



ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022



**Centre de
ressources
communautaires
de la Basse-Ville**



**Lowertown
Community
Resource
Centre**

Thank You to our Funders and our Partners!





Fier membre de:



Thank You to our resilient community!



Special thank you to Abigail (Abby) Andre for contributing some great pictures to this Annual Report!



A Word

From the Board President and Executive Director

The nature of our work, especially during the last two years, has meant that we are constantly in the thick of things, focused on putting out fires. We sometimes forget to take stock of what we have gone through and what we have done. And so it is for most people in today's society.

Often, like a hiker in the mountains, it is only by stopping for a few moments to look back that we can see the **extent of the path travelled**. We want to take advantage of the annual report to appreciate our journey.

Here are the **challenges and obstacles** we have faced in the past year:

- Cancellation of activities and events including Lowertown Celebration in May 2021 and Winterfest in February 2022;
- The introduction of the coronavirus vaccine has both given hope and caused consternation and great ethical debates;
- In Lowertown, the tragic murders of two young men in our neighborhood in the summer of 2021 were devastating to their loved ones and the neighborhood and shook us all;
- The omicron variant led to the closure of schools, businesses and public spaces as well as the suspension of several activities in December 2021-January 2022;
- The demonstration that became an occupation of downtown for a month in January-February 2022 destabilized the daily life of residents, especially those who live in Lowertown West;
- Food insecurity has steadily increased in Lowertown and the already-felt effects of inflation are very concerning.

Accomplishments and successes:

- LCRC-led COVID outreach efforts continued with Ottawa Public Health and other partners to promote safety measures, answer questions about coronavirus and vaccines, and facilitate connection to **services and supports**;
- Our social support workers had **3,670 appointments** with residents seeking support;
- **Youth soccer**, coordinated by resident Mathieu Loyer, was able to go ahead in summer 2021 and for the first time was offered free of charge thanks to the LCRC;
- A great collaboration between the LCRC, BGC Ottawa, Prezdential Basketball and the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre brought **basketball for young people and teenagers** back to Lowertown;
- With the support of several partners, we supported a group of youth in the development of the **Youth Action Plan for Lowertown**;
- The LCRC food bank didn't cease its operations and provided more than **13,000 services to almost 1,100 Lowertown residents**;
- York St. School and the OCDSB provided a room for the creation of a **new youth space** for meetings and a drop-in. The organization Helping with Furniture provided appliances, tables and sofas;
- Our core funding from the City of Ottawa has been **renewed for another 5 years**;
- The LCRC supported a group of residents in setting up an **Anti-Black Racism Committee**.



It should be noted that all these accomplishments took place in a context of organizational reorientation aimed at promoting an even more collaborative approach between our programs.

We realize, therefore, that we have faced many challenges and that we have overcome them with much success. We have shown initiative and have been driven in our mission to improve the quality of life of Lowertown residents.

We congratulate the strong, resilient, friendly and dedicated team at the LCRC. We salute all the residents, volunteers, funders and donors who believe in us and with whom we work symbiotically throughout the year.



Jolane T Lauzon
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD
OF DIRECTORS



Matthew Beutel
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



LCRC Board of Directors (2021–2022)

Jolane T. Lauzon, President (Member)

Marty Mudie, Vice-President
(Resident Member)

Désiré Kabore, Secretary-Treasurer
(Member and Lowertown business owner)

Dominique Boulais (Resident Member)

Jean-Paul Gagnon (Resident Member)

Kendra Hughes (Resident Member)

Christopher Knight (Resident Member)

Martha Labarge (Member)

Herman Ntawe (Resident Member)

Valerie Proctor (Resident Member)

Dalia Tejeda Alix (Resident Member)

Matthew Beutel, Executive Director
(*ex officio*)

Marie-Christine Gauthier, Staff
Representative (*ex officio*)

Our ESSENTIAL services, delivered with care

Social Support

▶ **1,500** wellness check-in calls

▶ **1,847 resolutions** or referrals to residents requesting social support

▶ **8,577 calls** and visits to our reception

▶ **2,636 bus tickets** given to residents

▶ **1,484 contacts** made through our Covid Outreach program

Support for families at **EMERGENCY MOTEL-SHELTER** – Through the Centre’s services, these families were able to access hot meals as they do not have access to amenities for preparing a family meal. Nearly **10,000 hot meals** served by the LCRC in partnership with Food for Thought.

COVID OUTREACH – The impact of our outreach to residents was enhanced by the development of a quarantine guide for parents created by **10 children** enrolled in our Club310 after-school program.



SUPPORT TO FAMILIES – Dedicated to the well-being of our residents, the LCRC's social support workers offered their very best providing accompaniment to newcomers, personalized support meetings to residents in distress and supplies for a less stressful back-to-school for more than **200 families**.

SUPPORT FOR SENIORS – Seniors have been the most affected by the pandemic. In addition to the threat of the virus, loneliness and lack of access to services have been the biggest challenges. In order to make their days less arduous, in collaboration with our partner organizations, the LCRC offered nearly **400 hot meals** to the seniors living at 160 Charlotte Street.

Another wonderful season of **BALCONY DANCING** in the fall allowed seniors in the community to reduce their isolation, get some exercise, gain a little hope, have some fun and be in the company of their neighbors.

CARING AND SHARING CHRISTMAS EXCHANGE 2021 – Total of 1,019 people served by this program. We distributed bags of **toys to 293 children, gift cards to 96 teens** as well as **130 holiday meals** to residents of 160 Charlotte in collaboration with 4 partner agencies.

VIRTUAL CARE – This program was very well received and met an important need in the community by providing free technology and connectivity tools to help vulnerable people stay connected to social support services, the Lowertown East Residents' Committee (LERC) group and community development. We distributed **43 devices** to residents.



Thank you very much for the Christmas and Valentine's meals, they were delicious. Your graciousness and thoughtfulness are truly appreciated. Your generosity is heartfelt.

Mrs. St. Amour (senior resident)

Community House



The pandemic has not been without impact on food security and we have helped all those who have requested support from the **LCRC FOOD BANK**.

Furthermore, the Centre continues to prioritize food security as a community empowerment and development issue.

COMMUNITY HOUSE – Intended to be a lively neighbourhood gathering place, our Community House has had to reinvent itself during the pandemic. In addition to the new appointment system for our Food Bank services, our team organized three events:

- **Plant giveaway** (vegetables, potting soil and planter),
- **Clothing Boutique** with back-to-school essentials and professional work attire,
- Spooky **Haunted House**, an exciting Halloween tradition that was extremely popular with the residents.

We are very grateful for the generous **donations of coats** and other winter items to the Community House; food donations from Broadview Public (**120+ boxes!**) and De La Salle schools; and the fundraising efforts of La Nouvelle Scène Gilles Desjardins for our Food Bank.

▶ **1,281 households** benefited from the support of the LCRC Food Bank

▶ **13,153 visits** to our Food Bank







Community Development

► **\$1,054,009**
put back into
residents' pockets

I would like to thank the Lowertown Community Centre for the wonderful opportunity to teach my children how to grow some of their food and how to co-exist in community. I am so thrilled to meet new people with new knowledge about gardening. Thank you for this chance of a lifetime. I have a brain injury and not much brings joy to me like this.

Pénélope (resident, mother of 7)

INCOME TAX CLINICS – Free income tax assistance services helped **312 residents** get an average of **\$3,000 back in taxes**.

This year for the first time, with the help of our partners, we included an **on-site component** to our income tax clinic for seniors living at 160 Charlotte to facilitate access.

Two community events were held despite restrictions due to the pandemic: installation of an illuminated sculpture, **A WARM HUG**, attended by about 40 people, at Jules Morin Park, and the **SACRED FIRE**, honouring Indigenous culture, attended by about 50 people.

HEALING THROUGH ART while being environmentally conscious – Our artistic partnership with MASC allowed 15 residents to create their own artworks with recycled materials.

LOWERTOWN YOUTH COMMUNITY SOCCER LEAGUE – With the dedication of a Lowertown resident, over **80 youth** were able to participate in regular practices and games at Jules Morin Park free of charge.

FEDERAL ELECTION 2021 AWARENESS – Debates organized by the Centre and its partners allowed residents to express their concerns to candidates in the federal election. Residents received the information they needed to exercise their right to vote.

COMMUNITY GARDENS – A special place for residents to get involved in gardening, including running and maintaining the gardens. The gardens are also an opportunity for residents to connect, exchange and share best gardening practices while growing their own food.



PAJ – Programmes auprès des jeunes (Youth Programming)

CLUB310 and Transitions After School Programs

Like many families, our staff experienced a significant amount of uncertainty with the numerous school closures and re-openings, needing to adjust to changing health regulations as the waves rolled in. Nevertheless, we take pride in having prioritized the **well-being and safety** of the children in all our decisions.

The **SNACK PROGRAM**, implemented during school closures, was a great success with **140 families** registered each week from March 2021 to June 2021 - we also offered a virtual after-school programming component and baby diaper support as needed.

SETTLING INTO A NEW SPACE – with supplies from Helping with Furniture and OCDSB, the staff and youth tastefully redesigned the room for our Transitions program supporting youth ages 12 to 14.

Summer Camp 2021

It was with great joy and enthusiastic participation that our Summer Camp and March Break Camp brought together Lowertown youth (in person!) again! We were able to combine **fun activities** with health restrictions.

For the first time, participants had the opportunity to go to the Ottawa Rowing Club on the Ottawa River, play in the trees at Arbraska and explore the Laflèche Cavern. In partnership with MASC, artists came to engage in activities and performances with the youth. They enjoyed several pool/splash pad outings and picnics in various parks in the neighbourhood (Jules Morin, Bordeleau, Bingham and Strathcona) and each day of the camp participants were provided with a homemade balanced hot meal and **healthy snacks**.



► **140 children** enrolled in our after-school programs

► **90 children** benefited from our Summer Camp program





Developing youth leadership through Basketball

The LCRC, the Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa, Prezidential Basketball and the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre have been collaborating on a pilot offering basketball and leadership programming. While working around pandemic restrictions and limited access to space, activities took place first at the municipally-owned gym at 40 Cobourg, then at the BGCO clubhouse in Overbrook (youth were taken by bus) and now at De La Salle high school. Participation has been strong and expanded hours are being planned.



Lowertown, Our Home (LOH)

This initiative brings together **15 organizations** and resident groups and aims to ensure the safety, welcoming and inclusivity of all residents through participatory community engagement.

Several initiatives have been undertaken including:

- The **BANNER CELEBRATION** in December 2021: 16 banners were created by neighborhood youth with the accompaniment of an artist from MASC.
- **PROMOTION OF SAFETY** through practical tools used by participating families. T-shirts and tote bags printed with the banner image for each participating family.
- **PRODUCTION OF A VIDEO CLIP** – With funding from the Community Development Framework and support from MASC, LERC members created a series of short videos aimed at recruiting Lowertown residents.

If there wasn't Club310, I wouldn't be able to finish my studies. Also, I wouldn't have time to do my part-time job... As for my son, he loves all the staff, he adores the activities, and cherishes the quality time with his peers there. Honestly, he has developed a more confident personality because of the socializing and embracing of the team there. I just wanted to thank you all for such a program that really impacts positively in our community.

Rania (mother of a 7 year-old boy, newly arrived in Canada)



Lowertown Youth Action Plan

By and for Lowertown youth

Lowertown has for some time had a lack of barrier-free socio-recreational activities for children and youth, particularly for teens. Lowertown youth have been feeling disheartened and neglected.

In summer of 2021, there were two tragic murders of young men in the neighbourhood. Representatives from OCH, the City's Integrated Neighbourhood Services Team, Ottawa Police Services and the LCRC held a debriefing meeting outside during our post-incident door-to-door visits. In discussing the state of affairs, there was strong agreement that a youth action plan would be important to guide the community and agencies in their approach.

As a result, the LCRC played a catalytic role in a process that led to the formation of a **youth committee** and the development of the **Lowertown Youth Action Plan** unveiled on March 12, 2022. This plan contains four priorities:

- Cultural Diversity,
- Youth-Friendly Places & Spaces
- Community Participation
- Services & Programs.

The next steps are to accompany the youth in the implementation of the activities according to the By and for youth approach.





YOUTH ACTION PLAN
LOWERTOWN

Purpose

The Youth Action Plan is a resource that will guide youth, the community, youth service providers and other supporters to meet the needs of local youth and build a youth-friendly Lowertown and increase a sense of Community.

Objectives

- Identify the **needs** of Lowertown youth including services, facilities and programs
- Build upon existing initiatives and identify **opportunities** to work collaboratively with supporters
- Advocate** on areas of concern for youth

Cultural Diversity
(family conflict, racism/discrimination)

Youth in Lowertown are welcoming and accepting of other cultures and religions. Some challenges they may experience include family conflict where cultural expectations differ, as well as racism and discrimination.

Objectives

- ✓ Celebrate the diversity of youth in Lowertown and the strength that this brings to the community
- ✓ Develop a variety of creative and social programs that enable culturally diverse youth to share their stories, celebrate their culture and contribute to the richness of the local Lowertown community
- ✓ Investigate opportunities for programs that aim to promote cross-cultural connections, tolerance and understanding as well as educate and address issues that youth face specific to

local businesses & organizations, external partners and youth

Youth-Friendly Places and Spaces
(socializing, studying and enhanced community connection)

A need for spaces where youth feel safe and welcome. Youth-friendly public space will become more important as a place away from home for relaxation, socialization and study. A place for youth to convene without barriers (restricted access, times) a place to create, connect, learn and inspire

Objectives

- ✓ Create welcoming and inclusive youth-friendly public places - where there is dedicated staff with structured programming but also a space to hangout, and chill.
- ✓ Convene programs and drop-in services and identify opportunities to improve existing service delivery - i.e. recreational activities.

community partners and funders

Community Participation
(employment services, volunteering, cleanups)

Youth in Lowertown are proud of where they come from and are optimistic about the future of their area. Building youth's ability to participate in the decisions that affect them will lead to better outcomes. Some youth are highly engaged, reaching and reflecting the diversity of youth in decision making is important.

Objectives

- ✓ Develop and implement training for LCRC staff to support meaningful youth participation through service delivery, community engagement activities and events.
- ✓ Build the ability of youth-led initiatives to deliver programs that address the identified needs of local youth, with training and brainstorming workshops to develop new ideas. (Spaces where renovation and improvement projects could be carried out by youth)

external agencies

Services and Programs
(recreational activities, youth services, programs/activities)

Increased demand for youth services, programs and activities to promote the strengths of youth

Objectives

- ✓ Deliver youth programs and services that respond to the needs of local youth.
- ✓ Investigate opportunities to provide new social and recreation activities, including after hours and on weekends for youth.
- ✓ Promote existing services, programs and events for youth, with a focus on promotion through social media channels (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram) and through schools.
- ✓ Coordinate and support existing services to expand service delivery and foster innovative approaches that reach more youth.

youth, community partners and agencies

Financial Report END OF FINANCIAL YEAR MARCH 31, 2022

INCOME STATEMENT

	2022	2021
PRODUCTS		
Grants and contributions	1 830 426 \$	1 698 840 \$
Donations, fundraising, etc.	46 871	65 076
Administrative fees	-	1 350
	1 877 297	1 765 266
OPERATING COSTS		
Salaries and social benefits	1 485 352	1 287 224
Program supplies	166 071	114 418
Program supplies	40 132	113 806
Maintenance and repairs	33 855	38 301
IT costs	29 849	28 482
Emergency fund	19 824	10 533
Telecommunications	14 917	10 673
Rent	11 126	11 126
Travel and meeting costs	9 619	10 506
Insurance	8 870	8 760
Community projects	7 836	15 869
Fundraising costs	3 000	2 234
Training	570	6 132
Professional fees	104 986	28 748
Service fees	3 625	3 478
Amortization of capital assets	1 815	1 815
	1 941 447	1 692 105
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(64 150) \$	73 161 \$

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and bank	360 936 \$	522 235 \$
Debtors	41 550	15 418
Fixed deposit – 1%, redeemable and expires February 2025	50 000	50 000
Prepayments	-	5 949
	452 486	593 602
Fixed Assets		
	6 660	8 475
	459 146 \$	602 077 \$
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	82 274 \$	98 244 \$
Deferred contributions	153 398	216 209
	235 672	314 453
NET ASSETS		
Restricted fund		
Contingency reserve	104 561	104 561
Reserve for contingency wages	46 022	46 022
Reserve for IVTF/CAWI contingency	6 660	8 475
Unrestricted fund	66 231	128 566
	223 474	287 624
	459 146 \$	602 077 \$

The pandemics opened the eyes of many people as to our collective dependence on global supply chains. This is true of food too, especially when coming from very far away, also a source of pollution that contributes to global warming. So for me, the question in 2020 became: Why not try and grow my own food? For this, I needed access to land (a real privilege these days) that I didn't have. Thankfully, there are community gardens in our city, even if they are too few.

Caroline (gardener, resident)



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