



Touring on home turf, 11



Why bees need trees, 9

THE CENTRETOWN BUZZ

New city rules threaten front yard gardens, libraries

Alayne McGregor

If you have a garden or a Little Free Library near the city sidewalk, it could be illegal under current city bylaws – and under proposed changes.

The city's Transportation Committee will debate the changes on June 22 and City Council on June 28.

City staff have proposed updates to the Use and Care of Roads By-law – which controls what's allowed not only on roads and sidewalks, but on a strip of land in your front yard abutting the sidewalk.

That's considered to be part of the city's "right of way" for that road. The width varies by road and is specified on the legal survey for each property. A good rule of thumb would be to assume that at least the first two metres of your front yard is actually under city control.

Right now almost anything green except grass and a city tree is forbidden in that strip, and the city is proposing changes to the by-law that would make it easier to

do some gardening there.

But when *The BUZZ* walked down Centretown streets, most of the flowerbeds we saw still wouldn't meet the new rules, because they allow only "soft landscaping" – i.e., decorative plants.

What will not be allowed:

- growing food, such as vegetables, fruit, or herbs
- plants taller than 0.75m high (i.e., no sunflowers)
- any hard landscaping materials, such as raised beds with wooden sides, larger decorative stones, or pavers
- riverstone/gravel surfaces
- your own tree (you can get a free tree for the right-of-way from the city)
- noxious weeds and invasive plant species

No gardens can be located within one metre of the trunk of a city tree (so much for planting tulips around the tree). Nor will they be allowed within a 1.5 metre radius of a fire hydrant or hydro transformer, as well as within a three metre-wide corridor from the fire hydrant or transformer to the roadway.



This lovely Centretown front yard garden breaks several of the city's proposed rules: it uses hard landscaping (pavers and bricks) and it's too close to a fire hydrant. ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

Is there a catch basin in the sidewalk? Gardens are not permitted within 1.5 metres of a catch basin and manhole.

Is there a hydro pole, guide wire, or telecom pedestal on your property? Don't

plant within one metre of that. Are you next to an OC Transpo bus stop? No gardening is allowed in the city right-of-way from 45m approaching the bus stop flag to 5m after leaving that flag.

This is "to ensure the continued safe operation of OC Transpo services, including the maintenance and operation of bus stops."

Gardens must be hand-dug **continued on page 13 "Gardens"**



Dave Robertson demonstrates how much one of his rental cargo e-bikes can transport. The bikes can carry groceries and supplies as well as passengers. JACOB KROPF/THE BUZZ

New cargo e-bike rentals can carry large, heavy loads

Jacob Kropf

Ottawa has a new business that's hoping to revolutionize green mobility in the city.

Since May 12, 2023, Let's Go Cargo has been providing rental cargo e-bikes with storage for groceries, supplies, and pets, and with space for extra passengers.

Improving accessibility in Ottawa is a driving factor behind the business; owner Dave Robertson said he understands the challenges of owning a car in Centretown. He insists on the importance of an online-only delivery model, bringing the rental cargo e-bike to the customer.

Let's Go Cargo provides delivery within a five-kilometre radius of Hintonburg, including Little Italy and Dalhousie – but that doesn't mean users are restricted to these areas. When asked how far customers can go, Robertson replied, "Where would [they] want to go?"

The battery life between the three models vary, but

each model can be taken across Ottawa and back without needing to be recharged. Each has a range calculator that keeps the rider informed of the distance they have left.

There are three types of cargo e-bike to choose from: the Tern, a Taiwanese model with front and back-load storage configurations and extra seating; the Muli, a front-load Germany model with a 100-litre capacity; and the Trio, a Danish model with the largest cargo addition that can carry 200 kg of weight in the front-load storage.

Ottawa's green culture helped inspire Robertson to introduce a cargo e-bike rental service. It's another solution that reduces the number of cars producing greenhouse gas emissions on the road. With its large space to transport goods – from groceries to pets – the cargo e-bike combats the load restrictions of a normal e-bike.

Though relatively new to cargo e-bikes, Robertson **continued on page 6 "New"**

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101-210 Gloucester St.
Ottawa, ON
K2P 2K4
Phone: 613-565-6012

centretownbuzz.com
twitter.com/centretownbuzz
facebook.com/centretownbuzz

BUZZ Staff

Managing editor: Alayne McGregor
editor@centretownbuzz.com

Associate editor: Eleanor Sawyer

City Editor: Robert Smythe
cityskyline@centretownbuzz.com

Distribution manager: Archie Campbell
circulation@centretownbuzz.com

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Adventures from Karen's Clinic, by Karen Munro-Caple



Comment: Will OC Transpo listen to the constructive ideas suggested by its riders?

Alayne McGregor

In the last month, I attended two consultation meetings run by OC Transpo on proposed bus route changes for 2024. I came with no expectations and a great deal of cynicism.

OC Transpo is currently facing a substantial deficit which no other level of government has stepped up to help cover. The answer in the past has been to cut service.

I have lived through at least three major revamps of Transpo routes, and the result has generally made my trips less, not more, convenient. The most recent that came with the introduction of light rail was one of the worst.

But with a climate crisis and an affordability crisis, we need a reliable transit service that works. We need to fix OC Transpo.

Constructive suggestions

What really impressed me was how much the citizens at those meetings want to help improve our transit system – despite how OC Transpo continues to treat its riders.

Their constructive suggestions included

- more use of signal priority to improve bus priority when turning at busy intersections;

- short turning a bus when it catches up to another on the same route;
- transit priority lanes on Bank Street;
- longer service hours to allow people to attend later evening events;
- making the fare structure more flexible; and
- fixing the “disappearing bus” problem on GPS.

A repeated concern was missing buses on important connection routes like the 88 on Baseline and the 85 on Carling.

Riders also noted concerns with safety on transit.

Bus grid system required

I told Transpo that it needs to commit to a grid system that includes, but does not completely depend on, the LRT. The latest revamp pushed every route it could to the LRT, even when this made routes less useful.

Instead, I argued, we should make transfers practical by having frequent service on a series of east-west routes: on Somerset, on Gladstone, on Carling, on Baseline, on Montreal Road, and possibly also on Hunt Club

We should restore the former 101 route, which took the Queensway and Carling to go from Bayshore to Orleans and provided an alternative fast route

across the city.

We know now that the LRT will be down sometimes even when it's running properly – as it is this month for maintenance. We should start to build resilience into our transit system so that people can be assured of getting to their destinations in a reasonable time and have options on how they can do that.

I hope Ottawa City Council will commit to a better transit system, rather than just cut again.

The BUZZ is on vacation

The BUZZ is taking its summer break next month to give our fine volunteer delivery team time to take holidays. We'll be back in mid-August.

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Skyline: Turning office buildings into housing. Is it magic?



Now called The Slayte, this building satisfied many of the office-to-residential requirements: a small, rectangular floor plate and solid walls with separate window openings.

CHARLES AKBEN-MARCHAND/THE BUZZ

Robert Smythe

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) has just released a timely report entitled “The Case for Conversions: Understanding opportunities for conversions of office space to housing in Canada,” with particular relevance to Ottawa’s vacant downtown offices.

The report’s authors include prominent university departments, think tanks, and private sector consultants from across the country. The study was funded by CMHC as a National Housing Strategy “Solutions Lab.”

Its purpose was “to understand the opportunity that vacant and under-utilized office space presents for making downtown districts across Canada vibrant, equitable and sustainable”, the CUI says in its introduction.

Office-to-residential (and other uses) conversion offers the potential to play a key role in this revitalization, it adds.

What do we do with empty office space?

So the central question is: What should we do with the millions of square feet of central office space sitting empty across Canada? This dilemma is a result of hybrid work patterns that have become entrenched, and downtown recoveries stalled at a fraction of their pre-pandemic levels of activity.

It was deepened by the growing stock of worn-out and aging office towers nearing the end of their lifespan, which was already well underway before the COVID-19 emergency struck.

Canada is far behind the US and Europe

The CUI study warns that “Canada has lagged in re-imaging and repurposing vacant and aging office buildings. In the time [since 2015] that Ottawa created 500 residential units through conversions, for example, American and European cities created thousands.”

One stumbling block: many Canadian municipalities have not yet streamlined the internal policies and procedures necessary to make these office-to-housing conversions easier and more appealing.

Six Canadian cities examined

In designing this inquiry into conversions, the researchers looked at six cities: Victoria, Regina, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Moncton, and Halifax. This presented a wide range of market and regional contexts, and sizes from large to small.

The team established a vocabulary of “best practices” and a building evaluation framework for cities to follow. Based on these six cities’ development scenarios, a toolkit of resources was created for each site-specific situation, which they think could be scaled up to fit other cities across Canada.

Is a building suitable for conversion?

There are five major factors in evaluating a building’s candidacy for these conversions. They are fairly self-evident and were scored and then ranked in order of importance:

Floor plate (30 percent): They can’t be too big. Window-to-core distances should be from 24 to 50 feet, with 40 feet being ideal. One elevator per 100 units is considered acceptable.

Building form (30 percent): Regular and rectangular floor plates work best for circulation, unit layouts, and points of egress. The more complicated a building’s shape, the trickier the conversion.

Servicing (20 percent): Conversion possibilities increase with the presence of a loading area, parking, and a central mechanical room to facilitate the complex job of threading new plumbing stacks and HVAC rises through buildings that weren’t designed for residential units.

Site context (10 percent): Is the building located in a walkable area that is well serviced by public transit? Do the units have direct access to natural light? How are the surrounding buildings and what is their impact on shadowing and view corridors?

Envelope (10 percent): Peeling off and replacing the building’s outer walls does not preclude conversion, but it does increase costs and extends construction time. Buildings with curtain walls (glass and metal pan-

els hung from the structural frame) are less desirable than those with operable window openings in solid walls.

Of course there are also many fiscal and regulatory constraints. The report examines the risk-benefit climate for these conversions in cities like New York and Rotterdam, where they have been very successful.

Make conversion projects a priority

In each case, these cities had to make office-to-residential conversion projects a well-defined public priority by navigating what will be familiar to Canadians – multiple levels of government and agencies, skepticism in the private real estate market, and trying to garner support from citizens and businesses alike.

Tax incentives and special funding instruments were frequently required to give these conversion programs a kickstart. They determined that a hot housing market coupled with a high demand for apartment units provided the most opportunity for conversions.

Ottawa has most potential for conversions

Interestingly for its modest record of successful office-to-residential conversions, Ottawa ranked first in this sampling of six cities. It was noted that, “Based on the modelling Ottawa has the most potential for conversions.”

This was largely due to the city’s relatively large size and good inventory of mid-century buildings suitable for conversion. Five recent examples include both student and supportive housing, which up until now has been rare.

The study points out that “The presence of federal buildings and anticipated office consolidation and disposal by the federal government gives Ottawa a unique position to address housing need, bring more residents downtown, and address explicit climate goals.”

This last point is important because it recognizes that recycling these buildings can retain much of the “embodied energy” that is contained within them, rather than consigning this material to the landfill.

Building-specific case studies from each of the cities were briefly detailed. For Ottawa, “The Slayte” at 473 Albert Street was represented as a commendable example of conversion. Readers of *The BUZZ* will recall that this was briefly mentioned in [the Skyline column of April 2022](#).

This development, which took a cautionary three years to complete, involved the office-to-residential transformation by the CLV Group of the decidedly rectangular, but definitely frowzy, Trebla Building into 158 mixed suites in an amenities-rich building, with a minimal intervention on the existing structure.

Expensive, not affordable

Unfortunately, as the report points out, in Canada the office-to-residential movement hasn’t been successful at delivering many affordable apartments.

If this is to happen, the not-for-profit sector must be encouraged to join in, because rents for almost all of the converted units are set at the absolute peak of market rates – which is high.

Policy changes required

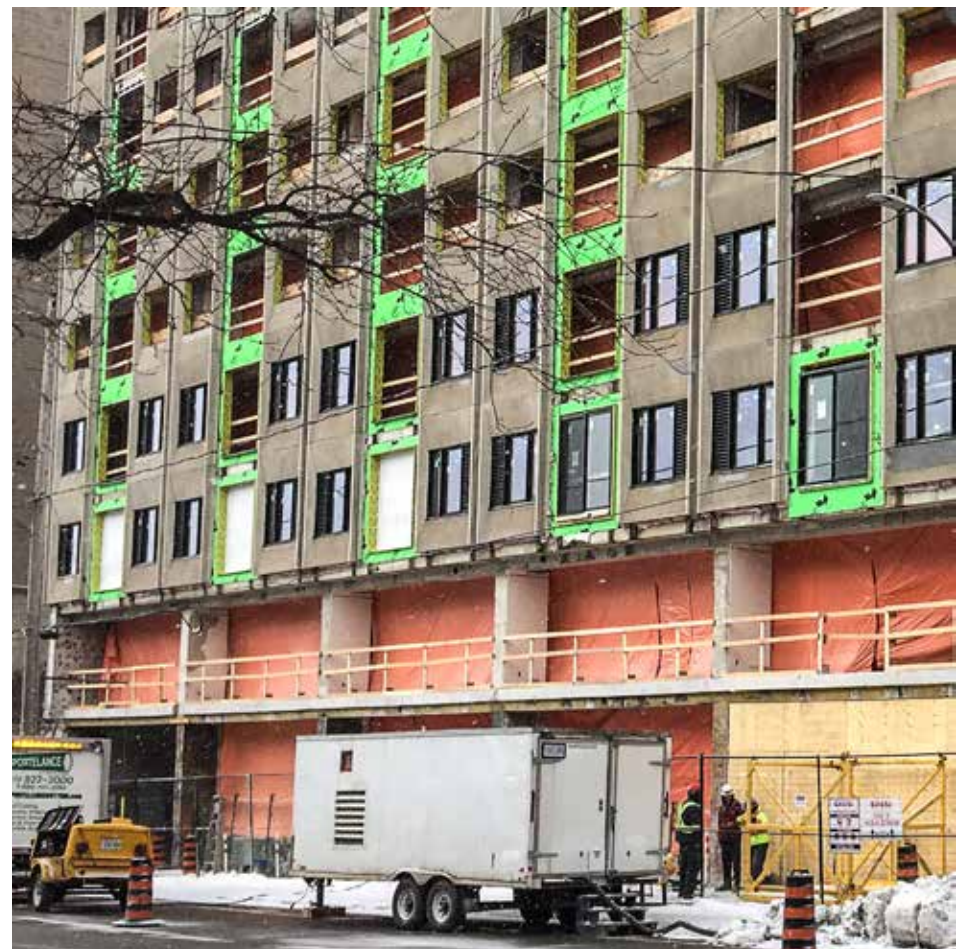
The key findings of this study suggest that high-level government housing policy changes, which always takes an interminable length of time to enact, are required. Each of these projects will encounter its own difficulties, although hopefully, with practice, the design and construction industry can develop more efficiency in bringing these conversions to the market.

A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* reported that, in the U.S., property owners are beginning to unload their troubled office buildings at bargain basement prices. Should this trend reach Canada, there may be further inducements for developers to pursue conversions.

The future in Ottawa

Right now in Centretown, there is only one small conversion project underway. It’s on Cooper Street somewhat removed from the downtown office core. According to consultants hired for the study, there is the potential for an additional 1,900 to 4,200 new residential units that could be wrung out of Ottawa’s surplus office buildings.

Although this may sound like a lot, conversions can never be the total long-term solution to the current housing shortage. They could be an important building block in meeting a percentage of our housing needs – with the fringe side-effect of re-animating a still-moribund city centre.



The progress of the CLV Group’s recent adaptive re-hab of the Trebla Building on Albert Street, converting it from a dumpy surplus office building into high-end residential suites, was a downtown spectacle for some time. Will others follow its example? ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ



Two shaded areas in Ottawa's downtown: the colonnade on the north side of Ottawa City Hall on Laurier Avenue, and the overhang on Nepean Street of One60 Elgin.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

Creating more shady places to walk in urban areas

Alayne McGregor

With dangerous heat spells becoming more frequent, cities should encourage walking by creating more shaded sidewalks, according to a just-released study.

“Cool Walkability Planning” by longtime transportation researcher Todd Litman of the [Victoria Transport Policy Institute](#), calls for more shadeways (covered sidewalks) and pedways (enclosed, climate controlled walkways between buildings) to provide comfortable walkability in hot climate cities.

Ottawa examples

Some shadeways already exist in Ottawa's downtown: for example, the colonnades on L'Esplanade Laurier and Ottawa City Hall. On the Nepean and Gloucester Street frontages of One60 Elgin, the covered walkway combines with the trees planted nearer the road to create a larger shaded area.

However, these exist as single blocks and are not integrated into longer networks. Litman says they should connect homes, commercial buildings and public transit within compact neighbourhoods.

Excessive heat makes walking dangerous

Litman argues that the combination of more urban areas and a hotter climate leads to excessive heat. He

defines that as 38 to 50°C, although Ottawans already were uncomfortable in three days of 32 to 35°C temperatures from May 31 to June 2.

That heat “makes urban walking uncomfortable and dangerous, leading to ill health, isolation, traffic problems, automobile dependency and sprawl.”

According to the World Health Organization, outdoor physical activity, including walking, is uncomfortable and unhealthy in temperatures over 32°C during the day and 24°C at night.

This is particularly important in Centretown, which has the highest walking modal share in the city – and the most noticeable heat island effect according to city studies.

That effect increases temperatures 0.5 to 4°C (1 to 7°F) due to more dark surfaces (pavement and roofing), reduced greenspace (less tree cover), and heat-generating activities (fuel and electricity consumption), Litman said.

“Pedestrians experience heat discomfort and risks when walking on unshaded sidewalks because they are physically active and absorbing heat from the sun above and radiated from below.”

How to create shady sidewalks

Shade can be created in many ways, Litman explains:

- covering sidewalks with slatted canopies of metal, wood, bamboo, or fabric;
- adding more large shade trees (but they require adequate space plus reliable

water, and take many years to grow);

- narrowing streets;
- designing new buildings with colonnades.

Shadeways should block at least 80 percent of sunlight on sidewalks and paths during summer mid-days (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), he said.

Litman's report shows photos of many canopies from around the world: for example, the 196-metre walkway connecting the Singapore Discovery Centre with a nearby bus-stop. It has a shade canopy incorporating solar panels.

Benefits of shadeways

“Although these cost more than basic sidewalks, they can greatly improve walking comfort and are far cheaper than motor vehicle infrastructure. Analysis in this report indicates that pedway and shadeway networks can often repay their costs through road, parking and vehicle savings, and by increasing local business activity and property values.”

By increasing walking, he argues, pedways

- improve user comfort and fitness, especially for physically and economically disadvantaged people;
- save money for users, since they don't need to drive as much;
- increase property values. One study found that 10-point increase in Walk Score is associated with a 5 to 8 percent increase in commercial values with even larger gains from proximity to high-quality transit stations;
- increase local business activity and tax revenue. Litman quoted studies that say businesses located in walkable commercial districts tend to have more customers and sales;
- reduce traffic problems and pollution, by reducing car travel.

Enclosed pedways

Litman also gives examples of pedways, such as Toronto's PATH network, that provide climate-controlled shelter for pedestrians. These skyways or underground cities have primarily been used in winter in Canadian and American cities, but are not common in Ottawa.

The underground section of Ottawa's LRT might provide a partial pedway, but it hasn't been used for that so far. In fact, many Ottawa LRT stations are notoriously unshaded and open to the weather.

Evaluating ped comfort

Litman has also devised a method for planners to evaluate pedestrian comfort – a Cool Walkshed Index (CWI) which rates pedway and shadeway network quality.

“Currently, most cities

have CWI ratings of D-F, which makes walking unpleasant and dangerous during hot periods; they should strive to achieve A-C in order to ensure that residents and employees always have comfortable pedestrian access to common services and activities.”

Its factors include access to services and transit, climate control, and continuity.

Public support needed

To be successful, Litman says, shadeway and pedway networks require public support.

“Their development requires effective planning and business models. They experience economics of scale – they become more effective and cost-effective [as] they expand and connect more people (potential customers and employees), businesses, and services, so property

owners should be encouraged or required to connect and support to them.”

While more expensive than basic sidewalks, “their costs are far lower than what governments spend on urban roadways, businesses spend on parking facilities, and motorists spend on vehicles in automobile-dependent areas.”

Their costs can be minimized if they are integrated into urban village development and implemented in conjunction with parking reforms and transportation demand management strategies, he said.

“They are most cost effective if built in compact urban villages with at least 25,000 residents and employees located within their walkshed. Their costs can be paid through value capture, with connection fees or special taxes.”



The First Baptist Church (at Elgin and Laurier) combined Doors Open Ottawa on June 3 with a plant sale and attracted many buyers wanting to add herbs and flowers to their gardens.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ



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Homelessness, affordable housing identified as major issues by Dalhousie AGM speakers



CitySHAPES founder Catherine McKenney (centre) spoke at the Dalhousie Community Association AGM on May 27, along with Chinatown BIA Executive Director Yukang Li (left). DCA President Catherine Boucher (right) listens.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

Alayne McGregor

“A great neighbourhood is where a two-year-old can walk to get a popsicle, and can get back before the popsicle melts.” That’s how former city councillor and CitySHAPES founder Catherine McKenney described their vision for a 14-minute neighbourhood. A corner store – the Preston Food Market in her area – is an important part, they said.

The 14-minute neighbourhood (even closer than a 15-minute) was the theme of the talks that McKenney and Chinatown BIA Executive Director Yukang Li gave to the Dalhousie Community Association annual general meeting on May 27.

Downtown essential, says Board of Trade

Downtown Ottawa recently received some bad news, and another initiative to try to save it.

In mid-May the federal government announced it was preparing to dispose of 10 buildings, including two downtown landmarks: the Jackson Building at 122 Bank and L’Esplanade Laurier.

Then, on June 9, the Ottawa Board of Trade “issued an urgent call to action to all levels of government to join them in declaring Downtown Ottawa their top priority.”

The board said that a vibrant downtown is important because it is a key driver of economic development for the entire region, a hub for community events and activities, and a major tourist attraction.

Its five-point plan included creating 15-minute neighbourhoods in Downtown, Centretown, and LeBreton; public and private investment in infrastructure; and addressing homelessness and addiction.

The current Downtown Revitalization Task Force said it is also continuing to develop ideas to revitalize downtown.

McKenney described why they moved to their home in Walnut Court in Dalhousie 17 years ago: affordable, in a diverse neighbourhood, the Plant Recreation Centre, nearby schools, the community health centre, great coffee shops and restaurants, close to their work – and great neighbours. It improved even more over the years with bike lanes and more neighbours in new developments.

Dalhousie is still lacking

a larger-scale grocery, and it’s not a perfect 14-minute neighbourhood, they said, but it’s getting there.

They identified the homelessness catastrophe and the lack of affordable housing as the major problem that needed to be addressed. Homelessness is not the result of addictions or poverty or other reasons, they said – there’s simply not enough affordable housing for those now unhoused.

Li talked about how his BIA is working to improve the image of Chinatown and to increase the foot traffic on Somerset Street West. This includes the three-day Night Market in early June, the Chinese cartoon statues on the street, murals, banners, and other projects to beautify the area. He mentioned two pairs of marble statues recently installed at each end of Chinatown.

The BIA does this work

on a very limited annual budget of \$140,000, supplemented by some grants. This makes it difficult to make long-term plans, he said. In contrast, Chinatowns in Edmonton and Vancouver are much better funded.

Drug use, homelessness, and crime were his top concerns. He said he received regular reports from businesses of thefts and trespassing, and several of the cartoon statues had been stolen or vandalized.

The city has not taken effective measures to address these problems, he said, and must do so. It needs to create positive change, “embrace the unique experience in Chinatown,” and keep it a “vibrant and inclusive place.”

In response to questions, he emphasized that Chinatown is a cultural centre as well as a business district, “a place that Asian people call home.” Regardless of some residents or businesses moving to the suburbs, it’s still a first stop for those of Asian heritage when they come to Ottawa.

Both speakers were asked how to ensure that Dalhousie residents have what they need to live a happy, healthy life. McKenney emphasized building mixed-use and mixed-income developments,

and more city amenities for recreation and bigger parks. They again pointed to the need for deeply affordable units for the unhoused, and places for seniors as they age.

“We have enough bedrooms in this city to end homelessness today. We just don’t have enough housing and affordable housing.”

Li said the BIA tries to attract families to Chinatown (e.g. with the statues) so they can walk the street with their children.

Another question asked about the impact of empty downtown offices caused by working from home. McKenney said that downtown will never again “be what it was” pre-COVID-19. Maybe 10 percent of the empty office buildings can be turned into housing, they said, but perhaps only one percent could be affordable. They argued that downtown needed to be made more animated and more fun, so that it’s liveable for the people living nearby.

“Build neighbourhoods for us. Others can visit.”

Li said the BIA is continuing to work on projects to promote the area, but has been stymied by very slow city permit approvals. It has been actively promoting using transit to get to Chinatown, he said.

Summer reading: Examining the underlying causes of “accidents”

There are no accidents

by Jessie Singer

Simon & Schuster, 2022

reviewed by Alayne McGregor

The drunk driver. The jaywalking pedestrian. The idiot cyclist, particularly if they don’t wear a helmet. The “accident-prone” worker who doesn’t properly attach their safety harness or follow safety instructions.

It makes us feel good to be able to blame those people when we hear of another death on the road or in a worksite, says author Jessie Singer. It makes that tragedy their problem, not one that would ever affect us.

But that doesn’t solve the underlying cause of those “accidents,” she says. It lets those responsible for dangerous situations off the hook: for example, owners of chemical factories or nuclear plants.

They can blame low-level operators for disasters rather than owning up to the badly designed safety systems, or confusing warning lights, or their decision to locate dangerous facilities near residential areas.

A similar case is when work in a mine or factory or warehouse is sped up so much that it’s impossible to accomplish what’s expected without taking shortcuts. Workers face a choice between risking their lives or getting fired.

She points out that, when automobiles were introduced into U.S. cities, they were considered a danger to people. A driver who hit and killed a child was almost killed by a mob of citizens. But then the automobile companies invented the crime of “jaywalking.” That changed the narrative so that pedestrians would be blamed for being hit by a car, rather than the driver for driving too fast or not avoiding the pedestrian.

Singer contends that pure “accidents” – incidents that could not be foreseen or prevented – do not exist. Rather, most of these incidents are a result of the “Swiss cheese” of different preventions failing and of the underlying situation being dangerous. She points to one incident where a black mother needed to cross a fast, multi-lane road to get from a bus stop to her home on the other side. Traffic engineers had decided a pedestrian signal

THERE ARE
NO
ACCIDENTS

The Deadly Rise of Injury
and Disaster – Who Profits
and Who Pays the Price

JESSIE SINGER

wasn’t warranted at that location because there weren’t enough pedestrians crossing there. So the mother had the choice of dragging three small children 13 minutes each way to the nearest signalized crossing, or crossing against traffic. Tragically, one child was hit by a motorist in the middle of the street. Then the mother was charged.

The book doesn’t just deal with traffic, however. Singer also discusses opioid overdoses, mine collapses, distance to hospitals, and more. In all these cases, she goes beyond physical causes to talk about how underlying racism – especially against black and Indigenous people – and underlying prejudice against low-income people leads to a much higher risk of being in an “accident.” The statistics (taken from the U.S. but likely applicable here) are stark: if you live in a wealthier area and have a comfortable income yourself, you’re not facing the same risks.

Blaming those involved in an “accident” has a basic problem: it doesn’t fix the underlying risks. Singer argues that an attitude which assumes people

will make mistakes, and looks for ways to make those mistakes non-lethal, is ultimately more useful than trying to make people act perfectly. Reduce traffic speeds; require that construction workers wear safety harnesses; redesign cars so they minimize injuries to passengers in a crash. Remove dangerous conditions. Even “make the world safe for drunks.”

Also regulate safe practices and ensure that government agencies are not subject to “regulatory capture” by companies who would prefer less-rigorous safety standards.

Singer also argues that larger issues need to be addressed, like heavy, high SUVs that are more likely to kill pedestrians in a collisions; wide, straight multi-lane roads and 85th percentile speed limits, which encourage dangerously fast driving; and climate emergencies that will lead to death from heat stroke.

“Find the nuance in every accident. Reject the accident described without a systemic explanation. Demand a longer, more detailed story. Ask why the Swiss cheese is stacked the way it is. Every accident is borne of overlaid failures. Find the systems that led to an accident – the big and the small, the personal and the systemic, the design of the road and the racism of vehicular homicide prosecution as well. This is the only way to prevent accidents.”

This book was inspired by the tragic death of a dear friend of Singer’s, who was crushed by a car while riding his bike in New York City. Of course, you would say – a perfect argument for segregating bike lanes. But, in fact, the cyclist was riding on a separated recreational path along a highway.

What happened to him was not his fault. It was caused by the fact that the city did not properly block off car access to the path with permanent metal bollards. There were several places along the path where a confused or drunk driver could turn the wrong way and drive along the path. More cyclists were killed after her friend. Finally, more than a decade later, the bollards were installed after a man drove over 20 people on the path in a terror attack.

I agree with Singer that we need to look at the underlying causes of these “accidents.” But, in my opinion, we also need to ensure we have the correct and complete solutions.

This book is available at the Ottawa Public Library.

More volunteers and donations needed to help feed Ottawa's hungry

Susan Palmal

On October 6, 2022, the Ottawa Public Foods' Your Community Fridge and Pantry opened its doors on the grounds of 415 MacLaren Street.

The fridge is open 24/7 and operates on the principle "Take What you Need and Leave What You Can."

Since then, success has been building!

Partners in the project include Glebe St. James United Church, the Carleton University School of Architecture, Ottawa Community Housing, Arlington 5 Café, and the Centretown Community Health Centre.

Volunteer "Fridge Checkers" visit the fridge twice a day to ensure the site is kept tidy and inappropriate items are removed. They check the fridge temperature and stock the shelves if supplies are available.

Often our volunteers report that there is no food in the fridge or on the pantry shelves. That tells us the program is successful.

We know that the shelves are being stocked regularly by individual community members and local businesses and churches, and emptied by those who need the food most.

More donors needed

Our donors thus far include: Cedars & Co, The Wild Oat, The OOS Quickie, Glebe St. James UC, the Centretown Community Food Centre, Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC), Carlington Community Chaplaincy, Hintonburg Marché, Golden Baguette Bakery, Café Deluxe, Massine's YIG and many individuals.

The Real Canadian Superstore and McKeen Metro Glebe donate via Foodsharing Ottawa.

We need to grow this list by spreading the word!

Preventing food waste

This is a community-based program which we hope will be self-sustaining shortly. We expect that the surrounding communities of Centretown and the Glebe



These residents patiently waited for Ottawa Public Foods volunteers to unload donated food and then filled their bags.

will make it so!

A main focus of our project and other Community Fridges across the country is to prevent food waste.

We have been soliciting businesses in the area to donate good food which cannot be otherwise sold and would go in the trash.

For example, food which is past its best before date or produce which is bruised or dark is still good food even if merchants cannot sell it.

How can you help us?

We need to add to our roster of Fridge Checkers and to build a roster of occasional drivers. We get calls at short notice from centrally located businesses to pick up food to deliver to 415 MacLaren Street; we need drivers who can be available quickly.

It's an easy way to contribute to bettering the health of our residents in Centretown Ottawa.

Please contact us directly at 613-286-3435 or through our website at ottawapublicfoods.org



Cedars & Co donated seven crates of food to the pantry.

BOTH PHOTOS BY SUSAN PALMAL/PUBLIC FOODS

MP | député
YASIR NAQVI

Ottawa Centre | Ottawa-Centre

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613 946 8682 | Yasir.Naqvi@parl.gc.ca
404-1066 rue Somerset Street West/Ouest
Ottawa, ON K1Y 4T3



@YasirNaqviCDN



@Yasir_Naqvi

Candidate didn't file election return - now can't run in 2026 election

Alayne McGregor

Brandon Russell, who ran for councillor in Somerset Ward in 2022, won't be able to run again in 2026.

The City of Ottawa Elections Office reports that Russell has not filed his financial report for the 2022 elections and is thus deemed to be in default.

The [city elections website](http://cityelectionsweb.site) says that, under the Ontario Municipal Elections Act, Subsection 88.23(2), candidates in default "must forfeit any office to which they were elected and are ineligible to run in any municipal election in the Province of Ontario, or be appointed to office, until after the 2026 Municipal Elections."

The act requires all candidates to file a report to disclose and report any contributions and expenses during their campaign period. Ottawa's filing deadline was March 31, 2023, or May 1 if the candidate paid a \$500 late filing fee.

The other two candidates

in Somerset Ward filed their reports on time.

In April, in response to a BUZZ inquiry, Russell said, "We had an issue with our auditing team that caused the report to be unfinished by the deadline. Due to the city aligning its deadline with tax season this caused an impossible deadline. Our report will be submitted next week."

The BUZZ asked Russell last week why his report had not yet been filed, and has not received a response.

New options for green mobility

continued from page 1
has been evolving the business model for a year.

It began after he was injured and left immobile for a short period. A close friend lent him a cargo e-bike, and "it changed [his] world." He started to see the possibilities of not only e-bikes, but cargo e-bikes and "what they can do for transportation in the city, and what they can do for people."

The bikes have impressive weight limits, cater to-

ward people of all sizes and different mobilities, and can be adjusted to the rider's comfort. The low centre of gravity provides better balance and stability compared to both e-bikes and regular bikes. Robertson hopes to see cargo e-bikes and e-bikes become a widespread mode of transportation in Ottawa, and wants people to experience how fun these bikes are!

Robertson hopes to see cargo e-bikes and e-bikes become a widespread mode of transportation in Ottawa, and wants people to experience how fun these bikes are!

Let's Go Cargo can be reached at www.lets gocargo.ca

Raised crossings to be installed in O'Connor bikeway

Alayne McGregor

Three intersections in the O'Connor Street segregated bikeway will be modified this summer in response to safety concerns.

All three – at Waverley, at Cooper, and at Nepean – have been associated with cyclist/motorist collisions.

On the first day the bikeway opened (October 25, 2016), a cyclist was hit by a car turning at Waverley. Another was hit two weeks later in the same location by a left-turning motorist. A third was hit at that spot in November 2017, and a fourth in August 2019.

At O'Connor and Cooper, a cyclist was hit in June 2017; at O'Connor and Nepean, a cyclist reported being hit in November 2019.

The city said it plans to change the intersections to reduce vehicle speeds across the bikeway and to improve the visibility of cyclists and pedestrians. The changes will cost \$1.465 million; the original project cost \$4 million.

Construction is scheduled to begin this month and end in the fall. During that time, the city said, lanes on O'Connor and/or the bikeway may be closed. The bikeway may be detoured onto O'Connor “with proper traffic control in place.”

Raised crossings will be installed on the east side of O'Connor at Nepean, at

Cooper, and at Waverley. This will require diverting the street slightly to the west at each of the intersections to allow space for the ramps up to the raised intersections. Bulb-outs will narrow the intersections as well.

The changes will require individually closing access to each of these streets from O'Connor for seven days, the city said. During these closures, the block between O'Connor and Metcalfe on each street may be converted to allow two-way traffic.

It said the changes are in response to the recommendations of a safety review of the bikeway, “concerning southbound left and eastbound through movements across the bikeway.” *The BUZZ* requested to see the safety review but was not able to obtain a copy or learn who conducted it.

The bikeway, on the east side of the one-way south-bound street, has one north-bound and one south-bound lane. The two lanes are separated from the rest of the street by concrete curbs topped by flex posts. These barriers are interrupted at every intersection and driveway. There are 13 intersections on O'Connor between Laurier and Catherine, and at least nine additional driveways.

Consultation preferred realigning street

An online public information session was held in July 2022 to allow

the public to see preliminary design drawings for two alternative solutions. According to a city report, participants at the session who expressed an opinion preferred Alternative 2, which was eventually chosen. One comment noted that realigning O'Connor might calm traffic; several asked if the city could beautify the street through planting.

Another asked how the city would be dealing with the many drivers who cross O'Connor even where it is prohibited, such as at Cooper.

Several comments asked about the impact of the parking spaces removed in order to realign the street. In a later phone call, a representative of the office building at 190 O'Connor and the apartment building at 171 O'Connor opposed removing the parking because of its usefulness for pick-ups, drop-offs, deliveries, and tenant moving trucks.

On the other hand, another participant said, “I bike down this street everyday and the street parking is hardly ever all used. I don't see this being an issue; there is enough side street parking anyway.” Another noted that removing parking improved sight lines for cyclists crossing the street and motorists turning right.

The BUZZ obtained cyclist collision reports from news stories and social media. More collisions may have occurred at these three intersections.



CCA report

Jack Hanna

Farmers market reopens

The Elgin Street Market is back on Sundays for the summer.

The market, in Boushey Square at Elgin and Waverley, gets started Sunday, July 9.

There will be vegetables, both organic or not; gourmet mushrooms; herbs; artisanal breads; and apple pies. There will be craft beers and ciders, and take-home Italian and Lebanese foods. Artisans will offer candles, soaps, and lotions.

The CCA-sponsored market will run every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Ottawa's shot at a Champs-Élysées

A new history walking tour, out of the Elgin Street Market, launches in July. It will feature Ottawa's failed dream to have a Champs-Élysées of its very own – a grand avenue.

Metcalfe Street runs between two icons: Parliament Hill and the Victoria Memorial Museum building. In the early 1900s, it was well on its way to becoming the Grande Allée of the nation's capital. It was a tree-lined boulevard perfect for the gentry to take a genteel carriage ride. Some of Ottawa's biggest industrialists and politicians built their mansions there.

Hear all about it every second Sunday through the summer. Alternate Sundays will feature the walking tour *Canal and Communities*, an exploration of early villages in Centretown and the challenges of building the local stretch of the canal.

See the CCA's website or the meetup app for a schedule. To join a walk, be at the Elgin entrance to the Elgin Street Market at 11 a.m., starting July 9.

The only cost is an optional donation to the CCA.

DCA report: development, traffic, trees, block party

Ed McKenna

Dalhousie Community Association elects new board and executive

Catherine Boucher is returning as president of the Dalhousie Community Association. Catherine will be joined on the executive committee by Ryan Turley (secretary), David Seaborn (treasurer), and Ed McKenna (vice-president). All four accepted a second two-year term during the first meeting of the new DCA board of directors on June 1.

The new board had been elected during a successful in-person annual general meeting, held May 27 at the Plant Recreation Centre. Charles Akben-Marchand, Archie Campbell, Ida Henderson, Jenna Moore, Zsafia Orosz, Lory Picheca, Michael Powell, and Sally Rutherford have also agreed to serve another term.

The DCA welcomes to the board three new members: Debbie Barton, Imran Kaderdina, and Amy Wong.

We've Been ONCA'd!

A principal task at this year's AGM was to ensure the DCA is fully compliant with the revised Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, popularly known as ONCA, which came into force in 2021.

The AGM was asked to approve new articles of incorporation and updated by-laws for the DCA, which are now ready for filing with the Government of Ontario. Contact us if you'd like electronic copies. This was the first update to the bylaws since 1995.

Thank you!

A thank you to Ten Toes Coffee House, our newest neighbourhood hang-out at Somerset and Rochester, for providing the coffee that everyone enjoyed at the AGM. And we've received a thank you from the Dalhousie Food Cupboard to those who donated when we passed the hat during the AGM.

More New Development on Preston

The DCA board heard from the Plan Our Neighbourhood Committee that Claridge Homes has submitted a revised application to develop the northwest corner of Carling and Preston. Twenty storeys have been lopped off the 60 first proposed for the tower. Most importantly, the six-storey above-ground parking garage is gone.

The committee also reported on an application for a six-storey 30-unit apartment building at 224 Preston at Larch. The proposed development does not comply with the zoning by-law: it's 20 metres high (15 metres are permitted) and is not set back sufficiently from its residential neighbours.

Watch for a public consultation on 224 Preston. In the meantime, the DCA will be submitting comments to the city on both proposals.

Eccles Street block party

The Eccles Street block party is going ahead again this year!

Here's the date: Saturday, June 17, from 4 to 7 p.m. The location is on Eccles, of course, in the block between Booth and Rochester.

Public Realm Committee

The DCA's Public Realm Committee participated in the Dalhousie & Centretown Climate Resiliency Community Dialogue, organized by the Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability (CAFES) Ottawa. The event took place June 13 at the McNabb Recreation Centre.

The committee is continuing its work to inventory properties in Dalhousie with potential as parks and greenspace. It's planning to embark on a tree inventory using the NeighbourWoods model.

And volunteers will be knocking on doors later in the summer to encourage homeowners to participate in the City's Trees in Trust program.

A Presentation on Traffic Issues in Dalhousie

With the assistance of Councillor's Troster's office, the Mobility Committee made a presentation to city transportation and traffic staff on Tuesday, May 30. The subject? “The Booth Street Corridor: A Community Perspective.”

This perspective includes the view that the temporary changes to the intersections at Booth and the Parkway, and Booth and Albert are a success, and should be maintained.

It also includes a request to do more to limit and slow traffic on Booth in traditional residential areas, and a growing concern about the impact of increased traffic in Dalhousie arising from development on LeBreton Flats and southbound truck traffic coming over the Chaudière Crossing.

The presentation kicks off the committee's campaign to have greater community involvement in decisions about traffic management in the neighbourhood, including better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

This won't be easy work, given that the city is insisting that the current restrictions on southbound traffic on Booth must be lifted, and that the westbound left turn from the Parkway onto Booth will again be prohibited, beginning in the fall.

The National Capital Commission has re-submitted its application to the city to eliminate the planned Preston extension between Albert and the parkway, which will afford the community another opportunity to address these concerns.

For more news about what's happening in our community, become a DCA member and join us at our next monthly meeting, June 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Check out the DCA website: ottawadalhousie.ca. Or write to us at president@ottawadalhousie.ca

Sunday gardening in Dundonald Park

Throughout the summer, volunteer gardeners will be busy in Dundonald Park Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings. Newcomers are welcome. Bring gloves and small gardening tools.

On Sundays, gardeners maintain and enhance the park's big beds from 2 to 4 p.m. On Thursdays, they work from 4 to 7 p.m. There's also a need for volunteers to water the beds, at times to be determined.

For information, email: dinahrob@sympatico.ca

Build the big bee garden on Frank Street

The gardens on the edges of Frank Street near Bank are looking for volunteers. Folks are needed to tend the gardens, help organize events, and maintain the survey of which plants that bees and other pollinators are visiting.

For information, or to volunteer: ray673294.wixsite.com/frankstbbg

High school volunteer hours

The CCA could use volunteers this summer, so if you are a high school student looking to chalk up volunteer hours, email: membership@centretowncitizens.ca

Volunteers might help publicize CCA events by stuffing flyers in mailboxes, putting up posters, or chatting with people and handing out materials at the CCA table at the Elgin Street Market.

Live Music, and more, in Dundonald Park

There's free live music in Dundonald Park Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons throughout the summer.

On Friday evenings, the music starts at 6:30 p.m. The series includes everything from solos to quartets, and covers genres from Celtic to R&B, folk, jazz, and pop.

Saturday mini pop-up concerts at 1 p.m. will feature local groups through the Music and Beyond festival, Sax Appeal, and the Odyssey Showcase.

There also are regular fitness activities in Dundonald Park. A walking group sets out from the park each Thursday at 5:30 p.m. On Saturdays, there are two opportunities to get fit outdoors. Soungui Fitness provides a workout Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. in the park. Cattleya Yoga Studio does downward facing dog Saturdays at 5 p.m.

The fate of Wellington Street

The CCA's Transportation Committee will meet on the evening of Wednesday, June 28, to discuss the future of Wellington Street and formulate a CCA position. Should ownership of Wellington be transferred from the city to the federal government?

To take part, email transportation@centretowncitizens.ca

What's on in Ottawa and beyond this summer

Tony Wohlfarth

This month, we celebrate the best in Ottawa music, highlight new exhibits at Ottawa museums, and review two films worth screening.

The Wrath of Becky

Rebecca (Becky) is a 16-year-old foster child. She works at a local diner, has lived in four foster homes, and has a mischievous streak. At night, she escapes to avenge the death of her father at the hands of neo-Nazis. Becky's exploits take down a cell of The Noble Men, a neo-Nazi group out to assassinate a US senator.

The film is a nicely packaged bloody expedition with a happy ending.

I was particularly impressed by Lulu Wilson who plays the role of Becky. The storyline is a nice blend of Charlottesville, January 6, and the Freedom Convoy – with flags reminiscent of the occupation of Ottawa last February. A fine good versus evil story.

The Wrath of Becky had its world premiere at South by Southwest in April. The co-directors are Matt Angel and Suzanne Cooté. The film is currently showing in suburban Ottawa movie theatres and is available on DVD on August 15. Running time is 1h23m.

The Rise of Wagner

The Wagner Group is a private army of mercenaries, led by one of Russia's most notorious millionaires, Yevgeny Prigozhin. *The Rise of Wagner* is a thoughtful and chilling documentary film directed by Benoit Bringer.

The film tracks the history of the Wagner Group from Syria to the Central African Republic, Mali, and the Ukraine, as it evaded

international scrutiny. The film documents the extreme methods the group has used, including the widespread use of torture. The images are graphic and disturbing. Nothing gets sugar coated.

The Rise of Wagner had its world premiere at the Hot Docs Film Festival. Running time is 1h44m.

Canadian Museum of Nature (240 McLeod)

The museum has a new exhibition, *Under the Canopy*, on until January 7, 2024. It takes you into the tropical rain forest, with live geckos, sloths, and iguanas on display. Special admission rates apply. www.nature.ca

Week-long *Museum Explorers* summer youth camps are also offered at the museum from June 26 until July 30. See campottawa.com At the museum's national collections facility in Gatineau, a *Nature Play* summer camp will take place weekly from July 24 to August 26. See outtoplay.ca/summer-camps/

Canadian War Museum (1 Vimy Place)

The museum begins a new exhibition on June 22, running until March 31, 2024. *Canada, Korea and The War* marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. Tickets: www.warmuseum.ca

Jane's Walks Ottawa-Gatineau 2023

Jane's Walks is a festival of free neighbourhood walking tours, named in honour of Jane Jacobs, which help put people in touch with their city. A few of this year's local walks in May were cancelled due to flooding.

On June 17, five walks return: four in Gatineau and one, *Un-Built Ottawa*, in downtown Ottawa.



The Cuvier Dwarf's Caiman control populations of predatory fish in rainforests. Two are now on display in *Under the Canopy* at the Canadian Museum of Nature. MARTIN LIPMAN/CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE

In the two-hour Ottawa walk, leader Dennis Van Staaldunin recounts the history of dozens of mega-projects (like a Grand Metcalfe Boulevard) that would have changed the face of Ottawa – but they never got built. Registration: www.janeswalkottawa.ca/en/walks/mini-janes-walk-ottawa-gatineau-jun-2023/21884

Under the Sea

James Cameron's submarine, the Deep-sea Challenger, is on display in Ottawa at 50 Sussex Drive until September 1. The exhibition is on from Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

Info: pressure.canadiangeographic.ca

Introducing The Ottawa Bagel Shop Music Fest

On Wednesdays and Sunday this summer until August 27, you can catch solo musicians live at The Ottawa Bagel Shop, 1321 Wellington Street West. All performances get underway at 2 p.m. and are free.

For a list of performers: ottawabagelshop.com/pages/music-fest

Bluesfest 2023

Bluesfest returns to LeBreton Flats on July 6-16. The strong lineup includes Shania Twain on July 6; Digging Roots on July 7; Robert Plant & Allison Krauss, BADBAD-NOTGOOD, and Blackie and The Rodeo Kings on July 8; Alan Doyle, and Tegan & Sara on July 9; Foo Fighters on July 12; and Allison Russell, and Charlotte Cardin on July 14. Info and tickets: ottawabluesfest.ca

National Arts Centre (1 Elgin)

The NAC is the place to be on Canada Day. The NAC Orchestra and guest Canadian artists will perform a free 75-minute concert of music by Canadian composers, culminating with "Hymn to Freedom" by Oscar Peterson. The concert gets underway in Southam Hall at 2 p.m.

This is the first in a series of free, mostly daytime concerts. See nac-cna.ca/en/series/summer-ete-free-gratuit

Other shows include:

• June 15-17: The NAC Orchestra performs Mozart's Don Giovanni;

continued on page 10 "What's on"

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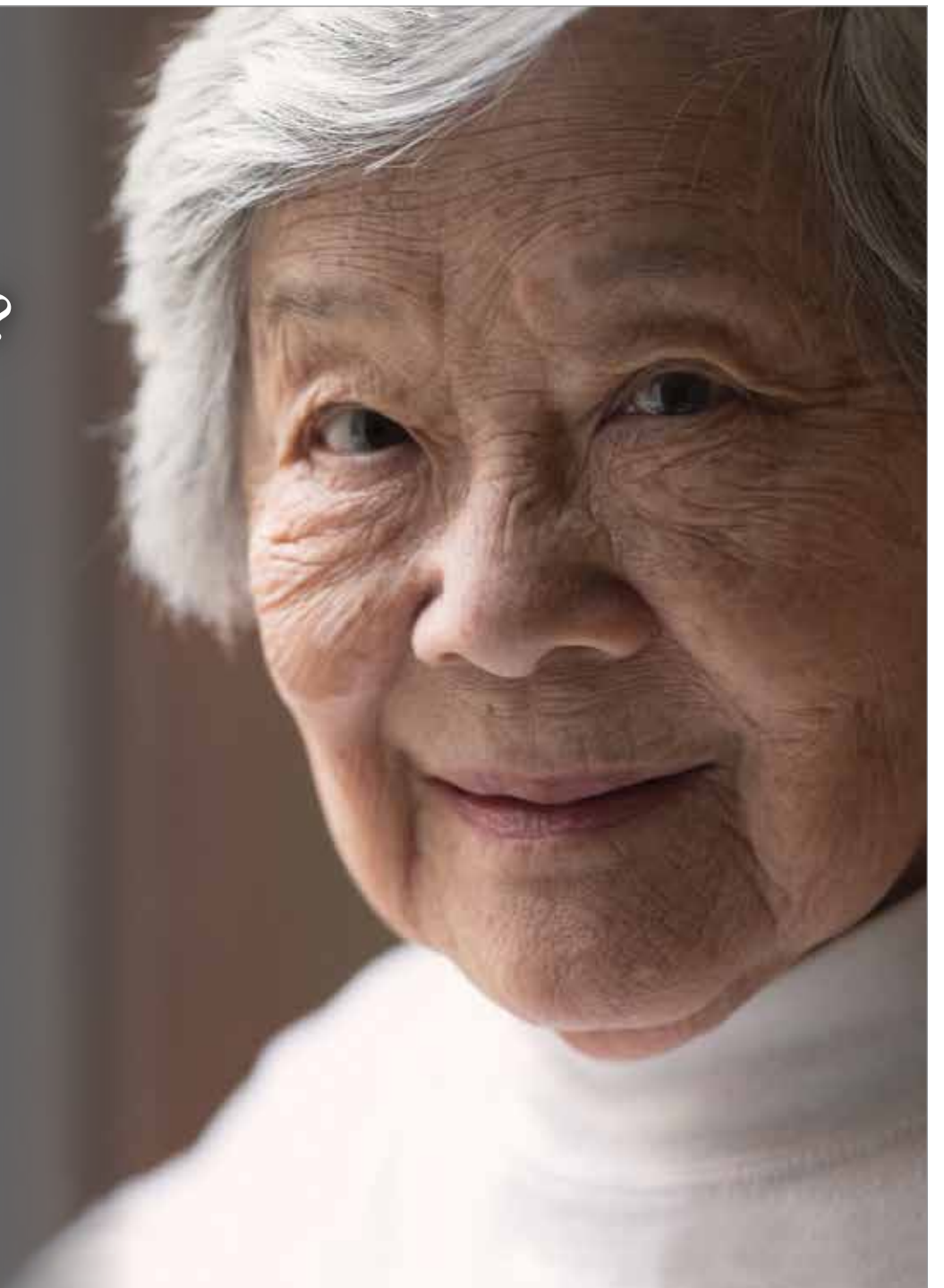
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Why bees need trees – especially in the spring



Dinah Robinson found this bumblebee queen walking on her deck in Centretown in early May when very few flowers were available, and fed it maple syrup from a spoon as a nectar replacement. Bumblebees will fly on cool, windy days, unlike honeybees who prefer temperatures over 10 degrees and low winds. *DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ*

Dinah Robinson

In early spring, when few other flowers are available, certain trees are a powerhouse of abundant nutrients for pollinators.

Pollinators that emerge early from hibernation, like the fuzzy bumblebee or the Dunning’s Miner bee, are desperate to find early flowering willow, maple, birch, and cherry trees. If they cannot find the type of food they need or their emergence is out of sync with the earliest flowers, they will not be able to survive and create a new generation of pollinators.

Some tree flowers are more subtle

Some trees like magnolias and cherries have beautiful showy blossoms. Most trees have smaller, more subtle, flowers that are higher up in the canopy where we don’t often get a chance to notice. If we could see into the canopy, we would notice many early pollinators.

Red maple and willow have prolific flowers as do elm and birch, which all come out in early spring. Cherry trees and many understory varieties of willow are appropriate for urban settings with limited space.

Trees feed pollinators after a winter’s nap

When native pollinators start to emerge from hibernation, the first thing they need is food after a winter of fasting. They require nectar as a source of fuel for themselves and pollen in order to start laying eggs to create a new generation – building up a colony for a bumblebee, or simply laying eggs and moving on for solitary bees and many wasps.

All require easy access to food after a long winter’s nap. Have you ever seen a bumblebee, bumbling around in a strange place, i.e., not on a flower? She could be a starving queen because she can’t find enough flowers for fuel in early spring.

Trees provide the earliest and most abundant pollen and

nectar sources for honeybees. Honeybees depend on trees to build up the colony strength coming out of winter. One acre of clover will yield up to 160 pounds of honey and one acre of linden trees can deliver up to 1,200 pounds.

Trees generally flower a month before dandelions come out. Trees have long blooming periods and their flowers continue to refresh with nectar for many weeks.

With fruit trees, the flowers only produce nectar until they have been properly pollinated. At that point the tree doesn’t want to waste resources. It can only support the production of so many seeds and once that number has been achieved the flowers fall off. Fruit trees have the added benefit of providing food for pollinators, birds, and people.

An investment to last decades

The impact of planting trees will last beyond our natural lives, if the trees are allowed to thrive. Perennials can last many years and saving seeds ensures a further lasting impact on biodiversity and pollinator protection. Annuals last only one season and can be a bit high-maintenance (all that dead-heading), but they do add color and nectar sources during the gaps in flowering times between the other plants in our gardens. As long as they’re native plants, the native pollinators will enjoy them.

The food chain – ours and theirs

Trees support a large variety of moths and butterflies, both as host plants for the caterpillars and as food source for the adult. Butterflies and moths develop from caterpillars, which are food for baby birds. Birds spread the seeds of many plants and trees to ensure more will grow, supporting the development of more caterpillars, so the cycle can continue.

Entomologist and author Douglas Tallamy studied the diversity of insects that we’re developing on trees. He compared insects found on the four most common native trees



A frame from a beehive with swarm cells. A new queen is developing in the large peanut-shaped cell. May-June is peak swarm season in Ontario and this year has already been especially busy. *DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ*

with those found on the most common alien tree species.

He proved that native plants produce over four times as much biomass as non-natives and supported 3.2 times as many herbivore species. He also found that native plants supported 35 times more caterpillar biomass than the aliens, meaning there is 35 times more food available for birds in areas with native plants.

Lost trees equals lost bees

Ottawa has lost a significant number of trees recently. A city staff memo to council on April 26 said that the derecho storm alone took down over 2,500 trees on city property. The city has no way of gauging how many individual trees were lost on private property or in forest stands.

We will never know the full impact of recent extreme weather on our dwindling tree canopy. The April ice storm caused major tree losses again, and it’s not clear how many.

Tree replacement and canopy regeneration are hugely important in protecting us and other species from the impacts of climate change and extreme weather.

Do you have a place for a tree? Front yard trees are free from the city’s Trees in Trust program. If you want a more mature tree, visit a reputable nursery that carries native species.

Councillor | Conseillère
Ariel Troster
 Quartier Somerset Ward

@Somerset_Ward
 @ariel4somersetward
 arieltroster.com
 @ariel4somersetward
 613-580-2484
 ariel.troster@ottawa.ca

Sign up for our weekly MPP email updates at joelhardenmpp.ca!

Joel Harden

MPP, Ottawa Centre
 joelhardenmpp.ca

109 Catherine St.
 Ottawa, ON. K2P 2M8
 JHarden-CO@ndp.on.ca
 613-722-6414

Cooking with less energy keeps us cool

Cathy Woodgold

This spring, we've already had record wildfires in Alberta and Nova Scotia, causing heartbreaking loss, while adding yet more carbon to the atmosphere. The good news is that we can help. Every small action we take to reduce our carbon footprint helps reduce the climate change that worsens these disasters.

As hotter weather comes on, people naturally feel like eating more cold foods, with greater emphasis on dishes such as salads and fruit and hummus. When we do cook, it heats the home, a benefit in winter but a liability in summer. If we run an air conditioner, it has a hard enough time trying to squeeze coolness out of the hot outdoor air without added heat from cooking at hot times of day.

Energy efficiency can be as simple as keeping a lid on a pot and turning the heat down as soon as it starts to boil. Whether you use gas or electricity, a conventional oven is probably the biggest user of energy and heater of the home.

If you do turn on the oven, use it to cook more than one thing or to cook a large batch. Some foods can be cooked on the stovetop instead.

Although fossil-fuel-powered generation provides only a small fraction of our overall electricity, it can be a significant part of the generation added during peak usage times.

While the efficiency of any appliance depends on how you use it, there are plug-in appliances that can be more efficient than the stovetop, such as one with insulation around the sides

and an embedded heating element.

It might be a combination slow cooker, pressure cooker, and stovetop-like cooker. Depending on how you use it and how often you cook, it might save enough electricity to cover its purchase price in a year or two. If it turns off automatically after a set time, it will also cut down on those inconvenient situations involving smoke alarms and blackened pots.

A microwave oven might be very efficient at rapidly heating food, but underwhelming at keeping food hot for an extended time to cook it, perhaps outperformed by a pot with a lid simmering on the stove. Taste, texture and chemistry can also vary with cooking method.

Enjoy your meals, keep cool, and have a nice summer!

What's on in Ottawa this summer



Danielle Allard at the Capital Music Awards.
TONY WOHLFARTH/THE BUZZ

continued from page 8

- June 22-24: Tony DeSare and Capathia Jenkins pay tribute to the music of Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald with the NAC Orchestra;

- June 23: *TuBari*, a tribute to tuba great Howard Johnson;

- July 5: Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* by Matthew Whitaker and the NAC Orchestra;

- August 15-16: Al Qahwa releases its new album, *Weyn Allah*, in two free shows;

- August 19: Jane Siberry;
- August 21-25: ElderQueers Storytelling workshop.

www.nac-cna.ca

New Broadway Across Canada season

Broadway Across Canada has announced a new season of musicals at the NAC: *Hairspray*, *Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations*, *Frozen*, *Six*, and *Les Misérables*. The current season ends with *Hadestown* on August 22-27.

Info: ottawa.broadway.com/shows/

The 2023 Capital Music Awards

On June 1, a boisterous sold-out crowd gathered at the Bronson Centre (211 Bronson Avenue) to celebrate the best musicians in Ottawa. Mayor Mark Sutcliffe opened the gala along with Ottawa Music Industry Coalition Executive Director Melanie Brulée and our own city councillor, Ariel Troster.

The award for Best Songwriter of the Year went to Danielle Allard. Allard streams her live music three times a week via Twitch and can be seen in person on June 28 at The

Ottawa Bagelshop Music Fest, and again on July 28 at The Rainbow Bistro on 76 Murray Street. www.danielleallard.com/events

The fan choice award for live music venue went to The Rainbow Bistro.

Live on Elgin (220 Elgin)

On June 16, music producer Stefan Jurwicz releases his first novel, *Lemon*, with a performance by his Desert Island Big Band and two other groups. On June 23, Edmonton melodic pop trio Scenic Route to Alaska perform. www.liveonelgin.com/collections/shows/

Redbird Live (1165 Bank Street)

Check out these shows (and many more) at Redbird Lounge (www.redbirdlive.ca):

- June 16: Caroline Marie Brooks and Ben Kunder

- June 22: jazz master Roddy Ellias (free)

- July 5: Nova Scotia's own Terra Spencer

I met Terra at Folk Alliance International (FAI) in Kansas City in February. Her voice is incredible and you can read more about her in the [February 2023 BUZZ](#).

- July 20: Release show for the Ottawa Guitar Trio's second EP, *Level 2*: tunes from video games reimagined for a classical guitar trio.

- July 29: Ben Caplan

Out of Town

Festival International de Jazz de Montréal

Downtown Montreal will soon come alive with the sounds of live music. The Montreal jazzfest (June 29 to July 8) is two festivals in one. Music fans stroll Ste. Catherine listening to blues, jazz, and pop performers on free outdoor stages. Indoors are major jazz names: Snarky Puppy, The Bad Plus, Emilie-Claire Barlow, Colin Stetson, Sheila Jordan, George Benson, Brad Mehldau, Hiromi, Gretchen Parlato, Chucho Valdés, John Pizzarelli, Stacey Kent, Diana Krall, John Scofield, and many more – at much higher prices.

Info: montrealjazzfest.com

Visit to Tasmania, Australia

I visited Hobart, the capital of Tasmania, this month. The Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) undertakes research in Antarctica. IMAS has a rich and diverse collection and is well worth a visit.

Tony Wohlfarth is an Ottawa-based freelance film and entertainment writer. He covered the 2023 Capital Music Awards and is part of a group of longstanding volunteers at the Ottawa Jazz Festival later this month.



Ottawa-raised Dana Fradkin (seen here in a previous Classic Theatre show) plays the role of Irene Eliot in the rediscovered comedy *Affairs of State*.

JEAN-DENIS LABELLE

Summer play festival a tonic for troubled times

Matthew Behrens

The Classic Theatre Festival – which produces hits from the golden age of Broadway and the London stage – describes its summer season as a “tonic for troubled times.”

It features playwrights whose work is better known than their authors, even though both were prolific writers for stage and screen.

For a capital city still dealing with the ongoing rancour of polarization, the festival's combination of a rediscovered post-WWII comedic gem set in Washington, DC, along with a mystery described by the *Times of London* as the “most fiendishly clever thriller ever written for the stage” promises thoughtful and humorous entertainment on its stage at the Arts Court Theatre (2 Daly Avenue).

Legendary Broadway playwright and Hollywood screenwriter Louis Verneuil's *Affairs of State* is a funny and intriguing story about the diplomatic deals and double crosses behind closed doors in Washington. It features a memorable love quadrangle that threatens the appointment of a new under-secretary of state, and is a fitting entertainment for Canada's capital city.

“*Affairs of State* invites us to revisit an age when satirical comedies were sophisticated, smart, sassy, insightful, and fun,” says Artistic Producer Laurel Smith.

Though first staged in 1950 – it ran almost two years on Broadway – *Affairs of State's* witty lines could be pulled from today's headlines, from “He's been a personal friend of mine for years, even if he is a Republican!” to “He is insignificance incarnate. He's allergic to thinking.”

While audiences may find themselves doing a double take to see Republicans and Democrats talking civilly with each other, they'll also enjoy a European-style relationship comedy by the prolific Verneuil, who also wrote the 1946 Bette Davis film classic, *Deception*.

Sleuth is a gripping thriller

The Festival's 2023 focus on theatre legends extends to its second show of the season: the gripping, Tony Award-winning thriller *Sleuth*. It's an ingenious story of a mystery writer whose obsession with the inventions and deceptions of fiction and his fascination with games and game-playing sets off a very dangerous and deadly chain of events.

Smith says this rollercoaster of a thriller – equal

parts mischievous humour and gripping anticipation – “continually puts the dramatic pedal to the metal, drawing audiences to the edge of their seats as they try to keep one step ahead of the increasingly desperate characters' life-and-death, cat-and-mouse battle of wits.”

Sleuth was written by Anthony Shaffer, who also wrote the screenplays for Alfred Hitchcock's *Frenzy*, as well as Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Death on the Nile*, and *Evil Under the Sun*.

It was partially inspired by a Shaffer family friend, the late composer Stephen Sondheim, who had an intense interest in game-playing.

“We love the era of the plays we produce at the Festival (1900s through the 1970s), when so much of what was happening in the world was reflected on stage in a way that helped inform and interpret our lives,” Smith says.

“The American author Joan Didion once wrote that we tell ourselves stories in order to live, and we strive to do just that. There's a universality to these stories that allows us to revisit and re-interpret them for our own lives.”

Tickets are on sale at www.classictheatre.ca or (613) 695-9330.

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Touring on home turf



The starting point of the Jane's Walk, which Stephen Thirlwall chronicles here, was Dundonald Park. Here walk participants learn about the park's history from tour leader Sarah Gelbard.

STEPHEN THIRLWALL/THE BUZZ

Stephen Thirlwall

Take a walk! That's the good advice of the late Jane Jacobs, a journalist, author, and brilliant promoter of urban studies and activism.

From the early 1960s, she advocated mixed use inner city development with walkable streets, while opposing large scale urban renewal and major highway projects that disrupted neighbourhoods.

Jacobs calls on us to draw on our natural human impulses to move, to explore, to experience, and try to understand our urban habitat, and ultimately better understand ourselves and our society. Jane's Walks, the festival of free neighbourhood walking tours named after her, hopefully lead us into responding to the experiences and new perceptions with positive ideas and actions that benefit both our community and the environment – thus creating “living cities.”

Jane's Walks put Jacobs' ideas into action

Current Jane's Walks put Jacobs' ideas into collective community action through themed guided walking tours. Anyone could sign up for any of the 30+ planned in Ottawa-Gatineau this year. Or you could make up your own. Guides provide not only background information on the history and development of each stop along the walk, but also an analytical commentary on accompanying social changes, present challenges, and future prospects.

I have taken several such walks in the past. This time, I selected two in the vicinity of my home, one passing my front yard. This article reflects my experience on the first walk only.

My aim was to see if I could learn something different about my west Centretown neighbourhood, in which I take almost daily informal walks and where I know much about its nature.

The beauty of the Jane's Walk is that it is both an individual and collective experience. You make various personal observations, but you travel with a group of about 25 people who don't necessarily know one another and many of whom don't know the area. What I gained most was hearing the thoughts presented by the guides and the questions and comments raised by the group, which covered a wide range of perspectives and analysis.

The Sociology of Third Places

Stop 1: “What are third places?”

These are places outside of work, study, home, worship, and shopping. They consist of parks, public spaces, and private spaces with open activities. Further discussion also named libraries, galleries, cafés and restaurants, train and bus stations, and tourist sites. We gain experience by walking through these spaces.

Sarah Gelbard, a very gifted analyst of ur-

ban planning, architecture, geography and sociology, led the walk. She presented a perspective of a continually evolving urban organism, constantly re-balancing to various competing and changing forces as it transforms.

Dundonald Park, the starting point, was formally established in 1903. Its basic plan has remained since its early days. Several of the trees date from that period. A women's group had especially lobbied for the parks and greenspaces for families and those with no home backyards. Parks have various forms from natural to highly designed and groomed. They can be sectioned into several activity areas (playgrounds, pool, sports fields, etc.), such as in McNabb Park.

Dundonald Park is mostly open greenspace, with a few bounded gardens and a fenced children's playground. This allows for many different activities to happen: sunbathing, picnics, concerts, movie nights, Tai Chi, yoga, community fairs, outdoor church services, a rest stop for cyclists, food distribution to the needy. Overall it is a meeting place.

But who manages the park and who is permitted there?

Dundonald has gone through many phases. At times, it fell into neglect. At others, it became well cared for. There were periods of highly organized activities and others of people sitting on the grass or playing frisbee.

The City of Ottawa provides minimal care. It is groups of resident volunteers, originally through guerrilla activities and now organized through the Centretown Community Association (CCA), who have taken great care of the park, cleaning and gardening. Various activities are organized through the CCA and Centretown Community Health Centre. Bicycle police make regular visits. Many residents feel an urgent need for their presence, but some parkgoers don't want them there.

There is always the chance of conflict between different park users, and between them and immediate residents. Dundonald is an “open” park where anyone can go. It is a sanctuary for new immigrants and the homeless. But there have been times of heavy drinking, illegal drug dealing and taking, noisy partying, vandalism, and fighting in the park. Other times, it is filled with multicultural and multigenerational community events.

Stop 2: “What is the separation of private and public?”

Rideau Curling Club formed as a private members' club in 1888, when curling was a high-status activity combined with socializing and fundraising for philanthropic purposes. It began in Lowertown but moved to Centretown in the late 1940s. From the 2000s, with the changing relevance of curling and altered social and economic factors, the curling hall and parking lot have been rented out to a range of more open functions: craft



The Rideau Curling Club has evolved from just curling to holding clothes sales, roller derbies, and board game festivals. Here the group learns about the club outside its entrance.

STEPHEN THIRLWALL/THE BUZZ

and clothes sales, roller derby, board game festivals. Still the sign by the front door reads “Private Club Members Only.”

Another good question: “Why was U.S. first lady Jill Biden brought here recently?” Probably because curling is representative of a heritage Canadian activity.

Stop 3: “Why are there so few public spaces in Centretown?”

Gelbard was very clear: “Capitalism.” Building development is given huge priority over parks and community services.

Bronson Centre, now an amalgamation of heritage buildings, formed in 1962. It has taken a community approach, becoming a non-profit service hub in which various social organizations operate. The original building was constructed about 1928. The building had been Immaculata High School until 1994, when it was transferred to the centre. In more recent times, because it has a large hall, Bronson Centre became a major city concert venue. Other rooms were used for art and craft shows, flea markets and other events.

Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre further east in Centretown has similarly become a multipurpose building sharing functions between religious services and joint social, educational, and commercial spaces that host concerts and theatre, music study, and community meetings.

Stop 4: “Why have public spaces on cliffs?”

Nanny Goat Hill has two parts: above and below the escarpment, each with a different focus. On the hilltop is a large community garden with many plots in big wooden boxes. It provides backyard space for people without backyards and a getaway for women to spend time away from home responsibilities. Land was made available by the City of Ottawa because it was unsuitable to developed in another way.

I was able to share about Off-Bank, a temporary Centretown community garden arranged by the CCA with the owner/developer and our city councillor.

Below the hill is a wedge of land that is being used as an off-leash dog park, at the back of which is a cliff face converted to a legal graffiti wall. The park provides exercise and socializing among dogs and among their owners. However, it could possibly contribute towards gentrification in the area, thus favouring certain groups of people and pushing others away.

The Tech Wall, named after the nearby Ottawa Tech High School, along with a community art program across Centretown, was

set up under Crime Prevention Ottawa to stop random graffiti and beautify the community using local talent. The program provides certain education, empowerment, and means for youth to express themselves while keeping “off the street.” What started as graffiti gradually transformed into art. The street youth not involved in this see the wall youth as “sell outs.” At the same time, they are inspired by the artistry and thus increased the level of their street graffiti instead of lower it.

Stop 5: Garden of the Provinces and Territories - “Why have a brutalist park?”

This was the end of tour 1 and beginning of tour 2. Some people left, some continued, and others started here, forming a much larger group.

This park was an example of Brutalist Architecture, in the same vein as the original National Art Centre. There is lots of cement. But nature is represented through gardens, trees, rocks, and a fountain. It is a beautiful sitting and strolling place. It reminds me of Expo 67 in Montreal, where I remember first seeing and loving this style. Unfortunately, not very many people think of coming here.

The garden was built in 1962. It communicates a federal government space, a symbolic space, a dedication to our country. This separates it from municipal public spaces that are more neighbourhood oriented.

To keep this park from being overrun by skate boarders, special bars and metal maple leaves were placed on all ledges so that skate boards would not work. This pushed skate boarders to use the Charlie Bowins Skatepark within McNabb Park, which replaced the outdated lawn bowling lanes.

Some final thoughts

The number and size of third places in Centretown and in Ottawa don't come close to what should be present in relation to population size and density. Although they are badly needed, they are still treated as a low priority.

There is a constant competition between major construction, protection of neighbourhood communities, and creation of public spaces. Common ground is required between the extremes of neglect of public spaces and their over-gentrification.

The question remains in debate: who is welcomed in our public spaces? Select groups or everyone?

This walk reminded me to take an even deeper look at my neighbourhood as I take my regular walks, perhaps more often with others. Much can be discovered in the stories behind it and the range of perspectives in understanding it.

Motorists, cyclists, walkers will all get detoured this summer and over the next decade, as Queensway overpasses are replaced

Alayne McGregor

Be prepared for detours this summer, as two more Queensway overpasses in Centretown are being replaced.

And look ahead to further extended road, sidewalk, and path blockages in the next decade with work on other downtown overpasses.

The Bronson and Percy overpasses are the third and fourth bridges in the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario's (MTO's) [Queensway Mid-town Bridges project](#). The Preston Street overpass is planned to be replaced next year, and more work is planned over the next two years to finish off approaches and add sound barriers.

Bronson replaced in July, Percy in August

The Bronson overpass will be replaced in July, with the Queensway closing at 8 p.m. on Thursday, July 13 and reopening before 6 a.m. on Monday, July 17.

The Percy overpass will be replaced in August, with the Queensway closing at 8 p.m. on Thursday, August 10 and reopening before 6 a.m. on Monday, August 14.

Like previous Queensway overpasses, both will be reinstated using Rapid Bridge Replacement Technology.

The MTO contractor, Kiewit Dufferin Midtown Partnerships, will demolish the existing bridges and replace them with the already constructed bridges that were built adjacent to the highway in a staging area. Computer-controlled, Self



The Lyon on-ramp to the Queensway is closed for this year's work to replace the Bronson and Percy overpasses.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

Propelled Modular Transporters (SPMT) will lift and carry away the old bridge and move the new bridge into place.

CEECAM Corporation has posted a video of the Booth Street rapid replacement in 2022 at www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW6yNoVfUQ8

Final detour info to come

The MTO said it will release more information about road closures, detours, and other work by the end of June.

For the Bronson overpass, previous plans had said Bronson would be fully closed to pedestrians and vehicles for up to three weeks from Catherine to Imperial Avenue/Plymouth Street, with pedestrians and cyclists detoured to Percy. Motor vehicles would be detoured to Booth Street southbound and Chamberlain/Bank/Catherine northbound.

For the Percy overpass, previous plans had said Chamberlain would be closed to all traffic for up to three weeks

between Imperial and Glendale. Percy is closed to motor vehicles from Catherine to Chamberlain, and will be closed to bicycle and pedestrian traffic as well for up to five weeks.

Percy is a heavily used bike route: cyclists would be diverted along Chamberlain to Kent Street and then back to Percy.

More downtown overpasses to be replaced

The MTO has begun planning to replace more downtown bridges starting in 2028.

Its [Ottawa Downtown Queensway Bridges project](#) will replace or rehabilitate seven bridges at four sites: Metcalfe Street, Elgin Street, the Rideau Canal, and Main Street.

These bridges were built as part of the original Queensway from 1959 to 1968, the MTO says, and the Rideau Canal Bridge is nearing the end of its service life.

The latest plans were outlined at a public information centre last November. The MTO says no further changes have been made to those plans.

Queen Elizabeth Driveway blocked for almost two years

The replacement of the Rideau Canal bridges are likely to cause the most disruption. Their construction would involve blocking the Queen Elizabeth Driveway and Colonel By Drive at the Queensway for up to 90 weeks, as well as the paths along the canal. Nearby sidewalks would also be closed.

Traffic would be detoured on to Elgin Street and Argyle Avenue. Existing cycling routes would be noticeably disrupted.

The plans also anticipate partially filling in the Rideau Canal for five weeks in the summer of year one of construction, and another five weeks in the fall of year two, as well as during the actual bridge replacement.

The new overpass design will integrate the bridge piers into the canal walls, instead of their current location in the canal. However, earlier plans to demolish two buildings at 221 Echo Drive and 3/5 Hawthorne Avenue have been dropped.

The Transportation Environmental Study Report for this project is scheduled to be issued for public review later this summer. At that point, residents will have 30 days to respond.

Full information on the project and how to comment or ask questions is available at queenswaydowntownbridges.com

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Gardens in city ROW can only have plants

continued from page 1 (no machinery allowed) in order to protect underground utilities such as gas lines, hydro lines, and telecommunication cables as well as tree roots. Before installing a garden or little free library, you must call Ontario OneCall to have your utility lines located.

Dalhousie resident Ria Bachman phoned *The BUZZ* when we alerted our readers to the bylaw changes. She had put stones at the front of her front-yard garden to keep the soil in, and she would be upset at having to remove them.

She said she was devastated at the thought that someone from the city might tell her to remove her garden. "I do a lot of gardening, and total strangers come by and tell me how much they appreciate my garden."

Little Free Libraries also regulated

Little Free Libraries (LFLs) will have their own sets of restrictions:

- a signed letter of acknowledgement must be provided to the city before installing an LFL;
- they may not have a permanent foundation, such as poured concrete;
- they may only be installed on a local road. This would prevent them from being installed in many roads in Centretown which are categorized as collectors or arterials even though residences are located on them;
- a LFL will not be allowed within 15m of the corner in a corner lot.

The city also says that any gardens or LFLs must be maintained, and are installed at the owner's risk.

The city or utility companies can require the gardens or LFLs to be removed if they need access to install, maintain or repair infrastructure; you would be responsible for replacing them afterwards.

Pop-up retail and sidewalk signs also covered

The new bylaw also covers pop-up retail display and vending by businesses on the sidewalk or within the right-of-way. Signs or structures will not be allowed within the outside 2m of a sidewalk, and all must be removed each evening.

The maximum size of any sign or structure would be five square metres. The operator must notify the city in advance, and commercial operators must show proof of liability insurance.

You can get more info and



The proposed bylaw wouldn't allow raised beds like this in the city right-of-way.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

the full list of restrictions at engage.ottawa.ca/use-and-care-of-roads-by-law-updates

Residents can sign up

to speak at Transportation Committee for five minutes, or submit written comments to the committee.

Contact Committee Coordinator Rosa Ramos at (613) 580-2424, ext. 21934 or Rosa.Ramos4@ottawa.ca

Dundonald splash pad raises wider concerns

Alayne McGregor

A proposed splash pad in Dundonald Park, which would allow people to cool down in heat waves, has again raised calls for other improvements to the park.

A [petition on change.org](https://petition.onchange.org), which received 24 signatures by last weekend, asked for Councillor Ariel Troster to develop "a holistic plan [for the park] which also includes programming and safety" before installing the splash pad.

"We ask that the \$500,000 currently allocated to a Splash Pad be redirected to fund a comprehensive strategy and augmented to fund a broader infrastructure plan. In the absence of such a plan, we believe that investing in one piece of significant infrastructure could be detrimental and could change the character and use of the Park for other activities."

Troster told *The BUZZ* that she had seen the petition and will consult with residents about other enhancements to the park. Her staff have talked to people in the park about what options they would prefer.

"I understand that Dundonald is a matter of concern to the neighbourhood. It's a meeting place for the neighbourhood and there have been a lot of challenges there."

However, "there's actually no splash pads in any of the parks in that part of Centretown. The closest one is on Elgin, and other than that, there's one in the Glebe. Water implements like splash pads are an essential heat release for city kids especially when we're dealing with a heat zone."

"It's nice to have something to cool people down."

The splash pad is planned to be placed in the west half of the park, near Bay Street. Option 1 would be a triangular pad nearer Somerset Street West, while option 2 would be a rectangular pad nearer MacLaren Street. Both options would consist of paving with jets of water coming out of the ground, and would also include benches.

One option includes "simple deck sprays to reflect the heritage character and views into" the park, while another combined deck sprays with "low water consumption vertical misting elements that have a subtle solar ambient glow at night." One design is spy-themed, reflecting the park's connection to Igor Gouzenko, while the other is flower-themed.

Troster said the pad will not displace any trees or flower beds, but will replace grass. A Twitter comment had asked if the pad could be placed outside the park as to not lose any greenspace; Troster said there was no available city-owned land to put the splash pad on.

"It really is a fairly small surface area in the grand scheme of the park, and it's an area of the park that's not widely used."

The splash pad – and any other park improvements – would be funded from the city cash-in-lieu of parkland fund. Troster said that those funds can only fund projects without significant regular staffing costs. That disallows washrooms, which would have to be cleaned regularly.

Because there has been so much development in Centretown, there is a fairly significant amount of money saved in Somerset Ward's parkland fund, so the city can afford to make further changes to Dundonald, she said.

"We've put the word out to the community associations and to various residents' groups and to the community health centre to say what else do you think would be useful there because we have some money to improve the park. We've heard maybe misting stations, maybe improved seating, maybe improved lighting. We could install more water fountains. We could have more gardening boxes. We could have more flowers."

"We want to hear all those ideas from people and we'll take them back and come up with some proposals."

As well, there is a city community development team that specifically works in Dundonald Park, she explained. "They spend a lot of time in the park speaking to folks, especially people experiencing homelessness. They have a real read on the people that are there. They're able to do conflict resolution and direct people to resources."

The Centretown Community Health Centre is also doing programming in the park this summer, as are local neighbours and the community association.

"So we also want to bring those people together to have a conversation about some of the social dynamics in the park and how they can relate to the physical infrastructure, and how we can make it a safe and welcoming place for everyone."

"We're not done talking about that park at all because it is so important for Centretown."

Troster held an online public meeting to discuss the splash pad design on June 12 after *The BUZZ* went to press. She said residents can also learn more about the project and leave comments in the pad's project page at engage.ottawa.ca, "so we're hoping we come up with a design that people like."

Those with ideas on how to improve the park should contact her or the Centretown Community Association, she said. She expected she would have a community meeting to brainstorm ideas as well.



Crews started work on the Commanda bridge in 2021.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

Cyclist/ped bridge to finally open in next month

Alayne McGregor

Cyclists and pedestrians may have their own bridge over the Ottawa River as soon as the end of June.

Current city schedules have the Chief William Commanda Bridge opening at the end of this month, allowing travel from Bayview Station and the Trillium and Ottawa River pathways in Ottawa, to the Sentier des Voyageurs pathway and Alexandre-Taché Boulevard in Gatineau.

This will allow bypassing the Chaudière and Champlain bridges, both now under construction and crowded at the best of times. Cyclists currently have to dismount and walk on narrow sidewalks to cross the Chaudière Bridge.

However, the opening date for the Commanda bridge may slip into July. Bruce Kenny, the city's manager of design and construction, said that the city will "review the contractor's schedule to determine with certainty the opening day" over the next few weeks.

The 144-year-old bridge

was formerly called the Prince of Wales Bridge, and carried rail traffic from Ottawa to Gatineau. The city originally bought the bridge from CP Rail in 2005 to protect it for a future transit expansion.

Many commuter rail activists, including the late *BUZZ* columnist David Gladstone, had pushed for Ottawa's LRT to be extended over the bridge and use existing connecting tracks to go from Bayview to the Casino de Lac-Leamy, providing an alternative interprovincial commuter route. This route was opposed by the City of Gatineau, which wanted a direct connection to Ottawa's downtown via the Portage Bridge. Former Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson contended that the cross-river rail route would overload Bayview Station.

Ottawa City Council instead decided to convert the bridge for active transportation, with a new timber deck installed on top of the existing rail tracks and ties, and new handrails, lighting, and benches added. Construction began on November 29, 2021. Once the pedestrian/cycling path over the bridge

is completed, further rehabilitation work on the substructure of the bridge will continue until next summer with "minimal disruption" to bridge users.

The project cost was \$22.6 million, with about \$14 million from the city and \$8.6 million from the federal government.

The bridge was originally supposed to open last fall, but the city said that it was delayed due to external factors "including labour shortages and supply chain issues such as continued delivery delays of critical components, as well as a labour union strike and unforeseen conditions."

The bridge is named after William Commanda (1913-2011), the Chief of the Kitiigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation from 1951 to 1970. He was an Algonquin elder, spiritual leader, promoter of environmental stewardship and a bridge builder between nations. He worked as a guide, a trapper, and a woodsman, and was a skilled craftsman and artisan who excelled at constructing birch bark canoes. He was awarded the Order of Canada in 2008.

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The green dots show where in Centretown Neighbourhoods has been collecting data.

Neighbourhoods results: too many old trees, too many maples, more trees needed

Darlene Pearson

The Centretown Neighbourhoods Team is starting its third season of collecting data on trees on public and private land in Centretown. The map shows where we have been hard at work.

Over the past two years we have collected information on over 1550 trees in parts of western Centretown and the Golden Triangle. For each tree, we gather over 30 data points, ranging from tree location to height to species name to condition.

What the data show

What do we do with all that information?

It can give us a picture of the health of our tree canopy and provide useful direction for canopy enhancement.

The data highlight some interesting and useful tree facts. For example, Centretown is home to 88 different tree species – and we keep finding more as we go. These include the ubiquitous Norway Maple, Eastern White Cedar, and Japanese Tree Lilac, but also Bur Oak, Hackberry, and Basswood.

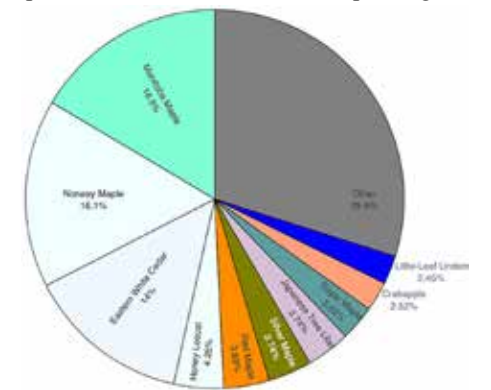
The surprising news is that most of Centretown’s trees have no major defects. This may seem hard to believe since we tend to focus on those highly visible street trees severely pruned to accommodate hydro wires. The effect of that pruning is only one aspect of tree condition which we record. As well, don’t forget that over 60 percent of our tree canopy is largely invisible, hidden in backyards.

Too many maple trees

Our survey has revealed some concerning trends. One is a serious overabundance of two species of maple. Norway Maple and Manitoba Maple are the two most common tree species in Centretown, and together account for 32.6 percent of trees in Centretown.

Why is that bad? Research suggests that the ideal mix of trees at a neighbourhood level should be no more than five percent of trees from one species (i.e., Norway Maple) and no more than 10 percent of trees from one genus (i.e., maple). This suggested ratio is to avoid having a large percentage of our trees destroyed

by disease or pests, as happened to our numerous elm and ash trees over the past few years. This type of data analysis suggests what tree species should be limited in future plantings.



And not enough younger trees

Another area of concern is the age of our trees. We all know and love those majestic Silver Maples that tower over and shade our streets. However, we need younger trees to replace them as they are lost to age and disease. We use the relative diameter at breast height (DBH) as a proxy for age. What our data shows is that, when compared to the ideal, we have too low a proportion of trees in the young category (category I) and too high a proportion of mature trees (category IV).

Centretown needs more trees

We already know that Centretown has the lowest tree canopy cover in Ottawa. The bottom line – we need more trees! And we need the right trees planted in the right spaces. So we hope that Mayor Sutcliffe will make good on his campaign promise to plant one million trees during his four-year term and ensure that Forestry Services has the budget to carry that promise out.

While we do our tree survey work, Centretown Neighbourhoods Team will be encouraging residents to use the city’s free Trees in Trust program and also finding ways to encourage the city to plant more trees on municipal property in Centretown.

A more detailed report on our survey work will be posted on the [Centretown Community Association website](#) in July.

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It takes a community!

Somerset Ward report: What Ottawa can learn from other Canadian cities

Ariel Troster

Canada's major cities are all grappling with similar challenges: unaffordable housing and growing homelessness, climate-related weather disasters, and unsustainable food costs.

That became apparent to me last month, when I attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) conference in Toronto.

As you may know, my last job before running for office was on the communications team at FCM, so I had attended this conference for several years as a staffer. But it was truly an amazing experience to be there this year as a newly elected councillor.

I did my best to soak up knowledge and connect with councillors and mayors from across Canada. I learned about **Toronto's pilot Community Crisis Service**, a new, alternate approach to responding to someone in crisis that focuses on health, prevention and well-being. This is something that many of us are working to bring to Ottawa, and I'm uniquely interested in it as it would fill a much-needed service gap in Somerset Ward.

I also had the chance to go on a bike tour of active transportation infrastructure near Toronto's waterfront. I got to learn about the city's **Vision Zero Road Safety Plan** while riding a **BikeShareTO** bike.

It got me thinking about ways we can improve mobility, safe cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in our own city. I know I am not the only councillor who thinks it's about time we got our own publicly managed bike-

share system in Ottawa.

Everywhere I looked, I saw public art – from **amazing murals under the Gardiner Expressway**, to **colourful Muskoka chairs replacing a lane of traffic in front of Roy Thompson Hall**, to the **paintings adorning concrete bike lane barriers**. It was amazing to see how creative interventions transform public space.

Still, what hampers our city and so many others across the country from dreaming bigger is the inadequate way that cities are funded – created as “creatures of the province” in the 1800s. As it stands, municipalities manage 60 percent of Canada's infrastructure and only collect nine cents on every tax dollar. This makes it difficult to scale up city services to meet people's real needs.

I am proud of Somerset Ward residents for speaking out and writing to the provincial government when Ottawa wasn't given our fair share of funding to address homelessness. It resulted in an additional \$24 million investment in affordable housing.

But it is frustrating to have to go cap in hand to beg for money from other levels of government to help solve the problems that were downloaded onto cities over the last several decades.

As FCM CEO Carole Saab said in her speech at the conference, **“We need to enable and empower our towns and cities – not down the road, not a few years from now, but today, with all orders of government doing what Canadians expect us to do, working together to figure it out.”**

MPP report: Governments are judged by how they treat the marginalized

Joel Harden

Earlier this month, we debated Bill G91, the *Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act* in the Ontario Legislature.

This was the Ford government's seventh bill to remove “unnecessary regulatory burdens.” But as I studied Bill 91 – a massive omnibus bill with 37 schedules – I saw nothing to reduce barriers for things we urgently need, like staff for our beleaguered health care system.

What I did see was an alarming regression on the issue of animal welfare.

Penned dog hunting allowed

Schedule 14 of Bill 91 permits the expansion of enclosed “train and trail” hunting areas for dogs, a practice meant to be abandoned almost two decades ago. Animals like coyotes and rabbits are caught in the wild, and delivered to these penned areas to be hunted by dogs for “sport.”

A sting investigation by the Ministry of Natural Resources in 2006 found wild coyotes were abused or killed in “illegal dog fighting rings posing as train-and-trial facilities.” Waves of fresh dogs were released every hour to track coyotes who were maimed or killed.

I grew up in rural Eastern Ontario with friends who hunted. They described to

me how careful they were to ensure a safe, humane approach to hunting; it was a practice that often stocked family freezers with food for the winter. Penned dog hunting is nothing like that.

The Ford government insists they will monitor the practices of these operations, and levy steep fines if necessary, but conservation officers say the regulations are unenforceable. At the moment, Ontario is the only place in Canada where penned dog hunting is permitted.

A similar moral failure with Bill 5 defeat

The moral failure in this move fits a pattern I saw elsewhere. On the same day the Ford government sanctioned animal cruelty in Bill 91, they also voted against Bill 5, a private member's bill to address the safety of political staff in municipal offices.

Bill 5 was moved by MPP Stephen Blais, and it was inspired by former Ottawa City Councillor Rick Chiarelli's shocking treatment of women staff. Chiarelli was investigated twice by Ottawa's Integrity Commissioner, and had his pay sanctioned for 15 months.

Thirty-six women came forward, three of whom did so publicly. But despite this evidence, Chiarelli could not be removed from office. If he had engaged in fiscal improprieties, he could be

removed under the Municipal Act. Sexual misconduct is treated differently – survivors are told to seek justice in the courts, and that's why very few speak out.

Bill 5 would have allowed for the removal of city councillors by judicial review. If a councillor was found by the Integrity Commissioner to have engaged in serious acts of misconduct, council could ask for a court to vacate the seat.

But the government argued Bill 5 could be weaponized against political opponents. While claiming to have a “zero tolerance policy” for abuse by office holders, they insisted that voters are best poised to remove councillors.

But this was a flawed reading of Bill 5. A court, not a city council, was empowered to remove a councillor based on independent investigation. There were checks and balances. That's why Bill 5 was supported by over 150 municipalities in Ontario.

In the end, governments are judged by how they treat the marginalized. Political staff are in a precarious position, and are vulnerable to abuse of power. Animals are in a similar position, and we can't allow the cruelty of some to prevail.

Words are cheap, and actions matter. We must build an Ontario that is safe for everyone.



MP Yasir Naqvi partnered with CAFES, Forests Ontario, and Forêt Capitale Forest to launch a pilot tree planting program in Ottawa Centre. (photo provided by Naqvi's office)

MP report: planting more trees in our community

Yasir Naqvi

I hope you are enjoying the warm weather, and taking advantage of Ottawa's active transportation network.

Opportunities to walk, run, bike, and roll are key parts to creating healthier, safer, and more environmentally sustainable communities.

This summer, Ottawa will see the grand opening of the new Chief William Commanda Bridge, made possible by an \$8.6 million investment by the Government of Canada, that will connect cyclists and pedestrians across the Ottawa River between Ottawa and Gatineau.

The NCC Weekend Bikedays are happening all summer long, encouraging residents to use our existing parkways to get around without their cars. These initiatives build on Ottawa's growing active transportation network, which includes new paths across LeBreton Flats, the iconic Flora Footbridge, and quite possibly in

the near future, a fully pedestrianized Wellington Street.

I encourage you to get outside and enjoy the nice weather by choosing to bike to work, walk to the grocery store or go for a stroll. You can find routes, maps and more information at City of Ottawa and National Capital Commission websites.

Why we need more trees

Summer is also a great time to plant more trees. Increasing our urban tree canopy is an important part of our work to make Ottawa the greenest capital in the world. Tree cover works as natural climate control by cooling temperatures during hot summer months, storing carbon dioxide and contributing to our natural biodiversity.

Planting two billion trees over a decade is a crucial part of Canada's climate plan. Last year's summer update reported that approximately 29 million trees were planted across the country, amounting to about 97 percent of the

2021 season's planting projection. More details to come later this summer on planting numbers from the 2022 planting season.

We have started a local initiative to plant more trees in Ottawa Centre to help restore our urban tree canopy. Last month, I was happy to partner with Community Associations for Sustainable Environment (CAFES Ottawa), Forests Ontario, and Forêt Capitale Forest to launch a pilot tree planting program for our community.

We gave out free trees to residents over Mother's Day weekend, along with instructions on how to care for their tree for years to come! Additionally, we hosted a community tree planting event for the whole family to enjoy. Together we have planted more than 120 trees in our community!

As always, my team and I are here to help. Let us know what issues are important to you, and how we can better support you and our community.

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Marion Dewar Plaza in front of City Hall was filled with cyclists June 3, as Ottawa hosted the very first ride (just beating out New York City by a few hours) for World Bicycle Day. The event was organized in Ottawa by the Embassy of Poland with the NCC and the city, to promote cycling and eco-friendly lifestyles. Representatives of European embassies and from as far away as Australia joined local cyclists in the Ride for Peace and Unity along the Queen Elizabeth Driveway. Councillor Theresa Kavanagh (lower right) represented the city. ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ



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Community Calendar

Ottawa Fringe Festival
June 15 to 25
Arts Court, 2 Daly Avenue
ottawafringe.com

Company of Fools
July 3 to August 26, 7 p.m.
Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, presented outdoors in parks across Ottawa
fools.ca

Free bike check-ins for Let's Bike Month
Saturday, June 17 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday, June 18 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, June 21 - 1 to 7 p.m.
Lansdowne Park
Mechanics will check all components, lube and grease the chain, and adjust whatever is needed. Parts not included. Free. Drop in.

Music & Beyond Festival
July 4 to 17
musicandbeyond.ca

Coming into Sight: Art Bank Acquisitions
Canada Council for the Arts
150 Elgin Street, main floor
June 20 to May 20, 2024
Open Monday to Sunday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
artbank.ca/blog/2023/5/coming-into-sight

Ottawa Public Library
Saturday, July 8, 11 a.m. to noon
family-friendly series of Pixar short films
Main Branch, 120 Metcalfe Street
Free. Drop in.

Chamberfest: Steinway Young Artists
Tuesday, June 20, noon to 1 p.m.
Ottawa City Hall, Jean Pigott Place
110 Laurier Avenue West
Free.

Ottawa Public Library
Tuesday, July 11, 6:30 p.m.
Eerie Tales to Tell with Graham Annable
Main Branch, 120 Metcalfe Street
Free. Register at bibliottawalibrary.ca

Stories at the Solstice fundraiser
Wednesday, June 21, 6:15 to 9:30 p.m.
First Unitarian Congregation
30 Cleary Avenue
Tickets: \$30. 613-864-6442 or Eventbrite

Ottawa Chamberfest
July 20 to August 4
www.chamberfest.com

Ottawa Canadian Film Festival (OCan) fundraiser
Episodes from locally-shot TV series "Chateau Laurier" and "No Regrets"
Thursday, June 22, 9 p.m.
Admission: \$15.
ByTowne Cinema, 325 Rideau Street
Tickets at the ByTowne or via Eventbrite

Ottawa Public Library
Wednesday, July 19, 1:30 p.m.
family-friendly showing of *Onward*
Main Branch, 120 Metcalfe Street
Free. Drop in

Mirror Mountain Film Festival
July 21 to 23
LabO Theatre, Arts Court, 2 Daly Avenue
mirrormountainfilmfest.com

Odyssey Theatre
July 27 to August 20
Molière's *The Miser*
Strathcona Park (outdoors)
www.odysseytheatre.ca