

2023 STATE OF THE CITY
April 4, 2023

The City of Ottawa has just over 18,000 residents and operates under the Commission form of Government where each of the four commissioners and the mayor have a department that they are in charge of. We operate on an annual budget from May 1st to April 30th.

Construction is underway for the \$27 Million YMCA project which should spur additional development in the waterfront area. Plans are in place to construct river pylon structures for large cruise ship tie-offs at Allen Park. Riverfront improvements were made by the City to accommodate the Sainte Genevieve that is now providing scenic cruises along the Illinois River offering cocktails and appetizers.

The City will continue its efforts to preserve its historic commercial buildings and beautify the downtown. Several downtown buildings are undergoing renovations and the Downtown Design Guidelines, a twenty-year-old document, was updated last year. We are planning a long-range commitment to resurface the alleys downtown and, in some areas, relocate utilities underground.

Surf Air Wireless LLC is mobilizing materials and equipment and should be starting the installation of High Speed iFiber Internet this spring starting on the Southside.

We are also seeing an expansion in residential growth primarily at Heritage Harbor on the East side of town. This past year we had \$9,981,550 in residential construction and \$38,235,300 in commercial projects.

A new gateway entry sign was constructed on the northside of Ottawa.

City Finances - FY 2022 and FY 2023

- The City of Ottawa maintains reasonable, but not excessive surpluses. The City operates in adherence to its budget, effectively deploying collected revenues and grant funding.
- The City's General Corporate Fund (the City's main operating account) is operating with a balanced budget, deploying some prior reserves.
- Tax revenues for the current budget ending April 30, 2023 are projected to comprise 79.5% of total General Fund Revenues (the City's main operating account). This is consistent with prior years.
 - Approximately 16% of tax revenues are from Property Taxes
 - Approximately 52% of tax revenues are from Sales Taxes

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- Total budgeted General Fund Revenues for FY 2023 are \$19.7 million, an increase from FY 2022 which were projected at \$18.2 million.
- Sales Tax Revenues continue to account for an increasing portion of the City's General Fund tax revenues.
- When considering all City Funds, Property Taxes account for a larger portion of overall revenues.
- The Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) which forms the basis of Property Tax revenues is projected to increase this coming year for the seventh consecutive year after four prior years of successive modest declines.
- The City has effectively utilized Tax Increment Financing Districts and Enterprise Zones incentives to encourage new business development.
- The City has consistently funded each of its employee pension fund obligations by the actuarially recommend amounts.
- The City consistently operates its business-type activities, primarily its water and wastewater treatment operations, as well as its NCAT municipal bus service at a modest profit.
- The City issued three separate bond issuances fiscal year 2023, and is completing a fourth. An issuance of \$4.8 million was to finance a municipal swimming pool, with a supplementary issuance of \$1.5 million in process for additional expenses for this civic improvement. The bonds are general obligation bonds with an alternate revenue source. A replacement tower truck for the fire department was the purpose of the second issuance of \$1.4 million. The third issuance of \$1.1 million was to refinance existing debt, taking advantage of a lower interest rate environment than existed when they were originally funded. The City's debt is below the statutory allowed maximum of 8.625% of the value of the taxable property within its limits.
- The City of Ottawa received bond ratings for each of its 2021 bond issuances. The bond issuances were insured. Standard and Poors assigned a rating of AA (Stable Outlook), and Moody's an underlying credit rating of A3. Each is categorized as indicating a "very strong" capacity to meet financial commitments.
- The City's outstanding debt is below the State statutory limit of 8.625% of the value of the taxable property within its limits. All obligations have been paid as agreed.
- The City has prudently managed the resources available to it, stayed within its budgetary projections, proactively sought grant funding, and effectively utilized debt for financing necessary projects.

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Economic Development

- A new Dunkin Donuts store is about to open in front of the Holiday Inn Express.
- Coogee Titanium has opened its doors at the former International Titanium Power site and is currently producing magnesium powder in a one-of-a-kind process being used nowhere else in the world. The intent is to also produce titanium powder in a couple years which will make it the only titanium powder producer in the United States.
- Lotz Trucking has expanded, and now has over 100 employees. They have improved the former Kmart building with extensive safety measures and is using the building for Carus Chemical storage.
- Sigan America has expanded their production capability and now employs over 400.
- Veralife is expanding and relocating to the former Anytime Fitness.
- Anytime Fitness has relocated to North Ottawa Plaza.
- A new bowling alley called simply “The Alley” opened at the former Pinheadz location on Ottawa Avenue
- The Justice Law Firm totally remodeled and moved into the former Mr. Penguin building.
- Ottawa Plant Food constructed a new Cold Storage warehouse.
- The Bridal Elegance building sold and developing into an indoor self-storage and laundry mat.
- Ottawa has been fortunate so far in that during and after Covid, none of its major industries has closed or relocated. Only a few businesses have closed, and most were due to retirement.

In the Downtown Area:

- The Times building has been remodeled and now houses Tangled Roots offices as well as The Times.
- Court Street was improved with a widened sidewalk area to accommodate outdoor dining and festivals. Two buildings on Court Street were sold since the improvements were made and the new owners intend to invest in improvements to their new properties.
- Infinite Charm consignments opened next to Bells Clothing.
- Valley Immigrant advocates opened in the former United way to help legal immigrants follow the US process.
- Pups in Pawradise pet care opened.
- Val Halla barber shop opened this year.
- Ottawa Area Chamber relocated to IVCC Satellite.

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- Several downtown buildings have been purchased by new investors and are in various stages of renovation.

Bottom line: People are investing in Ottawa.

FY 2022 Grants

\$300,000	US EPA, Brownfields Assessment Grant
\$500,000	DCEO, Lance Yednock water replacements (in lieu of Downtown Waterfront)
\$550,000	DCEO, Housing Rehab grant
\$506,000	IDNR, OSLAD Allen Park Grant
\$75,000	DCEO, RISE Grant to study Downtown residential and short-term rentals
3,000,000	DCEO, Rebuild Downtowns and Main Streets Grant – Downtown Waterfront Amphitheater
\$18,000	IDNR/The Morton Arboretum Tree Planting grant

New grants being pursued:

- Ottawa is partnering with Peoria and surrounding communities to pursue bringing passenger rail back to Ottawa on the former Rock Island Rocket line.
- Several Fire Department grants for much needed equipment and to defray personnel costs have been applied for.
- Fields Hill sanitary sewer extension
- Flood Buyout for the old YMCA building

Fire Department

It is the primary mission of the Ottawa Fire Department to provide a variety of services designed to protect the lives and property of our customer base, the citizens of Ottawa and surrounding area from the adverse effects of fire, sudden medical emergencies or the exposure to dangerous conditions caused by man and nature in an efficient, professional, and well-trained manner. In 2022 the Ottawa Fire Department responded to 4,121 emergency responses. Requests for EMS related calls rose to a record high of 3,443 calls for service. It was also a tragic year for fire casualties with three civilian fire deaths in 2022.

Some of the challenges faced in 2022 were recruitment and retention and supply chain issues. The City of Ottawa has taken a strong stand on working through these challenges by providing financial support and procedural changes to combat the recruitment and retention problem. The City of Ottawa has also been aggressive and has been a leader in the area for budgeting for apparatus and equipment that may take months to

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years to arrive because of the supply chain crisis. In 2022 the Ottawa Fire Department has either placed on order, received, or upgraded the following equipment.

- New 100ft Pierce Tower Ladder
- Upgraded to Lexipol policy platform
- Battery Powered Rescue Tools/Ventilation Fans
- New Cardiac Monitors
- Upgrade to Stryker power load system in Medic 7
- New Command Vehicle
- New AED's
- Explore design options for new Station 2
- New Pierce PUC Rescue Engine
- (2) new Osage medic units
- Upgrade front-line engine from ILS to full ALS
- Upgrade all support vehicles and Tower truck to BLS

The following is grants for funding received in 2022:

- REP Grant – Emergency response/training - \$11,256.80
- RPA/FEMA – COVID-19 Supplies - \$11,774.45
- Compeer – Wildland Firefighting Tools - \$3,814.00

Police Department

The Ottawa Police Department has continued to maintain its long time standing as one of the most professional and progressive law enforcement agencies in the area. This is done, among other things, through the continued support of established, successful programs such as the Peer Jury, Ottawa Police Department's Child Abduction Response (CART) Team, Crisis Intervention Team, and the recently created Peer Support program intended to address the mental health and wellness of the men and women of the Ottawa Police Department. The Ottawa Police Department prides itself in working with and educating the community such as offering education identity theft/fraud to those who are in high-risk groups such as long-term care facilities. In Addition to offering these programs to better meet the needs of our community the Ottawa Police Department in 2022 handled 17,619 squad car calls for service. Ottawa Central Dispatch handled a total of 11,765 - 911 emergency calls and 48,297 administrative calls.

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Public Works Administration

<u>2022 Streets</u>	Approximate Cost
Resurfaced 25 blocks	\$983,000
Resurfaced 27 alleys	\$453,000
Reconstructed and landscaped east side of Court Street	\$220,000
Widened south side of Madison Street at Court House for diagonal parking	\$37,000
Resurfaced Allen Park entrance road and west parking lots	\$225,000
Resurfaced Water Treatment Plant parking lot and maintenance yard	\$83,000
Resurfaced City Hall parking lot	\$40,000
Resurfaced parking lot at west end of Joliet Street	<u>\$35,000</u>
Total Street Program	\$2,076,000

Total length = 21.875 feet (4.14 miles) (25 blocks and 27 alleys)

Total curb replacement = 2,650 feet in 15 blocks (including 1 full block) with 25 sidewalk ramps

Water

2023 Water Main Replacements

Projects selected for 2023 include:

1. East Joliet Street from Scott Street to Post Street
2. Illinois Route 23 from the Dollar General to McKinley Road
3. Fern Street from Ottawa Avenue to Cactus Street

Competitive bids were received on March 8, 2023 at a cost of \$1,546,511. The project is expected to be completed by August 2023.

Wastewater/CSO

Illinois River Crossing Lift Station

The work includes the construction of a new sanitary lift station, manholes, force main, demolition of the existing lift station, associated appurtenances, and restoration. Bids were received and awarded at a cost of \$3,734,700.00. The completion date for the project is estimated for late spring or early summer of 2023.

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	<u>Approximate Cost</u>
• Long Term Control Plan Element 8.1 & 8.10 Sanitary Sewer Lining (Construction Phase – to be completed in June 2023)	\$8,540,000
• Long Term Control Plan Element 8.2 CSSA 004, 014 & 017 Sewer Separation at Third & Fourth Avenue (Construction Phase – to be completed in July 2023)	\$1,200,00
• Long Term Control Plan Element 8.2 CSSA 002 Sewer Separation Various Streets in CSSA 002 (under CDBG application review for \$1,000,000 grant)	\$1,500,000
• Long Term Control Plan Element 8.2 CSSA 006, 013& 019 Sewer Separation, Various Streets (Design Phase)	\$1,000,000

Fields Hill Sanitary Sewer Extension

Engineering design has been completed for an approximate 5,000 feet sanitary sewer extension to serve residence along Caton Road, Fields Place and Lincoln Road. The preliminary cost of the extension has been estimated at approximately \$1,500,000. A construction completion date is not known at this time.

Timber Lane Sanitary Sewer Extension

Engineering design has been completed for an approximate 1,000 feet sanitary sewer extension to serve residence along Timber Lane. The preliminary cost of the extension has been estimated at approximately \$250,000. A construction completion date is not known at this time.

Parks improvements last year

	<u>Approximate Cost</u>
• East Side Park Basketball Court	\$40,000

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- Allen Park Sea Wall Repairs \$250,000
- Recondition Fox River Docks \$5,000
- Thornton Park Splash Pad and Upgrades (Construction) \$610,000
- Dayton Bluffs Preserve Improvements \$35,000
- New Swimming Pool to be completed this summer \$6.7mil

Permits issued by Building Department

Residential Building Permits:

- Permits issued: 89
- Construction value: \$9,981,550.00
- Permit fees collected: \$17,477.00

Commercial Building Permits:

- Permits issued: 34
- Construction value: \$38,235,300.00
- Permits fees collected: \$46,640.00

Fence Permits:

- Permits issued: 118
- Permit fees collected: \$5,850.00

Pool/Hot Tub Permits:

- Permits issued: 30
- Permit fees collected: \$750.00

Demolition Permits:

- Permits issued: 19
- Permit fees collected: \$1,475.00

Floodplain Permits:

- Permits issued: 1

Sign Permits:

- Permits issued: 25
- Permit fees collected: \$820.00

Business Registration Program:

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- Permits issued: 27
- Permit fees collected: \$2,700.00

General Contractor Registrations:

- Licenses issued: 286
- License fees collected: \$28,600.00

Ordinance Report

Jan 2022 thru Dec 2022

Inspections:

Nuisance Inspections	673
Sewer, Water, Street, Other Utility	16
Street Permits	0
Subdivision and Jobsite	0
Street and Right of Way	148
Sidewalk program	0
Misc. Building and Zoning Inspections	3
Tree Inspections	408
Total Inspections	1245
Nuisance Notices posted or sent	257
Door Hanger Notices	297
Nuisance Citations	26
Nuisance files opened	554
Nuisance files closed	512
Building, Zoning, Misc. notices Sent	3
Tree Removal Permits Issued	17
Abatement Action	34
Tree Planting Permits issued	1
Feather Banner Permits	4
Feather Banner Fees	\$50.00 Fees Collected
Waste Hauler Licenses Issued	11
Waste Vehicles Registered 98	\$5600.00 Fees Collected

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Events planned for this year

April 8, 2023 - Hurray for Spring Egg Hunt
Washington Square Park, Jordan Block and stage and Court Street sidewalks

April 10, 2023 - 175th Anniversary of the I & M Canal
Washington Square Park

April 29, 2023 - March to Believe
Washington Square Park

May 6, 2023 - Mother's Day event
Court Street sidewalks

May 7, 2023 - Cars and Coffee
Old Central School Site from 7:30 A.M.-12 P.M

May 13, 2023 - Starved Rock Marathon, Half Marathon and 5K

May 20-21, 2023 - Kites in Flight

May 20, 2023 - Community Outdoor Movie Night
Old Central School

May 29, 2023 - Memorial Day Ceremonies
Vietnam Veterans Memorial
Fox River Bridge - South Side of bridge Navy Mother's Wreath Ceremony
Washington Square Park

June 2, 3 & 4, 2023 - Ottawa Two Rivers Wine Fest
Jordan Block

June 10, 2023 - Family Pride Fest and parade
Washington Square Park, Jordan Block and downtown area

June 14-17, 2023 – Lions Club Carnival
Upper and Lower Parking Lots by Veterans Memorial Bridge

June 16, 2023 - Cruise Night
Downtown

June 16, 2023 - Third Friday Downtown Market with Cruise Night
West End of the 200 W. Madison Street

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June 17- August 26, 2023 - Music in the Park
Washington Square Park

June 17, 2023 – Cross Country 5K Race –

June 24, 2023 - Run Today for Tomorrow 5K Race for Suicide Prevention
Albin-Stevens Drive

July 8, 2023 - Ottawa Canal Day
Washington Square Park

July 21, 2023 - Third Friday Downtown Market
200 block of W. Madison Street

August 2, 2023 - Welcomeburger
Washington Square Park South Side

August 3-6, 2023 - Ottawa Friendship Days
Downtown

August 6, 2023 - Touch A Truck
Old Central School Site

August 18, 2023 - Third Friday Downtown Market
200 block of W. Madison Street

August 19, 2023 - Children's Business Fair
Washington Square Park

September 9, 2023 - Walk to End Alzheimer's Illinois Valley
Jordan Block

September 9, 2023 – Cup in Hand Kickball Tournament – Peck Park

September 22-24, 2023 - Urban camporee to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the W.D. Boyce Council of the Boy Scouts of America
Allen Park Shelters, Fox River Park Shelter, Jordan Block & stage, Rigden Park Shelter, Washington Square Park, old Central School Park, Lincoln Douglas Park Shelter

September 30, 2023 - Scarecrow Festival
Washington Square Park, Jordan Block & stage, Upper (East) Parking Lot and Lincoln Place

October 1, 2023 - Fall Parade and Festival
Downtown and Jordan Block

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October 7, 2023 - Smoketober Fest
Jordan Block

October 14, 2023 - Out of the Darkness
Washington Square Park

October 28, 2023 – Trunk or Treat on Court Street

November 3-4, 2023 – Veteran’s Honor Guard Vigil

November 4, 2023 – Wine and Art Walk – Downtown Ottawa

November 11, 2023 – Veteran’s Day Ceremony – Washington Park

November 24, 2023 – Festival of Lights Parade and Fireworks

December 1, 2023 – Freezin 4 a Reason – Washington Park

November/December, 2023 - Chris Kringle Market – beginning Thanksgiving weekend and for three more weekends in December

North Central Area Transit (NCAT)

NCAT provides demand-response, door-to-door public bus transportation for the County of LaSalle, Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. There are no limitations or eligibility requirements for who can use NCAT. All NCAT’s vehicles are lift-equipped, making the fleet of 31 buses and vans ADA accessible. NCAT is proud to be LaSalle County’s safest and most economical transit provider.

NCAT has seen tremendous growth in ridership, clearly showing the need for public transit in our community. From July 2021 – June 2022, NCAT provided 52,123 rides for LaSalle County residents. While most trips during that period were for medical (38.6%) there was an increase in trips to/from work (30%). NCAT is on trend to provide over 65,000 rides this year. NCAT currently provides rides to Peoria twice a month and to Morris regularly. Riders may schedule rides by calling NCAT or using the Rider Portal. This program allows riders to request trips through a mobile app or computer. You can find more information about NCAT or how to schedule a ride by visiting www.ridencat.com or calling 833-433-6228.

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In closing

The City's goals for next year are:

- Complete construction on the new YMCA
- Riverfront development. We have been awarded a grant to construct an outdoor Music Venue on the former central school site and should begin designing this summer.
- We will also improve the landscaping near the Ste. Genevieve docks
- In Allen Park – We received an OSLAD Grant and will improve the recreation areas and playground
- We are partnering with IDNR and the village of Utica to rebuild and maintain the I&M Canal Towpath between Ottawa and Utica
- Nells Woodlands should be completed this summer and open to the public.
- Work with the Conservation Foundation for expansion at Harpers Farm including a Wetlands restoration project.
- Grand opening of a new swimming Pool estimated to cost \$6.7 million.
- Continue the permitting and Design of a second waste water treatment plant on East side of town.
- Raise Green Street out of the Flood Plain.
- Work with the Port District and Illinois Rail to relocate the switchyard and eliminate train blockages of Columbus and Champlain Streets.
- Work with the Scouting Museum to design and expand their facility.
- Work with PADS to build a new shelter.
- Work with the Community Food Basket to expand its facility.
- Work with Dr. Sarah Scruggs and the Arukah Institute to provide a safe space for those suffering from Mental Health and/or substance issues
- Work with Coogee Titanium to locate downstream users of their product in the Industrial Park.