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## A Year in Reflection

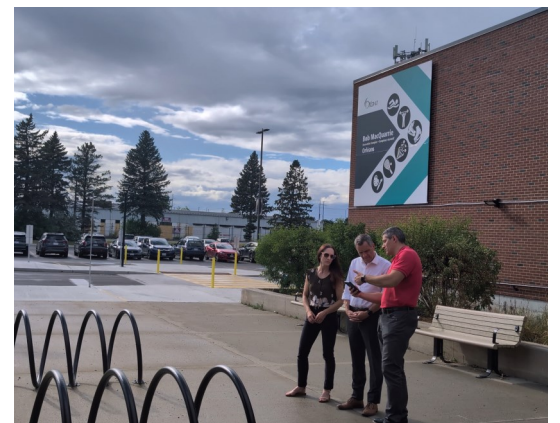
As we step into 2026, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible progress we've made together over the past few years. Much of our community was built more than 40 years ago, and unlike a fine wine, our roads, parks, and recreation facilities have not aged gracefully. That's why renewing and modernizing these amenities has been one of my top priorities.

Several years ago, I was proud to host the grand opening of the expanded and renovated Lois Kemp Arena in Blackburn. Soon, history will repeat itself, as my long-fought effort to expand the Bob MacQuarrie Recreation Complex-Orléans and add a new gymnasium comes to fruition. This will be a game-changer for our community, providing much

greater access to recreational and programming spaces for everyone.

This past year also set a new record for road resurfacing investments, surpassing last year's milestone. Our community deserves this investment and I am determined that we receive our fair share. I also opened the new splashpad at Roy Park, a project that completed a goal I set when first elected: upgrading every splashpad in our ward. Gone are the decades-old broken spray posts, replaced with modern, accessible water features for families to enjoy.

Finally, when the City acquired the former convent in Chapel Hill, it brought with it a sprawling new community greenspace. This past summer, over 100 volunteers joined



me to plant more than 1,000 trees, one of the largest tree plantings in Ottawa's recent history. Later this year, I'll also be unveiling plans for a new disc golf course at this site. Stay tuned!

Thank you to everyone who helped make these achievements possible. Together, we are shaping a stronger, more vibrant community.

## Changes Coming to Recycling in Ottawa

Starting January 1, 2026, the way recycling is collected in Ottawa, and across Ontario, is changing. Under new Provincial regulations, the responsibility for collecting and processing recyclable materials will shift from municipalities to the producers who create packaging and paper products. This transition is part of Ontario's Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) program, which ensures that producers cover the costs of recycling their materials.

What does this mean for you? The City of Ottawa will no longer collect

blue and black bins. Instead, Circular Materials, is the not-for-profit organization which will manage recycling collection across the entire province. Their contractor, Miller Waste Services, will handle curbside pickup in Ottawa.

You can continue using your existing City of Ottawa blue and black bins, no need to replace them. Starting in 2026, you'll also be able to recycle more items, including plastic bags, coffee cups, toothpaste tubes, deodorant containers, bubble wrap and styrofoam.



Starting Jan 1, 2026, for missed recycling collections or recycling bin replacements, instead of the City, residents will need to contact Circular Materials directly.

Visit: [CircularMaterials.ca/Ottawa](https://CircularMaterials.ca/Ottawa) for more information.

Learn more about Ottawa's transition at [ottawa.ca/recycling](https://ottawa.ca/recycling).

# Gems Awards 2025

One of the greatest joys of serving our community is shining a spotlight on the incredible people, businesses, and organizations that make Orléans such a vibrant place to live. That's why, six years ago, I launched the **Gems Awards**, and every year, I am blown away by the response.

This year was no exception. The sheer number of nominations we received speaks volumes about the strength and generosity of our community. Whether it's a small business going above and beyond for its customers, a volunteer group making a difference behind the scenes, or an

organization that consistently steps up to support those in need.

What makes these awards so special is that they come from you, the residents who see firsthand the impact these Gems have every day.

Your enthusiasm and pride in our local champions remind me why the east end is such an extraordinary place.

Recognizing these Gems are more than just an annual tradition; it's a celebration of the heart and soul of our community.



Laura presenting the Gem Award and Certificate to Café Amore, the award winner of Best Restaurant.

Learn more about last year's winners at: [LauraDudas.ca/gems-2025](http://LauraDudas.ca/gems-2025).

# Winter City Services

After a snowfall or freezing rain, I often hear from residents wondering why their street hasn't been plowed yet, or how long it will take before it is. To help answer those questions, I wanted to share some key information about the City of Ottawa's winter services. I hope you find this helpful and informative.

Over the past few years, the City has made major improvements to its Winter Maintenance Standards. Snow clearing now follows a priority system: high-use roads, emergency routes, and transit corridors are cleared first, along with pedestrian connections near schools and busy areas. This approach ensures that the most critical routes are accessible for emergency vehicles and transit.

Once a storm ends and the last snowflake falls, the clock starts. Most residential streets and sidewalks are scheduled to be cleared within 10 to 16 hours, though timing can vary depending on the severity of the storm and ongoing conditions.

If a storm is severe enough to create dangerous conditions, the City may declare a Significant Weather Event. This can lead to delays in normal clearing timelines and may include a Winter Weather Parking Ban. These measures help crews work more efficiently and keep everyone safe. You can learn more and sign up for alerts at: [Ottawa.ca/winter](http://Ottawa.ca/winter).

Another recent change is the OC Transpo Severe Storm Schedule,

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 City Crews maintain more than 427 km of roadway lanes in Ward 2. That's the same as driving from  
  
**Orléans → Toronto**  
 in a snowplow!

which applies on weekdays when heavy snow, freezing rain, or other severe weather is expected. Learn more at: [www.octranspo.com/en/plan-your-trip/how-to-ride/winter-travels](http://www.octranspo.com/en/plan-your-trip/how-to-ride/winter-travels)

For more details on what to expect during winter weather operations visit [LauraDudas.ca/winter-standards](http://LauraDudas.ca/winter-standards).

**Ottawa** **What to expect during a winter storm**

**Timelines begin once accumulation stops**

2-4 hours	4 hours	6 hours	12-16 hours	10-16 hours	24 hours
Highway 174, the Transitway, major roads and arterials	Sidewalks in the downtown core and the Winter Cycling Network	Secondary roads and minor collectors	Residential sidewalks	Residential roads and lanes	Bus stops
At accumulation	2.5 cm	5 cm	5 cm	7 cm	Clean up

**3-1-1: Your City Connection**

By Phone: **3-1-1**  
 Online: [Ottawa.ca/en/3-1-1](http://Ottawa.ca/en/3-1-1)

Ottawa's 3-1-1 service is your one-stop connection for non-emergency City services and information.

- Missed Garbage/Green Bin/Yard Waste Pickup
- Potholes
- Street Lights Out
- Sign-up for Recreation Programs
- Parks and Tree Maintenance
- By-Law Services (noise, parking)
- Property Issues (graffiti, weeds)

## The Villa St. Louis: A Tragedy Remembered

On May 15, 1956, Orléans was shaken by one of the most devastating events in its history, the Villa St-Louis tragedy. Villa St-Louis was a convent and boarding school operated by the Grey Nuns, located near the Ottawa River. That morning, a Royal Canadian Air Force CF-100 fighter jet experienced mechanical failure during a training flight. The aircraft crashed directly into the convent, igniting a massive fire that engulfed the building within minutes.

The disaster claimed 15 lives, including 11 Grey Nuns and four civilians. Sadly, many were trapped as fire spread rapidly through

the wooden structure. The tragedy deeply impacted the Orléans community, which rallied together to support survivors and honour the lives lost. It also prompted national discussions about aviation safety and emergency response near populated areas.

Today, the Villa St-Louis tragedy remains a somber chapter in Orléans' history, a reminder of the vulnerability of small communities to unforeseen disasters. Memorials and historical accounts preserve the memory of those who perished, ensuring that this event continues to be



Interior of the Villa St-Louis Chapel, Orléans, circa 1956, - City of Ottawa Archives

recognized as a defining moment in our community's past.

### Orléans Early Settlement and Founding

The first pioneers arrived in the 1830s. François Dupuis, a War of 1812 veteran, is often considered the founder of Orléans. His log cabin was later moved to the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum.

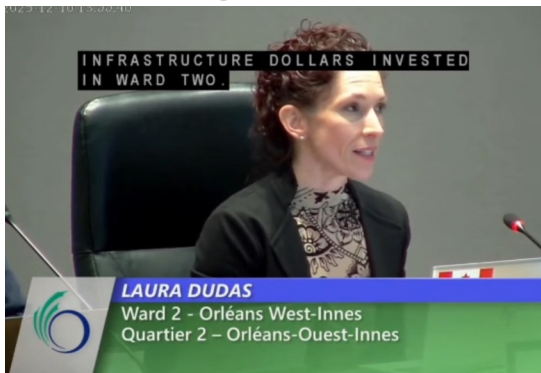
### The Birth of St-Joseph d'Orléans Parish

The parish was established in 1860, and the first church opened in 1885. A second, larger church replaced it in 1922 and remains a landmark today.

### St-Joseph Boulevard Our Historic Main Street

Originally called Ottawa Street, this became the heart of the village and now features 34 historical plaques installed in 2013 to commemorate businesses and homes from the 1950s era.

## Investing in our Community



At City Council, fighting to ensure Orléans West-Innes sees its fair share of investments.

As your City Councillor, I have long fought to ensure that our community receives the investments it needs and deserves. This means tackling the projects you see every day, resurfacing our aging roads and pathways, and renewing parks, as well as the less visible but equally critical upgrades to underground water and wastewater infrastructure. These investments keep our community safe, connected, and thriving.

This year's draft budget already included some of the highest levels of investment our community has ever seen.

Road projects alone totalled nearly \$4.7 million with road resurfacing planned for:

- Bédèque Court
- Fortune Drive
- Frank Bender Street
- Innes Road through Blackburn
- Superior Court
- Tours Place

While this was a great start, I worked closely with the Mayor's office to secure even more improvements. I am excited to share that both Hunter's Run Drive and Champneuf Drive have now been added to the list. The engineering work starting in 2026, and the resurfacing in 2027.

And it didn't stop there. Though not in the draft budget, the resurfacing of the tennis courts at Bilberry and Racette Parks, along with the replacement of the outdoor rinks at Barrington and Bearbrook Parks, were also added. These important upgrades were only added because of my continued advocacy and determination to deliver for our community.



The future gymnasium addition at Bob MacQuarrie Recreation Complex—Orléans

### Bob MacQuarrie Gym Expansion

For the past several years, I fought to secure funding for the City to complete the engineering studies and designs to make this project possible. I am thrilled to share that the Federal Government has now stepped forward, and the expansion was officially listed in the federal budget!

While there is not yet a timeline, the City and the Federal Government are working together to finalize the details. This is a dream I have long championed, and I am excited to see it finally moving toward reality!



Laura thanking resident for his quick thinking and heroic actions during a neighbourhood house fire.



Commemorative naming ceremony for Trèva Cousineau Park.



Laura at the Orléans Fall Family Festival at Barrington Park.



Laura representing our city and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to Federal Ministers in Ottawa.



Annual Pumpkin Parade at École élémentaire catholique L'Étoile-de-l'Est.



At the Ottawa Board of Trade Mayor's Breakfast with local business leaders.

## Looking Ahead Together



Laura at a park pop-up in the community.

As I wrap up this newsletter, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your continued support, ideas, and involvement in shaping our community. The progress we've made together is a direct result of your engagement, and I am proud to represent such a vibrant and caring community.

The start of a new year brings fresh opportunities, and I am excited to continue meeting with residents, whether at community events, local parks, or right at your doorstep. These conversations are invaluable, helping ensure that the decisions made at City Hall reflect what matters most to you.

Please remember that my team and I are always here to help. If you have questions about City services, need assistance navigating programs, or simply want to share your ideas, we are just a call or email away. Staying connected is key, and there are several easy ways to do so:

- Follow me on Facebook: <https://www.Facebook.com/CouncillorLauraDudas>.
- Visit my website: [www.LauraDudas.ca](http://www.LauraDudas.ca).
- Sign up for my monthly newsletter: Scan the QR code below to subscribe and receive updates directly to your inbox.

This year promises even more exciting milestones and new initiatives that will continue to strengthen our community. Together, we will build a future that is inclusive, sustainable, and full of opportunity. Thank you for being such an integral part of this journey, I could not do this work without your input and collaboration.

Here's to a successful and inspiring year ahead. I look forward to seeing you out in the community and working together to make 2026 our best year yet!



Laura at park pop-up on Carrière Street on the first day of school.



Laura visiting residents in the neighbourhood at their door.

## Sign up for my newsletter!

Sign up for my newsletter and get regular city updates. You can register at [LauraDudas.ca/contact](http://LauraDudas.ca/contact) or by scanning the QR code.

