



We believe
there
should only
be positive
experiences
in sport

2025

Ottawa Sport Council
Annual Report

Why We Are Here. 12 Years & Counting.

Sport is more than a game, it is social infrastructure that weaves into our neighbourhoods, parks, schools and centres. Sport has a way of providing so many benefits to our communities - it builds, it champions, it connects and, above-all, it's joy. At the Ottawa Sport Council, we believe that ***there should only be positive experiences in sport***, and work towards that every day.

This past year has been a pivotal one for the OSC. After 11 years of visionary leadership, our founder, Marci Morris, stepped down. Transitioning into the role of Executive Director in the path of her history has been both an honor and an energizing challenge. What has been significant to this transition is that I didn't do alone. Our city's sports sector is championed by over 800 community sport organizations and leaders who are the voice of why sport matters. Through our conversations this year, I have seen firsthand the incredible passion of our sector. This past year has been spent listening, connecting and learning the value of the Ottawa Sport Council today and what it must become tomorrow.

Our mission remains clear to me as we finish an incredible year and start anew. We bridge the many gaps that hold our community sport sector together, foster collaboration over competition and give a voice to the volunteers, coaches, parents and officials who give their time to sport so we all can belong. I am so grateful to be doing this with you, finding solutions to the evolving challenges or celebrating incredible wins, the OSC is dedicated to navigating the ups and downs together.

As I look back on my first year and forward to the many ahead, I am thrilled to be part of this incredible team and community. Thank you for your tireless effort to ensure that sport remains a powerful tool for good. Let's keep building a city where everyone truly belongs in sport.

Best,
Frances Mercer, Executive Director
Ottawa Sport Council

Strong Start to 2025

The OSC launched 2025 with a clear focus on the year with the Future of Sport in Canada Commission positioning itself as a major player. Opening up the conversations between national policy-making and the community, grassroots sport sector has been impactful. The OSC gathered local leaders and advocates to ensure Ottawa's voice was heard in the developments of what the community sport sector needs. By hosting this meeting with the FSCC and Lise Maisonneuve - Commissioner we were able to highlight the importance of community sport. The value of the meetings with CSO's was visible in the Preliminary Report released in August 2025, which mirrored many of the OSC's concerns. Lack of leadership between governing bodies, the national and provincial organizations, down to the local clubs where 95% of sport is played. The report shined a spotlight on the urgent need for a safe sport authority that focuses on every level of participation and an alignment to treat sport as a tool for social development and positive community building. The OSC continues to be locked in with the development of the FSCC, the 71 preliminary recommendations, an our role in ensuring the City of Ottawa's community sport organizations are supported.



Ottawa Sport Council – Impact 2025

CHAMPION



OSC prioritized a focus on advancing advocacy, championing the grassroots sport sector's importance. A round table with CSO's and the Future of Sport in Canada Commission, participating in the Sport for Life Summit and collaborating with national leaders of safe sport policies. We amplified the needs for community sport throughout. OSC remained engaged with the Sport for Ontario Collective and attended Parliament, speaking on behalf of sport with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Forward Together summit.

EDUCATE



OSC ensured the community sport sector's growth through strategic education and opportunities. We delivered the Community Development Jumpstart grant webinar, forged Algonquin Sport Management partnerships, and mentored high-impact interns. The OSC hosted the first National Officials day at City Hall, recognizing their importance. Our six bi-monthly newsletters shared valuable information regarding City of Ottawa engagements, 12+ funding opportunities, and essential insights reached our local community sport sector.

CONNECT



OSC connected the community sport sector to valuable opportunities for networking and engagement. We collaborated with the City of Ottawa on the Hall and Gymnasium Reclassification Strategy, bringing the sport sectors voice to the table. Hosted our first Sport Speed Networking session, followed by Ottawa Black Bears networking social. We served as a key resource for volunteerism in sport, attending the Volunteer Ottawa Expo in the Spring and Summer. OSC connected with the community by participating at the Ottawa Inclusive and Para Sports Expo.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL REPRESENTATION



NATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE FUTURE OF SPORT



PROJECT TEAM UP FOR SAFE SPORT CONFERENCE



THE WALRUS / JUMPSTART LEADERSHIP DINNER ON THE VALUE OF SPORT



ONTARIO SPORT COMMUNITY SUMMIT



CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION FORWARD TOGETHER SUMMIT



SPORT IN ONTARIO COLLECTIVE

OTTAWA SPORT SUMMIT LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT FOR COMMUNITY SPORT



SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

ENGAGEMENT



2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



OTTAWA BASKETBALL SPORT HOSTING IMPROVEMENT BUSINESS CASE



FUTURE OF SPORT IN CANADA COMMISSION CONSULTATION



COACHING BOYS INTO MEN WITH INTERVAL HOUSE OF OTTAWA



CITY OF OTTAWA CONSULTATION COLLABORATION FOR OUTDOOR TENNIS AND PICKLEBALL STRATEGY, SKATEBOARD AND ROLLER SPORTS STRATEGY, GYMNASIUM RENTALS ADJUSTMENTS & REIMAGINING BELTOWN DOME IN GRANDEUR PARK



Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Strategy
City of Ottawa



CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART CHARITIES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS WEBINAR

LOCAL EVENTS



2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



OTTAWA BLACK BEARS CONNECT, NETWORK & CHEER



NATIONAL OFFICIALS DAY CITY HALL CELEBRATION



VOLUNTEER OTTAWA EXPO



OSEG FOUNDATION SPORTS DAY THE GIRLS' WAY



OTTAWA CHARGE PWHL PRIDE UNITY GAME



OTTAWA INCLUSIVE & PARA SPORTS EXPO

Sport for All Fund Ottawa – Community Opportunity Grant

COMMUNITY & CELEBRATION

OTTAWA SPORT COUNCIL
FOUNDATION COMMUNITY
OPPORTUNITY GRANTS



TRIPS FOR KIDS OTTAWA



PREZIDENTIAL BASKETBALL

COMMUNITY SPORT HEROES



EMMA
SHIMIZU



KIAN
NEJAD



CHRIS & KERRY
MacLEAN



DAVE
MAINWOOD



GREG
RAMPLEY

Prezidential Basketball – 2025 Recipient

“What makes our program unique is it’s holistic approach. In addition to on-court development, we run a four-week Friday workshop call UPNEXT: Offseason Development Series. This program focuses on the personal growth of our athletes beyond the game. Participants engage in a one-hour workshop tailored to build their life skills, emotional intelligence and mindest.”

“Together, these activities create a powerful ecosystem of support and development. By combining structured sport programming with intentional character-building workshops, we help youth become not only better athletes but stronger, more self-aware individuals equipped to lead in their communities.”

Trips for Kids Ottawa – 2025 Recipient

Empowers youth through structured programs in mountain biking, learn-to-ride, skating, snowshoeing and other outdoor adventures which foster leadership, confidence, and social belonging. TFKO serves under-represented, marginalized, and socio-economically disadvantaged youth with programs run out of educational systems and the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre. These programs offer comprehensive support, including all the necessary equipment, food, transportation, peer mentorship and trained, educated adult leaders that ensure every youth can safely participate. By providing a platform for youth to engage with peers and mentors, we contribute to the social cohesion of local communities in Ottawa.



OTTAWA SPORT COUNCIL
FOUNDATION
2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Community Sport Heros 2025

Greg Rampley Lacrosse and Basketball - "Being part of a team and working together to achieve goals" is among the most valuable benefits youth athletes experience in sport, "and sometimes you win and sometimes you lose - you have to learn how to deal with that and learn from it." Rampley loves seeing kids who are new to sport develop a passion for it. "I think sport is this great way to teach us life lessons."

Dave Mainwood Ringette Coach - Set to start his 49th season coaching local ringette, Dave has just about seen it all in his storied career. "We all have goals and that's to win," says Dave. "But sticking together, I think that's the most important part of it." Dave is well-known for fostering a supportive atmosphere on the teams he coaches and promotes teamwork above all else.

Emma Shimizu East Ottawa Stars Hockey Coach - "The positive relationships Emma has built with her players is evident and undeniable. Everyday when she arrives at the rink, she is greeted with hugs and 15 girls yelling her name," highlights the nominator. "We were able to build a culture where all the girls support each other and work hard, and that's what led to our success in the league." Emma says.

Maverick Volleyball Club Founders Chris and Kerry MacLean - Founded the Maverick Volleyball Club 40 years ago and are set to retire from their leadership roles after building a cornerstone of the community. Kerry coached nearly 200 teams over his career and mentored thousands of athletes. "Not just as a volleyball coach, but [Kerry] cared so much about turning us into men who do all the basics of life in general," Jordan Canham underlined, who is now a member of the Canadian men's NextGen national team program.

Kian Nejad Boys and Girls Club Thunderbolts Coach - Kian has become a force and an inspiration on the Canadian prep basketball circuit. The Thunderbolts program provides youths with life-changing opportunities in sport, education and leadership at no cost. "Basketball is important because of everything it comes with," Kian underslines. "I love being there for the youth, because I was that youth," reflects Kian, who hopes to inspire future leaders through the commitment he's shown to developing the Thunderbolts.

Ottawa Sport Council Team - 2025

The Ottawa Sport Council is a professionally governed organization that leads by example. We advance the organization by building a Competency Governance Model where every director recruited represent a specific aspect of our mission and vision. We ensure our Board of Directors are in alignment with the **belief that there should only be positive experiences in sport**. The Board is strategically involved in the development of the community building projects like the Belonging Playbook and Safe Sport Toolkit and this year the Basketball Sport Hosting Improvement Strategy. They dedicate themselves hosting annually the Ottawa Sport Summit and Community Opportunity Grant. They work with accountability and transparency, ensuring community funding and resources are effectively and ethically utilized. The Ottawa Sport Council Board of Directors provides the foundation of expertise and integrity that drives the work of the Council to meet the needs and be the collective voice for our community sport sector so everyone belongs in sport.

FAREWELL OUTGOING DIRECTORS



JOHN CUNNINGHAM



ERIC McLOUGHLIN



MIKE PATTERSON

WELCOME NEW DIRECTORS



JOAN BARD MILLER



DENNIS BLINN



ALISON COSTA



TAYLOR MATTHEWS

OUTGOING & NEW COMMUNICATIONS LEAD



DAN PLOUFFE

Ottawa Sport Council Team – 2025



Frances Mercer

Executive Director

ed@sportottawa.ca

“Sport is joyful, playful and is a simple form of connection.”

2025 completes the first full year for Frances Mercer with the Ottawa Sport Council. A history of working directly in community sport organizations, lastly serving as the General Manager of Tennis Centre West Ottawa since 2016, transitioning into the role with OSC was exciting. With over two decades working with participants of all ages and abilities in sport, she brings vast knowledge and the joy of sport with her. She is dedicated to belonging, growth and building partnerships to advance sport for all in Ottawa. Highlights for 2025 include Game.Set.Equity. Initiative with Tennis Canada, collaborating with Deloitte on the Belonging in Sport Equity Audit Tool, developing the future vision for basketball infrastructure and meeting many of the community champions that lead for the good of sport.



Dan Plouffe

Communications Lead

communications@sportottawa.ca

“Sport, at its heart, is about community. It allows us to learn and unite.”

Dan Plouffe joined the OSC as Communications Lead in March 2025. With 20+ years of sport journalism experience, Dan also serves as the Executive Director for the Ottawa Sport Pages, a local sports news publication devoted to spotlighting the capitals amateur sports scene that rarely receives any attention from other media outlets. He loves crafting stories on inspiring people and groups who are underrepresented elsewhere, and showcasing all the great athletes, coaches and volunteers and organizations that drive local sport. In leading the OSC’s communications, he’s enjoyed getting a sharper view of all the work that goes on behind the scenes to create the magical moments on the field of play that we all treasure.

Public Communications

The Ottawa Sport Council built upon a strong foundation of highly-engaged members of the Ottawa sport community and grew our audience across all communications platforms in 2025.

Through our channels, we shared close to 250 pertinent items with the sport sector, including major sports events hosted in Ottawa, free and accessible sport participation opportunities, important policy updates, educational resources, grant and funding opportunities, public engagement and advocacy initiatives, professional development events, sport volunteer opportunities and more.

We also created feature articles and videos celebrating sports officials, 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion in sport, program

profiles on Ottawa Sport Council Foundation Community Opportunity Grant recipients, Community Sport Heroes and the 2025 Ottawa Sport Summit.

We are regularly undertaking projects to further enhance community sport connections, including an upcoming website revamp.

The Ottawa Sport Council's newsletter subscribers grew by 12% to almost 850 in 2025, we had over 27,500 website visits, our total number of social media followers is nearing 5,000, including 12% growth in followers across Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn. Our social media posts drew well over 250,000 views across platforms. Here were some of our top posts:



Vision 2026 and Beyond

In 2026, the Ottawa Sport Council is prioritizing key areas to support the community sport sector. Through collaborative partnerships, creative technologies and our continued dedication to building strong communities through sport, we aim to build, adapt and deliver:

- **Ottawa Sport Connect** mapping tool designed to ensure the discoverability of local sport organization and programs that prioritize safe sport standards, quality delivery, and environments where everyone belongs.
- **Navigate Together** - a bi-monthly learning series providing expert-led webinars on important topics prioritized by the collective voice of sport
- Launch of new innovative funding and grants alongside the newly developed **Ottawa Sport Sync Calendar**, a tool dedicated to deadlines and notifications for grant funding, permits, events.
- **Commitment to sustainability** and long term development with a focus on future coaches, officials and volunteers and advancing City of Ottawa engagements, world wide events and investment in infrastructure advocacy.



**CHAMPION.
EDUCATE.
CONNECT.**



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Experiences in Sport**

A Message of Gratitude to Ottawa Community Sport

To the community sport leaders, volunteers, administrators, parents and athletes, you are the foundation and momentum of our incredible sport community in Ottawa. **Thank you.** While 2025 was a year of big shifts and big conversations in sport, those discussions and changes make an incredible, positive impact on sport today and into the future. The work you do on the ground every single day – navigating complex new safety protocols, balancing budgets on a shoestring, or simply ensuring a child had a positive experience on the field, you are the reason sport remains a vital part of our city’s culture and passion. The time and effort you dedicate is what makes us all belong. As we look towards 2026 and what’s to come, we do so with confidence, knowing that Ottawa’s sport sector is steered by people who lead with heart, dedication, and joy – to making sport better for everyone, everywhere. Thank you.

Ottawa Sport Council



Ottawa Sport Council Partners 2025



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EDUCATE.
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City of Ottawa

Deloitte.

Deloitte Canada



Tennis Canada

OTTAWA

Ottawa Tourism



Leon's