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Federal Justice Minister Sean Fraser faces sharp criticism



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Parc-Extension council: Mayor's farewell, baseball debate persists, and local concerns on transit and permits

DYLAN ADAMS LEMAÇON
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The Sept. 30 borough council meeting in Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension was marked by a subdued crowd, the symbolic end of an era, and familiar frustrations from local residents.

Because the borough mayor was ill, councillor Sylvain Ouellet presided over the evening as acting mayor, noting that this would be the final meeting under her administration. The outgoing mayor, who is not seeking re-election, had prepared a farewell message read aloud by Ouellet.

In her text, she reflected on 12 years of public service — four as head of the borough — and highlighted achievements such as new community centres, more trees planted in heat-vulnerable areas, and economic development initiatives. She thanked her family and colleagues, adding that she leaves her role “tired, but proud.”

Ouellet also addressed residents directly, reminding them of the upcoming November 2 municipal election. “Please go vote November 2nd,” he urged, pointing out the typically weak turnout in municipal races. He added that candidates, including sitting councillors, are working hard, campaigning every day leading up to the election.

Deros stresses culture and cleanliness challenges

Speaking for Parc-Extension, councillor Mary

Deros thanked the borough's cultural services for a busy summer, highlighting two new murals — including one at Jarry Park. But she didn't shy away from the difficulties of the mandate.

She cited budget cuts, ongoing cleanliness issues, and the rat infestation plaguing Parc-Extension. “The citizens must work with the city, it's not only the city's fault,” she said, calling it a public health issue. “I hope in the next mandate, we can find a better way to fight this problem.”

Deros also thanked borough directors for their work and read a message encouraging residents to vote in the November election.

Baseball tensions return

Once again, the demolition of baseball fields at Parc Prévost dominated the question period. Parents and children dressed in team gear filled the speakers' list, voicing frustration at the loss of playing space to give way for a bigger municipal library.

A local mother and daughter opened the discussion, questioning the borough's decision-making process. Ouellet responded with familiar assurances that the borough will still meet the baseball association's needs, though the project to build a new library requires removing a field.

Resident Zachary Patterson, joined by his daughter, said he supports the new library but doesn't understand why it must come at the expense of baseball. Another frequent speaker on this matter, Sébastien Despelteau, echoed the sentiment stating they are not against the library, but questions

it impedes on the baseball diamond?”



Ouellet acknowledged their concerns but was clear: delaying the library further “after years and years of planning” was not an option.

Transit, trees, and permits

Beyond baseball, other residents raised issues tied to everyday life in the borough.

- **BIXI gap:** Resident Mr. Toussaint denounced a 3.5 km stretch of Pie-IX Boulevard in Saint-Michel with no BIXI stations, calling it a “BIXI desert.” He presented a petition suggesting potential station sites. Ouellet admitted coverage is thin in the north end and said expansion remains a priority.
- **Greenery:** Resident Alain Bertrand asked for more trees in Parc-Extension.
- **Permit frustrations:** Mr. Cloutier returned with grievances about a two-year wait for a construction permit, noting that over 250

similar projects had been approved while his stalled. The borough blamed regulatory changes but Cloutier remained visibly frustrated, insisting his questions have gone unanswered.

- **Metro construction concerns:** Marc-André Miron of 22nd and Everett street said traffic chaos from the new Blue Line metro station construction makes his intersection unsafe, asking for a temporary stop sign. The borough said proximity to traffic lights complicates the matter but promised to raise the issue with mobility planners.

Loose ends and adoption of items

Before the council moved to adopt its list of administrative items, Deros asked about unsafe or exposed electrical wires in the Mile-Ex region of the borough. Officials replied that discussions with Hydro-Québec are ongoing but admitted they too are tired of waiting for a resolution.

Most points on the order of the day were adopted without debate. Deros took a moment to thank citizen members of the borough's urban planning committee (CCU) for their input on development projects.

The meeting closed quietly, in sharp contrast to the charged baseball debates of past sessions. Still, the recurring themes of transparency, consultation, and the borough's balancing act between new development and community needs lingered in the air — setting the stage for what promises to be a lively November election.

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OPINION & Editorial



Expectations of citizens from their next municipal administration

As cities prepare for their municipal election on November 2, 2025, many stand at a crossroads. Citizens across the electoral districts are not just choosing a mayor and council—they are expressing their hopes, frustrations, and aspirations for the future of Quebec. The next administration will inherit cities grappling with urban growth, infrastructure challenges, environmental concerns, and a demand for greater transparency and community engagement.

Urban development with a human touch

Quebec cities have seen rapid development in recent years, with new residential and commercial projects reshaping the landscape. However, many residents are calling for smarter urban planning that prioritizes livability. Citizens want green spaces preserved, traffic congestion addressed, and public transit expanded.

Affordable housing and inclusive communities

Housing affordability remains a pressing issue. With rising property values and rental costs, many residents—especially young families and seniors—are struggling to find suitable housing. Voters expect the next municipal government to implement policies that promote affordable housing.

Climate action and environmental stewardship

Environmental concerns are top of mind for many citizens. From flooding risks in low-lying areas to the need for better waste

management and cleaner air, residents are demanding bold climate action.

Transparency, accountability, and civic engagement

Trust in local government is fragile. Citizens want more transparency in decision-making, clearer communication from elected officials, and genuine opportunities to participate in shaping their communities. The next mayor and councils must commit to open governance, regular consultations, and accessible platforms for feedback and dialogue.

Public safety and community well-being

Safety is a foundational concern. Residents expect continued investment in public safety services, including police, fire, and emergency response. They expect from their police force to be more efficient against crime. They need to feel that sense of security and nothing less.

Infrastructure renewal and mobility

From aging roads to outdated water systems, the infrastructures across Quebec need attention. Citizens are calling for strategic investments that improve mobility, reduce commute times, and enhance the quality of public services. The next administration must prioritize long-term infrastructure planning while addressing immediate concerns. Citizens are for bicycles, but they want the rules of the road to be obeyed to the fullest. Riding a bike has as much responsibility as driving a vehicle.

Support for local businesses and economic resilience

The pandemic and economic shifts have impacted the business community. Residents across the province want their leaders to champion local entrepreneurs, attract sustainable investment, and create jobs that reflect the evolving economy. Economic development must be inclusive, resilient, and forward-looking.

Respect for anglophones

The anglophone community—many of whom are bilingual and deeply integrated into the social fabric—expect recognition, respect, and equitable access to services. Recent provincial policies, such as Bill 96, have raised concerns about the erosion of English-language rights and access to information.

Citizens in these communities want the next municipal administration to ensure that communication, public services, and civic participation remain inclusive and linguistically accessible. This includes supporting cultural organizations, and acknowledging the unique challenges faced by linguistic minorities.

Looking ahead

The next municipal administration will not only manage budgets and bylaws—it will shape the future of a city that is dynamic, diverse, and full of potential.

On November 2, voters will cast their ballots not just for candidates, but for a vision of what their city can become.

George Guzman

Co-publisher, Nouvelles Parc-Extension News

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Ottawa faces blowback over request Supreme Court set limits on 'notwithstanding' clause

'It's a direct attack on Bill 21,' says Quebec's Secularism Minister Jean-François Roberge

MARTIN C. BARRY

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Provincial leaders from Quebec and other parts of the country reacted poorly last week after federal Justice Minister Sean Fraser announced that the Liberal government is asking the Supreme Court of Canada to set limits on how the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms' "notwithstanding" clause is used to override conflicting provincial laws.

"As Attorney General of Canada, I have filed a factum with the Supreme Court of Canada outlining Canada's position on constitutional issues raised by the use of the notwithstanding clause," Fraser said in a statement.

"The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a pillar of our democracy and a reflection of our shared values," he said. "It guarantees fundamental freedoms, including freedom of thought, belief, expression, religion, and association."

Decision's lasting impact

"It also guarantees equality before the law, and the right to life, liberty and security of the person. The Charter protects these rights for

everyone in Canada, and they are at the heart of our democratic society.

"This case is about more than the immediate issues before the Court," Fraser added. "The Supreme Court's decision will shape how both federal and provincial governments may use the notwithstanding clause for years to come."

The notwithstanding clause has proven to be controversial since its inclusion in the Charter of Rights, which was part of the Constitution of Canada enacted by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's Liberal government in 1982. The clause was included as a political compromise to obtain the support of the provinces for the constitution and charter.

Deal broke a deadlock

The inclusion of the clause is widely viewed by political scientists and analysts today as a deal struck to break a deadlock between the federal government and the provinces during the constitutional negotiations, allowing legislatures to pass laws that temporarily override certain Charter rights if necessary.

Some, but not all, Charter rights are subject to the notwithstanding clause. The clause authorizes governments to temporarily override the rights and freedoms in sections 2 and

7 through 15 for up to five years, subject to renewal.

The notwithstanding clause has been used most often by Quebec to justify legislation deemed necessary to safeguard the French language, as well as by Alberta, which invoked notwithstanding to enshrine a definition of marriage as being exclusively heterosexual.

'Attack on Bill 21,' says CAQ

In Quebec within just a few hours of Fraser's announcement, members of the Coalition Avenir Québec government weren't mincing words when reacting to Ottawa's intervention – especially regarding its potential impact on Bill 21, the province's "religious symbols" secularism law.

Quebec Justice Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette accused the federal government of not only attacking Quebec, but also of attacking the parliamentary sovereignty of the legislative assemblies of all of Canada.

"They want to break the deal that they had," Jolin-Barrette told journalists in Quebec City, alluding to the federal government's original intention for including the notwithstanding clause.

Quebec's Secularism Minister Jean-François

Roberge, went further, accusing the Carney government of hypocrisy.

He said the federal government claims to not be against the secularism law, while opposing the measure put in place to safeguard it. "It's a direct attack on Bill 21," he said. In a statement, Fraser emphasized that his request for limits is not only about Quebec's secularism law,

'Overreach,' says Ontario's Ford

In Ontario, Premier Doug Ford warned that Ottawa's bid to curb the province's use of notwithstanding would be an overreach his government would not tolerate, as he also maintained that provincial governments have the full political backing of voters.

"It's way overreach with the courts," Ford told The Toronto Star. "Again, parliament – federal parliament, provincial parliament – they're supreme because the people are supreme, not judges ruling on stuff that shouldn't even be in front of the courts."

Jolin-Barrette appeared to agree with Ford. "These people have been elected by people of each province," he said, while maintaining that the federal government was trying to use a back door in its arguments to try and rob the provincial legislatures of their powers.

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First Nations claims 'not settled,' says Mulcair, defending land acknowledgments

**'There's still a lot that has to be done,'
former Chomedey MNA tells Concordia U
audience**

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Are Canada's national anthem sung at the beginning of major sports events and the "land acknowledgment" recited at the start of many public gatherings to recognize Canada's indigenous peoples at odds with one another?

The question was one that former federal NDP leader and Chomedey Liberal MNA Tom Mulcair answered following a talk he gave on legal issues affecting indigenous rights and the environment in Canada on September 25 as a Jurist-in-Residence program guest at Concordia University.

Indigenous issues advocate

Over the course of his political career – especially at the federal level – Mulcair advocated strongly for respect for court rulings and international obligations towards Canada's indigenous peoples, according to an iPolitics summary of the NDP's positions under Mulcair's leadership published in 2013, two years before the 2015 election.

According to CTV News report a few months before the election in which Mulcair and the NDP would suffer a major setback after finishing in a distant third-place, he advocated for a "nation-to-nation" relationship between the First Nations and the federal government.

Hollow statements

But as one attendee at Mulcair's lecture

pointed out, land acknowledgment statements, which typically refer to "unceded" lands or territory originally belonging to First Nations, tend to ring hollow in the context that no further action is being taken to restate the First Nations.

She also suggested that some of the words in O Canada and in land acknowledgments stand in contrast if not outright contradiction to each other.

She recalled recently being at a recent hockey game in western Canada where some fans from First Nations sitting next to her were appalled that a land acknowledgment was recited just before everyone stood up for the country's national anthem.

'It's not settled,' said Mulcair

While Mulcair conceded that land acknowledgments have no binding legal effect, he maintained they still have the ability to keep within people's minds the understanding that "this is not ours as of right – this is something that belonged to people who were there before," he said.

"Land acknowledgments are a way of putting into the general public's mind that we should be thinking about this stuff – that it's not settled and that there's still a lot that has to be done," he continued.

"That's the best way to look at it." While insisting that land acknowledgments are helpful, Mulcair had nothing more to say in terms of taking the statements a step further.



Former NDP leader and Chomedey Liberal MNA Tom Mulcair continues to advocate for indigenous Canadians' rights more than seven years after leaving politics.
(Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)



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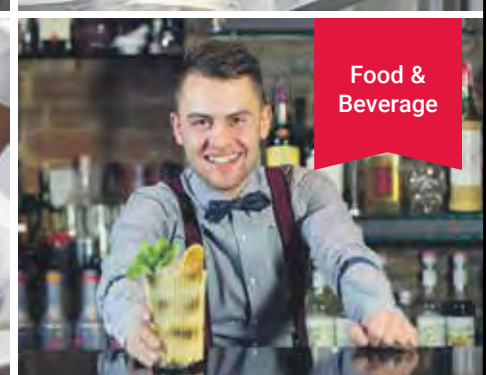
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Elections Québec takes special measures because of Canada Post strike

**Voter reminder cards may not be arriving
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Quebec's Chief Electoral Officer Jean-François Blanchet has made a special decision to allow municipalities to deliver election-related documents by means other than direct delivery to voters during the 2025 municipal general election. Blanchet says the decision was necessary given the current disruption to postal services.

"Postal services are a key element of the electoral process," Blanchet said in a statement issued by his office.

"In the current context, municipalities, responsible for organizing their elections, will have to make considerable additional efforts to find other solutions," he said. "I urge voters to be understanding and take the time to contact their municipality to obtain all the information they need to exercise their right to vote."



Alternative measures

Blanchet said his decision would not prevent municipalities from delivering their documents by mail if the strike ends quickly and postal services resume as normal. But in the meantime, the chief electoral officer's office is proposing various alternative measures.

If municipalities are able to, they are being encouraged to prioritize a solution that will ensure the delivery of two documents to voters' doors, in accordance with the spirit of the electoral act: the notice of registration on the voters' list and the reminder card.

The municipalities are being told they can use another delivery service or rely on their staff or a group of volunteers, for example. If they are unable to distribute personalized registration notices in the name of each voter, they can distribute a non-personalized notice to each door.

They should then allow voters to verify in person their registration on the voters' lists, but also by telephone or online. They can also disseminate general information through posters, advertisements and their websites. If municipalities with 20,000 or more inhabitants are unable to deliver their reminder cards to voters' doors, they must allow them to verify

their polling place by telephone, according to the chief electoral officer.

Mandatory Mailings

Under the legislation respecting elections and referendums in Quebec's municipalities, all towns and cities are required to send a notice of registration by mail to all addresses in their territory. This notice indicates the names of the electors registered on the lists of electors at each address. It may also indicate that no one is registered at that address. It also indicates where and when the board of revisors will sit. This notice should be sent between October 6 and 15, depending on the municipality.

Nearly 92 per cent of Quebec's approximately 6.4 million electors are registered on the list of electors. Nearly 98 per cent of them are registered at the correct address. Between October 11 and 21, each municipality must hold at least two electoral list revision meetings to allow voters to register or change their registration if necessary. The locations, dates and times vary from one municipality to another.

Owners and co-owners

Élections Québec invites voters to use its online service to check their registration on the provincial electoral list. The majority of people registered on this list are also registered at the same address on their municipality's electoral lists. However, this is not the case for people who are eligible to vote as owners or co-owners of a building or as occupants or co-occupants of a business establishment within the municipality.

In addition, anyone who has changed their address and modified their registration on the electoral list since September 5, including through the Quebec Change of Address Service (SQCA), must contact their municipality to make this change of address, even if the information is up to date on the Élections Québec website.

Make sure you are registered

Voters should not assume that they are registered on their municipality's electoral lists, even if they voted in the last federal election, since the electoral lists used in the upcoming election are separate. No one will be able to make changes to the electoral rolls on election day. This is an important difference between federal and municipal elections.

To be eligible to vote in the 2025 municipal elections, you must meet these five conditions on the November 2, election day: Be registered on the electoral lists of your municipality; Be 18 years of age or older; Be a Canadian citizen; Be in one of the following situations: domiciled in the municipality and, for at least 6 months, in Quebec; Be the owner of a building in the municipality or the occupant of a business establishment located within the municipality for at least 45 days. 5. And still have the right to vote (unless it has been revoked because of non-residency or other reason).

A right to leisure

Montreal's new policy and what it means for Park Extension



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Montreal has just unveiled a sweeping new Public Leisure Policy, the first of its kind in Quebec, built on a simple but radical idea — that leisure is not a luxury, but a right.

The city now officially considers recreation as essential to civic life as housing, public safety, or mobility. From sports and arts programs to quiet parks and community gardens, every Montrealer — regardless of income, language, or postal code — is meant to have access to meaningful leisure.

For neighborhoods like Park Extension, where space is tight, incomes modest, and cultures wonderfully diverse, that declaration feels both inspiring and overdue.

A city vision meets a dense neighbourhood

Walk through Park Extension on a sunny weekend and you'll see the city's leisure ideals in miniature: children racing through Jarry Park, parents chatting in dozens of languages, teens turning narrow alleyways into impromptu soccer fields. Yet beyond these lively moments

lies a persistent inequity.

Urban studies have repeatedly shown that green spaces, shaded areas, and bike-friendly streets are scarcer here than in wealthier parts of Montreal. A 2024 study found that residents of Park Extension have *five times fewer cooler green areas* than those of Outremont or the Plateau. On hot days, that difference can be felt on the pavement.

So when City Hall says that every Montrealer deserves accessible, inclusive, and "inspiring" recreation, Park Extension is precisely the kind of community where that vision will be tested.

Beyond parks and playgrounds

Montreal's new policy defines public leisure not just as organized activities, but as any free, personal experience of joy in public space — from reading in a library to growing tomatoes in a community garden, or simply dancing in the park.

In practice, that means recognizing that recreation doesn't always happen in shiny new facilities. It happens in laneways turned into mini-plazas, in schoolyards shared after hours, and in community centers where language classes and dance rehearsals coexist.

In Park Extension, that could translate into support for organizations like the Table de quartier de Parc-Extension (BIPE), which already helps local residents discover cultural and leisure resources, or the Parc-Exchange project, a neighborhood network where people trade skills and services without money changing hands — a violin lesson in exchange for tutoring, or help with gardening traded for a home-cooked meal.

These grassroots initiatives reflect precisely the kind of human connection the city's policy celebrates: leisure as a path to belonging.

Closing the gap

The city promises to ensure that every borough receives a fair share of resources — funding, staff, equipment — to offer quality recreation. But achieving equity in a place like Park Extension requires more than resource sharing. It requires overcoming barriers of information, language, and space.

Many newcomers don't even know that the Accès-Loisirs program offers free registration in city sports, art, and cultural programs for families with low income. Others may face online registration systems available only in French or English. And while Jarry Park remains a regional gem, small neighborhood parks like Bloomfield or Saint-Roch still struggle with aging playgrounds and limited amenities — although, encouragingly, Bloomfield is slated for renovation before the end of 2025.

Meanwhile, new traffic-calming measures announced for Park Extension — speed bumps, curb extensions, safer crossings — could make walking or cycling to these spaces safer, especially for children and seniors. A good leisure policy depends as much on how people get to the park as what they do there.

The measure of success

Will Montreal's new vision succeed in Park Extension? That depends on whether policy can meet the realities of everyday life. Leisure here isn't something abstract — it's parents gathering under a lone tree to escape the heat, seniors chatting on a single park bench, or kids inventing games between parked cars because there's no open field left.

If the city truly believes that leisure is a right, it must listen to the neighborhoods where that right is most fragile. That means inviting residents into the planning process, funding the small community groups that already make magic out of very little, and recognizing that cultural diversity is not an obstacle but a powerful creative engine.

Toward a fairer city

Montreal's leisure policy is more than an administrative blueprint; it's a moral statement about what makes urban life worth living. In Park Extension, it could become a lever for fairness — a way to reclaim small corners of the city for laughter, music, exercise, and rest.



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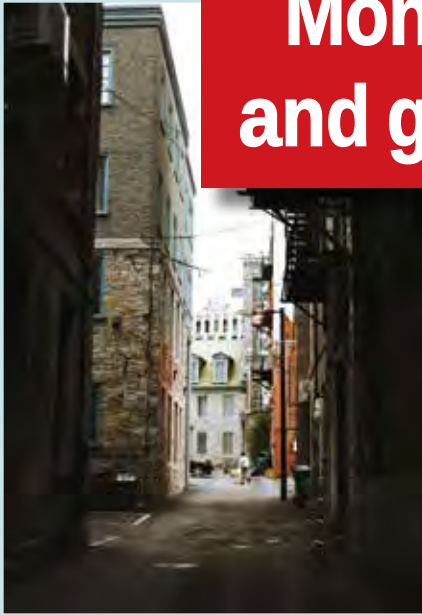
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Montreal at a crossroads: between housing and green space, the city's future takes shape



DIMITRIS ILIAS
dimitri@newsfirst.ca

As Montreal grapples with an escalating housing crisis, a deeper question has emerged: where, and how, should the city grow? From forested plots on the West Island to densely packed blocks in Park Extension, the debate over land use has become a defining issue of our time.

A crisis that touches every borough

Virtually everyone agrees that Montreal needs more housing. Vacancy rates are at record lows, prices are pushing young families to the suburbs, and waiting lists for affordable units

are years long. Yet almost every new project—no matter its scale or location—faces resistance from residents worried about losing green space, community character, or livability.

In Pointe-Claire, activists are fighting to protect a 16-hectare woodland near the Fairview shopping centre and a future REM station. The citizen group *Save Fairview Forest*, represented by Sandra Maki, wants construction redirected to the mall's existing asphalt lots rather than the adjacent forest. Similar battles are playing out on Nun's Island, in Westmount, and across the South Shore, where proposed developments threaten to replace trees with towers.

The local dimension: Park Extension's dilemma

In Park Extension, the dynamics are different but the tension is familiar. Here, the issue is not untouched forest but the relentless pressure on an already built-out neighbourhood. Developers eye older duplexes for demolition and replacement with micro-apartments, while residents fear displacement and the loss of what little communal green space remains.

For many families, the patchwork of small parks—Jarry, Bloomfield, and Howard among them—represents the only open air their children can access daily. Projects that add height without adding parks risk pushing the district beyond its breaking point.

Urban sociologists note that the same planning

logic applies at both extremes: the suburbs fight densification to preserve trees, while inner-city districts struggle to preserve community as density increases. Both, however, reflect a single metropolitan challenge—how to balance housing necessity with environmental and social well-being.

The democratic gridlock

"Democracy is essential, but it can also slow down urgent solutions," says Kevin Manaugh, associate professor of geography and environment at McGill University, who studies the intersection of housing and sustainability. Citizen consultations and local referendums, he explains, ensure transparency but often delay projects for years.

The Quebec government has explored loosening those procedural requirements to accelerate construction, yet that idea itself provokes controversy. Critics warn that weakening public input would erode trust and sideline community voices, especially in neighbourhoods like Park Extension where residents already feel unheard.

Toward Smarter Density

Experts increasingly argue that the answer lies in "smart density"—focusing new housing near public-transit hubs while preserving

vital ecological corridors. For Montreal, that means encouraging mid-rise and family-friendly apartments around the REM and Metro lines rather than sprawling subdivisions on the city's periphery.

Such policies could relieve pressure on older central districts while allowing suburban zones to grow without destroying natural areas. "It's not about choosing between roofs and roots," as one urban planner quipped, "but learning how they can coexist."

Data-driven decisions

Initiatives like the Canadian Housing Observatory (CHO) are helping policymakers ground these debates in real data rather than emotion. By mapping housing availability, affordability, and transit access, the CHO aims to make the trade-offs clearer—and the decisions fairer.

For residents of Park Extension and beyond, this data can't come soon enough. Montreal's next municipal elections will determine who sets the rules for how and where the city builds. The leaders chosen this fall won't just decide where the next condo rises or forest falls—they will define what kind of Montreal we leave for the next generation.



PSYCHOLOGY FOR ALL

Emmanuel Aliatas, MA, Psychologist emmanuelaliatas@gmail.com

Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D)

S. A. D. (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is a disorder that tends to begin around the month of October. It is what we call a situational depression which should be addressed with your doctor or a qualified professional who understands it. I have been working with such patients for many years in my private practice and have witnessed how devastating this disorder can be firsthand. I am writing this article to enlighten people to the fact that it exists and requires attention.

This is simply a depression brought on by the lack of light that we experience during the winter months. There are exceptions where someone is already depressed, and this season enhances that depression to a state where it is hard to deal with.

There are ways to deal with it with your family doctor or psychologist. There have been improvements in treatment for depression over the past several years. Given this is an illness that affects many Canadians, consulting and understanding it with qualified guidance is essential.

I will state just some of the symptoms people may experience when depression begins to set in around October: there is a lack of sleep leaving the patient with chronic fatigue making it hard to get through the day. There can be a loss of weight and paradoxically weight gain in the process depending on the capabilities of the individual.

The person who stays under a blanket in front of the television all day may experience weight gain and may be suffering a lot more than the active person who gets up and with the weight of the world on their shoulder has

to get the kids to school, go to work, and then get the kids home for the regiment they have enacted for their evenings. This means that they cannot sit on the couch and watch TV all night. There is homework that needs to be done, dinner must be prepared and regardless of the help the individual has, it is still extremely hard for them; however, they must do what needs to be done until bedtime.

This is the time that they are alone with their thoughts and most wonder if they will get a good night's sleep and wake up rested the next morning. The never-ending optimist hopes so and come springtime with longer daylight this will occur. I have noticed this pattern in my office for several years. It is hard in October to tell someone to wait until March or April to feel better.

Nevertheless, there are treatments that you can consult with your doctor and get such as light therapy; ultraviolet lights that have been known to alleviate the symptoms of this depression. Another highly successful way to deal with S.A.D is exercise. Attending a gym on a regular basis may be one of the best treatments I know. I understand how hard that can be, and I empathize with the suffering but one may weigh the benefits of a gym membership over the couch and comfort food. The answer is obvious.

In conclusion, I have to say that this is a real issue for many people. I would advise anyone suffering with symptoms described above to see your doctor or a qualified professional. There is medication that can be prescribed to alleviate the symptoms and help you get through the winter blues.

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A rejuvenation for Bloomfield Park

A fresh chapter in Parc-Extension



DIMITRIS ILIAS
dimitri@newsfirst.ca

In the heart of the Parc-Extension district, *Parc Bloomfield* is preparing to turn a new page. This autumn, the 24,000-square-metre green space will undergo a substantial makeover — one intended to revitalize its infrastructure, enhance safety, and reimagine its role as a gathering place for children, families, and neighbourhood caregivers alike. The effort comes nearly a quarter-century after its last major renovation.

A \$460,000 investment in community life

The borough of Villerey-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension has earmarked **\$461,109.01** for this renewal — a budget intended to cover a comprehensive suite of improvements. Among the upgrades:

- Modernizing the playground with new, diversified play modules
- Repairing fencing in areas where it is needed
- Replacing aging benches, picnic tables, and the drinking fountain
- Installing two game tables outfitted with chessboards
- Elevating and spotlighting the mural *Alegria* by artist Julian Palma, in collaboration with MU, as a central visual anchor of the redesign

The upgrades aim not merely to modernize, but to create a playful, safe, inclusive space that encourages children of every age to explore balance, spatial awareness, and social

interaction.

The legacy of *Alegria*

One of the more poetic elements of the project is the integration of *Alegria* — a mural painted in 2015 by Julian Palma, produced by MU. The work depicts vibrant, joyful imagery painted on a red-brick wall that faces the park. It is the third MU mural in Parc-Extension, and it aligns with the borough's long-standing mural theme of “cultural convergence.”

The mural's imagery — notably a stylized hand — symbolizes solidarity, cooperation, and the interplay of cultures. In the upcoming renovation, *Alegria* will be woven into the park's new design, its colors and motifs reinforced so that the artwork becomes an inseparable component of the public space rather than a mere decorative element.

From tender to timeline

The public procurement process has already commenced. A formal call for tenders was issued for the redevelopment project, with submissions received as of early September 2025.

Some more recent reporting indicates that the contract for Bloomfield's renovation has been awarded to **Les Terrassements Multi-Paysages inc.**, for \$364,974.48 (including taxes). However, earlier municipal sources listed a slightly higher figure.

As of now, work is slated to begin in October 2025 and extend through to year's end. Yet, some updates suggest that the renovations may carry into **summer 2026**, possibly due to weather

constraints or scheduling contingencies.

Meeting local needs with precision

Though this project is modest compared to large citywide park overhauls, it reflects a highly targeted, socially attuned investment. Bloomfield Park sits at **7060 avenue Bloomfield, Montréal (H3N 2G8)**. The park is open daily from 6 a.m. until midnight.

Currently, its amenities include a water fountain and a children's play module, though parts of its infrastructure—benches, fencing, and surfaces—show signs of age. The neighbourhood's childcare centres and local families have long expressed a desire for safer, more stimulating outdoor space, particularly amid rising density and reduced private yards. The timing of this renovation is being welcomed as a refresh that responds directly to grassroots needs.

Moreover, the nearby Centre communautaire Jeunesse Unie, fronting the mural itself, offers programs and services for youth, making the park's aesthetic and functional renewal a natural extension of community infrastructure.

Challenges & future watchpoints

While the stated timeline is optimistic, Montreal's fall-and-winter weather can introduce unpredictability. Delays are not unusual in outdoor construction. The possibility that work may roll into 2026 suggests officials are

already accounting for contingencies.

Another question is continuity: will the renewed infrastructure be maintained at a high standard in coming years? Public spaces often face deferred maintenance and budget constraints. The success of the Bloomfield renovation will depend not only on the initial build but on ongoing stewardship.

Finally, as with any public art integration, it is essential that *Alegria* remains respected and protected — free from vandalism, chemical damage, or weather deterioration — so that the symbolic, visual heart of the project continues to speak to future generations.

A renewal of more than hardware

When the work is complete, Bloomfield Park won't simply look newer — it will feel renewed. Its redesigned playground, refreshed furniture, safer boundaries, and reinvigorated mural all point toward a space that fosters play, connection, and pride in place. In a neighborhood as dense and diverse as Parc-Extension, such public investments are often subtle signals: that the city still believes in welcoming, well-maintained, artistic, and child-friendly urban life.

For the children who climb, balance, chase, and imagine among its trees and benches — and for the adults who watch them — this coming “cure de jouvence” is more than cosmetic. It's a reaffirmation that even small parks can carry big meaning.

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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

LOVE'S BEGGAR

Q I am 20. Five months ago I started dating a coworker, 29. We work in separate departments, so we are not on top of each other every day. When we started dating, I told him I was looking for a relationship. He said he had just gotten out of a two year relationship four months before.

We talk on the phone every day and see each other at least twice a week. I thought we were on our way to making it official as a couple—at least until two days ago. That's when he confessed this new girl at work wants to get back together with him. That was a shocker.

Before we started dating he dated her for a month, but she broke it off because he was moving too fast. Now he says he is stuck in the middle because he has feelings for both of us and doesn't want to hurt either of us. I told him he was too late because he is already hurting me by leaving me to get together with her.

I said I was beginning to fall in love with him, which is true, and if he cared as much as he said he did, he would stay with me. Well, he told me he wanted to be with me and he would tell her his decision. And he did.

Problem solved, right? Wrong! While I was on the phone with him, she shows up at his house, and they have a long talk. He tells me she said he is confused, and now he doesn't want to talk about it anymore because he's stuck in the middle of a situation he doesn't want to be in.

I hurt so much when I realize I could lose him, because I have strong feelings for him. I want to be with him, and I already told him how I feel. What else am I to do?

Shauna

A Shauna, some stories stick with us because they condense a truth in an unforgettable way. For us, one such story was a news item about a pilot guiding a large ship into port. When the ship collided with the pillar of a bridge, gravely damaging both the bridge and the vessel, the first words out of the pilot's mouth were, "Don't tell anybody."

People aren't honest naturally. We are animalistic. Our self-preservation mechanism is still so strong that a lie is the first thing which tries to come to our lips. Only our good character can stop it.

Your boyfriend is weak and a coward. When you jumped up and down, arguing with him, he didn't have the courage to say he doesn't want to be with you. Instead, he threw his hands in the air and said, "I'm confused." But he doesn't love you. He can't explain why he doesn't, he just doesn't.

No man can tell any woman exactly why he loves her. Love is an unmeasured quality, beyond factors and reasons. With a man who cares about you, you don't have to beg. But when you beg, you know for sure you are not loved. Arguing will not change that.

You think you have to make this relationship work because you are hungry for love. That is the first misstep in falling down a long staircase. When you find yourself tripping on the first step, you must grab the rail so you don't fall all the way down the stairs.

What railing are we talking about? The railing of reality. Grab hold of reality and say I've dated him five months, I told him how I feel, he doesn't love me, and I'm not going to beg any man to be with me.

Treat yourself as a person of value. Prize yourself, as the one who loves you will prize you. You need to be some man's first choice, his right choice.

Wayne & Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF (www.yourotherhalf.com)

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- Lettuce (Quebec)
- Tomatoes (pack) (Quebec)
- Sweet Potatoes (5) (Quebec)
- Potatoes (~3lbs) (Quebec)
- Leek (Quebec)
- Mushrooms (Quebec)
- Garlic (Egypt)
- Corn (3) (Quebec)
- Beets (~2lbs) (Quebec)
- Radishes (Quebec)
- Organic Apples (3) (Quebec)
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VIRGO, LIBRA AND SCORPIO



ARIES

This week, you'll realize how important you are to your employer. This will translate into a well-deserved raise and exciting new opportunities. In your love life, you'll take meaningful steps to plan experiences that reflect the depth of your feelings.



TAURUS

You'll make your days at work better by sharing happy moments and using your energy to have engaging conversations. Don't hesitate to share your ideas; they'll energize your discussions and strengthen your connections.



GEMINI

If you're facing financial challenges, negotiating the terms of a loan could result in a solution that improves your quality of life. Additionally, by paying more attention to your partner, you will strengthen your relationship and create a sense of peace between you.



CANCER

In your love life, focus on fairness by considering your partner's needs when you're making decisions. At work, pay close attention to details; the smallest things can make all the difference.



LEO

Prioritize sleep this week. Sufficient rest is crucial to maintaining focus and staying healthy. When your body has the rest it needs, it will boost your creativity, making you better able to achieve impressive results.



VIRGO

Many friends will reach out to you this week. You may find yourself distracted by social media. A family commitment will help you refocus. You'll also discover a new art form that will captivate your interest and awaken your senses.



LIBRA

Work emergencies could pile up this week. However, your family will step up to help lighten your load at home. You'll create a warm, inviting atmosphere and spread joy with your infectious smile.



SCORPIO

Before diving into a new project, gather all the necessary information to set yourself up for success. Although you haven't planned a romantic weekend getaway, a tempting and unexpected adventure could arise.



SAGITTARIUS

You must show courage to succeed in your career. Commit to ongoing training and adapt to your changing work environment. These adjustments will ensure stability and drive your professional growth.



CAPRICORN

Small details matter. Your appearance and how you present yourself will directly impact your career advancement. You'll treat yourself to a few personal indulgences this week. Your friends will encourage you to spoil yourself with these well-deserved treats.



AQUARIUS

You'll receive very positive news about your health this week. A new treatment or medication will improve your well-being. You'll be given various urgent tasks at work. Fortunately, you'll handle them with grace.



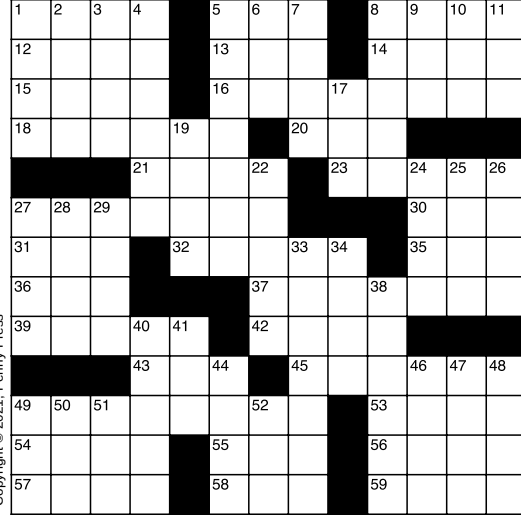
PISCES

You'll attract fascinating individuals with your undeniable charm, increasing your romantic prospects. At the same time, you'll successfully expand your client base, which will delight your boss. Thanks to your charisma, the company's sales revenue will double.

Coffee Break

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ACROSS

1. Broadway bust
5. Drill attachment
8. Become tattered
12. Deputy
13. Important timespan
14. Role model
15. Harness-racing gait
16. Jumped the track
18. More uncanny
20. Orchestra
21. Trampled
23. Bind again
27. Monarch
30. Find a sum
31. Set of two
32. Clever
35. Fire fuel
36. BPOE member
37. Wonder
39. Wanting
42. Old
43. Furniture wood
45. ___ and flowers

DOWN

1. Destiny
2. Italian money, once
3. Perfume
4. Short and slender
5. Boudoir
6. Rage
7. Waterproofed canvas cover
8. Snowy
9. Long fish
10. Is, pluralized
11. Closet bar

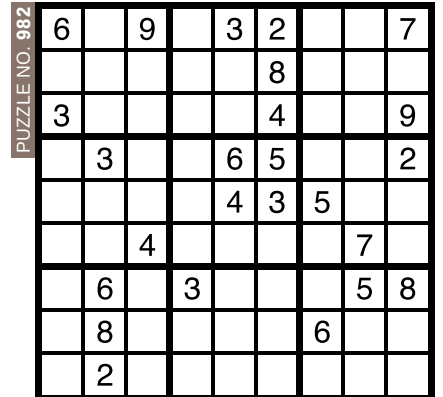
17. Publicize
19. Does wrong
22. Playwright's offering
24. Soft mineral
25. Fan's favorite
26. "Jagged ___"
27. Ancient garden
28. Stubborn animal
29. ___ fun at
33. Justly
34. Cedar, e.g.
38. Adjusts
40. Gift receiver
41. Shaggy ox
44. Beer containers
46. Ramble
47. Ballet skirt
48. Fawn's father
49. Sailor's domain
50. "How the West Won"
51. Bat wood
52. Maple-sugar base

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: **You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.**

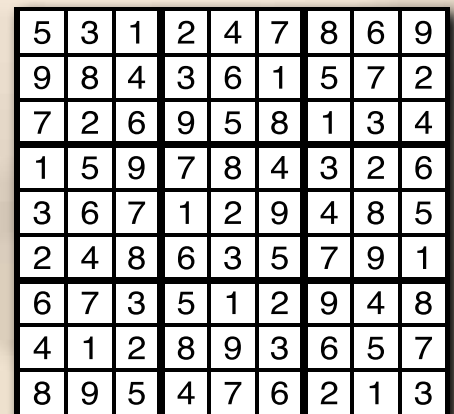


Last Issue's Answers

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