91 William Street North, Town of Lindsay (Bell Telephone Exchange)

Heritage Designation Evaluation

Town of Lindsay
LT 7 S/S BOND ST PL TOWN PLOT; PT LT 6 S/S BOND ST, 8 S/S BOND ST PL TOWN PLOT AS IN TL30707 AND VT94471; S/T AND T/W VT94471; KAWARTHA LAKES
2023

Kawartha Lakes

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. A heritage evaluation of the property has determined that 91 William Street North has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

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:

The property is a unique example of a mid-century Neo-classical structure constructed for a telephone exchange. The building, which was constructed around 1949, is executed in the stripped neo-classical style prevalent in public architecture in the middle of the twentieth century, particularly throughout the 1930s and 1940s. It includes key features of this style such as streamlined massing, keystones and a Classical entrance surround typical of this time period. There are few other commercial buildings in Kawartha Lakes constructed in this style.

ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property displays a typical degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit for a building of this type.

iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

The property demonstrates the evolving telephone technology in the mid-twentieth century particularly with regard to the wide-spread introduction of automatic switching, or dial, telephones in the period following the Second World War.

2. The property has historical or associative value because it:

i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community:

The property has direct associations with the development of telecommunications in Kawartha Lakes as the mid-century telephone exchange in Lindsay. It was constructed in 1949 as a new telephone exchange for Lindsay with the expansion of the community in the mid-twentieth century and the emerging technologies in telecommunications that demanded new facilities and structures to respond to these changes.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The property has the potential to yield information regarding the role of telecommunications in mid-century Lindsay and the evolving technological impact on both the telephone system itself in the community, as well as the impact on the workforce which underwent significant changes throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century with the increasing automation of telephone exchanges.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:

The architect of the building was F.A. Williams about whom nothing is known. It appears that he was in the employ of the Bell Telephone Company and his significance to the local community is minimal.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property is important in supporting the diverse historic landscape of the William Street North corridor. This corridor, which runs north from Kent Street West in close proximity to the Scugog River, includes a wide range of historic buildings dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century and includes both commercial and residential structures. Taken together, these form a cohesive evolved landscape that demonstrates the development of this portion of Lindsay throughout this period.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

The property is historically linked to its surroundings as part of the diverse historic landscape of William Street North which includes a range of historic properties dating from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century.

iii. is a landmark.

The property is not a specific landmark.

Design and Physical Value

91 William Street North has design and physical value as a unique example of a mid-twentieth century Stripped Classical telephone exchange in Lindsay. The building was constructed between 1948 and 1949 as a new telephone exchange for the Bell Telephone Company and is one of only a few examples of this style of industrial structures in Kawartha Lakes. The Neoclassical style was prevalent throughout the 1920s and 1930s in commercial and public architecture where it was adopted by a range of architects in different urban locations across North America. Although it had declined in popularity in Canada and the United States by the late 1940s when the subject property was constructed, it remained an important architectural form into the mid-twentieth century of which the subject property is a good example. The property is also representative of increasing technical requirements around telephone exchange construction in the first half of the twentieth century in response to new technologies and an increased demand for telephone services.

With the invention of the telephone in 1876, there soon a need to house the new infrastructure of telecommunications, particularly the switchboards that were used for routing calls. In the late nineteenth century, switchboards were developed to serve the needs of local communities and were operated by telephone operators, most of whom were women, who manually connected callers through the switchboard. These spaces quickly became known as telephone exchanges and were the hub of the expanding telecommunications systems to link phones in houses and buildings with one another. The earliest telephone exchanges were housed in existing buildings, including Canada's first telephone exchange which was established in the upper storey of a commercial building in downtown Hamilton in 1878. These spaces were relatively basic and required space only to house the switchboard itself, space for operators, storage space for equipment and basic business offices. Most telephone exchanges in existing urban centres were located in similar premises. In smaller communities, they were sometimes located in people's homes. Most of these exchanges and their equipment were owned by the Bell Telephone Company, the major player in telecommunications in North America for most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, controlling phone service and its associated infrastructure.

Lindsay's first telephone exchange opened around 1881 and was located on the upper storey of George Edward's hardware store on Kent Street West; at the time, there were only 27 telephone subscribers – mostly local businesses – and a small space was all that was required. This exchange was owned by Bell Telephone, and operated by a local agent who oversaw the operation of the lines in the community, with the space rented out from the hardware store. As

telephone service expanded, the exchanged moved into a larger space at 24 William Street North.

Purpose built exchanges began to appear in Ontario around 1890 as the telephone system gradually expanded and space specific to the requirements of switchboards and telephone staff were required. The earliest of these were constructed in major commercial and urban centres, such as Toronto, Montreal, London and Hamilton where there were already large number of subscribers and the growing infrastructure to support them. From a technical standpoint, these buildings were industrial structures, designed specifically to house telephone equipment, including switchboards, batteries, and other electrical equipment, all of which had specific spatial needs that these buildings needed to fulfil. At the same time, telephone exchanges of the late nineteenth century required large numbers of staff to operate and these spaces also needed to have spaces for the people who worked there, including offices, lunch rooms, cloakrooms and washrooms for the more human functions of the building. Architecturally, these buildings generally adhered to the aesthetic trends of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture, with a strong preference for Classical forms in adherence with the pervasive Beaux-Arts and Edwardian Classical styles of turn of the century Ontario.

Bell's first purpose built exchange in Lindsay was constructed in 1917 at 33 William Street North; this building is still extant but no longer in use as part of Bell's system. It was likely designed by the Chief Architect of Bell Canada, W.J. Carmichael and is virtually identical to another exchange constructed in the same year in Ottawa at 43 Eccles Street. Two storeys in height and constructed immediately adjacent to its neighbour to the north, in design and massing it is consistent with the rhythms of the existing Italianate streetscape, although its ornamentation has been drawn from the Edwardian Classical design language. As with many purpose built exchanges constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it had both an aesthetic function within the streetscape, where it was constructed to blend in to the existing late Victorian streetscape, but also an industrial one to house the central exchange infrastructure and its staff. There is little about the structure, from the outside, to mark is apart from a turn of the century office building; this is the case with many exchanges of this period. While the number of subscribers was small, there was little need for more space and this modest building was sufficient for Lindsay's gradually expanding telephone system for most of the first half of the twentieth century.

The early decades of the twentieth century brought technological changes to the telecommunications industry that had a profound impact on the architecture of telephone exchanges. In particular, the introduction of automatic switching made substantial changes to how these structures were

designed and constructed to accommodate both the new technology and changes in the workforce as a result of these upgrades.

Automated switching was first patented in the United States in 1891 and was an electromechanical system that required dialing equipment at the customer's home or business and switching equipment at the central exchange, as opposed to manual switching which required operators at a central location to direct calls from the customer using a switchboard. It was also often known as dial calling because it required the customer to dial the number of the person they were trying to reach directly from their phone, as opposed to asking the operator to connect them. These were first used commercially in 1892 in La Porte, Indiana for local calling using a key pad system to dial and would later result in the invention of the rotary dial phone in 1896.

While automatic switching and dial operations was technologically feasible from the early 1890s, it was not readily adopted until after the First World War. The technology required a significant financial investment to put in place, including new phones for customers, new machines at the exchange, appropriate buildings to house these machines and the power required to operate them, and there was not a business case to make the switch until the early 1920s, even in large urban centres. The number of subscribers, while increasing gradually throughout the late nineteenth century, was not enough to justify the change for Bell and, as a result, manual switching with operators remained the norm until the middle of the twentieth century. Similarly, dial technology was best suited for local calling and in many places, including Lindsay, manual operations for long distance calling remained in place for many years after dial calling was introduced for local calls; some exchanges, particularly in rural areas, remained manual until the mid-1970s. The first dial exchange was opened in Toronto in 1924 but this posed new design challenges for exchange buildings.

The development of exchange architecture from a technical perspective, including the design of buildings to facilitate dial calling, was discussed at length in an article by F.J. Macnab in the *Royal Architects Institute of Canada Journal* in October 1951 when the majority of exchanges across Canada either were or were in the process of automating for local calls. Macnab, a Scottish architect who emigrated to Canada in 1906, served as the Chief Architect for Bell Canada from 1927 to his retirement in 1953; he had begun his career in Canada there as a junior draftsman and was, at the time, the leading expert in telephone exchange design or construction. He was not the designer of the subject property, but wielded significant influence over the design of new exchanges in his time as Chief Architect for the company.

For Macnab, the telephone exchange building was primarily a technical, as opposed to aesthetic, design challenge, although he did recognize that "it is essentially that the telephone building is acceptable to the community…The architect's problem is then to design a building which will meet all technical requirements, and be compatible with its surroundings."[1] Despite these considerations with regard to the look of the building, Macnab viewed the exchange as part of a wider system of telecommunications infrastructure that was required to fulfil a specific technical purpose and needed to be designed as such. With the advent of dial service through automated switching, Macnab recognized that architectural changes were needed to accommodate technological requirements, writing:

> The introduction of dial operation in the 1920s resulted in radical changes in the planning and structural design of telephone buildings. Floors had to be designed for still heavier loads, more ceiling height was required, column spacing had to be changed and many features which had become standard for buildings housing manually operated equipment were not applicable. Concentration of users meant that it was more efficient and economical in large cities to plan for several units of approximately 10,000 lines each in one building. While there might be wide variation in external design, the plan irrespective of size was now governed by rigid engineering standards.[2]

Beyond the installation of new machinery, automated switched also meant that fewer people were needed to run the telephone exchange. The number of employees working in telephone exchange buildings decreased dramatically throughout the first four decades of the twentieth century: whereas telephone operators were a significant workforce at the turn of the century and buildings had to accommodate them, their number was drastically reduced with the advent of automatic switching because telephone operators were no longer needed to direct incoming calls. The substantial economic impact aside, this change was also reflected in the architecture of telephone exchange buildings. Whereas turn of the century buildings required fairly extensive facilities for their staff given the large number of people required to run a mid- to large sized telephone exchange – facilities such as lunchrooms, cloakrooms, and washrooms as well as large floor spaces and banks of switchboards where operators would sit- this was no longer the case when switching was automated and run by machines. The majority of interior space was dedicated to equipment and power with much smaller spaces set aside for staff offices

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[1] F.J. Macnab, "Telephone Buildings: Seventy Years of Progress," *RAIC Journal* 28, no. 10 (1951): 283.
[2] Macnab, "Telephone Buildings," 282.

and associated facilities. As a result, telephone buildings became increasingly buildings for machines, as opposed to buildings for people and their spaces were designed to accommodate evolving telecommunications technology with fewer spaces for people within them.

While these changes were contemplated as early as the 1920s, their application in full came after 1945. In the immediate years following the Second World War, the provision of telephone service exploded across the country. The war had demonstrated the need for better telecommunications in people's homes and businesses and, as a result, the second half of the 1940s saw a massive expansion of Bell's network across the country. At the same time, the war had delayed the expansion of the network to non-military and government clients, with most of the company's resources being funnelled to supporting the war effort and there was a substantial backlog for new telephone infrastructure throughout this period. The company, which controlled the majority of telecommunications infrastructure across the country, expanded its operations and investments to meet this demand and undertook a variety of activities to do so. One of these activities was the addition of new lines to new subscribers, particularly in rural areas which were generally underserved even in the middle decades of the century. Another was general infrastructure upgrades through the installation of new cables and poles throughout and around Canadian communities and the expansion and upgrading of exchanges themselves to handle increased numbers of subscribers and new technology.

It was also at this time that the majority of telephone exchanges in smaller cities and towns began to automate; the expansion of the network required this shift and the construction of new buildings to allow for larger exchanges facilitated it. In Kingston, for example, the transition to automated switching happened in 1942 and this transition was gradually rolled out across the province throughout the decade, with particular acceleration after the end of the war. In Lindsay, the switch was facilitated by the construction of the new building between 1948 and 1949, although the full switch to automation and dial phones for local calls did not occur in Lindsay until 1950.

The construction of Lindsay's new telephone exchange happened as part of a broader upgrade of facilities in the town and surrounding area in the second half of the 1940s; the exchange in Lindsay served both the town itself and rural Ops Township. As elsewhere, demand for telephones had increased dramatically throughout the 1940s: in 1937, there were 2,419 telephones in the Lindsay service area, a number which climbed to around 4,000 by the end of 1947 with around 200 orders for new lines still in progress when these numbers were reported in the *Lindsay Daily Post* in early 1948. New lines and subscribers all required new and upgraded infrastructure for local and long distance calling including lines and switchboards. Anticipating future needs,

Bell purchased the subject property at the southwest corner of William Street North and Bond Street West in 1945 with the goal of building a new exchange to facilitate expansion and technological upgrades.

The construction of the new building was announced in March 1948 at the same time that dial service was announced for Lindsay. Bell indicated that the building would be constructed throughout 1948, with a scheduled opening in 1949 and dial equipment would be installed once the building was constructed. The announcement was reported in the *Lindsay Daily Post* which noted that:

> The exchange building will have a frontage on William Street of approximately 74 feet and a depth of 62 feet. Provision will be made in the plan for the possible addition of a third storey and an extension to the rear. The ground floor of the new structure will house a business office, dial switching equipment, and a test centre. On the second floor, space is provided for long-distance switchboards, operators' quarters, and offices for the company's plant department. Power equipment, cable vault and heating and ventilating equipment will be housed in the basement.[3]

The architect of the building was noted as F.A. Williams, identified as an architect for the company, and the successful bidder for the construction contract was W.H. Yates Construction Company. Construction began in August 1948 and continued into early 1949 when the building was complete with new space and technology for dial operations, although the full switch was not made until 1950. The building cost around $200,000 to construct and also included a diesel backup generator to sustain the phone operations in case of a power outage.

As with other mid-century exchange, the building was explicitly designed for industrial equipment: its interior space was focused on the spatial requirements of both dial switching equipment and manual switchboards, along with the physical infrastructure required to support them. This was a significant switch from early telephone buildings, both purpose built and modified from other structures and was driven by technological changes and innovations. The exterior design of these buildings, however, was informed by wider aesthetic and design trends that extended beyond industrial architecture and were informed by a move towards a modern aesthetic transforming architecture throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century.

From a stylistic standpoint, the subject property is very distinct from most other commercial building in Lindsay and reflects the stylistic trends of the

[3] "Dial Phones Coming!" *Lindsay Daily Post,* March 11, 1948, 1.

first half of the twentieth century, particularly in the interwar period. By the First World War, tastes in architecture were turning away from the highly decorative and revival styles of the Victorian and Edwardian periods in favour of more modern, streamlined architecture. This was the period that saw the rise of a number of distinct, but related architectural styles where there was an explicit attempt to break with the past to embrace new modern forms, materials and idea. Architecture of the early twentieth century, including the Moderne and International styles, tended towards the extensive decorative found in much late nineteenth and early twentieth century structures in favour of an aesthetic that was pared back and streamlined, with bold, modular and unornamented forms and simple massing. Architects began to look to use and feature modern materials in their designs to reflect the technological innovations of the twentieth century, including large expanses of glass, concrete, and metal. This new modernism spread throughout global architectural language and was well-entrenched in practice by the middle of the century.

Not all architects and clients, however, were quick to embrace the new modernist aesthetic. Particularly in commercial and public architecture, the shift away from traditional forms was slow, but the new modern aesthetic began to exert influence on the design of new buildings throughout the 1910 and 1920s. Many organizations, particularly large corporations such as banks and governments, were not overly enthusiastic to embrace modern styles, particularly at a time when architectural styles were seen as being imbued with meaning; at the same time, however, a shift in taste was occurring away from the styles that had dominated before the First World War. This can be seen in the development of the new Stripped Classical style, sometimes known as Modern Classical, that gained popularity in the interwar period.

Throughout the Edwardian period, variations of Classical architecture prevailed in most commercial and public buildings. The preferred styles of the Edwardian period – Edwardian Classical and Beaux Arts – were both highly decorative and widely used. Both of these styles, although there are specific differences between them, applied bold and often complex decorative elements to the massing of the structure; Edwardian Classical was the less ornate of the two, but both took elements directly from Classical antiquity and were consciously revival styles. These styles were extremely pervasive throughout Canadian communities up to and throughout the First World War, with many examples still to be found with dates of construction throughout the 1920s, although they had begun to fall out of favour at this time with architects beginning to look to more modern and streamlined approaches.

Responding to the emerging modern movements, many architects began to experiment with a new streamlined version of Classical architecture, which eventually became known as Stripped Classical. This new style sought to

bridge the gap between streamlined modern architecture and the more decorative idiom of the Classical Revival styles and became popular in the interwar period. In general, it was defined by streamlined forms and massing with select Classical ornamentation applied to the building; this could take the form of simplified and flattened columns and pilasters, abstract friezes, and Classical entrance surrounds. The rustication that was well-used in Edwardian Classical buildings was definitively set aside in favour of smooth ashlar and brick surfaces; similarly, the heavy massing that often characterized early twentieth century Classical architecture was also out of favour and replaced with a lighter massing intended to project volume as opposed to mass. Ornamentation, particularly throughout the 1930s, was often simplified to the point of abstraction, resulting in a style that clearly derived from Classical precedent, but also firmly within the modern movement. This style has been generally regarded as a conservative stream of modernism that both looked to the new trends in architectural form and material, but maintained a specific and defined link with the past and the Revival styles.

In particular, this style was used for large corporate structures and government buildings who continued to view Classical architecture as an architectural expression of power and commercial stability. Some of the earliest adopters of the style were banks, where the Classical style was well-ingrained as the prevailing design preference and had been since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The work of Toronto architect John M. Lyle, a prominent figure in early twentieth century design circles, aptly demonstrates this trend in banking structures. Lyle was a major contributor to the built landscape of banking throughout the early decades of the twentieth century and help usher in the use of Stripped Classical design in this sector. His design for the Bank of Nova Scotia head office in Halifax (1929-1931) is representative of both his work and the adoption of the style in the corporate world, relying on flattened pilasters and abstracted figurative design to emphasize both the modernity of the structure and its linkages to the past.

The other significant adopter of the style was the federal government which underwent a significant period of asset expansion throughout the 1930s and consistently chose the Stripped Classical style for new building design. This was both the preferred style for government architecture at the time and it was seen as being less expensive that an ornate Classical design, at a time when infrastructure projects were being initiated to stimulate the economy during the Great Depression but also needed some cost saving measures to respond to the contemporary financial situation. One of the key examples of this trend in government buildings is the Dominion Public Building in Hamilton completed between 1935 and 1937 by local architects G.J. Hutton and W.R. Souter and which served as a post office and federal administration building. As with other buildings of this style, the Classical decorative elements on the structure are clear but they have been flattened and abstracted in low relief to

emphasize the streamlined massing and smooth surfaces of the building as a whole. This style was also heavily used in the United States for government-initiated projects where it is sometimes known as PWA or WPA Modern in reference to its extensive use in relief projects across the country initiated by the Public Works Administration and Works Progress Administration between 1933 and 1944.

Throughout the 1940s, the Stripped Classical style gradually fell out of favour in favour of more definitively modern approaches. However, the use of this style continued throughout the 1940s and there are some examples from the 1950s and 1960s, although these are relatively rare. With its construction date of 1948, the Bell Telephone Exchange building is a late example of this style, but is not out of place when viewed in light of the general trends in telephone exchange construction throughout the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s where the Stripped Classical style was regularly used throughout the interwar period, throughout the Second World War, and in the immediate postwar period.

The subject property shows a number of characteristics of this style. Notwithstanding its modern addition on the rear of the structure, the exchange building is executed in red brick, using a simple rectangular massing with a flat roof, a simple and streamlined approach typical of Stripped Classical buildings. Its decorative elements are also indicative of this style. The long windows are arranged in a regular pattern along both the first and second floors to allow substantial nature light into the building. With the exception of the two unique hexagonal windows flanking the entrance, the windows are rectangular and have been accentuated from the wall plane by low relief brick surrounds and radiating voussoirs with contrasting concrete keystones; the central windows on the second floor of each elevation are further accentuated by rectangular drip mould. Further ornamentation is provided by low relief brick coursing. These features are all consistent with the Stripped Classical style.

The majority of the ornamentation on the structure is concentrated around the main entrance to the building which faces onto William Street North. The entrance, which is located in the centre of the building to create a balanced and symmetrical façade, includes large double doors with recessed panels and a wide transom with abstracted metal screen, typical of early twentieth century Art Deco design and regularly used in Stripped Classical buildings. The entrance is defined by its large cast concrete surround which is consciously executed using Classical design motifs. The surround is flanked by simplified pilasters and an entablature bearing the inscription “The Bell Telephone Company of Canada” and two floral motifs, below a simple cornice and abstract decorative motifs. The inclusion and execution of the entrance surround is fully within the design patterns of Stripped Classical architecture and clearly demonstrates the use of this style on the building.

The subject property is a unique example of this type of architecture in Lindsay; there are no other buildings like in its community, due to its highly specific industrial function and there are few other buildings in this style in the community. It is, however, demonstrative of telephone exchange design across both Ontario and Canada throughout the 1940s where the use of the Stripped Classical style on this type of industrial buildings was almost universal; this style was used for structures of this type as early as the 1920s, in examples in large urban centres such as the London exchange located at 479 Clarence Street, designed by Macnab. Despite Macnab's assertion that there could be wide variations with regard to external and aesthetic elements in exchange design, this was very much not the case for most exchanges constructed in the interwar and post war period as most adhered to the same aesthetic and similar plans to one another. An examination of examples constructed during or immediately after the Second World War as part of the exponential expansion of the telephone system across Canada demonstrates this trend, as hundreds of new exchanges were constructed to serve the growing demand for services and the switch to dial service. For Bell, the style had specific conceptual associations with commercial stability and power, something the company was certainly interested in projecting, but it was also relatively economical to build as it could be executed in brick with limited ornamentation.

A good comparator to the Lindsay exchange is the exchange constructed on Balsam Drive in Oakville around the late 1940s or early 1950s; its exact date of construction has not been established. Executed red brick, it includes similar design features to the subject property such as its large rectangular windows with radiating voussoirs and keystones, coursing and Classical entrance surround executed in cast concrete. It does not possess the same symmetrical façade as the Lindsay example, but the design relationship between the two buildings is very clear. Examples such as the Brantford exchange, built in the second half of the 1940s, are also clearly Classical in their inspiration, with a recessed portico, large flattened columns and a thin cornice with dentils. The Brantford example, also includes an ashlar façade, which was extremely common in Stripped Classical architecture, although an examination of the elevations of the structure that are not street facing show that it is, in fact, constructed in buff brick. This design language was almost universally consistent across exchange buildings constructed during this period, regardless of location or designer; at this time, Bell had around twenty different architects in its employ, either as employees or on contract, and their designs were consistently executed in this style, creating a highly recognizable building type in towns and cities across the country.

The exchange in Lindsay is a good example of the use of the Stripped Classical style during this postwar period and is demonstrative mid-century telephone exchange design, responding both to technological and aesthetic

considerations. By the middle of the twentieth century when the exchange was opened, the spatial needs for telephone exchanges had changed drastically, particularly as a result of dial service, and buildings needed to be designed and built accordingly. At the same time, there was still a desire to project a certain aesthetic and the designers of the building took both aspects into consideration for this building, which is unique within Kawartha Lakes for its function and design.

Historical and Associative Value

91 William Street North has historical and associative value in its association with the history of telecommunications in Lindsay. The building was constructed in 1949 as a replacement for the town's older telephone exchange and responded to a substantial increase in demand for telephone services in the community. The property yields information regarding the development of the telephone in Lindsay as it evolved from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century as increasing numbers of residents and businesses installed telephones in the community. Similarly, it yields information regarding changes in the local economy and workforce with the introduction of new technology, particularly automated switching which had a substantial impact on women in the workforce.

The telephone was first patented by Alexander Gram Bell in 1876 and the first telephone lines were constructed the following year. The new invention was a major innovation in communications; at this time, most people relied on written communication to communicate with one another, whether through letters, or by the mid-nineteenth century, the electric telegraph which could transmit messages electronically over large distances which were transcribed at the receiving end. Bell's invention allowed, for the first time, communication by voice over wire. In the creation of the new device also came the creation of a new commercial entity, the Bell Telephone Company, which would become the primary service provider for telecommunications throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century.

The earliest telephones were connected in pairs so that each could call the other, but not other telephones outside of the pair. Soon, however, Bell's company recognized the value in a central office through which multiple lines could be directed and subscribers could have their call directed to others on a larger network. The idea of an exchange was not new; telegraph companies had already pioneered this idea in some areas and many early exchanges were installed in telegraph office and operated by them as third-parties, such as telegraph companies or even local merchants in smaller centres who may have already had a telegraph installed in businesses such as general stores. The operation of exchanges by third parties well into the late twentieth century.

The first exchanges were rudimentary, including a small switchboard and other necessary equipment and were generally installed in existing buildings; the first telephone exchange in Canada, in Hamilton, was installed in the upper storey of a commercial building. Early subscribers rented their equipment from the Bell Telephone Company, and the equipment connected to the local system. The earliest systems only connected a local network, but by the end of the 1879s, long distance calling had been developed, connecting subscribers in different towns and cities to each other through networks of exchanges and telephone wires.

The development of this new system necessarily required labour, both to install the equipment and necessary infrastructure and to operate the exchange. Phones and infrastructure were installed by men, but the exchanges were almost exclusively operated by women and provided an important economic outlet for the female workforce for much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The earliest operators were young boys, but many companies found that they did not provide the level of customer service they required for managing so many calls and providing a good and courteous experience to subscribers. As a result, most companies quickly transitioned to all female operating staff and customers came to expect that their call would be answered and transferred by women. Wage rates were also lower for women, so there was also a financial, as well as a customer service, incentives for this change. This was demanding and technical work: operators were expected to be able to quickly answer and transfer calls to connect the caller and recipient efficiently which required knowing in detail the geography of the switchboard and the identities of the callers. There was also a high level of people skills required to do this position, to work as a team on the switchboard and to deal with clients' problems.

Lindsay's first telephone came into operation in 1877, just one year after the patent was granted. The first two phones were rented from Bell by the Victoria Railway and used for their operations in the town. Soon after in 1880, the local firm Dundas and Flavelle rented four telephones to connect their store, warehouse and the homes of J.R. Dundas and J.D. Flavelle to assist their business operations; these were all direct lines on closed circuits. The telephone was quickly adopted by local businesses for its usefulness in their day-to-day operations and, in 1881, the first telephone exchange was installed above George Edwards' hardware store on Kent Street West to be used for local service. The following year, however, Bell began the installation of new long distance lines to connect Port Hope, Lindsay, Cobourg and Peterborough, which would then be connected to Toronto through a line from Port Hope. By 1883, this circuit was in operation, allowing Lindsay subscribers to call and conduct business both locally and in regional towns and cities. Callers in Lindsay did not have phone numbers at this time, as the number of subscribers was small enough that the operators would run the system without them.

The 1883 Bell directory shows Lindsay with twenty-seven telephone subscribers and speaks to the market for telecommunications during this period. Of those phones, three belonged to what was then the Midland Railway, while the majority of others were installed at several of the major local industrial businesses, including their main premises and warehouses. There were only six residential lines, all of which appear to have belonged to business owners who also had telephone lines at their workplaces. Other lines were connected to the Bank of Montreal, the County Court House, barristers Hudspeth and Jackson, and the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company office to coordinate telephone and telegraph service. Of particular note are two lines which were installed to Cambray for the home and office and grain buyer V. Bowerman, likely to coordinate his business with partners in Lindsay and showing the range of the exchange at this time. It is clear from the directory that the telephone was not, at this time, a tool for the majority of people although it would quickly gain in popularity and widespread use throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The next two decades saw increasing use of the telephone throughout Lindsay; data shows subscribers increasing to 46 in 1885, 57 in 1887, 60 in 1889 and 86 in 1891. In 1893, the 100th telephone was installed in Lindsay and the following year, telephone numbers were assigned to subscribers to assist the operators in routing their calls. The exchange was moved to a commercial building at 24 William Street North, which is no longer extant to accommodate the growing number of subscribers. By 1917, Bell Canada purchased land at 33 William Street North to construct its first exchange. The growing number of subscribers throughout the early decades of the twentieth century required more dedicated services, such as a large exchange and business offices, as well as space to house increasing amounts of technology, such as common battery systems which allowed for power to be centralized at the exchange and the removal of battery boxes and cranks from customer telephones. The new exchange, which is still standing, was opened in 1918.

Continual expansion of the system occurred throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The First World War, for many people and businesses, had underlined the importance of quick and easy communication through the phone. More subscribers were added, but the system was also improved with new and better infrastructure, telephone units, and lines for better calling. In larger centres, this era also saw an increase in the number of new purpose built telephone exchanges to serve increasing numbers of customers for whom telephones were becoming invaluable communication tools. In Lindsay, the 1930s, in particular, saw extensive improvement of local lines, as well as expansion to more rural locations and new telephones with more private lines. Phones were also increasingly being installed in private residences, including cottages, as they became more and more important in everyday

communications. In June 1935, the *Watchman-Warder* reported on both the improvement of local lines, noting that:

> Mr. Jewell [Bell's local manager] reports quite an increase in telephone installations, particularly at the summer resorts. At the four resorts near Beaverton, namely Ethel Beach, Cedar Beach, Cedarhurst, and Maple Beach 100 telephones have been installed and more applications have been received. It is estimated that there are 1400 telephone users in the town of Lindsay.[4]

By 1937, the region served by the Lindsay exchange had 2,419 telephone subscribers, including both those in the town itself and in the surrounding rural communities, a huge increase from the turn of the century when just over 200 telephones were served by the exchange. Lindsay was not unique in this regard as demand for telephone service across Ontario steadily increased throughout the interwar period as more and more households and businesses saw the value, and had the income, to install a phone.

While demand was high by the end of the 1930s, 1939 marked the beginning of the Second World War and industry, including telecommunications, shifted to supporting the war effort. Many of Bell's employees, most of whom, except for the operators, were young men, joined the armed forces in some capacity, rapidly decreasing the workforce available for manufacturing and installation. This meant that the installation of private telephones in home and businesses effectively ground to a halt. However, when the war concluded, Bell was faced with a substantial backlog of phone requests, and additional requests for new service that came in the years following the end of the war. As a result, the second half of the 1940s marked a period of rapid expansion in the telephone network with the installation of new phones, the building of new infrastructure and the construction of new telephone exchanges to serve the growing telephone network.

Prior to the Second World War, telephones were becoming increasingly common, but were by no means universal. Most telephone subscribers at this time were upper and middle class households, businesses, and governments. It has been estimated that in 1940, just under 40% of households had a phone. Most of these phones were concentrated in upper and middle class urban households but they were also used extensively in rural areas; in some areas, it was more common for a farm to have a phone than a house in town in the years leading up to the Second World War. The massive postwar expansion of the telephone system changed that; telephones were now a common piece of

[4] "Improving Bell Lines in District," *Watchman-Warder,* June 4, 1935, 1.

everyday household technology as services expanded exponentially, making up for the virtual halt in system expansion throughout the war.

This expansion also occurred in Lindsay as Bell played catch up to meet demand in the years following the war. This expansion was reported on with regularity in the *Lindsay Daily Post* which frequently noted Bell's continued expansion throughout the region, both with new subscribers and new lines connecting communities throughout Kawartha Lakes. An ad placed in the *Post* by Bell in 1946 outlined the investments being made in Ontario and Quebec between then and 1950 with $13 million dollars invested in new exchange equipment, $22 million on new local lines, and $28 million in new telephones and interior wiring, alongside an expansion of the long distance system to accommodate a tripling of long distance calls since 1939. In Lindsay itself, the *Post* reported:

> For 1937, ten years ago, the number of telephones installed in these communities was only 2,419 or 1,581 fewer than for the year just closed. The Lindsay exchange alone added 1,159 telephones in the period 1937 to 1947 while the increase in 1947 accounted for additional 207 telephones in the town.[5]

With this increase, the exchange in Lindsay needed upgrades as well to serve new subscribers and allow for increased capacity in the years to come both as subscribers and the population of the community increased. In 1946, Bell purchased a site further north on William Street to build a new exchange – the subject property – reflecting the changing needs of the community and the increasing importance of the telephone in every day life.

The new exchange also allowed Bell to begin the transition to dial telephones and automatic switching in Lindsay, a change that was occurring across Ontario at this time. In 1948, Bell announced that the new exchange would be a dial exchange to house the equipment required for automated switching, or the ability to place and receive calls without an operator as an intermediary. Dial phones used a rotary dial to allow the customer to input a phone number directly which would then be connected to the recipient through the exchange, but using electromechanical systems as opposed to a live operator. This announcement was made in March of that year with the Lindsay Daily Post's article headline read "Dial Phones Coming!" before going on to explain:

> Lindsay telephones are to be converted to dial operate in 1949. J.E.A. MacDonald [Bell's regional manager] announced today that a dial telephone exchange is to be

[5] "Telephones Served in Lindsay Region Sets All-Time Record," *Lindsay Daily Post* January 31, 1948, 1.

> build on the site purchased by the Bell Telephone Company of Canada at the corner of William and Bond streets....When the building is completed next January, work will commence at once on the installation of dial switching equipment. Extensive alterations to the wire and cable system in Lindsay will be carried out in order to be ready for the conversion date next year.[6]

The switch to dial phones was a major shift in the telecommunications industry that had begun in earnest several decades earlier. The technology for automated switching had actually been invented in the 1890s, but there was no movement towards its mass deployment until the 1920s; the first dial exchange in Canada opened in 1924. The business case for the use of dial equipment was complex. On one hand, dial equipment had the potential to vastly increase the size and efficiency of the telephone network, but in the early twentieth century, this technology was still in its infancy. At a time when phones were installed in a minority of homes and businesses, phone companies found that the installation costs – which were significant – were not justified based on its performance or the system's need when compared with manual operation. The transition from manual to automatic switching generally required two to three years of construction and the installation of new infrastructure and equipment and was not undertaken lightly.

By the early 1920s, however, that business case was beginning to shift and the installation of dial equipment began in large multi-exchange cities across North America. This was where automatic switching made the most sense from a financial and also an efficiency perspective; the number of subscribers in large cities was increasing to a degree where switching was becoming too complex for efficient manual switching. The transition began in large centres, such as Toronto (1924) and Montreal (1925), and was gradually extended to other cities throughout the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. in 1946, Bell estimated that 70% of its customers in Ontario and Quebec had been transitioned to dial phones, but these customers were virtually all concentrated in larger urban areas. In communities the size of Lindsay and in rural areas, the switch did not occur until after the Second World War as Bell used the rapid expansion of the system after the war as a springboard for upgrades. Even so, many rural exchanges remained manual into the 1970s. Automatic switching was also only used for local calls and long distance switching still required an operator, although this began to change in the late 1950s with the installation of the first direct distance dialing in Guelph in 1956.

For customers, the change to automatic switching meant new phones – the rotary dial phone where a number could be entered when placing a call – and

[6] "Dial Phones Coming!" *Lindsay Daily Post,* March 11, 1948, 1.

changing customer service as they no longer spoke directly to an operator. However, economically and for operators themselves, the shift was much more profound. The automation of the telephone network up to the middle of the twentieth century was one of the largest job-specific shocks in modern economic history and had very specific demographic impact on young women. The introduction of women into the telephone company workforce in the late 1870s was an important career outlet for women and became, by the early twentieth century, one of the main career choices for women in their late teens and early twenties. By the end of the nineteenth century, operators were exclusively women, as were the majority of their supervisors who trained and oversaw the operators; Bell only hired women operators by and in the decades after 1900.

At a time when work opportunities were limited for women, being a telephone operator was a respectable career that paid well and offered a good career path for both working and middle class young women. Unlike working in a factory or a shop, there was a level of respectability about working as a telephone operator that was prized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; telephone exchange companies, including both Bell and their third-party partners, went out of their way to create an atmosphere that was seen as both respectable and safe for young women, many of whom were unmarried. It also provided an accepted career for women who were married; at a time when many women, particularly middle class women, left the workforce when they married, there were still many women who continued to work as operators after they had married. This is in stark contrast to other middle class jobs for young women, such as teaching, where women were generally expected or even required to be single. At the same time, there was a very explicitly gendered understanding of the role: telephone companies hired women because they were seen as being able to provide better and more personalized service than men or boys because of their feminine and caring attributes. While it was technical and skilled work that required a substantial amount of knowledge, skill and work ethic, it was also seen as intrinsically feminine.

The impact of the opening of this career path for women was significant, both on an economic level and in the everyday lives of the operators. Analysis of the labour market in the United States in the early twentieth century estimates that around 4% of white, American-born women were employed as telephone operators in 1920, a huge number when compared to other industries; as in many other industries, there was significant discrimination in hiring practices against both immigrants and racial minorities. When examining data regarding women who had ever been employed as telephone operators during this period, that number jumped to nearly 15%, as many women did leave the labour market as they got older, married and had children. Comparable analysis has not been completed in relation to Canadian employment numbers,

but they are likely similar as the telephone systems in North America developed in tandem with one another.

For the women themselves, the ability to undertake this work and, for some, build a long career was extremely important and not just from a financial standpoint. For married women, it provided an important outlet to contribute to the household financially and pursue a career independent of their husband and children. For young and single women, it provided a significant degree of independence that they may not have had otherwise; particularly in middle class households where young women having jobs was not always looked upon favourably, respectable jobs at the telephone company allowed them to have career-oriented ambition and their own earning power. For many young women, it gave them an opportunity to move out of their parents' house; many operators relocated to be closer to the exchange and often lived in boarding houses, generally run by an older woman, sometimes a widow, with other young women, usually other operators.

The near-universal predominance of women in this area also made great strides with regard to workers' rights and, more specifically, women's labour rights, in the context of early twentieth century labour movements. Trade unionism flourished in the community of operators; the first all-female led trade union in the United States was comprised of telephone operators as women pushed for equality in bargaining with their male counterparts in other professions. Operators also provided a lot of support for the suffrage movement as conversations around women's rights aligned with the idea of independence and career development that could be fostered as an operator and were not necessarily available elsewhere. Operators successfully pushed for benefits both on the job, such as lunch rooms, and those that had a greater impact in their career development, such as the hiring of married women and paid maternity leave. These movements gained momentum amongst operators, in part, because there were so many of them and the increasing importance of the telephone in everyday communications allowed them to make demands of their employers under the threat of strike and shutting down the switchboards, which actually occurred in Toronto 1907 where 400 operators walked off the job in response to issues around working conditions and wages.

In Lindsay, the number of operators was necessarily much smaller, given the size and population of the switchboard's catchment area. However, the opportunity for women to enter the workforce as operators was still important. A snapshot of female operators before automation can be seen in an examination of the 1926 Lindsay Directory which lists thirteen operators in the town. Of them, most were young women living at home, but it is notable that three of these women lived together at a boarding house at 60 William Street North, which was then one of a block of townhouses housing workers in

Lindsay's various industries. This was common amongst operators who often lived together; one of the three was Ruby Bell, who was just 16 years old and, by the 1931 census, had risen from operator to supervisor at the age of 20 and was the chief operator at the Lindsay throughout much of the 1930s.

Automation, however, began the shift away from this important role for women in the workforce. In its investigation of automatic switching in the late 1910s on its operations, AT&T, as the Bell Telephone Company was known in the United States from 1885 onwards, estimated that automation would wipe out 70% of operator jobs in large centres; the switch was necessarily more profound in areas with concentrated populations where there was more local calling. That the change was gradual helped to lessen the shock, as did the fact that operators were still needed to connect long distance calls. In reality, while operators were laid off, the reduction is operators occurred gradually: often as operators left, whether for marriage, children, or another job, they were not replaced and those that remained were transitioned to the more complex job of managing long distance calling and other jobs that still required a person on the line, such as customer service requests. As a result, the age of operators gradually became older as more experienced operators continued to manage complex tasks and the opportunities for young women in their late teens and early twenties disappeared. By the second half of the twentieth century, the promise of independence and entry into the work force through telephone operations was effectively gone, removing an important economic opportunity for women.

Despite this, the Lindsay exchange continued to have a reasonable number of operators even after the switch to dial operation. One of the advantages for a centre such as Lindsay, which was relatively small in population and was a regional centre for a wide rural hinterland, and the operators who worked at the local exchange was a higher percentage of long distance calls compared to larger centres that still required an operator to connect. A call from Lindsay to Fenelon Falls, for example, was still considered a long distance call in the middle of the twentieth century because Fenelon Falls was served by its own exchange and an operator in Lindsay was required to manually connect a caller to the exchange in Fenelon Falls. In fact, the number of operators in Lindsay rose from 17 in 1940 to 44 in 1949, primarily due to the need for operators for long-distance calling. This number decreased, however, after 1950 and the gradual switch to automatic long distance calling in the second half of the twentieth century. It is not clear how quickly or slowly the decrease occurred; the number for 1940 and 1949 were reported by Bell itself in the Post, but this reporting on employee numbers did not continue after the opening of the dial system.

With its labour disruption and change for consumers, the shift to dial calling after the war represented a significant alteration in telecommunications in

Lindsay with more subscribers and a different type of calling. The dial system took two years to install and came into operation in 1950, a year after it was initially forecasted, and required both new phones for subscribers and new phone numbers to correspond with the switching equipment. The 1956 Lindsay, Peterborough and Area phone book is demonstrative of the system in the region in the years following the construction of the new exchange. The region served by the book, which included Peterborough County, then-Victoria County, Haliburton County, Brock Township and northern Northumberland County, had forty telephone exchanges of different sizes, the largest of which were located in Peterborough and Lindsay. The Lindsay exchange served Lindsay itself, as well as the surrounding rural area and several hamlets, including Janetville, Glandine, Oakwood, Pleasant Point, Reaboro, and Valentia, including several thousand subscribers in both homes and businesses.

The phone book also speaks to the shift to dial calling that was occurring at this time, including extensive instructions on how to place dial calls, from individual, two-party and rural party lines. Dial exchanges were still new in the mid-1950s and were a significant shift from routing calls through a human operator. Not all of the exchanges offered dial calling; some were operated by local companies who maintained their own local operators in conjunction with Bell's larger system and retained operator calling until the 1970s. In Dunsford, for example, the system was operated by a local operator under the banner of the Dunsford Telephone Light and Power Commission until 1972. However, the shift was occurring for the majority of customers, most of whom lived in urban areas within the region and the book outlines how to dial another customer, on a rotary dial phone, without having the call the operator, including looking up numbers, listening for the dial tone, how to use the dial itself, and how to hold the receiver when speaking. Everyone, however, still needed to speak to the operator to call out of the local exchange's coverage area, whether that was a call from Lindsay to Fenelon Falls costing 10 cents for five minutes, or a call from Lindsay to Ottawa costing $1.15 for three minutes. Operators were also still required to obtain information that could not be found in the phone book, to request repair service, and for assistance in making a call when there were technical challenges.

The new exchange at 91 William Street North represented these substantial changes occurring in telecommunications in Lindsay in the second half of the 1940s. The 1917 exchange at 33 William Street North was not large enough to handle the machinery required for dial technology, which not only included the switchboards, but also batteries, a diesel generator, and other mechanical systems to run the switchboards. Bell explicitly recognized the need for a new exchange to provide better service at the increasingly crowded older William Street North location; calls in Lindsay increased from 8,000 local and 250 long distance calls in 1939 to 18,000 local and 1,000 long-distance calls ten years later just prior to the opening of the new building. Bell openly admitted that

service was not prime due to overcrowding and lack of capacity in the older building and that the new building was specifically intended to remediate these problem, as well as to introduce new technology to provide faster service and capacity for more lines. The new exchange had capacity for 3,400 dial lines, alongside its long distance capacity, and Bell estimates that around 3,000 customers were switched over in 1950 when the facility made the conversion to dial calling. Overall, the new building was part of, and a physical representation of, a significant historical shift in telephone operations in Lindsay as they entered into the second half of the twenteith century and yields information regarding the history of the telephone in the town and its broader thematic implications both locally and on a larger scale.

Contextual Value

91 William Street North has contextual value as part of the diverse historic landscape of William Street North. The William Street North corridor, which runs north from Kent Street West in close proximity to the Scugog River, include a wide range of historic buildings dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century and includes both commercial and residential structures. Taken together these form a cohesive evolved landscape that demonstrates the development of this portion of Lindsay and the subject property is linked to its surroundings as part of this evolving development.

The earliest telephone exchanges in Lindsay were in the downtown core, just to the north of Kent Street West. The purpose built 1917 exchange on the west side of William Street North forms part of a continuous commercial block that includes both the property and late nineteenth century Victorian buildings. This was fairly typical for telephone exchange construction in towns where it was seen as important that the exchange be in close proximity to the downtown area for business. However, by the mid-twentieth century, Bell increasingly looked to new sites outside of immediate downtown cores for its new buildings because it needed the space. The space at the corner of Bond and William Streets was not vacant: it had previously been occupied by as single storey wooden house and some sheds. However, this was a lot that was easier to clear than one in the downtown and so suited Bell's needs.

At the time the exchange was constructed, William Street North was a mixed industrial and residential corridor. The opposite corner to the exchange housed the Lindsay Woolen Mills buildings and across the road was its office; other industrial structures including the former John McRae foundry and the Carew Lumber Company were also located along this corridor. Mixed between these were residential buildings, including both single detached structures and townhouses, most of which housed workers in these local industries. This mix of buildings was suitable for a new exchange and was typical of the types of places these new exchanges were constructed.

In the present day, a substantial number of these buildings that were extant at the time of the exchange's construction are still standing, with the exception of a number of the large industrial structures which mostly closed and were demolished throughout the second half of the twentieth century. what is primarily remaining are the late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences, located by adjacent to and across the road from the exchange building. When examined today, the evolution of this area of Lindsay is very clear through its nineteenth century residence, twentieth century industrial and commercial developments that remain – including the subject property – and more modern construction. The buildings are of a mixed height, from one to six storeys, and comprise a range of different architectural styles to create a cohesive and mature area of Lindsay, just to the north of the downtown core.

Summary of Reasons for Designation

The short statement of reasons for designation and the description of the heritage attributes of the property, along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief, constitution the Reasons for Designation required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

Design and Physical Value

91 William Street North has design and physical value as a unique example of a mid-twentieth century Stripped Classical telephone exchange in Lindsay. The building was constructed between 1948 and 1949 as a new telephone exchange for the Bell Telephone Company and is one of only a few examples of this style of industrial structures in Kawartha Lakes. The Neoclassical style was prevalent throughout the 1920s and 1930s in commercial and public architecture where it was adopted by a range of architects in different urban locations across North America. Although it had declined in popularity in Canada and the United States by the late 1940s when the subject property was constructed, it remained an important architectural form into the mid-twentieth century of which the subject property is a good example. The property is also representative of increasing technical requirements around telephone exchange construction in the first half of the twentieth century in response to new technologies and an increased demand for telephone services.

Historical and Associative Value

91 William Street North has historical and associative value in its association with the history of telecommunications in Lindsay. The building was constructed in 1949 as a replacement for the town's older telephone exchange and responded to a substantial increase in demand for telephone services in the community. The property yields information regarding the development of the telephone in Lindsay as it evolved from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century as increasing numbers of residents and businesses installed telephones in the community. Similarly, it yields information regarding changes in the local economy and workforce with the introduction of new technology, particularly automated switching which had a substantial impact on women in the workforce.

Contextual Value

91 William Street North has contextual value as part of the diverse historic landscape of William Street North. The William Street North corridor, which runs north from Kent Street West in close proximity to the Scugog River, include a wide range of historic buildings dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century and includes both commercial and residential structures. Taken together these form a cohesive evolved landscape that

demonstrates the development of this portion of Lindsay and the subject property is linked to its surroundings as part of this evolving development.

Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations, unless otherwise specified, and the roof including: all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, stucco, concrete, plaster parging, metal, glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features.

Design and Physical Attributes

The design and physical attributes support the value of the property as a mid-twentieth century telephone exchange and a unique example of Stripped Classical architecture in Lindsay.

- Two storey red brick construction
- Flat roof
- Cornice
- Rectangular, symmetrical massing
- Low relief decorative brickwork and coursing
- Fenestration including:
    - Drip moulds
    - Low relief surrounds
    - Radiating voussoirs
    - Keystones
    - Hexagonal windows on front elevation
- Central entrance including:
    - Classical entrance surround
    - Pilasters
    - Entablature and decorative motifs
    - “The Bell Telephone Company of Canada” signage
    - Cornice
    - Double entrance doors
    - Transome with decorative grating

Historical and Associative Attributes

The historical and associative attributes support the value of the property in its role in the history of telecommunications in Lindsay.

- Association with the historic of telecommunications in Lindsay
- Relationship to 33 William Street North
- “The Bell Telephone Company of Canada” signage

Contextual Attributes

The contextual attributes support the value of the property as a contributing feature of the mixed and evolved landscape of William Street North.

- Location along William Street North at the intersection of Bond Street West
- Views from the property along William Street North and Bond Street West
- Views of the property from William Street North and Bond Street West
- Set back from the sidewalk

Images

91 William Street North under construction, c.1949 (Bell Canada Archives)

91 William Street North, c.1950 (Bell Canada Archives)

Operator's Lounge, c.1950 (Bell Canada Archives)

Bell Business offices, c.1950 (Bell Canada Archives)


Bell
WILLIAM ST N


THE BELL TELEPHONE
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