

Try out our Y or N? poll

Our new survey feature will tap the community's mood each issue with a topical question for you to answer.

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Unlock the vaults

Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay concludes her in-depth editorial analysis of the cost implications of City Council's recent approval of the Lansdowne 2.0 project.

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Meet OOE sculptor "Eamon"

Art Beat editor Tanis Browning-Shelp discovers that art is a conversation for Michael FitzPatrick.

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A growing season for the Main Farmers' Market

New home, new management deal with Ottawa Farmers' Market will yield a bounty of benefits for OOE's expanding local market



JOHN DANCE

Poised to make a major move into the new market stalls of Grande Allée Park, the Main Farmers' Market (MFM) is about to take a second giant step that will ensure that it remains an enduring part of the fabric of Old Ottawa East (OOE).

The MFM Board of Directors has concluded a management arrangement with Ottawa Farmers' Market (OFM) that will see the popular Main Street market become one of five farmers' markets across the City of Ottawa managed under the OFM umbrella. OFM is also the manager of the Lansdowne, Westboro, Orléans and Barrhaven farmers' markets.

With its motto "from the heart of the land to the heart of the city," OFM is a producer-only organization that features over 150 vendors within an area of 100 kilometres. According to its website, it provides "an opportunity to buy the freshest local products the season has to offer directly from the people who produce them."

Under the new OFM management, MFM will relocate this coming May to Grande Allée Park that was constructed along the tree-lined heritage laneway linking Main Street to the Deschâtelets Building, the future home of Au Coeur d'Ottawa school and the new OOE community centre.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Steph Kittmer of the Ottawa Farmers' Market and Sue Cavanaugh, chair of the Main Farmers' Market, are looking forward to Old Ottawa East's market relocating to the Grande Allée Park.

A history of relocation

Over its 18-year history, MFM has had to relocate twice to accommodate Main Street reconstruction and the availability of parking lots. Unlike the Grande Allée, none of the locations had such features as anchors for canopies nor were any of the

stalls in the shade of large maples like the ones along the Allée.

MFM was originally set up as a non-profit, community-run market, one of the only ones of its kind in the province.

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"A good, local farmers' market is a vital part of a healthy community..." - Sue Cavanaugh, Main Farmers' Market

From our photo editor's files

Some memories of local life and winters past

Climate change and warming temperatures have started to play havoc with our winter weather and with the outdoor lifestyle we've long been accustomed to in Old Ottawa East. It's becoming difficult to engage in time-honoured local winter pastimes like canal skating and shinny on frozen ponds. We asked our photo editor, Peter Fowler, to dig into his photo archives to find some of his favourite images of ice and snow from winters past in and around our community.



PETER FOWLER PHOTOS

If you thought the local real estate market was tough sledding...

Three local realtors brace for a charity "mush" across Lapland

QUINN ABUGOV

In this part of the world, where snow falls for nearly five months of the year, one could be forgiven for thinking that we live within close proximity to the North Pole. But as if our home climate wasn't bone chilling enough, three hardy Ottawa realtors will be making the trek to one of the northernmost communities on Earth - and one that is regarded by many believers as the home of Santa himself - Lapland, Sweden.

Jennifer Stewart, whom many locals may already be familiar with as part of the Diane and Jen realty team based out of the Glebe, and her real estate partner, Amy Jarvis, are two of the adventurous souls heading out on this trip of a lifetime that will take them 200 kilometres across the frozen Laplandic tundra with only a team of sled dogs. The women will be joined by another Ottawa-based Engel and Volkers realtor, Michael McWilliams.

On this voyage, the trio will be subjected to winter camping in one of the harshest climates this planet has to offer. "It's not glamping by any stretch of the word," joked Stewart in a recent interview. "There's no electricity, no running water, (we'll be) sleeping in tents. We're also the ones mushing the dogs for 200 kilometres, so it will be intense."

Not only will their trek be gruelling, the flight plan from Ottawa to Northern Scandinavia is itself fairly daunting. "We fly to London, then Stockholm, then a small city up north called Kiruna. After that, it's 150 kilometres north traveling overland above the Arctic Circle," Stewart explained. When the trekkers finally reach their destination, they will already have been travelling for the better part of two days.

While a trip like this may be enough to leave most readers aghast, Stewart herself is an adventure enthusiast, having already

completed two similar trips - the first, a casual 100-kilometre trek through the southern highlands of Iceland, the second, a trek through the Sahara Desert in Morocco.

You might ask yourself: What would compel three realtors from central Ottawa to head to the northernmost part of the globe in March? The answer - charity. Stewart and her companions found this Lapland adventure trip through the website, Charity Challenges, an organization that puts together similar voyages each year financed entirely by fundraising, with 100% of the proceeds going to charity.

The organization encourages adventurers to partner with a local charity for fund donations, and Stewart's team has partnered with the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa. The group's goal is to raise \$10,000 for the trip and they are currently one third of the way there. They are planning an event this month that will hopefully put them over the top. "Charity and giving back is a huge part of who I am. I am looking forward to giving back to the Ottawa community that has done so much for my family, friends and me," says Stewart.

Once Stewart and her team return to Ottawa in April - and thaw out - *The Mainstreeter* will catch up with them to hear about their icy saga. So stay tuned for part two of this adventure!



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Veteran Ottawa realtor Jennifer Stewart (above) and her colleague, Amy Jarvis (below) will find themselves next month dogsledding 200 kilometres across frozen Lapland, Sweden to raise money for the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa. To donate and help the team achieve its fundraising goal, visit: <https://ysbfoundation.akaraisin.com/ui/diy4ysb/p/EVdogsleddingchallenge> or the dianeandjen.com website.



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Lansdowne 2.0 plans appealed to Ontario Land Tribunal

JOHN DANCE

The contentious City Council approval of its \$419+ million-dollar second upgrading of Lansdowne's entertainment facilities has been appealed by the Glebe Community Association (GCA) to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

The appeal poses a challenge to the City's "Lansdowne 2.0" plans to demolish the existing north side stands, the arena beneath, and the adjacent commercial buildings that were built just 12 years ago. In place of these facilities, the City proposes new stands, commercial space, two high-rise residential towers and a new entertainment centre/arena on parkland to the east of the football field.

GCA argues that the removal of greenspace is contrary to City and provincial policy and that the proposed two towers of up to 40 storeys do not comply with the City's planning policies.

GCA and others appealed the previous Lansdowne "revitalization" of 2011-2014. In that case, the appeal

tribunal (then known as the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)) mediated. As a result of mediation, amongst other limitations, the heights of proposed buildings were reduced along Holmwood Avenue, where these buildings would face existing low-rise homes. In addition, the OMB imposed a cap of a maximum total of 280 units.

The plan for the second upgrading of Lansdowne blows by these limits by proposing much larger towers. The City's own Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP), which is a panel of independent experts, made clear recommendations to remove the third tall tower that was part of the original proposal. While the City followed that advice, they appear to be ignoring the UDRP recommendations to reduce the scale of the second tower to be located closer to the Aberdeen Pavilion and Aberdeen Square. Importantly, none of the units included in the proposed towers will be earmarked as affordable housing.

The City also appears to have completely disregarded UDRP recommendations to ensure that the green park area comprising the

Great Lawn and Great Hill remain a contiguous green space by lowering it into the ground and making the roof both green and fully accessible. Instead, the City's rezoning proposal seeks permission for the arena to rise roughly four storeys above the height of the existing Great Lawn, and Council rejected motions last November to make it green and accessible.

With the previous appeal, the OMB did not accept GCA's argument that the proposal failed to meet the greenspace provisions of the Official Plan. The OMB's reasoning was that the proposal represented "a significant increase in greening" because of new urban park features and because the proposed underground parking garage would eliminate much of existing and extensive surface parking.

That is not the case with "Lansdowne 2.0." Not only is much of the Great Lawn and toboggan hill proposed for removal, but the City fails to satisfy the required provision for the additional parkland that the 1,500 new residents are supposed to have.

The City has requested that OLT expedite the appeal. In the meantime,

"[s]ome work on the project will continue and be reported back to Council in the second quarter of this year, including undertaking a procurement options analysis, development of a social procurement framework, and development of the air rights evaluation criteria," says a staff memo for City Councillors.

The Old Ottawa East Community Association has contributed \$500 towards GCA's appeal. But it's a David and Goliath battle for a volunteer organization to fight against the City with its support from the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG). OSEG initiated both the original proposal and Lansdowne 2.0, but, despite being the primary beneficiary, it is not investing anything in the second effort.

GCA will be launching a fundraising campaign to engage expert legal and planning advice. It aims to raise \$35,000 to \$50,000 and, as with the previous effort, concerned residents from across the City, including Old Ottawa East and South residents, will be asked to contribute.



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Blossom Park

New location, new management hold promise of exciting future for local market

Continued from Page 1

Volunteer board members have worked hard over the years to maintain the market's viability, but the challenges of the last few years, including COVID, Main Street reconstruction and the need to attract additional vendors for the 46 stalls of the Allée, resulted in MFM reaching out to OFM to see if it would be a good fit.

Sue Cavanaugh, chair and long-time member of the MFM board, is "really excited" about the future of the local market. She says most of the same vendors are expected to return, and the market will retain the same neighbourhood vibe, now with the support of the largest producer-run organization in the region.

Steph Kittmer, OFM's general manager, is no stranger to OOE. As a master's student at Carleton University, she made major contributions to the "Deep Green" initiative that Sustainable Living Ottawa East launched to establish sustainable goals for the development of OOE's institutional lands. She was also a vendor at the MFM for four years.

Asked how the Main Street market will work relative to the OFM's much larger market at Lansdowne, Kittmer notes that the two markets provide different experiences, and Cavanaugh says the two markets will "complement" one another. Indeed, because MFM operates on Saturdays and the Lansdowne market is on Sundays, local residents can visit both markets or they can go to the one on the day that best works for them.

Heather Syposz, one of the four partners of the popular Agricola Cooperative Farm, which has been a core vendor at the MFM, says they are looking forward

to the new management under OFM. "While we have never attended an OFM market before, we admire the markets that they run and we hope that they will be able to guide us successfully through the move to the Grande Allée. We are committed to our Old Ottawa East community and to the Main Street market and are hopeful the market will thrive in its new spot."

Smooth transition expected

"As the vendor representative to the MFM board this past year, I was able to voice the concerns of vendors and stay up to date with the plans for the transfer," says Syposz. "Steph [Kittmer] from OFM has been super receptive to working with the existing MFM vendors to maintain continuity and community at the market."

The relocated market will have challenges adapting to the new site but it's similar to the Aberdeen Square configuration at Lansdowne so, with OFM experience, a smooth transition is expected. Parking is not seen as much of an issue. "Parking as an issue has mostly faded away," says Cavanaugh, noting that many more people now bike and walk to the market. In the absence of public washrooms with the new park, OFM plans on having portable toilets.

Both Cavanaugh and Kittmer express their appreciation to The Regional Group, which has long supported a farmers' market in OOE. Similarly, they acknowledge the important role the Green Door has played by providing its parking lot as a market location for the last number of years.

"A good, local farmers' market is a vital part of



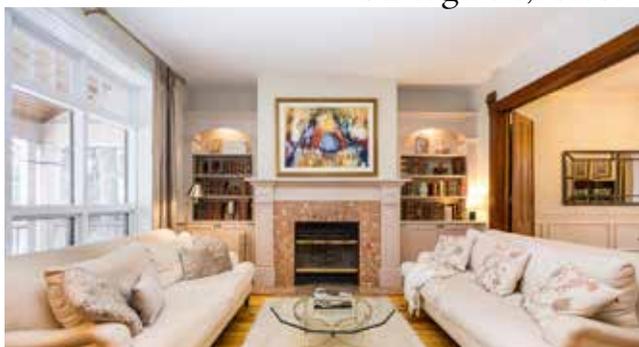
SUPPLIED PHOTO

Agricola Cooperative Farm, a popular core vendor at the Main Farmer's Market, remains committed to Old Ottawa East and is excited about the involvement of Ottawa Farmer's Market.

a healthy community," says Cavanaugh. "More than anything the MFM board wanted to make sure that our market survives and continues to serve the people in our neighbourhood. We are very optimistic that under the OFM umbrella it will do just that."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We all have much to learn

As a non-Indigenous person, I very much appreciated Patrick Taillefer's well-written article in the December issue of *The Mainstreeter* about Team Mikinak at Immaculata High School, a group which promotes fellowship and awareness of Indigenous cultures.

A couple of things caught my eye, however. The article said that Mikinak translates to turtle "in Indigenous language." Ottawa is home to First Nations, Metis and Inuit people with a diversity of languages. It would be more accurate and informative to say which language we are talking about. (In this case, I believe it is the local Anishnaabe language.) It's equivalent to saying that the phrase "déjà vu" comes from "European language" instead of from French.

In a similar way, the article said that "in Indigenous spirituality" the homeland of North America is depicted on the back of the Turtle. This is true of some traditions but not all. For West Coast nations, for example, creation stories are more likely to centre around the Raven. Nor is it true for the Inuit—an Indigenous group with an especially large population in Ottawa. Again, it's like saying that in "European religion," priests are not allowed to marry, rather than specifically in Roman Catholicism.

I look forward to more articles like this one in *The Mainstreeter* that help us move forward in our journey towards reconciliation.

Steve Fick,
Drummond Street

Is it time to change Greystone street names, reader asks

I was inspired by Patrick Taillefer's article in the December edition of *The Mainstreeter* about Immaculata High School's Team Mikinak and its activities in support of reconciliation.

Across the road from Immaculata is Oblats Ave.; a stark and perpetual reminder of why reconciliation is needed. Oblats Ave. is named after the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who owned the land upon which the Greystone Village now exists.

De Mazenod is also a street name in the area. It is named after Eugène de Mazenod who founded the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate staffed and ran about 40% of Canada's residential schools. Residential schools, in operation for over 160 years in Canada, were established to assimilate Indigenous people into European/Canadian culture and to eliminate their culture and communities. They left a devastating and brutal legacy.

Generations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were forced to attend and live at these schools; many removed from their families and homes against their will. The schools were plagued by hunger, malnutrition, disease, poor living conditions, dilapidated buildings, sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and the death of thousands of Indigenous children.

The Oblates operated some of the most notorious residential schools — including Saskatchewan's Marieval School, Kamloops Indian Residential School, St Anne's Indian Residential School and St. Joseph's Mission Residential School.

So why are street names selected that apparently honour the Oblates and de Mazenod, when they were responsible for so much pain and trauma among Indigenous people in our country?

We all share responsibility for taking action on reconciliation, as the youth on Team Mikinak are doing. Is it not time to also show respect for our Indigenous neighbours and change these street names? A small but meaningful gesture on the path to reconciliation.

Martine Vallee,
Greystone Village

Y or N?

One thing we really care about at *The Mainstreeter* is you – our readers. We have launched a readership survey and invited our readers to give us your opinions to help us improve our community newspaper (see page 37 of this issue for the QR Code).

Now, we are proud to introduce Y or N?, a community-wide poll on matters directly affecting Old Ottawa East. In each issue, Y or N? will ask you a key question relating to local issues in the news that you can respond to by scanning the QR Code to link to the question. Then, all you need to do is choose a simple Yes or No answer. In the next following issue, we'll let all of you know how the community responded to the Y or N? question, and we'll pose another one for you to mull over.

Now, here's our first Y or N? question:

Elsewhere on this page, a reader urges the City of Ottawa to change several street names in Old Ottawa East. Do you agree? Yes or No...



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OPINION

Part 2: Unlock the vault - here comes Lansdowne 2.0

ALEXANDRA GRUCA-MACAULAY

On November 9, 2023, Ottawa City Council agreed to fund OSEG's proposal to further redevelop Lansdowne Park – a plan that, at last estimate, will require \$437.7 million of new City spending (the City has already spent \$210 million on Lansdowne), and \$331.3 million of new 40-year City debt (the City still has \$100 million of Lansdowne debt outstanding).

The complexity of the “Lansdowne 2.0” proposal has tended to obscure the fact that at its heart sits a group of disenchanted private investors who have presented the City with a “take it or leave it” plan. Given the plan's staggering cost, and less-than-transparent presentation of information, it may be helpful to step beyond OSEG's well-orchestrated marketing campaign and take a closer look at what the proposal actually involves.

While OSEG has claimed that a new event centre and stadium are key to financial sustainability, the projections presented in the staff report tell a different story. In fact, in the 2.0 plan, the new Event Centre and Stadium are projected to lose \$164.8 million. The 67s are projected to lose \$4.5 million. The Redblacks have lost \$10.5 million over the past 9 years, but OSEG's projections assume a dramatic turnaround to an operating profit of \$150.7 million. EY's due diligence underscored that “improved team performance [i]s critical for achieving the projected profitability.” The Redblacks ended their 2023 season with 4 wins and 14 losses. But even if OSEG's projections were to hold, the teams and sporting facilities together are still projected to lose about \$20 million.

At the end of the day, as has been the historical reality with Lansdowne 1.0, the LLP's financial sustainability rests on the performance of the retail component. To date, the retail component has not managed to generate enough profit to cover its retail loan payments and to offset the losses of the other three business lines. Whether an additional 2% of retail space will be enough to turn partnership losses around remains an open question.

During the Lansdowne 2.0 November committee meetings, a few councillors who voted “yes” for OSEG's proposal engaged extensively with one presenter who spoke of the importance of tech companies to the Ottawa area, and specifically the role of Lansdowne in attracting

such businesses to its offices. The presenter singled out a company called Field Effect, which has its office at Lansdowne, and the Mayor then added “I'm glad that you brought up Field Effect.” However, neither the Mayor nor the Councillors seemed to be aware that the Office Component at Lansdowne is not one of the LLP's operating components (retail is, office is not). Lansdowne's Office Component is owned by outside investors. In fact, as profiled in the *Ottawa Business Journal* in 2022, Field Effect leases its office at Lansdowne from BTB, a commercial real estate investment company that is traded on the TSX. City staff did not correct the Councillors' confusion.

The 2.0 plan approved by Council would see the City build a new arena where the berm at the end of the football field now sits resulting in the loss of 58,000 square feet of public park greenspace. According to Mr. Goudie, the berm is called “Cheapskate Hill” because people can watch games “for free”... “If you're watching a game on TV from Ottawa, there's always a shot of Cheapskate Hill and people sitting with their picnic baskets, and their blankets watching a game.” For other residents, the berm is a treasured part of the park and known by many as the Great Toboggan Hill. Its loss will be acutely felt.

Last year's Lansdowne 2.0 proposal suggested that there may be a green grass roof on the arena, but in a cost-saving measure this feature has since been removed from the current concept design. Also removed is a roof over the north-side stadium stands, which currently has a roof but which will be open to the elements under the Lansdowne 2.0 plan.

The City would sell a parcel of land to a private developer (not OSEG, which exists solely as an investment vehicle for the LLP; the Lansdowne 1.0 private developer of the towers was Minto—a development company owned by the Greenberg family) and use the estimated \$39 million from the sale to help offset its \$437.7 million in project costs. The developer would construct two residential towers, at least one, if not both, with a height of forty storeys. While the plan tabled on November 2 designated only 10% of the proceeds from the sale to affordable housing, a motion restored the amount required under City policy – 25%. The \$17.4 million of yearly debt payments that will be needed for 40 years will require an annual City budgeted debt accrual reserve, as well as annual

drawdowns on the City's parking reserves. The staff report also advises that as a “legacy” project, the amount by which property taxes could be raised to cover Lansdowne debt servicing is unlimited.

Before Council's vote on the Lansdowne 2.0 proposal, Councillor Menard summed up: “We would be losing public space and beloved buildings that have decades of life left and well-used green space to pay for new infrastructure that a private partner says they need to be more financially stable. They need to make more money or at least stop losing some of that money here and that's, at the end of the day, what this is all about... [I]f this project debt is too expensive to include things we agreed to prioritize as a Council... then maybe this project is simply too expensive to be a priority for us right now, maybe we shouldn't be considering this public debt at all... how can we have enough money for a stadium but not enough to house people in this harsh winter city, or to have proper buildings for Emergency Shelters, or to avoid service cuts to our transit system? I believe this decision will be one that this Council will come to regret...”

Councillors Menard, Bradley, Devine, Troster, Johnson, Brockington, Kavanagh, Leiper, and King voted no to 2.0, the Mayor and the remaining Councillors voted yes.

After receiving Council's approval, Mr. Goudie sent a note to thank Lansdowne supporters. Once a few remaining items are completed, he told them, “the vault will be unlocked” and construction will begin.

This concludes Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay's in-depth editorial analysis of the cost implications of City Council's recent approval of the Lansdowne 2.0 project. Part 1 of the analysis can be viewed on our website at: www.mainstreeter.ca or by scanning the QR Code below.

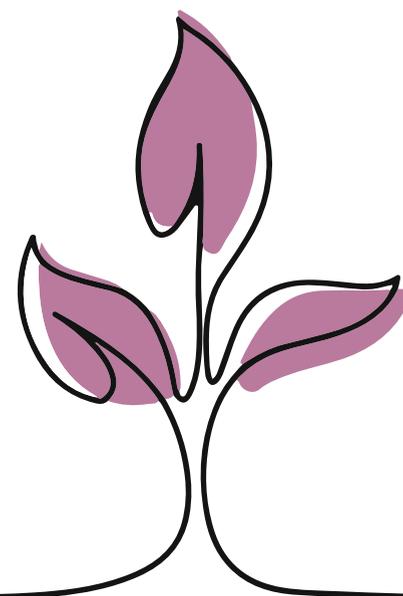


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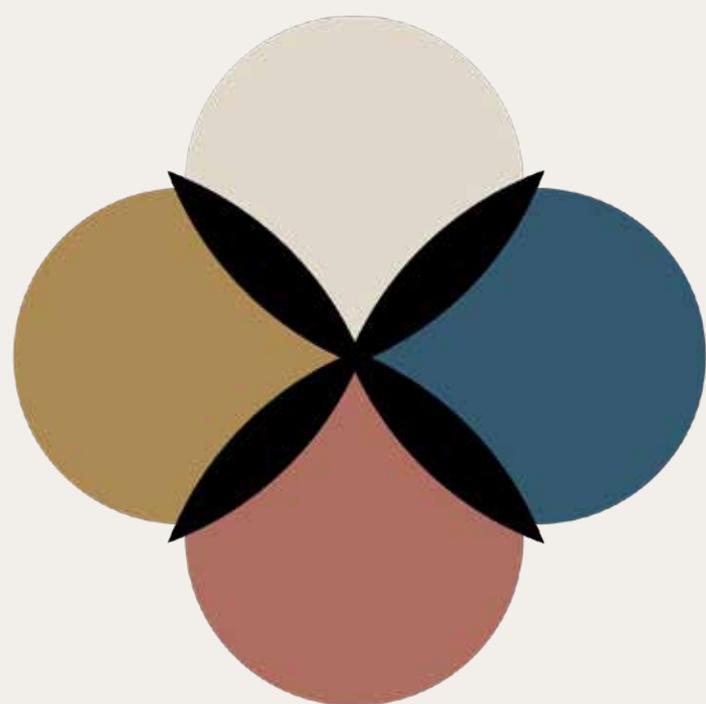
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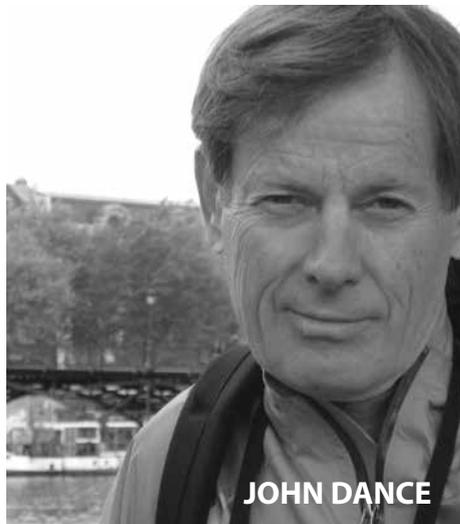
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OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY UPDATES



JOHN DANCE

John Dance is The Mainstreeter's chief reporter and the former Chair of the Old Ottawa East Community Association's Planning Committee. With his extensive experience, he keeps our readers informed of a wide range of community developments.

GRANDE ALLÉE AND SPRINGHURST DOCK PROGRESS

If weather permits, construction on the new Springhurst dock is scheduled to begin this month, City staff report. Otherwise, construction activities will begin in July so that construction does not interfere with fish spawning and other environmental constraints on the site.

"Once construction begins, the site will be fenced off to ensure it is safe," says Dan Chenier, the City's general manager of recreation, cultural and facility services. "Staff anticipate that the work should be completed by the end of August."

The Grande Allée Park is substantially complete but final work and inspections still need to be completed prior to the City assuming control of the park, reports Chenier. "Once the work is completed and approved by the City, the fences will be removed, and the park will be opened to the public. It is anticipated that the contractor's fencing will remain in place until the spring." Next winter, "(i)t is anticipated that the Grand Allée Park will be plowed, and winter maintained," he says.

CLOCK KEEPS TICKING ON AU COEUR D'OTTAWA

More delays in Ministry of Education approvals of designs and for additional funding have pushed the forecast opening of Au Coeur d'Ottawa elementary school in the Deschâtelets Building to September 2025. Originally, the opening was forecast for 2022. Over the last two years, major structural and exterior improvements have been made.

In December, parents were informed by the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE) that the call for tenders was progressing quickly, and a construction permit request was submitted to the city that same month, "marking a crucial step in the realization of this project."

"We look forward to moving to the next stage with the interior design of the building, as soon as the required funding and authorizations are granted by the Ministry of Education," noted Danielle Chatelain, CECCE superintendent of education.

In related news, the City's Dan Chenier says, "Construction of the new Old Ottawa East Community Centre is contingent on approval of provincial funding for the CECCE's school project for the Deschâtelets Building. Once funding has been confirmed, City staff will finalize timelines for the new community centre and provide updates on estimated opening dates for the facilities."

"The new community centre project will not have any direct impacts or changes to Old Town Hall [OOE's current community centre]," says Chenier. "The existing town hall structure will continue to receive regular maintenance and lifecycle work."

STEADY PROGRESS ON GREYSTONE VILLAGE CONSTRUCTION

The nine-storey Spencer condominium building with 85 units now under construction at the corner of Hazel Street and Deschâtelets Avenue will have its first occupancy this summer.

Leasing of the completed Milieu and the Ballantyne, the two large apartment

buildings on the south side of des Oblates Avenue, is progressing well, Regional Group reports.

Regional has not yet confirmed the tenure (condominium or rental) of the two approved Phase 3 buildings just to the south and east of the Deschâtelets Building or their construction schedule.

Planning of Phase 4, the final part of Regional's Greystone Village, is underway and consists of the semi-circular area bounded by the Grande Allée Park on the west and the Forecourt Park on the east, just in front of the Deschâtelets Building. Dubbed "Greystone Forecourt," Regional is proposing about 30 freehold dwelling units in eight different groupings. Regional has had preliminary discussions with the OOECA planning committee and will be consulting with the broader community before long.

In terms of overall number of units, there will be 968 total units, including units occupied, under construction, and forecasted within Greystone Village (excluding the retirement residence).

115 ECHO WELCOMES FIRST RESIDENTS WITH A NOD TO LOCAL HISTORY

The new six-storey apartment building – the "ECHO" – at the corner of Main Street and Echo Drive will welcome its first residents this month.

The new building has 53 suites ranging in size from 585 to 1,285 square feet, catering to diverse needs and preferences. "Among these suites, there are 28 one-bedroom layouts and 25 spacious two-bedroom layouts – as well as some unique ground floor suites that present live-work opportunity and unique terraced connections to Main Street," says Emily Meyers, Uniform Living's marketing manager. Rental rates range from \$2470 to \$5200 and indoor parking and storage is also available.

"We have nearly 25 percent of the building rented to date, and we are very pleased with this response given we launched only recently," says Meyers. "Our feedback from clientele is that the building is stunning with great attention to detail, the location is unmatched and the proximity to vibrant spaces and places in Ottawa is opportune."

The bell from Holy Trinity Church that once stood on the site has been fully restored and now shines prominently within a limestone entrance feature in front of the building's front doors. "This nod to the history of this address is really lovely and creates a stunning focal point for our residents and the greater neighbourhood to enjoy," says Meyers.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Emily Meyers stands beside 115 Echo's prominent entrance feature with its restored bell from the now demolished Holy Trinity Church.

Continued on Page 10

OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY UPDATES

Continued from Page 9

MTO STILL MUTE ON QUEENSWAY CANAL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The transportation environmental study report (TESR) for the replacement of the Highway 417 bridge over the Rideau Canal is now a year late, yet it seems the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) still has no intention of consulting further despite the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) strongly opposing MTO's preferred option that involves detours of both Canal parkways for up to 90 weeks.

Since the last consultation in November 2022, the only community contact was through a meeting arranged by Ottawa Centre MPP Joel Harden. But this meeting was simply a matter of MTO reiterating why it was recommending closing the Canal parkways and pathways to allow the bridge replacement.

In December, OOECA president Bob Gordon wrote to Harden requesting that MTO "immediately freeze its planning of the replacement of the 417 bridge ... and should properly consult with affected communities before going further."

MTO responded to Harden saying, "The proposed 90-week closure length is a worst-case scenario, and the potential opportunity to reduce the closure length will be further reviewed in the subsequent detailed design stage with input from stakeholders."

The Mainstreeter then asked MTO what the "best-case" scenario would be, and they didn't initially respond to this question. But when prodded, MTO said, "[T]he potential opportunity to reduce the closure length will be further reviewed during the detail design stage."

"The biggest failure on MTO's part is not defining any further community engagement and consultation during this phase of the environmental assessment process," says Tom Scott, OOECA's transportation director. "They will publish the TESR without any requirement to consult and without any requirement to disclose the current level of dissatisfaction. It's really just too opaque."

Stay tuned for the next installment on this so-called consultation.

COMMUNITY SEEKS ADDED IMPROVEMENTS FOR GREYSTONE PARKS

More trees and other improvements to the Grande Allée and Forecourt parks are sought by the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA).

The association's goal is to have the Allée "lined and well shaded by two rows of thriving trees so that when failing trees are removed there will be succession trees of substantial size," OOECA president Bob Gordon wrote to city manager Wendy Stephanson.

The construction of the Grande Allée Park running from Main Street almost to the Deschâtelets Building is now largely complete and several new trees were planted near Main Street. However, it's the community association's view that more trees should be planted near Main Street and between existing trees that are in declining health.

Gordon also requested the City ensure "that the width of the Grande Allée corridor, as currently defined by the southern faces of the two new buildings between des Oblats Avenue and the Grande Allée, applies all along the Grande Allée, from Main Street to the Forecourt Park in front of the Deschâtelets Building."

The context for Gordon's comment is that The Regional Group's draft plan for "Greystone Forecourt" appears to encroach on the Allée's viewscape from Main Street and, if built, would narrow the width of the Allée. That said, Regional says it will be revising its plan that has been presented to the community association's Planning Committee.

Several other issues are also of concern to OOECA. Gordon urged the City to provide a safe crossing of Deschâtelets Avenue for pedestrians and cyclists so that they can move comfortably and safely from the Allée to Forecourt Park and on to the river pathway. Secondly, he raised concerns about the use of the fire lane in front of the Deschâtelets Building.

Originally, the fire lane was planned solely for emergency vehicles but now the City and the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est are proposing that it will be the drop-off zone for students of the new elementary school in Deschâtelets. Ongoing involvement in the planning of the Forecourt Park was also sought by Gordon.



Dr. Louis Patrick Leroux

NEW RECTOR APPOINTED AT SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY

Following a rigorous and independent process to replace Chantal Beauvais, Saint Paul University has announced the appointment of Dr. Louis Patrick Leroux as the university's 7th rector. Dr. Leroux will assume his new duties later this spring.

Dr. Leroux joins Saint Paul from Concordia University in Montreal, where he held the position of Associate Dean of Research in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

"After intensive years of researching, creating and teaching, I understand very well that collaboration and innovative solutions can lead to positive social change," explained Dr. Leroux. "The constant dynamism shown by the Saint Paul University community in its mission to create a better world is something that inspires me. It is an honour for me to represent this institution."

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. Louis Patrick Leroux to Saint Paul University. With his rich experience as a leader and researcher, he embodies the core values of our institution," said Marie-Michèle Laferrière, President of the Board of Governors. "His daily commitment to making the world a fairer place through the arts is a testament to his bold vision and commitment to social justice."

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Public consultation later this month

Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne project on track

JOHN DANCE

Later this month, Old Ottawa East (OOE) residents will be invited to an in-person public information session on the second year of construction associated with the Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne project, which entails rebuilding the infrastructure in much of the northern part of OOE.

A public open house on the massive three-year project is planned for 7:00-9:00 p.m., February 20 at Saint Paul University, 223 Main Street. Project drawings will be on display and staff will be present to answer any questions and receive comments, including any detailed property-specific questions. There will be a short presentation at 7:30 p.m.

In addition, the City is providing an “online engagement opportunity” beginning February 12, with a question/comment period which will remain open until March 5, 2024.

“Preconstruction inspections are planned to begin soon for homes that were not impacted in 2023,” the City’s website notes. Affected residents on Main Street, Greenfield Avenue, Concord Street and Montcalm Street should already have received delivered notices.

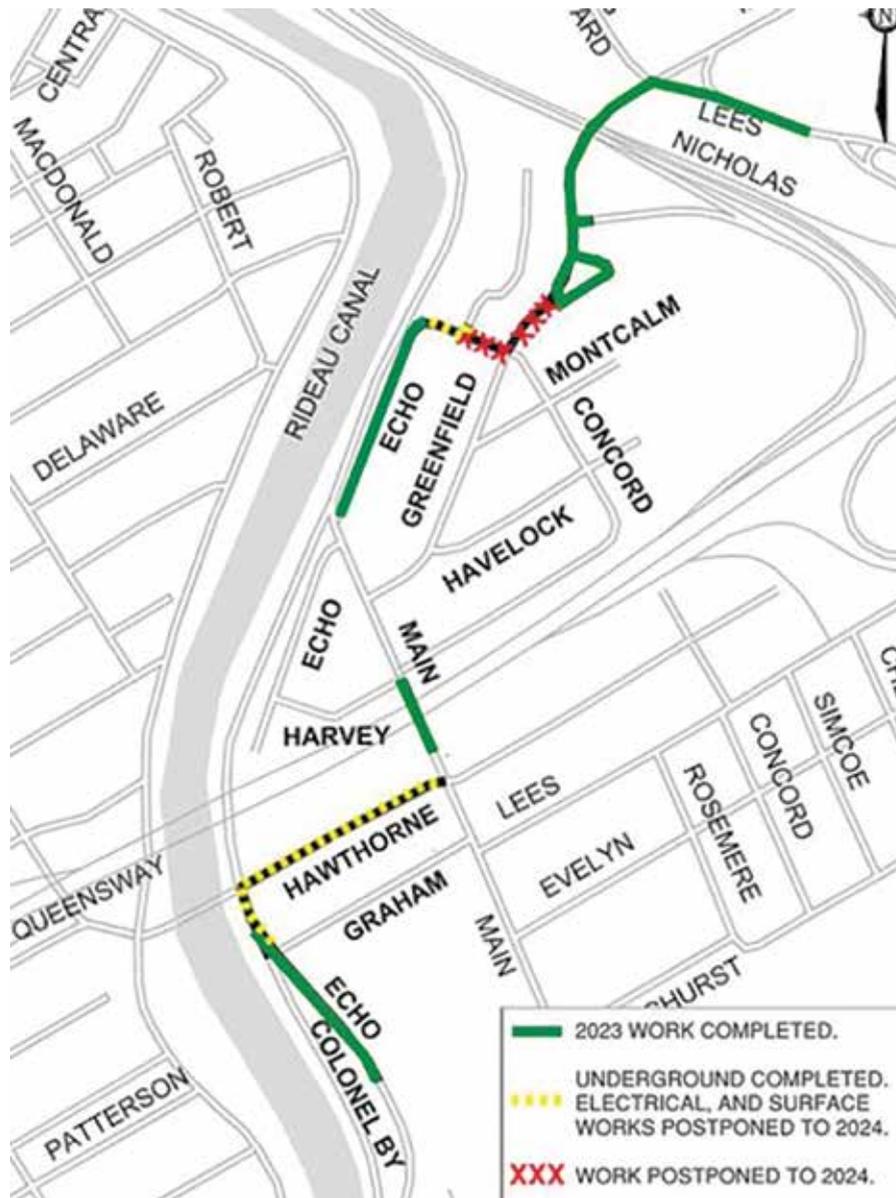
While most construction activity has ended, “[s]ome activity is expected over winter, including the installation of a retaining wall on Greenfield Avenue under the Nicholas Street bridge, installation of a deep storm sewer maintenance hole on Main Street, and some anticipated tree removal in advance of construction,” says Bruce Kenny, the City’s manager of design and construction. “Major construction is expected to start in April with the set-up of temporary water in advance of the major underground work.”

Major work areas are expected to include: final roadway and landscaping reinstatement for areas completed in 2023; Hawthorne Avenue electrical duct installation as part of the overhead to underground hydro conversion; and sewer and watermain work on Greenfield Avenue (Main to Old Greenfield), Main Street (Harvey to Greenfield), Concord Street North (full length), and Montcalm Street (full length).”

A decision still has not been made on whether there will be a protective bollard at the southwest corner of Main and Hawthorne, a feature sought by community members to provide pedestrians additional safety at the dangerous, constrained corner. “The positioning of underground utilities, above-ground traffic poles, and requirements for snow removal equipment may impact the ability to install an additional bollard while still maintaining minimum clear width distances,” says Kenny.

But a decision has been made on another feature of the new design. With the creation of a multi-use pathway along the east side of Echo Drive/Colonel By Drive (CBD) between Hawthorne and Graham, the City engineers have eliminated the cyclist left-turn pocket from CBD to eastbound Graham.

“Through the design process, a safety review was completed on this location, and it was identified as a high safety risk,” says Kenny. “Following the risk assessment, the safety consultant’s recommendation was to remove this movement and improve the cycling connectivity at the Hawthorne and Colonel By intersection.” Also, the no left-turn sign at the CBD-Graham intersection will not provide a cyclist exemption.



CITY OF OTTAWA IMAGE

Substantial progress was made during the first year of the Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne project.



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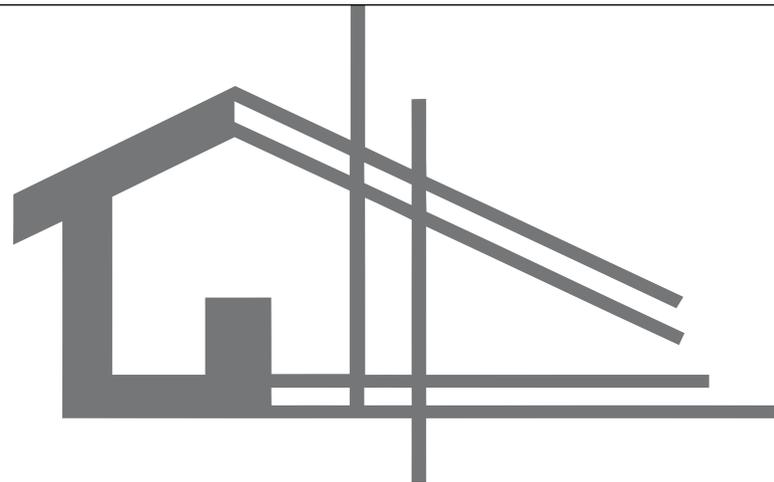
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NCC's Rideau Canal plans finally come to light

Long-awaited upgrades will marry heritage and new lighting technology

JOHN DANCE

The new lights along the Rideau Canal will be much improved compared to the failing system now in place, according to the National Capital Commission (NCC). Finally, after years of complaint by Canal pathway and roadway users, the upgrading of the dysfunctional and obsolete lighting along both sides of the Rideau Canal stretching from Wellington Street to Hog's Back has begun.

Overall, at the end of the project (tentatively by 2025), the number of lights will increase by 50 percent for a new total of 1224 roadway and pathway lights.

Currently, Old Ottawa East's 2.5-kilometre section of Colonel By Drive has many roadway lights that are not working, and there are sections of the pathway - especially near Pretoria Bridge - where there are no lights at all.

The massive project with its 15-kilometre-long construction zone is necessary because the existing system is "beyond repair," according to the NCC, which stresses that the work will respect the heritage of the Canal while allowing updates to new lighting technology.

Key changes for the Old Ottawa East (OOE) portion of the project are modernized street lights installed in line within railings that will illuminate both the pathway and the roadway between Bank Street and roughly Mutchmor Road. Between Mutchmor and Pretoria Bridge the street lighting will be modernized and "new contemporary cut-off lights" will be installed along the pathway. From Pretoria Bridge to Concord Street North, the street lighting will be modernized and globe fixtures will be placed along the pathway.



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION IMAGES

Specialized machines allow for directional drilling so installation of new electric cables can be done without digging lengthy trenches. The drilling for the Canal lighting on OOE's portion of Colonel By Drive began in December and is slated to finish this month. The drilling for wiring on the adjacent pathway will not be completed until May. While the entire new lighting system won't be finished until winter 2025, sections of the route will be energized earlier as they are completed.

Although new underground wiring will be primarily installed with "directional drilling," rather than by digging lengthy trenches, there will be pathway detours. At a stakeholders' session in November, NCC staff said there will be "relatively low impact on users" but it's "too early" to provide a traffic plan.

The big question is what obstacles will be found as the drilling occurs. There are no engineering drawings for much of the area where the drilling must be done.

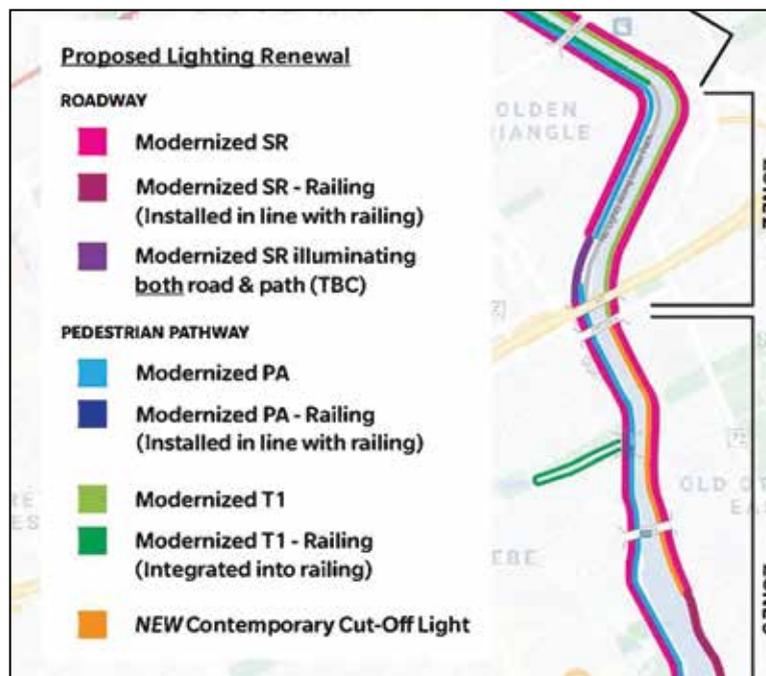
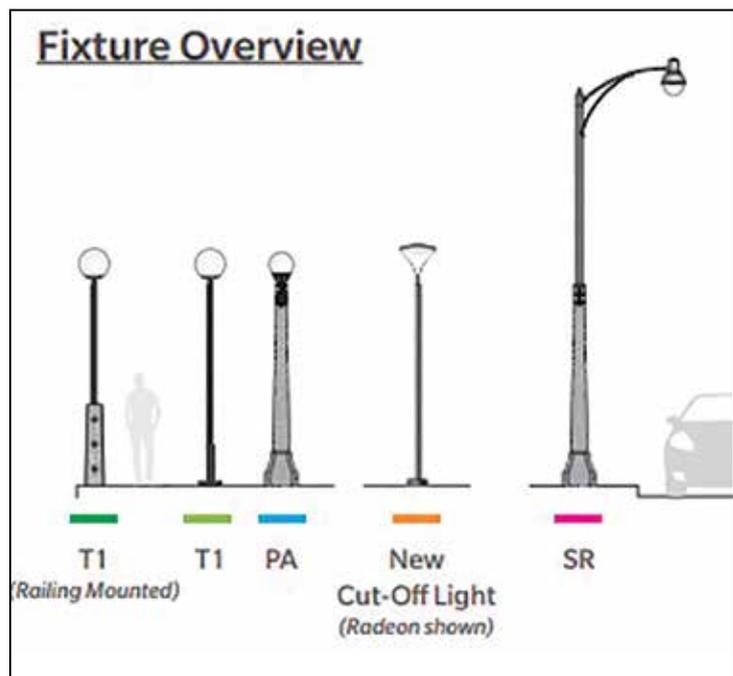
Rocks and other obstacles may delay the schedule.

The project's staging area has been constructed just south of the western end of the Pretoria Bridge. The excavation/directional drilling work on both sides of the Canal is currently on-going. It began in November on the Queen Elizabeth Drive side of the Canal in the Glebe and got underway along the OOE portion of Colonel By Drive in December. By next summer, the old lights will be removed

and the new ones installed with targeted completion during "winter 2025."

Reinstatement of landscaping and additional planting should be done after the lights are energized and construction is completed.

The good news is that the new lights will be energized as the various sections are completed. It will not be a matter of waiting for the winter 2025 for a switch to be thrown to energize the entire system.



LEFT: The new streetlights along Colonel By Drive retain their iconic style (SR) but the pathway lights of the OOE portion of the Colonel By Drive pathway will be either the new "cut-off light" style or "modernized globe lighting" (T1); RIGHT: Modernized street lights installed in line within railings will illuminate both the pathway and the roadway between Bank Street and roughly Mutchmor Road. Modernized globe lights and "new contemporary cut-off lights" will be installed along the pathway north of Mutchmor.

BUSINESS BEAT

Much awaited opening is
close at hand

J:FUSE Aburi & Bar here at last!

PETER TOBIN

That Opening Soon sign that has been fluttering over the proposed J:Fuse Aburi bar and restaurant site on Main Street since early November may be on its last wings. Not to worry because a replacement sign in February could well read Open Now.

In an email exchange with *The Mainstreeter* just days before we went to press, J:Fuse chef/owner James Park explained that aside from a minor adjustment to a range hood, the restaurant's infrastructure is now complete. The tables and chairs are in place, the liquor licence will be received before opening, and all the regulatory inspections except for a fire inspection have been completed.

Assuming that the fire inspection proceeds successfully and in a timely manner, and Park is hopeful that it will, J:Fuse could open as early as the first week of February.

As noted previously in *The Mainstreeter*, J:Fuse will feature Japanese fusion cuisine and some Korean dishes. Aburi, literally translated from Japanese, means 'flame seared'. J:Fuse will complement Park's other restaurant, the popular J:Unique sushi restaurant on Cooper Street in downtown Ottawa. In



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

J:FUSE Aburi & Bar, the new Japanese and Korean cuisine restaurant located in the commercial units of the Milieu Modern Apartments fronting on Main Street, was poised to open as we went to press with this issue of *The Mainstreeter*. Look for our J:FUSE restaurant review in our April issue.

2018, he and his wife moved to Ottawa from Vancouver and the pair opened J:Unique in the fall of that year.

Regardless of whether an early February opening proves to be overly optimistic, James Park and his team remain excited about coming to Main Street, and local residents remain anxious to taste the fusion offerings of J: Fuse Aburi bar and restaurant.

NOTICE OF THE MAINSTREETER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20th, 2024

The Mainstreeter's Annual General Meeting will start at 7:00 pm and is open to all Members in good standing as of January 20th, 2024.

The meeting will be held at the Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop (L'Atelier) at 62 Clegg Avenue. Members can register to attend by contacting the Secretary at admin@mainstreeter.ca.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE MAINSTREETER

Do you support *The Mainstreeter* and want to have a say in the decisions of the paper? Any person 18 years of age or older residing in Old Ottawa East, or who carries on a business or owns property in Old Ottawa East, is eligible for membership in the newspaper. And it costs nothing to join. To become a Member, email the Secretary at admin@mainstreeter.ca. Any existing Member or any person who joins the membership by January 20, 2024 is eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting on February 20, 2024.



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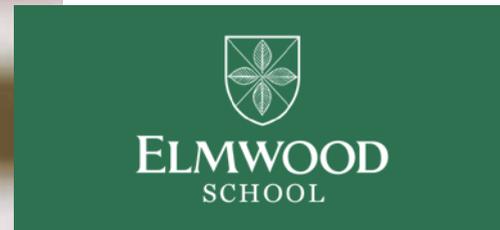
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Central Ottawa's community newspapers mostly defy the decline of print media

JOHN DANCE

Two years ago, *The Mainstreeter* published a special report on the state of the 12 community newspapers in central Ottawa. Since then, the for-profit newspaper industry has continued to decline, so we decided to check back with local editors to see how their not-for-profit community newspapers are doing.

In September, Metroland Media Group announced the closure of the print editions of 70 community papers and the layoff of 605 employees. The move was a blow to many communities in Ontario where the community papers represented a key source of local news. Although none of these papers served central Ottawa, some of the nearby papers to lose their print editions included The Kemptville Advance, The Renfrew Mercury, and The Perth Courier.

"When a community paper dies, it's as if you shut a light in a room in a home and never open it again," says Christian Marcoux, editor of Perspectives Vanier. "The house is still there but somehow it's not as welcoming at night as it once was."

Alayne McGregor, managing editor of the Centretown BUZZ, notes, "We've lost so many community papers in the last few years, and what they covered isn't necessarily being replaced by the few remaining commercial news outlets. CTV Ottawa, which has always had a big local news presence, is now threatened with major cuts by Rogers. We recently lost a local radio station as well. This means news is being missed," she says. "Local councils and boards aren't being held to account. While the remaining local community papers do their best to cover our parts of Ottawa, publishing once a month or once every two months - and with limited space - doesn't allow us to cover everything in a timely manner."

But despite their limitations and challenges, the not-for-profit community newspapers of central Ottawa continue to flourish, with one sad exception. The Overbrook ConneXions published its last issue in the summer of 2022. "We hung on by our fingernails through COVID but could not grow to the point of hiring staff, and our volunteers could not sustain it," reports Heather Amys, past president of the Overbrook Community Association.

Others, though, are doing well. "We're thriving," says Liz McKeen, editor of the Glebe Report. "Our board is recruiting new members and is quite active. Our advertising is robust."

Similarly, The OSCAR's editor Brendan McCoy reports, "Ad revenues are down a little from 2018 (maybe 10 percent) but they are not bad and are holding up pretty well. In the community, there seems to be continuing support for the paper - lots of articles, lots of volunteers to deliver the paper, that sort of thing."

In the case of Perspectives Vanier, revenue-wise, the last two years have been its best, and the paper has expanded from 16 to 20 pages.

The Mainstreeter has also had a strong year with expanded content and advertising activity reported, according to editor Lorne Abugov. "Our advertisers are very loyal, and new ones seem eager to get into the paper. And our volunteer base of writers, editors and delivery



JOHN DANCE IMAGE

The decline in daily newspaper readership has helped community newspapers fill the local news void and paved the way for increased ad revenues needed to offset a spike in printing costs.

distributors has never been stronger. Some of our newer community initiatives like our annual outdoor art tour and our community calendar have boosted community engagement and provided us with an important new fundraising source."

"We just spent an enjoyable hour catching up via the New Edinburgh News," John Morris recently wrote to the paper. "It's truly remarkable that your local, dedicated, volunteer group can deliver much more entertaining and relevant info than our horribly over-priced and underwhelming national-chain local newspaper. Incidentally, your latest edition weighed more than theirs. Keep up the good work!"

The pandemic caused many difficulties for community papers: there was less advertising, maintaining volunteers and delivering papers proved more difficult, and, in general, COVID curtailed community activity. Several papers temporarily suspended their print editions but resumed after a few months.

Although the for-profit print media are being overwhelmed by on-line social media, particularly as Facebook and other sites have drained advertising from them, the not-for-profit community papers seem to be surviving primarily through print. "We have no intention of abandoning print now or in the foreseeable future," says McKeen. "It's one of the more appreciated aspects of the paper, with young and old readers alike." As Marcoux succinctly puts it, "We print on paper and that's that."

Meta/Facebook's blocking of Canadian news media has thus far had little impact on the community papers, primarily because they focus on print and don't rely on an on-line presence.

Although most of the central papers generate sufficient advertising revenue, The Riverview Park Review has had to work very hard at beating the bushes to find advertisers, according to editor Carole Moul. "Most businesses in our area are either corporate or with head offices across the country," says Moul. "They have absolutely no interest in the community where

they are located, nor are they allowed to advertise."

"Pre-COVID, we had a lot of restaurant advertising. Not so now. We have had to broaden our advertising base," she says. "Our advertising revenues remain about the same; however, we must continually work very hard to achieve this. Fortunately, over the years, the RPR has had a loyal group of advertisers helping support their local paper."

In the face of static or declining advertising revenues, some papers have solicited donations from readers and, in a few cases, support is provided by community associations. Interestingly, a number of papers have advertising from the City of Ottawa and other levels of government while others have none.

One problem that Wes Smiderle, editor of the Manor Park Chronicle, raises is printing costs, saying that their printer recently increased fees by a substantial amount. "The increase was enough to get us to look around for alternatives, but there don't seem to be many," Smiderle says. Moul notes a similar concern, saying "Within the past five years, two of the printing companies we used folded and the cost went up four times."

Indeed, McGregor wonders whether more coordination and communication between Ottawa's community papers might help. "It might be worth meeting in person or setting up a mailing list to talk about common issues like City advertising or printer quality."

Although the advantage of Facebook and other social media advertising is that it can be specifically targeted, community papers are distributed to everybody in a particular community and therefore they hit the target of all of those within their neighbourhood catchment area.

Some last words: "I feel very lucky and I am aware how fragile a community paper can be in these times... Long live *The Mainstreeter* and Perspectives Vanier," says Marcoux. "We continually hear that people love their community papers," says Moul.

OPINION – PART 1

Lessons learned: A primer on my private citizen's appeal of a key City of Ottawa planning decision

In our December issue of The Mainstreeter, John Dance reported on the efforts of Adriana Beaman, an Old Ottawa East resident, who challenged Ottawa City Council's decision to approve by-law amendments sought by the developers of the former Sisters Convent property at 15 des Oblats Avenue. Her four-month battle to mitigate impacts of the development on neighbours and on the community included a private citizen's appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT).

In this two-part article, which concludes in our April issue, Beaman shares her experiences and perspective with others in the community who might consider challenging City of Ottawa local planning, zoning and development decisions. Part 1 below covers the initial public process associated with the City of Ottawa's planning approval framework from Beaman's initial filing of comments through to her appearance at the all-important Planning And Housing Committee meeting. Both parts of Beaman's article are available now online at www.mainstreeter.ca.

ADRIANA BEAMAN

Last summer and fall, I immersed myself in the appeal process to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) from an approved City of Ottawa zoning by-law amendment that would have affected my neighbours and me directly.

Although I am a lawyer, I don't practice municipal law. Unable to retain a municipal law lawyer for reasons described below, I embarked on this journey as a private citizen without representation. My four-month journey through the tangled web of Ottawa's planning process and the OLT appeal process taught me many lessons.

In recent years, with increased media focus on developments such as Lansdowne 2.0, planning disputes in neighbourhoods across the City seem to have spiralled as provincial government policies such as intensification are implemented by developers who have embraced this planning vision. Unfortunately, our existing provincial legislation and local zoning by-laws have not caught up with recent provincial policies aimed at addressing the current housing crisis.

What I learned: Based on my recent experience, there are flaws that need fixing, chief among them, overly generalized legislation and policies that grant broad powers to city councils by way of recommendations of their planning committees, and equally broad discretion in the hands of the OLT to interpret and apply outdated zoning by-laws. As a result, development applications are now requesting extreme amendments to existing by-laws on the pretext that these new builds comply with provincial policies and official plans.

In my view, we all need to be forward thinking about our City's future needs and quick to respond to economic and environmental changes. However, important development decisions must always be founded upon good planning principles and fair and transparent public process.

Initial Public Process

While property owners have property rights, they also have obligations to comply with the zoning by-laws. Property owners can apply for a variance or an exemption from the applicable by-laws. And even before applying to the City, property owners engage in a pre-consultation process with the City's planning department regarding their proposed plans. The public is not involved and has no insight into the process until an owner actually files an application.

When the City of Ottawa sign went up for the proposed development at 15 des Oblats Avenue, it included the usual phrase, "Let us know what you think." In response, like many other neighbours of mine who had valid comments, concerns and questions, I submitted comments on the redevelopment, including the proposed by-law amendments.

What I learned: The City planners assigned to these files have significant workloads, which is neither ideal for the employee nor for citizens like me who try to engage with these employees. Sadly, I learned that many of my neighbours received no response from the City to their emails, and thus received no answers to their questions and concerns. I also learned that despite the building owners' desire to engage more fully with my neighbours and me, they followed the recommended consultation process established by the City and our Councillor. I concluded that key to the City making a good planning decision was providing citizens with a more engaging public consultation process right from the outset, one that included the assigned City planner, the affected City Councillor and the building owner.

Planning And Housing Committee Meeting

Once the required public consultation concludes, the City planner completes a report and recommendation and the matter is brought to the City's Planning and Housing Committee (PHC), comprised of

The former Convent site at 15 des Oblats

Approved Sisters development plan appealed by local resident with some success

JOHN DANCE

In the face of City Council approval of the 15 des Oblats "Sisters" development, Corners on Main resident Adriana Beaman launched an appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) and achieved several successes that will benefit the entire community.

Her efforts - which she describes as "all consuming" and an "eye-opener" - led to one of her primary goals of meeting with the developer to discuss the concerns of the community. The developer was able to provide clarification and written commitment on some items in her appeal. She received confirmation that specified "transportation demand measures" will permanently mitigate the impact of the development which provides no parking spaces for the residents.

Even if the property is sold, a new owner will be bound by the Site Plan Agreement terms requiring such measures as ensuring that lease agreements advise that residential

the westerly or northerly walls." The developer also committed to "ensure that no one using the space can stand along its westerly or northerly edges, which significantly reduces privacy or overlook concerns with the Corners on Main building or landowners along Springhurst."

Beaman filed the OLT appeal after conducting many weeks of research. While generally speaking, an OLT appeal requires costly efforts of municipal lawyers and professional planners with development expertise, Beaman, a lawyer who does not practice municipal law and filed her appeal as a private citizen, did the work herself. With the success noted above, she has now withdrawn the appeal.

Initially, Beaman found that the City of Ottawa was unwilling to discuss the appeal. Beaman believes that generally the City and a developer can be under a false impression that if no one comes forth with an appeal, it equates to a community having accepted



ADRIANA BEAMAN PHOTO
Thanks to the efforts of Adriana Beaman, this lovely tree on des Oblats Avenue may be saved.

Our December issue introduced Adriana Beaman and her private citizen's appeal to overturn a controversial City of Ottawa by-law amendment.

a selection of our City Councillors. As a member of the public, I was able to register to participate at the PHC meeting to voice my comments about the requested zoning by-law amendments. I was allotted five minutes to speak.

What I learned: I acknowledge that Councillors have significant workloads and, for time management reasons, they rely on

staff reports and recommendations in their decision making. During my appearance before the PHC, I observed that when voting on the applications, the PHC also gave significant weight to the opinion of the Councillor in whose ward the property in question is located. But when I read the staff report to prepare for the PHC meeting and

Continued on Page 18



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Hey readers...how are we doing???

The Mainstreeter's 2024 Newspaper Readership Survey

It's been almost 15 years since we last polled our readers on how they really (really!) feel about *The Mainstreeter*. If we are going to continue to improve our community newspaper, we need to know what things we do well, what things not so well, and what we need to do to get better. So, this is your chance - as faithful readers of *The Mainstreeter* - to give us your opinions, tell us about your readership interests and habits, and spell out what you specifically like or dislike about your community newspaper. It will take you about seven minutes of your time.

We were delighted with the responses we received from our initial notice in the December issue. The early responses we reviewed have already spurred a few changes in this current issue of *The Mainstreeter*. Now, we need you to add your voice to those who have already completed our survey. A comprehensive article in our April issue will let all of our readers know the results of our readership survey.

So please, take the plunge! You can complete *The Mainstreeter's* Newspaper Readership Survey by accessing our website at www.mainstreeter.ca, or by using the link at: <https://sprw.io/stt-1P3sGRj9TU1B6CCYqXcuGr>, or by scanning the QR Code to the right.



OPINION – PART 1

Lessons Learned: A primer on appeals

Continued from Page 17

when I listened to the staff presentation during that meeting, I questioned some of the staff's explanations and answers.

If you think there is an alternate interpretation of the provincial policies or the City's Official Plan, or a possible error in the staff report, you should present this information at the PHC. I learned that it is important to know your Councillor's position on the staff recommendation before the PHC meeting takes place. If your Councillor is in favour of the staff report recommendation that you wish to contest, it's best to bring your concerns to your Councillor in advance of the PHC meeting and ask how community concerns are to be addressed or resolved.

I learned that City Council most often approves the recommendations of the PHC. The PHC's recommendations are therefore critical. Because this is the case, keeping an open mind during PHC meetings is, in my opinion, a paramount aspect of a City Councillor's role as a PHC member. Merely allowing citizens the opportunity to speak at PHC is not enough; Councillors must also listen to presenters without prejudice or

appearance of bias.

When Councillors are members of City committees, they should not allow their personal beliefs or interests to influence or predetermine their decisions. In performing their role as a PHC decision-maker, Councillors should be impartial and they should review all materials submitted to the committee on time, not only the staff recommendations. It is essential for City staff to ensure that PHC members have all the materials submitted by the public prior to the meeting, which I believe did not occur in this case.

I personally felt an apprehension of bias from one PHC member, and I should have voiced my concerns at the PHC meeting or to that PHC member in writing following the meeting, since possible bias is not an issue easily addressed in an OLT appeal. From my perspective, City Councillors would benefit from training in administrative law principles of procedural fairness. During the OLT process, I passed this suggestion on to the City solicitor assigned to my appeal.

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Sunday March 24 **Greenspace and Water**
Saturday April 27 **Transportation**
Sunday May 5 **Zero-Waste Living**

Jim Durrell Rec Centre, 1265 Walkley Rd, Ottawa
9:30 – 11:30 am

Saturday June 8 **Climate Risk – Basement Flooding**

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LIVE MUSIC

Walking Through The Fire

Sultans of String collaborate to showcase Indigenous music talent

LORNE ABUGOV

On January 19th, a spellbound audience of concertgoers embarked on a personal path forward to reconciliation that was paved with pure gold – musical gold, to be precise. On that cold January evening, a near-capacity crowd of almost 300 hardy musicophiles bore witness to *Walking Through The Fire* - a critically important musical project performed by the Canadian award-winning ensemble, Sultans of String, together with a veritable who's who of Canada's top Indigenous musicians.

The special performance at Meridian Theatre @ Centrepointe brought the magic of musical collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to life in a multimedia show that included live and video performances and a range of music from Métis fiddling to Inuit throat singing.

Walking Through The Fire, which arrived in Ottawa in the late stages of a 26-performance Ontario tour, was inspired by recommendations of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's "94 Calls to Action" which called for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to work together as an opportunity to advance reconciliation.

Publicists for the musical collaboration explained that "(a) central theme running through *Walking Through The Fire* is the need for the truth of Indigenous experience to be told before reconciliation can begin in earnest. Embedded in the title of the show is the energy of rebirth: fire destroys, but it also nourishes the soil to create new growth, beauty, and resiliency. *Walking Through The Fire* ensures that we emerge on the other side together, stronger and more unified."

Early in the show, Métis musician Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk electrified the audience with *Chanson de Riel*, the



Performers from many nations, including the Dene, Blackfoot, Métis, Inuit and Tsm'syen wove together a brilliant tapestry of Indigenous music with the backing of the Sultans of String.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTOS

A dynamic array of Indigenous and non-Indigenous musicians created a magical collaboration.

lyrics to which, according to Métis legend, were written by martyred hero Louis Riel in his final days before his execution in 1885. What began as a deep, slow lament erupted into a lively fiddler's reel midway through the tune that had the audience bouncing in their seats.

Among the many memorable moments in *Walking Through The Fire* was Shannon Thunderbird's performance of her powerful and chilling ballad, *Lost and Found*. Thunderbird, a West Coast Tsm'syen Elder Singer-Songwriter, wrote the song shortly after the discovery on May 27, 2021 of the bones of 215 Indigenous children in a mass grave on the grounds of a residential school in Kamloops, B.C.

"I wrote *Lost and Found* to acknowledge the fact that with tangible evidence Canadians could no longer deny what we have been saying for over a century," Thunderbird explains in liner notes to the *Walking Through The Fire* CD.

The multimedia aspect of the event was evident midway through the first set, beginning with a video performance of *Our Mother, The Earth* by Alberta-based Dr. Duke Redbone, a Chippewa/Anishinaabe Elder and poet. The song, set against a backdrop of Canada's scenic landscapes, combines powerful spoken, chanted and sung lyrics.

According to Dr. Redbone: "The song was inspired by the idea that every country has a national anthem, but there is no anthem for the Earth. If people included an anthem for

the Earth along with their national anthem at every event, it would serve to acknowledge our identity, values and sense of pride in the fact that we are all children of the Earth."

Video was also the medium to introduce the song *Ko* and performer Leela Gilday, a Dene singer and songwriter from the Northwest Territories, who sang to the accompaniment of live music on stage from Sultans of String and Indigenous musicians Forrest Eaglespeaker, a Prairies Blackfoot singer-songwriter and Nevada Freistadt. The alluring imagery of Northern terrain and Gilday's traditional Dene dress on the giant video screen combined to create one of the most visually striking segments of *Walking Through The Fire*.

The sheer diversity of the musical offerings was underlined by strong performances from Ojibwe/Finnish singer Marc Merilainen (Nadjiwan) who began the evening with his composition, *A Beautiful Darkness*; Crystal Shawanda, an Ojibwe/Potawatomi singer-songwriter, and her coming of age song *The Rez*, and Ottawa-based Inuit throat singers Kendra Tagoona and Tracy Sarazin who performed *I Am Happy*, a traditional Inuit song known as a *pisiq*, written by a North Baffin Island man to welcome the spring and celebrate living.

Not to be forgotten are the Sultans of String quartet whose prodigious efforts onstage during *Walking Through The Fire* represented only the leading edge of the band's hard work in pulling together this inspiring and innovative musical collaboration for our times.

You can watch String's bandleader Chris McKhool discuss the *Walking Through The Fire* project in a special video at <https://youtu.be/0A5V6Q1Iabg>. And a full recount of the production is available by scanning the QR Code below.



At Immaculata, co-op work experience is paving the way for bright future careers

PATRICK TAILLEFER

As a testament to Immaculata High School's commitment to experimental learning, five standout students have embarked on diverse educational journeys, contributing their skills to fields across the City of Ottawa. Ranging from healthcare and electrical services to art and mechanics, these ambitious students navigate real-world workplaces on co-op placements. Each of their experiences offers a compelling narrative of personal growth, skill development, and the invaluable intersection of education and practical application.

According to Dana Leahey, Immaculata's cooperative program teacher, students register themselves to participate in the co-op program and then determine the careers they are interested in pursuing. Before beginning their placements, students must complete all of the required health & safety training, build their resumé's, practice interview skills and learn about worker's rights and responsibilities just to name a few. Leahey singled out the willingness of employers in the Ottawa region to take on co-op students as the main reason for the success of

Immaculata's program.

"We have many excellent employers in the region who welcome our students into their workplaces year after year and provide valuable learning opportunities for young people. We are always seeking new opportunities in the community for our students and local employers often reach out to inquire about having one of our students work with their team."



DANA LEAHEY
Co-op placement director at Immaculata oversees a thriving program for ambitious students.

Learning beyond the four walls of the classroom has provided students with diverse educational journeys.



JULIAN

Next, we interviewed another 12th grade student, Julian, who was working his placement at the Ottawa General Hospital and other campuses across the City. Cool, calm and collected, the

young man expressed his desire to pursue a future career as a doctor, a role which mainly influenced his decision to work his placement in healthcare. He then explained his contributions as a co-op worker at the local hospitals.

"I work in medical imaging, meaning I assist medical imaging technologists with their scans, such as x-rays and magnetic resonance imaging, and then help the technologists identify components of each scan."

Post-graduation, Julian plans to pursue a university degree in biomedical science or health science, followed by studies in neurology, dermatology or radiology at medical school. He then plans to do a residency and become a qualified healthcare professional.



EMMA

On a recent visit to Immaculata, *The Mainstreeter* interviewed Emma, a 12th grade student working her

placement at the Ottawa School of Art. Citing creative interests like theatre and graphic design as inspiration for her desire to enroll in this placement, Emma described her everyday role in the workplace.

"Recently I've been tasked with creating informative signs for multiple events including the school's Christmas classes, the craft fair and the Halloween costume contest. I also tend to supervise the kids and help reorganize the library," she explained.

When asked about her future ambitions in the workplace, Emma expressed a desire to remain in the creative field or pursue a career in communications.



TOMMY

We interviewed Tommy on his 17th birthday. Following in his father's footsteps, he enrolled in a co-op

placement as an electrician.

"My dad's an electrician and he encouraged me to get into it as well. It took a long time to find a placement because there's a shortage of electrical businesses willing to take on co-op students, but I ended up finding one in the market, and I've really enjoyed my experience."

Tommy assists senior electricians on job sites by providing them with support when required, and he pays close attention to details in order to learn more about the trade. After graduating high school, he plans to do an apprenticeship in electrical work at Algonquin College.

Continued on Page 21



MARIA

Exciting job placements make for valuable life experiences

Continued from Page 20

Maria, a 12th grade student and Immaculata's Team Mikinak co-leader, is another of the group of young co-op workers. Currently assisting on projects with graduate students in the Department of Neuroscience at Carleton University, under Professor Matthew Holahan, Maria provided great insights into her experience.

"The first project is related to Parkinson's disease. I help with pipette cell media for the differentiation of dopaminergic neurons. My other project is research connected to Autism

Spectrum Disorder, and we're partnering with the University of Guelph. We're analyzing neurons from the brains of rats that are part of a study at Guelph. I get to trace neurons from a live image under a microscope and label spines on the branches of the neurons collecting data."

In her future endeavors, Maria expressed interest in obtaining a university undergraduate degree in the field of biology.



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MICHAEL

The final student we met was Michael, an 11th grader working as a

mechanic at an auto shop. A well-spoken and muscular young man, Michael advised that his interest in trades work along with the future acquisition of his own vehicle were the main influences for his placement.

"My duties mainly include changing oil and tires. I wanted to get into trades, and a mechanic shop seemed like a good option for me because I'd like to get my first car and learn how to modify it by myself," he explained.

When asked about the future, Michael expressed his desire to carry on working as a mechanic, excelling in each area of the trade as a means to further his skillset and achieve his goals.

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ART BEAT



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OOE ARTIST FEATURE: EAMON (MICHAEL FITZPATRICK) REVEALS HIS INTERNAL IMPRESSIONS THROUGH SCULPTURE

Michael FitzPatrick the journalist and media/communications specialist lives with his wife Sally at The Corners on Main in Old Ottawa East. Michael FitzPatrick the artist goes by the name “Eamon” and refers to his artworks as “Expressions of Eamon.” Eamon is FitzPatrick’s second name. “I was born an Irish Catholic,” he says.

FitzPatrick worked covering politics for 23 years. “I filed stories from 19 countries, including two war zones, and worked for CTV National in Toronto, Montreal, and Global National on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.”

By education, FitzPatrick is a physical anthropologist/archaeologist. “By inclination, however, I am a sculptor,” he says. “The anatomy courses I took transferred over into my art. All of my sculptures start with faces and heads.”

Eamon has been sculpting and exhibiting for over 40 years and his works are in private collections across Canada, the U.S., France, Ireland, and England.

A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE



SALLY FITZPATRICK PHOTO

OOE resident Michael FitzPatrick, who creates provocative sculpture using the name Eamon, seen here at work in his home studio.

“My work is about the human condition. I try to capture the emotions, attitudes, and feelings of humans—all humans.”

His work is autobiographical. “It started within me and was born of me. I have always been an artist. When I was a kid, I climbed up trees and looked into nests in order to draw them. I painted watercolours and drew with coloured pencils.”

Art, Eamon believes, is a conversation. “In the case of my art, it may provoke conversation! We have struggled with our existence from the moment that we became aware of it. Perhaps, through introspection, we can sort through the rhymes and reasons for being here and

collectively we can continue to explore the astonishment of existing.”

When Eamon was in university, he would use cross hatching in his drawings because he wanted his works to have three dimensions. “Eventually, I thought, why not actually work in three dimensions?”

“My first plan was to make a Tolkien-themed chess set. But that never happened. Once I had the clay in my hands and started manipulating it, I began to see things. It is always a face that emerges. Even when I work with soap stone, I look at it until I see something in the raw piece. I can say with certainty that I have never planned a piece. But

what better way to try and understand an ethereal, philosophical aspect of existence than trying to materialize it into a three-dimensional object?”

Eamon’s sculptures range in size from three inches to fifteen inches in height. The themes in his works are Politics (*The Two Solitudes*, *The Politician*, and *The Foot Soldier*); Religion (*The Archangel*, *Faith*, *Vengeance*, *Guilt*, and *Reparation*); and Personal (*Victim of Circumstance*, and *Memories*). The faces in his art are intense. “They are definitely not happy,” he says. Many of his pieces are peppered with hidden heads and faces. “You have to turn them around to find them all.”

Eamon is a member of the Sculpture Society of Canada and Past President of the National Capital Network of Sculptors. He has exhibited his work 96 times and has been the in-house sculptor for several galleries. “We have lived in Ottawa since 1984, except for one year when we lived in Ireland.”

Eamon doesn’t go anywhere without his “little bag of tricks” – some clay and a few tools. “I work on my pieces when I’m out for dinner, visiting somebody in a bar, attending an OOE Life Drawing class, or travelling on an airplane. I was busy polishing a soapstone sculpture one day back in the 80s when somebody suggested that I get my work cast into bronze. I had never thought of doing that, but I was intrigued. I started out going to a foundry near Montebello, Quebec. Later, I changed to one in Georgetown, Ontario called Artcast, where the quality of their work was even better.”

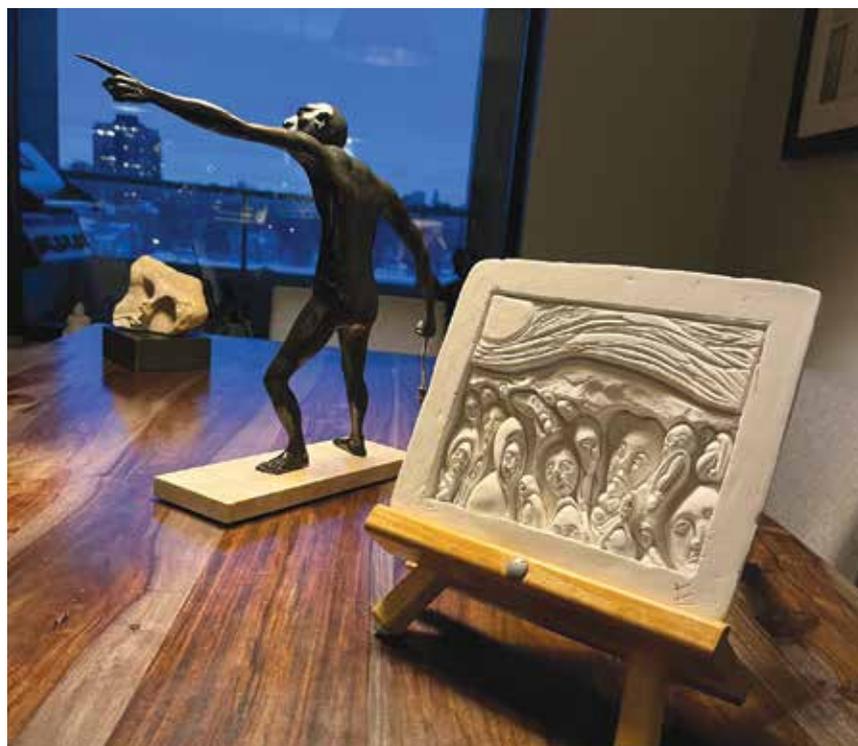
The bronzing process begins with the

Continued on Page 23



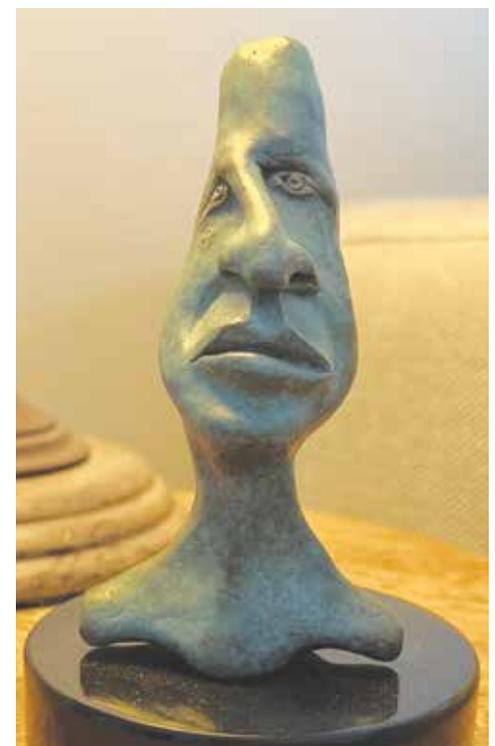
SALLY FITZPATRICK PHOTO

Eamon displaying a few of his statues at A Walk of Art last September.



EAMON PHOTO

Three of Eamon’s sculptures on a table. From nearest to farthest, *Field of Dreams* (plaster of Paris), *Vengeance* (bronze), and *Memories of Minos* (Brazilian soapstone).



EAMON PHOTO

Rapa Nui

ART BEAT



TIM HUNT'S MAIN STREET SKETCHES

Tim Hunt explores his community outfitted with a small sketchbook, pen, and watercolour kit. In our regular feature, he shares the pages from his sketchbook and tells the stories behind his work.



Tim Hunt: I recently read in the Old Ottawa East archives that in the early 1900s folks would pay a nickel to take a rowboat ferry from Herridge Street to cross the canal over to the Ottawa Exhibition. Living on an island nestled between the Rideau River and the Rideau Canal, we are accustomed to crossing

bridges daily without giving it second thought. Most of these bridges have been in use for as long as I can remember, so the opening of a new bridge right on our doorstep was a once-in-a-lifetime event!

The Flora Macdonald Footbridge opened in 2019 just in time for my youngest's final year at Glebe Collegiate,

eliminating the need to go north to cross Pretoria Bridge and double back on the other side. The bridge has made a world of difference to pedestrians and bike commuters on both sides of the canal. A trip to the Lansdowne Farmer's Market is now a comfortable walk on a Sunday morning. At sunset, the bridge is a popular spot for taking photos and viewing spectacular scenes of the cityscape and the night sky.

I couldn't resist including a cameo of *The Mainstreeter* news box in this sketch, the commission I painted myself and lovingly restored after it was thrown from the bridge by revelers last winter. You can just make out the Flora bridge tattooed on its left side...like a souvenir battle scar from a wild night on the town. Sharing the space in this drawing is another piece of functional public art—a bench entitled "Alone," created by artist Sally Lee Sheeks—at the foot of the stairs. Incorporating iron, wood and natural stone, the bench echoes both natural and architectural elements of our community.

How fortunate we are to live here in a time when a dream of generations

has been realized. The Flora bridge is so convenient it already feels like it has always been here!



To view Tim's video of his restoration of *The Mainstreeter* newsbox, see <https://youtube.com/@timothyhunt2019>. To read *The Mainstreeter's* article on the Flora Footbridge newsbox affair, scan the QR Code below.



OOE sculptor Eamon

Exploring the astonishment of existing

Continued from Page 22

artist creating an original sculpture in clay, Plastelina or plaster. "The foundry then encases your piece and creates a rubber mold. Sometimes the original gets destroyed. Artcast has been very good at preserving my originals and that's not easy to do given how tiny certain aspects of my work can be. They pour wax into the mold to create a wax version that gets encased in ceramic material. They heat it up and pour out the wax. That's when they have a negative. That's when you pour in the bronze."

The patina/colour of the bronze is another area where the artist gets involved. "Artists develop their own formulas/recipes for patinas. There are books filled with the recipes/formulas for different colours. It used to be that you were allowed to bronze a sculpture seven times and still call each of them originals. Today you are allowed twelve. I've never gone beyond four because of the cost of bronzing."

Eamon refers to one of his bronzed

works, a three-inch-tall, bronzed sculpture called *Rapa Nui*. "The rubber mold cost me \$300, the wax \$50, the bronze \$300, and the marble base \$40 for a total of nearly \$700, but I can only sell the piece for \$200-\$250."

Recently, Eamon created and sold a sculpture in Brazilian soapstone. "I kept a portion of the piece in its raw form and carved out the face. I used wet/dry sandpaper over a number of weeks to polish the carved part and then oiled it with Tung oil. I like having the contrast between the raw and the polished stone. He is also currently writing his first book with the working title *It's All in Your Head: A Fable About Myths*.

Author Tanis Browning-Shelp (<http://www.browning-shelp.com>) pens her Maryn O'Brien Young Adult Fiction series, published by Dog-Eared Books, from her home in Old Ottawa East. Contact tanis@browning-shelp.com if you have information about artists or art events that you believe would enrich our community members' lives.

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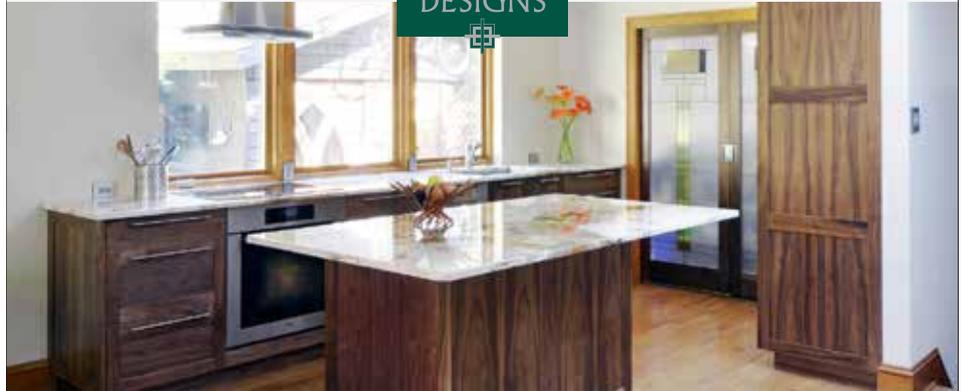
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Relying upon nature to improve lives in the age of climate change

KELLY ALLEN & PETER CROAL

Did you know that our close neighbour Montreal is fast becoming a “sponge city”?

What is a sponge city, you might ask? If you see a hard sidewalk or park surface of asphalt or concrete, you’ll notice that, when it rains, the water runs off to join water from other hard surfaces and into storm drains. But if the sidewalk or park surface is made of permeable material that acts like a sponge (such as soil or grass), the water seeps into the ground below, which helps reduce the risk of flooding. Montreal has taken this concept to heart and is creating 400 more sponge sidewalks and 30 sponge parks, in addition to what it already has.

Climate change is having an increasingly profound impact on our cities due to increased rain, snow, storms, wind, heat and ice. Cities in Canada and around the world are using nature-based solutions (NBS) such as sponge parks to help manage these effects. NBS ranges from wetland restoration and tree planting to community gardens and green roofs.

Natural assets help reduce the effects of climate events, such as flooding and extreme weather, and protect and enhance ecosystems. Forests, grasslands and wetlands are also living systems. They grow stronger and more effective as they age, and most require little or no maintenance and will function in perpetuity.

Nature-based solutions are often more economical than engineered solutions and are a more sustainable way forward. By adopting NBS, Ottawa can reduce its climate risks, create a more livable city and decrease the need for engineered assets that have higher acquisition, maintenance and replacement costs.

Ottawa has responded to some degree in using NBS to address climate change impacts. Rain Ready Ottawa is a pilot program that supports and encourages residents to take action on their property to address rainwater runoff (such as building rain gardens and permeable driveways). The pilot is currently confined to the east and west ends of the City in areas that

can directly affect the Ottawa River. However, owing to its popularity, there have been numerous calls by residents to expand the program, which is currently oversubscribed, beyond the designated priority area of the pilot.

But Ottawa still lags behind many Canadian cities. For example, White Rock, BC recently passed a by-law requiring that all new and existing municipal parks be developed and managed using NBS. Why can’t Ottawa have a similar by-law?

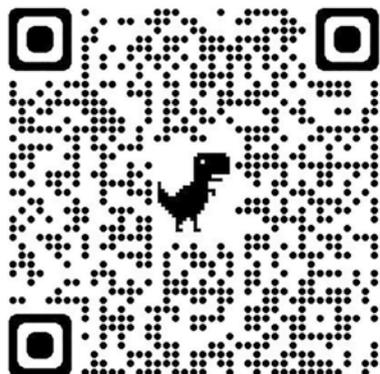
Not only does NBS address climate change in an economical and sustainable way, but it’s also good for our community too. Families and children can get involved directly with NBS activities in their homes and schools. It’s a great way to discover the benefits of nature, learn about the plants, trees and animals in our neighbourhoods, and encourage all of us to have more nature time and less screen time. By fully adopting NBS, Ottawa has a significant opportunity to become a more resilient and livable city.

Kelly Allen and Peter Croal are members of the Citizen Climate Counsel.



Readers may wish to encourage City Council to be more proactive in using NBS to address climate change issues.

And the next time you notice how much water a sponge can hold, just remember how that principle can help Ottawa with future flooding! If you wish to know more about NBS, please scan the QR Code below to access an informative Government of Canada website:



GOOGLE IMAGE

This aerial image of Echo Drive to Main Street south of Graham Avenue shows the extent of hard asphalt and concrete surfacing that creates runoff and possible flooding. Using permeable “sponge” materials instead is one of the ways that NBS can help to manage adverse climate change effects.

Atelier/Ottawa Tool Library join forces

Tool Repair Café event will save money, reduce landfill

AMÉLIE NAULT

The Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop has crafted a unique partnership with the Ottawa Tool Library (OTL) to host a Repair Café at The Atelier on 95 Clegg Street, adjacent to Saint Paul University, on Saturday, March 2 from 10am until 3pm.

Repair Cafés are an international concept that the OTL brought to Ottawa in 2017 with a goal of reducing landfill waste, exchanging skills, and building community.

The free Repair Café is open to the public and will allow members of the Old Ottawa East community to meet and work with a volunteer OTL fixer to learn new skills and repair their item, which can include small appliances, jewelry, clean clothes, small furniture,

electronics, and more! Community members must register their broken item to be repaired at the event on a first-come, first-served basis (only one item per registrant).

The Ottawa Tool Library is a non-profit tool lending library with a mission to engage and empower the community to participate in sharing resources by providing access to tools and skills for everybody. In addition to its tool library, the OTL provides expertise, workspace for projects, learning events, and Repair Cafés. Since 2014, the OTL has worked with community partners to host events like the Repair Café. Since then, the OTL’s community of volunteers, friends, and partners has grown, helping to make the organization’s events fun, informative, and productive.



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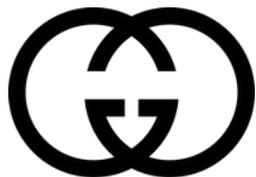


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To volunteer for *The Mainstreeter's* Advertising Manager or Accounts Manager positions, contact our Board Chairperson Ron Rose at ron.rose@gmail.com.

POLITICAL PAGES

SHAWN MENARD COUNCILLOR, CAPITAL WARD

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SHAWNMENARD.CA



A NEW YEAR AT CITY HALL BRINGS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR CITY

Happy February. This is the first Councillor update of the new year, and I hope 2024 is off to a good start for all of you. At City Hall, the final months of 2023 saw some big issues come before City Council, including the Lansdowne 2.0 proposal and the Ottawa budget, but with the new year comes a time for a fresh look at what we want for our City.

The coming months (and years) will see us dig into a number of important matters that have the potential to improve life in our community and across the City. My team and I have been preparing for many of the issues that will come before Council throughout the year. From transit planning to affordable housing to environmental stewardship, there is much work to be done in this City to improve quality of life for residents, which has been our number one goal.

Over the next couple of years, there will be some important decisions made about transportation. The City will be embarking on updating Part 2 of Ottawa's Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Last spring, Council approved Part 1 of the new TMP which focused on active transportation and transit, as well as creating a framework for prioritizing road projects.

In Part 2, they'll be looking at the road network for vehicles, the Capital Infrastructure Plan (where we spend our money) and the City's origin-destination study (looking at where people start and finish their travel).

Part 1 of the new TMP was a significant step forward for the City, moving away from an antiquated transportation planning mentality that didn't capture the importance of transit and active transportation, establishing a number of important projects for Capital Ward and for the City to help us move around better. It is important for Ottawa to build off the successes of Part 1 to make sure that our transportation planning remains headed in the right direction.

For Old Ottawa East, a big issue that will be discussed is the future of the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC). This project—should it ever be built—would see a four-lane urban freeway run through greenspace and parks. Currently, the field on Lees Avenue between the towers and Springhurst Park gives residents much-needed space for sports, leisure and recreation activities. This space would be lost if the AVTC is allowed to be built.

Instead, we would have an unnecessary road that increases traffic congestion, that decreases public safety, and that contributes to environmental degradation and climate change. It is so incredibly important that we get this road out of the City's transportation plans and allow residents to put that space to better use.

We need to prepare for upcoming City consultations that are expected to occur in the fall. In addition, our office will be hosting public consultations on ward-specific transportation issues, including the AVTC, to help inform Part 2 of the new TMP.

To keep informed of these engagement opportunities you can subscribe to our newsletter, the Capital Ward Bulletin. Please email us at CapitalWard@ottawa.ca.

I am excited to see what we can do.

JOEL HARDEN MPP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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109 CATHERINE ST, OTTAWA, ON, K2P 0P4



A HOSPITAL CRISIS HITS CLOSE TO HOME

I don't talk about my family very much, but a recent event has given me an exception to that rule.

Andrea, my sister, had a 37-hour ordeal at a local hospital emergency room (ER), and her experience offers a cautionary tale about where we're at with health care in Ontario. She said I could share her story to push for urgent change.

On the advice of her family doctor, Andrea was admitted to the ER with acute appendicitis, and scheduled for an urgent surgery. After an agonizing wait, the surgery finally happened.

But as Andrea waited, she saw many things. She saw exhausted staff run off their feet with skeleton crews. She heard two Code Whites called (that's the signal for a serious physical assault on hospital personnel). She saw rooms that were dirty with accumulated mess.

She saw Ottawa Police Service members waiting for hours as people they helped admit to the ER with serious mental health crises were treated for their needs.

She slept overnight in a reclining chair, in significant pain, in a hallway. Her surgery kept getting bumped when major trauma incidents came through the ER.

Of course, getting bumped through the process of ER triage is a normal practice. But waiting for 37 hours for an urgent surgery is alarming, and it's not normal to have the current levels of violence, staff fatigue, and acute conditions Andrea saw in our hospitals.

That sentiment is shared by health care staff. They've been warning us, but political decision-makers are not responding to their concerns. Instead, Ontario's ERs have been temporarily closed due to staff shortages – 867 times in 2023 alone (the highest rate ever).

The Ontario Coalition of Hospital Unions polled their members and found almost half of them in the Ottawa area dread going to work. Nursing leaders are saying the same thing.

Family doctors in Ottawa have threatened job action given underfunding, and massive demand from people without access to primary care (a nurse practitioner or family doctor). 2.2 million Ontarians are in this situation, and the consequences for hospitals are serious.

Ontario's Auditor General notes that 23% of ER admissions were low acuity in 2022-2023 and could be resolved by access to primary care. But there is no serious provincial strategy for this; a paltry \$30 million (or 2 bucks per Ontarian) was allocated last year for "primary care innovation," and even these meager funds went unspent.

The government claims that its increased health care spending is working, as is its engagement on a "health human resources strategy." It has opened up opportunities to allow for-profit, investor-driven clinics to operate in public hospitals, or to be paid from OHIP funds. But this strategy has failed.

Hospitals are losing staff (notably nurses), and often hiring them back from employment agencies that charge double or triple normal compensation. That drives up costs, leading some hospitals to seek exemptions to run deficits, or take out bank loans. The experiment with for-profit health care has not reduced surgical wait times.

We are headed in the wrong direction on health care, and that has to change.

Ontario's Official Opposition has called for the immediate resumption of the House. We have health care solutions to offer the government - we are hopeful they will listen.

POLITICAL PAGES

YASIR NAQVI MP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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DOWNTOWN OTTAWA REVITALIZATION TASK FORCE: FINAL REPORT RELEASED

After a year of dedicated effort, I am thrilled to announce that the Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force has released its comprehensive report with recommendations to reimagine our downtown to become a vibrant and people-first space.

The Task Force's comprehensive report is a testament to the power of community engagement and collaboration. Ottawa residents have spoken, and their input is woven into the fabric of these recommendations. I look forward to advocating for the implementation of these proposals at the federal level, ensuring our downtown becomes a place where everyone is excited to live, work, and visit.

The Task Force, which is composed of

affordable housing advocates, not-for-profit and for-profit housing developers, Indigenous leaders, sustainability advocates, tourism and economic development stakeholders, and local business improvement area representatives, has meticulously crafted a vision for a renewed downtown based on extensive feedback and input from Ottawa residents and stakeholders. The Task Force report, "Envisioning a Great Downtown," presents a comprehensive suite of recommendations that tackle the challenges faced by Ottawa's downtown communities. The report recommends various short-, medium-, and long-term solutions to our community's challenges within the themes of Living, Shaping, Playing, and Doing Business

that can be implemented by each order of government.

Additionally, the report outlines possible solutions to known challenges downtown, such as the lack of affordable housing, tackling the chronic homelessness challenge, reinvigorating local businesses in a hybrid work environment by encouraging the return of residents and tourists, providing ideas for a more sustainable urban environment, and creating more inclusive community spaces that promote Indigenous reconciliation.

Finally, the Task Force report also looks into three transformative projects that our community should seriously explore. These projects include a revitalization and redevelopment of The Jackson Building, the old Ottawa Public Library, and l'Esplanade Laurier.

The Task Force spent the last year actively seeking feedback from a variety of external actors, including Ottawa residents through a large-scale online public consultation where hundreds made their voices heard. Additionally, the Task Force held workshop discussions with interested groups of stakeholders throughout the report development process.

Moving forward, the Task Force is committed to utilizing their report as a powerful advocacy tool, fueling joint and individual efforts at all levels of government and within the community, with the goal of ensuring that recommendations are not only acknowledged but also implemented to bring about positive, long-lasting change. To read the full report, visit YasirNaqviMP.ca. If you would like a printed copy mailed to you, give my office a call and let us know!



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JOHN CALVERT PHOTO

Snow & Ice

To the delight of many, the City has agreed to shovel snow off the steps of the Flora Footbridge (left) throughout the winter months, providing pedestrians with the option of the ramp or the stairway to cross the Canal. And as for ice, there was plenty of it to be seen this month in the form of ice sculptures (right) along the Sparks Street Mall during Winterlude 2024. This beauty is the rare Ojibwe Spirit Horse, inspired by Rhonda Snow and lovingly carved by the staff of Mādahòki Farm in Ottawa.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

COMMUNITY COUNTS

Despite warm winter... Still hope for Brantwood rink

JOHN DANCE

In January, volunteer “hosers” led by co-convenors Eric Cauchon and Louis Denis jumped to action after the unseasonably warm weather ended and they created this year’s version of the Brantwood Community Rink, otherwise known as Old Ottawa East’s winter jewel.

The rink flourished for a while, but then warm weather struck again, necessitating its closure. However, hosers are determined to restore the rink, which is often one of the last outdoor rinks in the city to close.

At this writing, Brantwood is set to host the Capital Ward Cup in February. The Old Ottawa East team, not surprisingly called the Hosers, will be defending the championship after defeating the Old Ottawa South team last year. Councillor Shawn Menard organizes this annual event where each of the four major Capital Ward communities compete in the intense but civil shinny tournament.

In the fall, Trevor Sabean and Matt Gohier were awarded the Hoser of the Year trophy. They distinguished themselves by re-building the rink base twice during last season’s challenging



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Brantwood Rink co-convenors Louis Denis (left) and Eric Cauchon (right) presented the Hoser of the Year award to Trevor Sabean and Matt Gohier.

ice-making season.

More volunteers are always needed, Denis says. “If you value the rink, please volunteer,” says Denis. Volunteers and prospective attendants should contact Brantwood.rink@gmail.com.

Weekday hours are 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. and weekends are noon - 5:00 p.m.

Snow Moles assess Flora's winter walkability

The “Snow Moles” of the three Capital Ward communities along the Rideau Canal recently completed a Ground Hog day assessment of local “winter walkability” and commended the City for its clearing of the east-side stairs of the Flora Footbridge.

However, on the Glebe side of the bridge, the Snow Moles questioned the safety of the pedestrian path “desire-line” between Fourth Avenue and the bridge’s ramp. It’s a well-used shortcut for those who want to save themselves two blocks of walking when their destination is Fourth Avenue or farther north in the Glebe.

Although well used, the short-cut slope can be slippery and there is no flat spot to wait for traffic to pass. During the design of the bridge, the National Capital Commission and the City wanted all footbridge users to cross at the Fifth Avenue - Queen Elizabeth Drive signalized intersection. Bridge advocates suggested that there should be an additional ramp to allow bridge users to readily go north, but this was to no avail.

The Snow Moles also noticed iced-over drains and unplowed bike lanes en route to the Abbotsford Senior Centre.



Councillor Shawn Menard, “Snow Moles” Mary Gick (left, Glebe), Dianne Breton and Ann Goldsmith (OOE), and Anna Cuyllits (OOS) recently assessed the winter-friendliness of the Flora Footbridge and beyond.

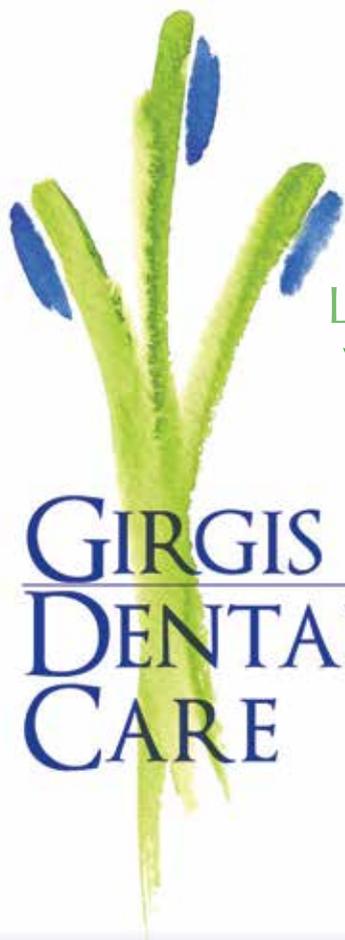
JOHN DANCE PHOTO



PETER CROAL PHOTO

Oh what fun it is to ride...

Many locals say that living in Old Ottawa East is like residing in a country village. That down home feeling was reinforced again this Christmas Eve when a horse drawn wagon ride was held, complete with carol singing, hot apple cider and a small brass ensemble. The festive fun marked the 47th consecutive year that a horse drawn wagon ride was organized in the community. Over 120 adults, kids and a few dogs came out to celebrate Christmas Eve in the old fashioned way.



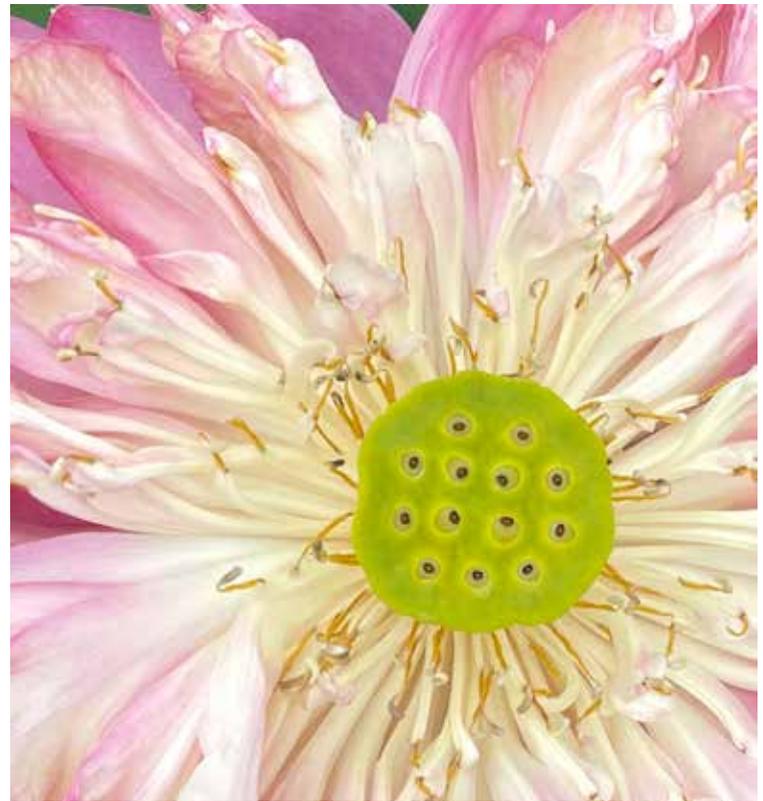
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ECLECTIC EVENTS

February 11th -17th

ONLINE AUCTION, Heritage Ottawa.

Heritage Ottawa, the national capital's foremost non-governmental voice for understanding and conserving built heritage and landscapes, will be holding its first ever online auction from February 11-17, 2024. There will be something for everyone, including works of art, walking tours, restaurant meals, hotels, income tax preparation, a heritage-inspired garden shed, a week at a secluded Gatineau cottage, theatre

passes and rare books on Ottawa's built heritage and history.

Funds raised will be used to continue providing sought-after expert advice and delivering quality educational programs and activities like walking tours, workshops, and public lectures, and to offer a range of publications that reach, inform and influence thousands. Visit www.heritageottawa.org for more information and check our website as of February 4th to view the selection of items available. And get your e-paddles ready!



Ongoing now...

RECRUITING BASSES AND TENORS, The University of Ottawa Choir.

Do you enjoy singing and can you read music? If so, the University of Ottawa Choir, a bilingual adult choir affiliated with the School of Music, is looking for basses and tenors for its winter semester (January to April 2024). For its spring concert, the choir will be singing Mozart's Coronation Mass and Vivaldi's Gloria with a chamber orchestra. See <https://www.uottawachoir.ca/> for more information.

Please contact info@uottawachoir.ca to schedule an audition in early January!

RECRUTER DES BASSES ET DES TÉNORS, La Chorale de l'Université d'Ottawa

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Veuillez contacter info@uottawachoir.ca pour planifier une audition début janvier!



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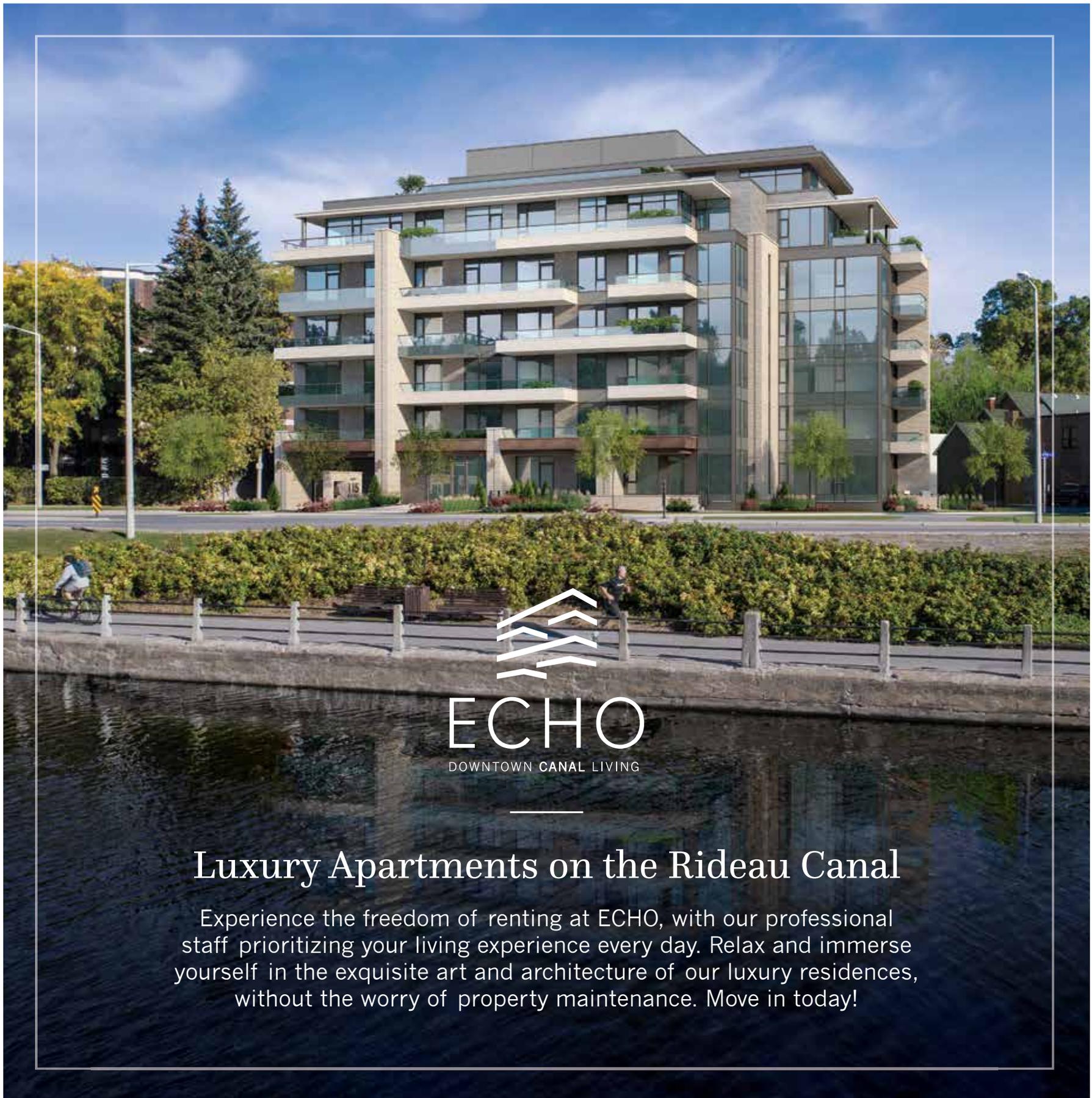
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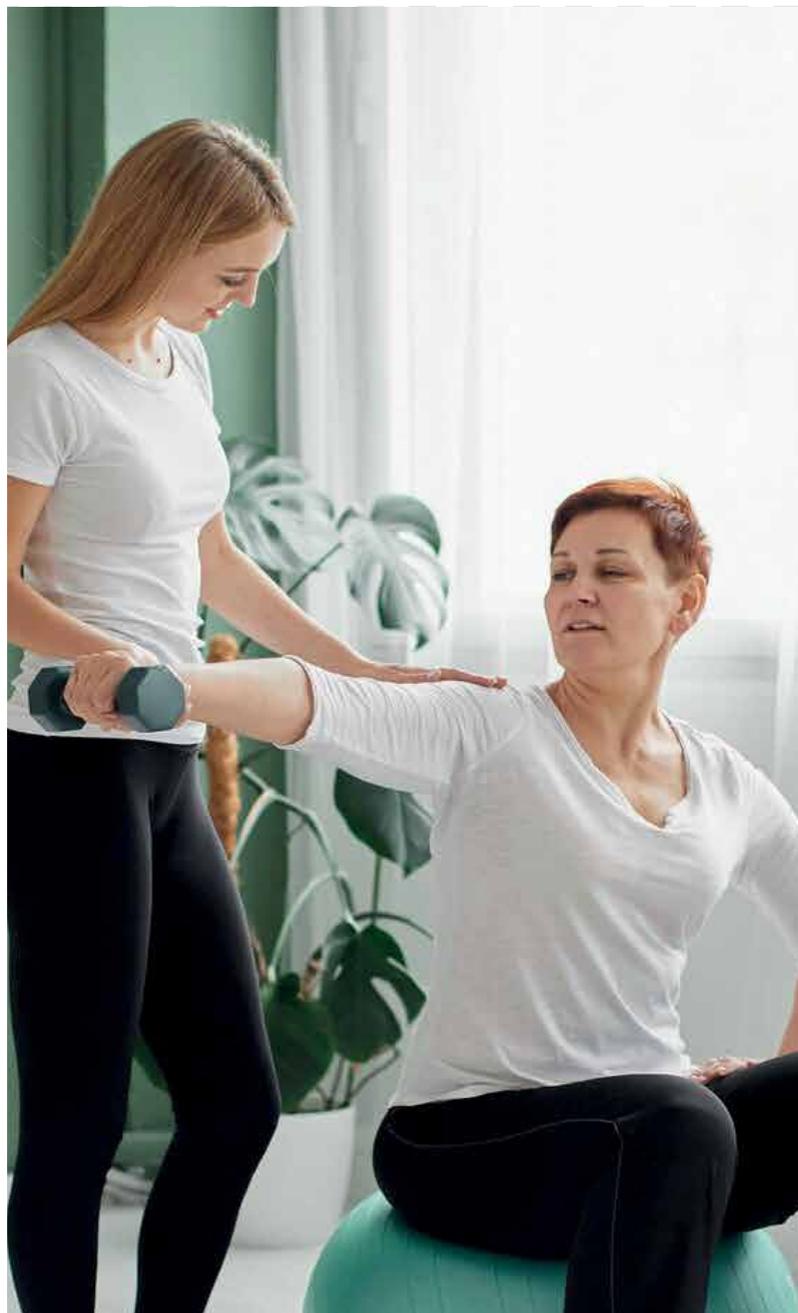
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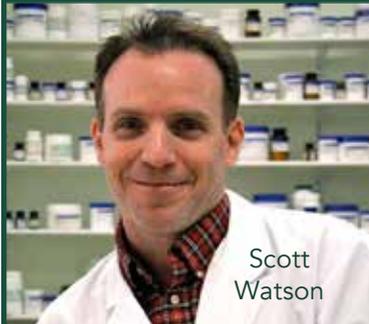
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Pharmacists can now prescribe for 19 minor ailments

On January 1, 2023, Ontario pharmacists were authorized to prescribe medications for 13 minor ailments that include:

- Allergic rhinitis
- Candidal stomatitis (oral thrush)
- Conjunctivitis (bacterial, allergic and viral)
- Dermatitis (atopic, eczema, allergic and contact)
- Dysmenorrhea
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Hemorrhoids
- Herpes labialis (cold sores)
- Impetigo
- Insect bites and urticaria (hives)
- Tick bites, post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent Lyme disease
- Musculoskeletal sprains and strains
- Urinary tract infections (uncomplicated)

On October 1, 2023, Ontario pharmacists were authorized to prescribe certain drugs for 6 additional minor ailments that include:

- Acne (mild)
- Aphthous Ulcers (canker sores)
- Diaper dermatitis
- Vulvovaginal candidiasis (yeast infection)
- Pinworms and threadworms
- Nausea and vomiting of pregnancy

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