



Dear friends and neighbours of River Ward,

February may be the shortest month of the year, but there is certainly a lot on the go.

The cold weather may prevent some of us from getting outside, but River Ward offers a bounty of activities to keep us busy.

The Terry Fox Athletic Centre offers cross country skiing courses and trails for those who want to drop in. 5km of groomed trails are available at Terry Fox and within Mooney's Bay Park.

Every main neighbourhood in our ward offers outdoor skating rinks. A list of all rinks may be found in this newsletter.

Snowshoeing is popular in some of the larger parks, such as Carlington, Hog's Back, Mooney's Bay and Vincent Massey.

Tobogganing is sanctioned at Carlington Hill, the highest point in Ottawa inside the Greenbelt.

I also wish to acknowledge that February is Black History Month. This year, Canada's theme for Black History Month is: *February and Forever: Celebrating Black History today and every day*.

"This year's theme...reminds us to recognize the tremendous contributions of Black Canadians, like Lincoln Alexander, and their communities, all year long," said Canadian Heritage in a release last month.

I will be sharing various events to celebrate and recognize the achievements of Black residents of Ottawa, as I am aware of them on my Twitter account this month. You may follow me [@RiverWardRiley](#)

Stay safe, stay well.

Sincerely,
Riley

Riley Brockington

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Mooney's Bay Hill Tragedy

On December 27, 2021, 11-year-old Josée Abi Assal died while tobogganing at the Mooney's Bay Hill. Josée's death is devastating and leaves her family without their oldest daughter.

I have met with the City of Ottawa, particularly the Parks and Recreation Department multiple times since the accident to discuss Mooney's Bay Hill. Although this hill is not a sanctioned toboggan hill by the City, it is used extensively in the winter for this activity, and it is paramount the Hill be addressed for outstanding safety issues. As such, the City has agreed to my request to hire an independent consultant who is conducting a risk assessment. His report is expected this month.

I support keeping this Hill and park open to the public, for public use, including tobogganing. I will ensure that needed safety measures are undertaken and all families will be able to enjoy this wonderful park.



COVID-19 and Ottawa Public Health Updates

Timelines for Ontario's Reopening Plan

January 31, 2022

- Social gatherings increased to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.
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- Sporting events, concert venues and theatres are able to operate at 50 per cent seated capacity or 500 people, whichever is less.
- Restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments without dance facilities are able to operate with 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Retailers, including grocery stores and pharmacies, as well as shopping malls, can operate with 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Non-spectator areas of sports and recreational fitness facilities, including gyms, can operate with 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Movie theatres, meeting rooms and event spaces can operate with 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Recreational amenities and amusement parks, including water parks, can operate with 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos and similar attractions, as well as casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments can open at 50 per cent capacity indoors.
- Indoor religious services, rites, or ceremonies can take place at 50 per cent capacity.
- The province said enhanced proof of vaccination, and other requirements would continue to apply in existing settings.

February 21, 2022

- Social gathering limits will increase to 25 people indoors and 100 people outdoors.
- Capacity limits will be lifted in indoor public settings where proof of vaccination is required.
- Spectator capacity at sporting events, concert venues, and theatres will increase to 50 per cent capacity.
- Capacity is limited in most remaining indoor public settings where proof of vaccination is not required to the number of people that can maintain two metres of physical distance.
- Indoor religious services, rites or ceremonies are limited to the number of people that can maintain two metres of physical distance, with no limit if proof of vaccination is required.
- Indoor capacity limits will be increased to 25 per cent in the remaining higher-risk settings where proof of vaccination is required, including nightclubs, wedding receptions in meeting or event spaces where there is dancing, as well as bathhouses and sex clubs.
- Enhanced proof of vaccination, and other requirements would continue to apply in existing settings.

March 14, 2022

- Social gathering limits will be increased to 50 people indoors with no limits for outdoor gatherings.
- Capacity limits will be lifted in all indoor public settings. Proof of vaccination will be maintained in existing settings in addition to other regular measures.
- Remaining capacity limits on religious services, rites, or ceremonies will be lifted.

City of Ottawa Services

Write and be awesome! OPL's Awesome Authors contest

It's that time of year again when Ottawa Public Library challenges children and youth interested in writing to push their creative flair for self-expression and literary

composition to the next level by inviting them to sign up for the next edition of the Library's [Awesome Authors Youth Writing Contest](#)!

OPL is thrilled to announce that [Awesome Authors](#) is open for another year to set in motion an experience of learning and creativity that will shine the light on young local writers. If you have a thing for storytelling, drawing or writing, 2022 might be your year to become an awesome author.

Starting **January 10, 2022**, participants aged 9 to 12 and 13 to 18 will prepare to compete against their peers by submitting an original piece of writing in one of the following categories: comic/graphic novel, poem, and short story. Contestants have until Friday February 25, 2022, to submit their entries in English or French and even in both official languages!

Rest assured, young scribes. You won't be alone during this writing journey. Participants will be able to polish their writing skills by attending various workshops hosted by local authors who will prepare contestants for the competition as well as share their knowledge with them. These workshop leaders are the same seasoned authors who will be on the panel to choose the best works that will determine this year's winners. Hurry to register for the workshops which dates, and time are announced on the [OPL website](#).

The deadline to submit a work of writing is **February 25, 2022**. Each participant may submit one piece in each of the 6 categories: comic, poem, short story, bandes dessinée, poème and nouvelle. In the case of comics, submission coauthored by two participants will be accepted. Entries may be submitted electronically through the Awesome Author's web page, or in person at any open branch during opening hours and Bookmobile stop.

Contest winners (including honourable mentions) will be announced online. They will be awarded cash prizes, and the winning entries in each category will be published in *Pot-pourri*, the annual anthology published and printed by the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library (FOPLA). Visit [FOPLA's website](#) to get a copy of last year's anthology.

The contest is made possible with the generous support of the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association (FOPLA). FOPLA has always been an ally to the library and is delighted to give those kids and teens the chance to showcase their talent to the community and promote creative exploration and expression.

Young writers, we are passing the pen to you. Let the contest begin! For more information on the contest, visit <https://bibliottawalibrary.ca/en/awesome-authors>.

Fire Hydrants in Winter Months

The City of Ottawa's Water Services maintains more than 23,000 fire hydrants throughout the winter months, ensuring they are in operation for firefighters in the event of a fire.

To help, the City is encouraging you to be hydrant heroes and keep your local hydrant clear of snow. Clearing 1.5 metres around a hydrant maintains access for our firefighters and keeps you, your family and your community safe.

Children and youth who participate will receive an electronic Hydrant Hero certificate. Youth volunteers can also participate in this program to get their community involvement hours.

Visit ottawa.ca/hydranthero to request your electronic Hydrant Hero certificate, share your photo, or to request confirmation of community service hours.

Did you know?

Beginning in December, the Water Services team begins proactively monitoring the City's 23,000 hydrants to ensure that they're in operation for our firefighters in the event of a fire. Each team member covers approximately 1,000 hydrants and follows a consistent schedule. If you're unable to clear your hydrant, staff will reach it, but this can take 2 to 3 weeks following a significant winter storm.

Clean your Vehicle of Snow and Ice

(Ottawa Safety Council submission)

After a snowstorm, do you clean off your vehicle? Your entire vehicle - windows, roof, hood, and trunk? Removing ice and snow from your vehicle is necessary to keep you, pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists safe.

- Removing snow from your vehicle improves visibility
- Removing snow from your vehicle prevents needless damages and injuries
- Removing snow from your vehicle is the law

Snow and ice from a moving vehicle can result in cracked or broken windshields and fatal injuries. Drivers have also been known to swerve in an attempt to avoid the snow or ice coming at them and depending on what is in the lane next to them, could cause an accident. Pedestrians and cyclists are not immune to being hurt from flying snow and ice either. This debris can hit them at any time with varying results of injury, including death.

Taking the time to clean all the snow and ice from your vehicle not only makes sense, but also prevents accidents, damages, and injuries to those on and off the road. Getting rid of the snow and ice from your car may add a few extra minutes to your daily routine, but it can keep everyone safer during the winter, both on and off the roads.

For more information, visit, [how removing snow from your vehicle makes winter roads safer for everyone](#).

Everything you need to know about winter operations in the City of Ottawa may be found here: <https://ottawa.ca/en/parking-roads-and-travel/road-and-sidewalk-maintenance/winter-maintenance>

Snowmobiling - Make Safety your First Priority

The Ottawa Police Service reminds enthusiastic snowmobilers of the importance of making smart choices, like riding sober, avoiding lakes and rivers and using established snowmobile trails. Keep in mind that *no ice is safe ice*.

Plan your trip ahead and check available trails in the Ottawa area per the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) interactive snowmobile trail guides available at: <https://www.ofsc.on.ca/trail-maps/>

Here are some quick tips before you head out:

- Inform others of your destination and estimated arrival time;
 - Check your headlights, taillights and brake lights to ensure they are in working order;
 - Wear suitable clothing to prevent hypothermia - remember that children are particularly susceptible to the cold;
 - Don't forget your helmet;
 - Carry first aid and survival kits;
 - Carry a fully charged cell phone and GPS if available;
 - Have all permits/documents on hand;
 - Plan your route and make sure you have ample fuel for your planned route and extra;
 - Always be prepared to stop, especially for wildlife, which moves along trails at night;
 - Stay on prescribed trails whenever practical, and ride on the right side;
 - Exercise extra caution when crossing roadways and railway tracks; and
 - Never ride alone.
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Residential Vacant Unit Tax

The City is planning to implement a Residential Vacant Unit Tax (VUT) in 2023 based upon the occupancy status of a residential property. The proposed framework states that a residential property that is not the owner's principal address and is vacant for more than 184 days during the calendar year could be subject to the new vacancy tax.

The VUT is designed to motivate homeowners to occupy or rent their properties, helping to address the affordable housing crisis. Further, the net revenue collected from this tax is expected to support the City's affordable housing initiatives. Once implemented, the vacancy tax will be calculated using a one percent tax rate applied to the property's MPAC assessed value.

At the beginning of 2023, pending Council's final approval in the spring of 2022, all homeowners will be required to complete a declaration based on their property's occupancy status during the 2022 calendar year. If a property is not a principal residence, the homeowner will be required to declare whether the property was vacant, rented, or qualifies for an exemption in 2022. If the vacancy period in the calendar year exceeds 184 days, a vacancy tax will be added to the 2023 final property tax bill. Exemptions are being considered for the VUT in the following circumstances:

- Death of a registered owner
- Property owner in a hospital or long-term care facility
- Arm's length sale of the property
- Specific court orders prohibiting occupancy, sale, or rental of the property
- The property was undergoing extended renovations or construction

The City will audit declarations and properties each year. Staff will work with owners to review the accuracy of the property status and declarations. If it is proven false, the vacancy tax and penalties will apply.

In June 2021, Council approved the initial framework for the new Residential Vacant Unit Tax. The final report (including approved rate and exemptions) and supporting by-law will be presented to Council for approval in the spring of 2022.

Transportation Master Plan - Phase 3 consultations

The City of Ottawa has launched [Phase 3 of its consultation on the Transportation Master Plan](#). During this phase of engagement, the public is invited to provide input on the close to 70 proposed transportation-related policies to be included in Part 1 of the TMP and use the online engagement tools to provide feedback on the pedestrian and cycling projects that are proposed for implementation from 2023 onwards. The deadline for input has been extended to **February 18, 2022**, though feedback is encouraged as soon as possible.

Residents are also invited to take part in an **Open House on February 15 at 6:30 pm.** focusing on the proposed policies and hosted by the City of Ottawa. This is an opportunity to learn more about the TMP policies and take part in a question-and-answer session. Those interested in attending can register <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/tmp-open-housepdt-seance-portes-ouverte-tickets-252006778057>

Residents are strongly encouraged to submit their questions ahead of time. You can submit your questions here <https://s-ca.chkmkt.com/?e=257370&h=114D24DA8842950&l=en>

The TMP Review website can be found here: <https://engage.ottawa.ca/transportation-master-plan>

City Restarts Drop-in Recreation Activities

With the Province of Ontario relaxing restrictions on Monday, January 31, the City will resume drop-in recreation and cultural activities at select locations with 50 per cent capacity

levels.

Select facilities [listed on ottawa.ca](https://www.ottawa.ca) will open for drop-in activities and facility rentals at 50 per cent capacity starting on Monday. Access to most activities will require a reservation in advance and [proof of vaccination](#) will be required for everyone 12 years and older. Reservations for drop-in activities can be made under the “schedule” tab of the facility page beginning at 6 pm on Saturday, January 29.

Many of the planned winter registered programs will be cancelled due to limited time remaining in the winter session and capacity restrictions. You will be contacted if your program has been cancelled and receive a refund. The following registered programs will still take place beginning Saturday, February 5:

- Advanced aquatic certification programs (modified schedule)
- Outdoor programs at Mooney's Bay Ski Centre at the Terry Fox Athletic Facility
- Learn to Skate programs
- Hockey programs
 - 4-on-4 for ages seven to 12
 - 50+ Game Play
 - Night Adult Game Play
 - Ray Friel Hockey League
 - Instructional powerskating
- Nepean Visual Arts Centre programs
- Inclusive Recreation programs, including Social Recreation
- Seniors Centres programming
- “I Love To” programs
- Modified rural program offerings (check the guide for availability in your community)
- Virtual programs
- Before and After school programs
- March Break camps will be offered with registration opening on Wednesday, February 16 at 9 pm.

These programs will run as staff availability permits. It's a good idea to check for cancellations before heading to your program.



Committee of Adjustment – Wednesday, February 2, 2022

D08-01-21/B-00513, B-00514, 925 Falaise (Ward 16-River)
D08-02-21/A-00420, A-00421

The Committee of Adjustment will consider Applications for Consent to subdivide the property into two separate parcels of land for the construction of two new detached dwellings with one dwelling on each of the newly created lots. The existing detached dwelling is to be demolished.

The Committee of Adjustment will consider Applications for Minor Variances to permit

reduced lot widths and lot areas.

Committee of Adjustment – Wednesday, February 16, 2022

D08-02-21/A-00425, 3 Harrold Place

The Committee of Adjustment will consider an Application for Minor Variances to permit a reduced front yard setback, to permit a covered porch to project into the frontyard and to permit the covered porch to be located closer to the front lot line. It is proposed to demolish the existing porch at the front of the detached dwelling and to construct a new covered porch.

Please contact the Committee Office at cofa@ottawa.ca with your comments.

Airport Parkway Expansion Final Design – Formation of Community Working Group

Final design on the Airport Parkway expansion has started. The design consultant is Parsons. The City intends to complete the final design (detailed blueprint) by the end of 2023. The construction is expected to start in 2024 and be completed by the end of 2025. The two-year construction period will be further reviewed during the design phase.

I have met with Transportation Staff and Parsons earlier in January to discuss the project, which will include an update on overall project objectives and schedule, discuss matters of interest to the community, and identify community association representatives and other key community stakeholders and a Community Working Group for this project was formed.



International Women's Day Virtual Event

I will be hosting my annual International Women's Day speaker event virtually via Zoom on Thursday March 10, from 6:30pm to 8pm.

Further details to be released in the coming weeks. If you would like to pre-register with my office, send me an email at: Riley.Brockington@ottawa.ca

River Ward's Fabulous Outdoor Rinks

Thank-you to all volunteers who assist every year with our local outdoor rinks. Winter is challenging for many, but access to these rinks is very appreciated and your service in keeping the rinks up and running is applauded.

Here is a list of our local rinks:

Alexander Park – Silver St.

Arnott Park – Hartman Cres.

Bellevue Manor Park – Caldwell Ave.
Carleton Heights Park – Apeldoorn Ave.
Celebration Park – Central Park Dr.
Frank J. Licari Park – Cochrane St.
Geoff Wightman Park – Leopolds Dr.
Ledbury Park – Ledbury Ave.
Lexington Park – Lexington St.
McCarthy Park – Paul Anka Dr.
Meadowvale Park – Trenton Ave.
Owl Park – Owl Dr.
Paget Park – Hobson Rd.
Pauline Vanier Park – Harkness Ave.
Raven Park – Larose Ave.
Rideauview Park – Eiffel Ave.
