourne Street to the east, Isabella Street to the south, and Huntley Street to the west that is characterized by a mix of late-19th century rowhouse, semi-detached, and detached residential structures in a variety of styles including Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Bay and Gable, and Gothic Revival. On the south side of Isabella Street, opposite 164-166 Isabella Street, is a parking lot followed by a mix of mid-century apartments and late-19th century residential structures that have been adaptively reused for commercial and institutional uses.

The City of Toronto Property Data Map attached (Attachment 2) shows the site of the properties at 164-166 Isabella Street.

### 4. VISUAL RESOURCES



Figures 2 & 3: Fire insurance plans from 1889 (left) and 1911 (right) showing the building footprint and verandah as built and the extended verandah following the post 1897 alterations to 164 Isabella Street (Heritage Planning, 2024).

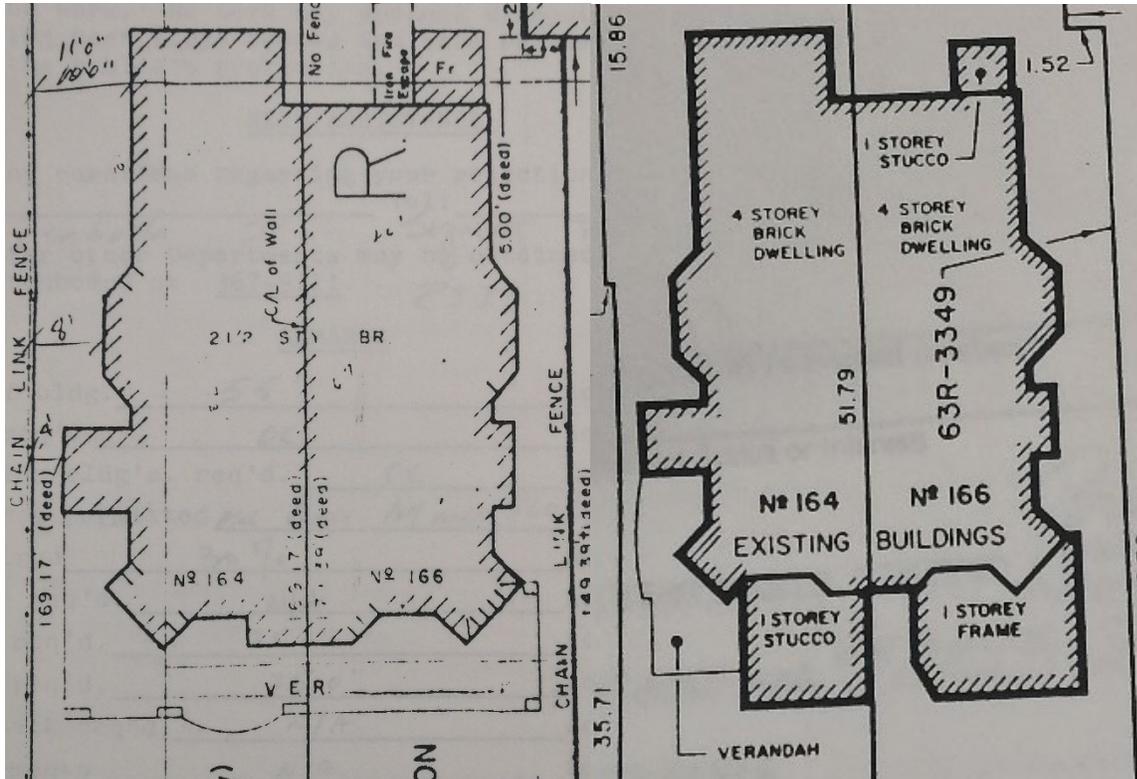


Figure 4 & 5: Circa 1960 survey (left) and 1987 survey (right) showing 164-166 Isabella Street before and after the c.1960s alterations, including the addition of two one storey additions. Note the verandah shown in c.1960 survey which matches the one identified in the 1911 fire insurance plan in Figure 3 (Heritage Planning, 2024).



Figure 6 post 1960s photo showing 164-166 Isabella Street along with its wood verandah (TPL, David Richie Collection)



Figure 6: Image of the principal (south) elevation of 164-166 Isabella Street showing bay and gables with decorative bargeboard and brackets and pedimented dormers. Note c. 1960s one storey additions obscuring the first storey (Heritage Planning, 2025).



Figure 7: Image of 164 Isabella Street showing southwest corner bay and gable, eastern elevation with square bay and gable with entrance and two-storey oriel window followed by center bay and gable (Heritage Planning, 2024).



Figure 8: Image of the rear of 164 Isabella Street to the right and 166 Isabella Street to the left (Heritage Planning, 2025).



Figure 9: Contextual image looking north from Isabella Street showing (left to right) 164-166 Isabella Street, 168 Isabella Street, and 556 Isabella Street (Heritage Planning, 2024).

## 5. LIST OF SOURCES

### ARCHIVAL SOURCES

- City of Toronto Archives, Tax Assessment Rolls.
- City of Toronto Archives Photographs
- Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto, 1884, 1890, 1903, 1910, 1924.
- Might's Greater Toronto City Directories, 1871-2001.
- Land Registry Office 80, Book 285A.
- Toronto Public Library, The Globe and Mail Newspaper Archives.
- Toronto Public Library, Toronto Star Newspaper Archives.

### SECONDARY SOURCES

- City of Toronto, *Garden District Heritage Conservation District Plan* (Toronto, 2021). <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/96fb-CityPlanning-Garden-District-HCD-Revised-Plan.pdf>
- McHugh, Patricia, *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide* (Toronto, 1985).
- McHugh, Patricia and A. Bozickovic, Alex. *Toronto Architecture A City Guide. Revised edition.* (McClelland & Stewart, 2017).