



Ottawa City Hall Report

Alex Cullen

Your Community Councillor
in Bay Ward

Bus strike ends – bus service to resume Saturday Feb. 7

OC Transpo's 51-day bus strike has finally ended (*yea!*) with all outstanding issues going to arbitration, and now the City is working to bring about resumption of bus service. Due to the accumulation of buses requiring safety certification OC Transpo is only able to put some 570 buses (out of an 846 bus service) into operation starting on Saturday Feb. 7 (the O-Train began running earlier this week). This will allow all Transitway routes to operate plus 17 regular bus routes (including the 2, 18 and 85) as well as a number of feeder routes, all 600 school bus routes and all 800 early morning routes. Express buses will take more time to get in service, depending on how fast OC Transpo can get these buses road-worthy (expected early April). More details can be found at www.octranspo.com or call 613 741-4390.

As well, bus and O-Train service will be free up to February 15 and weekends in February will be free also. Seniors will be able to ride the bus system free on Wednesdays. December bus passes can be refunded or exchanged for February bus passes, and February bus passes will be available at reduced rates. More details about this can be found at www.octranspo.com.

The parking mitigation measures announced by the City during the strike will continue to be in effect until the bus system is fully operational.

This bus strike was certainly hard on many people – the public, the drivers, and City Council. What I hope will happen is that people will put this unfortunate episode behind us as we board the bus, so that our drivers can get on with the job of driving our buses safely.

New Official Plan to guide city growth to 2031

A new Official Plan (the document that all municipalities must have to guide urban and suburban growth) has been tabled at City Hall for public review and comment. This new O.P. proposes the first expansion in urban boundaries for the City since 2000, proposes new policies to ensure that intensification is more compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood, creates a new rural settlement policy, and better protection of wetlands. The draft Official Plan is available at www.ottawa.ca/beyondottawa2020; the public has until March 31 to comment on these proposals. A public open house (with presentations) on the draft O.P. will be held on **Saturday February 24** at Ottawa City Hall.

NCC begins review of Greenbelt

The National Capital Commission has begun a two-year study on the future of the Greenbelt and will be inviting public comments on proposed policies on this important rural/natural landscape that surrounds Ottawa. More information on this can be found at the NCC web site at www.canadascapital.gc.ca.

Bay Ward Community Council

The Bay Ward Community Council is a monthly public meeting of Bay Ward community groups with Councillor Alex Cullen to discuss local and City Hall issues. It meets the first Wednesday of the month (7 pm) at the Ron Kolbus-Lakeside Centre – all are welcome!

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