



PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY VOICES LAY OUT BOLD PROPOSALS FOR *REIMAGINING THE RIDEAU CANAL PARKWAYS*

OTTAWA, 10 JANUARY 2022 - Today, Parkways for People releases [*Reimagining the Rideau Canal Parkways*](#), the second in a series of papers featuring community voices rethinking the National Capital Commission (NCC) parkways as spaces for people.

Parkways for People is a grassroots coalition that engages local citizens and decision-makers on the question of how to build on the unqualified success of recent NCC pilot projects to open its parkways for active use.

With the excitement greeting the NCC's announcement that Queen Elizabeth Driveway (QED) will again close to traffic for limited hours starting on January 15, Parkways for People believes the time is right to consider bolder ideas that look beyond temporary closures to imagine permanent park space, water access, attractions, and Indigenous reconciliation, along with active transportation activation.

"We have an opportunity today to transform the national capital region on a scale similar to what was done in the 1970s with the creation of the Rideau Canal Skateway." -- Neil Saravanamuttoo, co-lead of Parkways for People

Reimagining the Rideau Canal Parkways summarizes ideas put forward during two community discussions the group hosted in recent months to present new ideas for the Rideau Canal parkways and gather feedback from residents.

“The response from the community has been incredible. We’ve seen the most amazing ideas come forward for reinventing the Canal parkways as a space for people.” -- Erin Maher, co-lead of Parkway for People

Reimagining the Rideau Canal Parkway provides detailed options for QED and CBD, and highlights more expansive proposals that imagine what we could create if vehicle traffic was permanently removed from both sides of the Canal and the roadways repurposed as space for people.

From picnic spots and boat launches to bike “superhighways” and a floating sauna, the ideas presented are sure to inspire new visions for Ottawa.

In all cases, the community proposals realign the roadways to the original NCC mandate of creating parkways that help people access the greenspaces and waterways of the region. In the 1950s that meant a scenic drive. Today, it’s time for new models and new visions.

[*Reimagining the Rideau Canal Parkway*](#) makes clear the opportunity Ottawa-Gatineau now has to reclaim valuable public spaces for people, as many cities around the world have successfully done since 2020.

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