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The Laval News EXCLUSIVE

MPs El-Khoury and Koutrakis proud of their achievements

Laval-Les Îles MP Fayçal El-Khoury and Vimy MP Annie Koutrakis say they will be running in the next election and continue to support their embattled leader, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, The Laval News)

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Di Sano seeks SWLSB chairmanship

Sandra El-Helou awarded with medal



(THE LAVAL NEWS) - Senator Leo Housakos (on the right) recently presented the King Charles III Coronation Medal to Laval city councillor Sandra El-Helou.

Laval mayor Stephane Boyer (on the left) was present at the ceremony.

This prestigious Canadian medal honors individuals who have made significant contributions to their communities or achieved outstanding accomplishments that bring credit to Canada. Senator Housakos highlighted Sandra's exceptional dedication, noting that she has gone above and beyond in serving not only the Laval and Lebanese communities but also Canadians in general. Her tireless efforts and commitment to public service exemplify the values celebrated by this award, making her a deserving recipient of this national honour.

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Laval pilot project in Duvernay

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\$325,000 for breast cancer

Pink in the City co-founder Denise Vourtzoumis, seen here with her spouse, Bobby, during the group's Magic of Hope gala evening at the Château Royal in Chomedey. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

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Three out of four Laval Liberal MPs say they will run in the next federal election

The Laval News
EXCLUSIVE

But when? That's the big question – with voting foreseen as early as spring or even January

MARTIN C. BARRY

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Saying they have every intention of running in the next federal election, which ordinarily would be scheduled for October next year, two of the Laval region's four Liberal Members of Parliament said in an interview with The Laval News earlier this week that Canadians could actually be heading back to the polls much sooner – as early as January possibly.

Early election 'possible'

"For me, my answer is it's possible," Laval-Les Îles Liberal MP Fayçal El-Khoury replied when the question of an early election was put to him. "I think so, too," Vimy Liberal MP Annie Koutrakis responded, although she was more nuanced in her response.

"Personally, I don't think it'll happen before Christmas," said Koutrakis. "But I would not think that it would be beyond the realm of possibility that it could be by the end of January. I suspect that it will probably even before spring."

Growing caucus split

Those who follow the news from the nation's capital lately couldn't possibly have missed the growing turmoil in the Liberal ranks over the future of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. His popularity among Canadians is at an all-time low, leading to a growing rift within the Liberal caucus, between MPs who want him to go and others who remain loyal.

On that issue, Koutrakis and El-Khoury left no doubt as to their feelings. Asked where they stand on Justin Trudeau's future, El-Khoury made the following statement. "Me, I could tell you he is the Prime Minister of Canada," he said.

"He is concentrating on doing a job for the benefit of Canadians. That's his main mission right now. I'm supporting the Prime Minister and I think, I believe and I'm convinced he should stay as the leader to lead us for the next election."

Trudeau's choice, Koutrakis says

Koutrakis said: "I think only he [Trudeau] has the answer. I mean, there's no question he knows that there's, you know – and it's been a while now, it's not something, I mean, the media knows, you've got your sources, right? – [that] there's a lot of malaise within the caucus. I'm not going to, you know, sugarcoat it.

"There are a lot of people who are sharing with the media and with us as colleagues what they hear at the door," she continued.



Koutrakis and El-Khoury both support Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose greatly diminished public popularity has contributed to a rift in the Liberal ranks. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, The Laval News)

"It's, I have to tell you, when I do door-to-door, and I've been honest with you face out, yes a lot of the comments at the door say that, you know, it's time for the Prime Minister to move on. But when you push them and you ask them, you know, what does that change look like for you? You're telling me you want change after nine years and I get it, I'm an elector, as well."

Iacono in, Robillard out?

Laval's two other federal ridings are currently held by Liberal MPs. According to the Montreal daily Le Devoir, Marc-Aurèle-Fortin Liberal MP Yves Robillard is one of several Liberal caucus members from Quebec who have expressed doubts in recent months about running in the next federal election.

Late last week in an interview during a fund-raising event in Chomedey, Alfred-Pellan Liberal MP Angelo Iacono confirmed he will be running and has obtained official candidate status to run for the Liberals in Alfred-Pellan.

That said, both El-Khoury and Koutrakis stand steadfastly by the Liberals' achievements since 2015 when Justin Trudeau formed his first government. They emphasized the government's handling of the more than three-year-long Covid-19 crisis, with generous amounts

of subsidized relief to financially-challenged individuals and businesses.

Defending the Liberal record

"Thank god it was this government in place, thank god it was this Prime Minister," said Koutrakis, maintaining that Canadians stand to live four years longer than their counterparts in the United States, because of the generous pandemic relief provided in Canada compared to the U.S.

She also suggested that a Conservative government would have acted with a great deal more austerity and restraint, to the detriment of needy Canadians. She and El-Khoury cited the federal dental care and pharmacare programs introduced in more recent years as examples of positive government spending.

"It's covering medicine for diabetic people," Koutrakis said of pharmacare. "If you look at our population, and I have the number here because I wanted to make sure that I got it right, diabetes affects 9.4% of Canadians or around 3.7 million people across Canada.

"Most medications for people who suffer with type 1 and type 2 diabetes is \$1,000 a month. I mean, that is money that people can now take out of their monthly budget and can send their

children to summer camp if they wanted to. Or they can buy that bicycle that they wanted to buy to their children that they couldn't."


The Trudeau government's generous spending has also led the Liberals into previously unexplored territory for record-setting deficits. However, in El-Khoury's view, spending is necessary in order to succeed.

Spending necessary, El-Khoury says

"I was a businessman and my mind is still in business also even in politics," he said. "In order to succeed in any business or to reach your goal, you have to invest. For us, what we put money in this system in order is, and we're investing for the better future of us and for generations to come.

"If we did not invest during Covid, which was the maximum we put, and take a possibility of our economy collapsing, our health system collapsing, losing lives and losing jobs," he added.

"You know what the consequences would be? It would take years and years to recover. We protected that. It was a great investment. People have to understand the difference between throwing money on the street or investing money for a better future. And that's exactly what we did."



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OPINION & Editorial



Billions of litres of milk wasted while families go hungry

Our outdated dairy supply management system is failing the environment, and Canadians

Canada's dairy system is drowning in waste – up to 10 billion litres of milk discarded over the past decade. This isn't just inefficiency; it's a shocking mismanagement of resources that doesn't fit with today's environmental priorities or changing consumer preferences. The system is broken, and it's time for serious reform to stop squandering billions of dollars worth of milk and resources that could be better used.

Since 2012, Canadian dairy farms have wasted over six billion litres of milk, with some estimates suggesting the figure could be closer to 10 billion litres over the last decade. That's milk valued at up to \$14.9 billion, gone down the drain – literally. This massive waste, highlighted in a study set to be published by the Ecological Economics journal, exposes a dairy supply management system (DSMS) that's completely out of touch with today's market demands and environmental realities.

The DSMS was designed to perfectly match milk supply with consumer demand through production quotas, theoretically eliminating waste. Unlike other countries where over-production is common, Canada's system was supposed to provide stability and efficiency. But that's not what's happening. Instead, farmers, incentivized to overproduce to hedge against variable cow lactation, are flooding the system with excess milk that ends up being thrown away. The environmental cost of this waste is

staggering. The production of this wasted milk has devoured between 920 and 1,900 square kilometres of arable land and guzzled between 930 million and 1.9 billion cubic meters of water. That's on top of 8.4 million tonnes of CO2 emissions – equivalent to adding 330,000 cars to Canada's roads. In a world increasingly concerned with water scarcity, land degradation, and the fight against climate change, this is nothing short of a catastrophe.

And it's not just about environmental harm. The DSMS also ignores the fact that Canadians' dietary preferences are shifting. More people are choosing plant-based alternatives for health, ethical, and environmental reasons. Meanwhile, food insecurity is rising, with more Canadians turning to food banks to survive.

How can we justify throwing away billions of litres of milk while families go hungry?

The Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC), the crown corporation that oversees these quotas, needs a drastic overhaul. For starters, milk waste on farms should be made illegal. The CDC should also implement a milk rescue program, converting surplus milk into powdered form for strategic reserves, much like it does with butter. This wouldn't just cut waste – it would create a safety net for times of market fluctuation, ensuring that surplus milk benefits Canadians instead of becoming an environmental and moral liability.

The time for change is now. First, transparency in the DSMS must be increased. The U.S. dairy industry has systems in place to document and report milk waste, and Canada should follow suit. This would help provide an accurate picture of the problem and encourage more responsible practices.

Second, it's high time to rethink the quota system. It's based on outdated assumptions about the indispensability of milk, and it no longer reflects the realities of today's dietary landscape. Quotas should be adjusted to accommodate the growing demand for plant-based alternatives, moving Canada toward a more sustainable agriculture system.

Finally, exporting surplus milk could be a temporary fix, but it must be done carefully to avoid creating dependency on volatile global markets – something that could sabotage long-term sustainability goals.

If politicians are so eager to defend Bill C-282, which would protect supply management during future trade negotiations and is facing resistance in the Senate, they should also be willing to start an honest conversation about how to make the system work for all Canadians – not just the dairy sector elite.

It's time to stop crying over spilled milk and take concrete action to prevent it from happening again.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois

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City of Laval aims to upgrade and max the efficiency of its operations

The City of Laval says it has now become a leader among Quebec's municipalities for efficiency and transparency with a new vision to maximize the convenience and speed of its services for residents.

'Growing needs'

"Like many other municipalities, Laval is faced with a situation involving growing needs but limited resources," Mayor Stéphane Boyer said during a press conference last week to announce new technologies and systems the city will be using to help meet its goals. "That is why for the past two years, we have been working towards reforming the culture of our organization," he added.

"I am among those who believe that an efficient municipal admin-



Seen here last week with the heads of several City of Laval departments, Mayor Stéphane Boyer (far left) announced a series of new measures, including the introduction of AI, designed to improve efficiency for Laval employees as well as residents. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

istration is a guarantee of greater quality for services to residents, for raising of working conditions and for a true capacity to deliver expected projects to citizens within a reasonable time at reasonable cost."

'A responsibility,' says Boyer

"However, more than just believing, I am also of the opinion that we are talking about a responsibility, a necessity even, which is to make sure that each dollar paid by taxpayers goes the furthest possible," said Boyer. "And why shouldn't we pursue the goal of being the best city in Quebec in this matter?"

Beginning in November, according to city officials, Laval will be upgrading the quality of its response time with residents who contact the city's client relations agents by phone at 3-1-1 or by other means.

The city says that from now on, and in keeping with a commitment to transparency, Laval residents will be told how many days have elapsed between the time a resident makes a request and when it finally is resolved.

Improving transparency

"For the sake of transparency and commitment, the delays have been defined in order to guarantee an adequate, realistic and satisfactory response for each request sent to the city," said Benoît Collette, the City of Laval's director-general. "With clear, measurable and shared standards, the city will offer better visibility as regards the length of time for processing requests."

According to the city, information regarding delays in processing requests will be made available for all phone contacts, as well as in person at the city's multiservice client offices, and online through the "Mon Dossier" web site. The city says that performance indicators will be in place to make sure the results meet customer satisfaction targets.

The city says that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be playing a

more prominent role in the near future in plans to increase the municipality's overall efficiency. For example, beginning this fall the public works department is using mobile pothole detection units to seek out and identify breaks or imperfections on the pavement of Laval's many streets and roadways before they deteriorate further.

Bill-paying efficiency

AI has also been deployed since March this year to increase the efficiency of the City of Laval's bill-paying abilities. The city currently does business with some 10,000 providers of services and products and needs to process more than 120,000 payment invoices annually. Laval has started using an automation tool with AI built in.

The goal is to minimize the amount of processing time and related costs, to pay providers faster and to simplify procedures as much as possible for city employees. The city's 3-1-1 call centre, which has come in for a fair degree of criticism by users over the years, is also about to be improved through the addition of Artificial Intelligence.

The city says that AI, supplemented by cloud computing technology, will provide call centre employees with text-based readouts, such as transcripts of calls and other information, making the job easier for personnel and the overall customer service experience more pleasant for Laval residents.

AI-powered lawn mowers

The City of Laval's public works department, normally a labour-intensive environment, is also starting to be taken over by Artificial Intelligence. As part of a pilot project, the city has started to purchase self-driving, electrically-powered lawn mowers as "an eco-responsible, practical, silent and safe solution for the management" of two green spaces, the city says in a press release.

The city foresees a 30 per cent savings from the move, coming from lower energy, maintenance and repair costs, as well as from fewer outsourced contracts to landscaping firms which did that work for decades.

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Laval pilot project seeks to improve local feedback with new 'district assemblies'

Duvernay–Pont-Viau and Auteuil are testing grounds for an experiment in democracy

MARTIN C. BARRY

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In an ongoing effort to improve democratic traditions in the City of Laval, while also encouraging greater participation and involvement by residents in the affairs of their city, Laval officials launched a new phase of a pilot project earlier this month, designed to establish more focus on local issues in individual districts.

District assemblies

Laval city councillor for Duvernay–Pont-Viau Christine Poirier welcomed 70 residents of Duvernay at the Pavillon du Bois-Papineau on Saint-Martin Blvd. East on Oct. 10. She was there to help brief them on the shape that two planned district assemblies will take in the pilot project.

The first assembly, for residents of Duvernay, with another planned for the district of Auteuil, is taking place on Oct. 29 at the Pavillon du Bois-Papineau beginning at 7 pm.

The current city administration under Mayor Stéphane Boyer (as well as the previous under former mayor Marc Demers) has often found itself the target of criticism from the city council opposition.

Decentralizing locally

Opposition councillors, including those with Action Laval, have claimed (at election time especially) that the mayor and his team of Mouvement lavallois councillors neglect district interests while concentrating on major development projects – often in the centre of the city.

With that in mind, the new district assemblies are perhaps being created in response to the criticism, as well as to silence the opposition critics – for a while at least.

In a brief outline of the nascent assemblies, Poirier, who sits on the city's executive-committee, referred to the councils as "a major innovation in terms of participatory democracy," while saying they're designed to bring residents closer to the centre of power, effectively decentralizing the process of decision-making.

Budgets for assemblies

According to Poirier, the administration is initially allotting each local assembly an operating budget of \$2,500, as well as additional



One of the City of Laval's first district assembly meetings will be taking place at 7 pm on Oct. 29 at the Pavillon du Bois-Papineau on Saint-Martin Blvd. east. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

funding of \$15,000 for innovative projects to be conceived by the district assemblies.

"I encourage you to take part in great numbers," she said. "I invite you all to become hard-working players. I also encourage you to speak to your neighbors.

"This is a great opportunity to have your voice heard," Poirier added. "This is an opportunity to express your needs regarding everyday projects, while carrying out projects that will improve neighborhood life, start conversations, but mostly to allow you to become agents of change in Duvernay."

Helping boost democracy

Malorie Flon, executive-director of the Montreal-based non-profit Institut du Nouveau Monde which promotes local democracy and citizen participation, cited the decline of democracy in recent years in a growing number of nations around the globe as a good reason to help boost democracy by becoming involved on a local assembly of like-minded people.

The initial response from some residents at the meeting was suspicion as to the city's motive, but also cynicism with regards to the paltry budget amounts that the city decided to allot the district assemblies. Others pointed out that assemblies like this, although indicative of Laval City Hall's good intentions, have no decision-making authority and therefore haven't any autonomy.



Laval city councillor for Duvernay–Pont-Viau Christine Poirier is helping to guide the city's pilot project for the creation of district assemblies to deal in closer detail with issues of local importance. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)



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Upcoming opening of the new elevated ramp on Highway 440 West in Laval



secure and improve mobility in the interchange of highways 440 (Jean-Noël-Lavoie) and 15 (des Laurentides), one of the busiest in Quebec. This project, which included various redevelopments, required investments of \$133 million, which is below the initially planned cost of \$189.4 million.

“Laval residents can breathe a big sigh of relief, because the long-awaited elevated ramp will soon be open to traffic. After the serious pile-up in 2019, it became necessary to improve the configuration of this sector. I am really proud that the only decision that was necessary was made, which was to make this area safer,” he said.

Highlights

The project to make the Highway 440 and Highway 15 interchange safer and improve mobility includes two phases:

- **Phase 1 (2021-2022):**
 - the addition of an entrance leading from the northbound Highway 15 service road to the northbound Highway 15 expressways (in service September 2022);
- **Phase 2 (2023 to 2025):**
 - the redevelopment of exit No 24 *Industrial Blvd.* on Highway 440, westbound, by installing two separate exits with two lanes each: one leading to Industrial Boulevard and the other to the service road (completed in summer 2024);
 - the construction of an elevated ramp leading directly from Highway 440 westbound to Highway 15 northbound,

replacing Exit No. 22 that used to use the service roads (scheduled to open in the coming days);

- The completion of the work and landscaping will be completed in 2025 and will complete the project.
- This project is listed under the Act respecting the acceleration of certain infrastructure projects, which aims to

stimulate Quebec’s economic recovery, and to accelerate certain projects for a faster start of construction, which has made it possible to carry out it more quickly.

Approximately 305,000 vehicles travel through the Highway 440 and Highway 15 interchange every day.



(THE LAVAL NEWS) - Christopher Skeete, Minister for the Economy, Minister responsible for the Fight against Racism and Minister responsible for the Laval region, is proud to announce, on behalf of Geneviève Guilbault, Deputy Premier and Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility, the opening of the new elevated ramp leading directly from Highway 440 in the coming days. westbound on Highway 15 northbound.

This new access ramp, whose construction began in 2023, is part of the vast project to

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Laval Unveils

An Iconic, New Downtown District



The Carré Laval project

Last September, Ville de Laval proudly unveiled the Carré Laval project—an innovative eco-district that will transform part of the city’s downtown core. This large-scale development, designed to meet the needs of a growing city, expresses an ambitious vision of the future, combining sustainability, connectivity and vitality.



A visionary project for a rapidly changing city

Carré Laval represents a major step forward in the city’s urban development. It provides a strategic response to the challenges of our time, as demographic growth intensifies and, with it, the demand for housing, green spaces and public services. This new eco-district is in line with the *Laval 2035 strategic vision: urban in nature* and the *Laval climate plan – horizon 2035*. Carré Laval demonstrates a responsible, sustainable approach, focusing on respect for our environment and collective well-being.

A forward-looking approach

Carré Laval is based on three major areas of innovation. Firstly, on the concept of *One health*—an approach inspired by the scientific research carried out by INRS in the life sciences and by Laval’s

key players in the Biotech City. The *One health* concept takes into account the profound links between humans, living species and their environment, to promote a balanced and harmonious urban ecosystem and innovative solutions, particularly in the fields of agri-food, biotechnologies, the environment, health and artificial intelligence technologies. In addition, the desire for social innovation is central to the project, with the aim of creating an inclusive district that celebrates diversity and reflects the richness of Laval’s social fabric. And last but not least, the project incorporates innovative energy infrastructures, based on advanced technologies that ensure optimal energy management, thereby guaranteeing the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the district.

A future eco-district where city and nature meet

Carré Laval will be spread over more than 4,000,000 sq. ft. (42 ha), strategically located close to Autoroute A-15 and Montmorency station. It will also feature new structuring mobility projects, facilitating access and daily life for future residents. The eco-district will include a 22-hectare regional park—a real green lung for the downtown area—designed to capture rainwater and serve as a refuge for biodiversity. It will include, as well, a mixed residential development with a potential of 3,500 diversified and accessible housing units, in addition to innovative ecological infrastructures to minimize its carbon footprint. Local shops and services, pedestrian routes promoting sustainable mobility, and spaces dedicated to institutional facilities—such as a school, an early childhood centre (CPE), and a community centre—will enhance the district’s family-friendly and inclusive nature. A partnership between Ville de Laval and Société de développement Angus (SDA) will lead, in particular to the creation of an innovation centre that will serve as a driving force for the region’s economy. This centre will be home to academic institutions, research centres and innovation hubs, positioning Laval as a model for innovation.

Involving residents

To ensure that this project meets the real needs of the community, Ville de Laval has launched a participatory process to enable all residents to get involved in designing the Carré Laval innovation park. Exploratory walks and an online consultation will be set up to get residents’ ideas and suggestions.

Carré Laval is more than a development project: it’s the fulfillment of a shared vision for a sustainable future. It will provide an ideal, attractive living environment and become a source of pride for all Laval residents.

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Current Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board Ward 7 commissioner James Di Sano who is running for the SWLSB's chairmanship in the Nov. 3 election describes himself as "a dedicated and experienced" member of the board, where he has been serving with a commitment to enhancing education and fostering student success.

Passion for quality

Throughout his six years in office as a commissioner, Di Sano states in a biographical account submitted to *The Laval News*, he has shown "a strong passion for ensuring that every student

James Di Sano seeks SWLSB chairmanship under 'United for Success' banner

'To really protect our home and our family' is what it's about, says outgoing Ward 7 commissioner

receives a high-quality education in a safe and inclusive environment."

He says his leadership and decision-making skills have been instrumental in guiding SWLSB policies that prioritize student achievement, teacher support, and community engagement. "As a long-standing advocate for our students, educators, and community, Di Sano says he has witnessed first-hand how a collaborative and forward-thinking approach can make a significant difference in the lives of the SWLSB's learners.

Resources to succeed

He says he will continue building on this momentum to ensure that every child has access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed.

Di Sano also says he brings a wealth of knowledge to his role, having a deep understanding of the educational landscape in Quebec, particularly in addressing the needs of the English-speaking community.

He says his ability to work collaboratively with fellow commissioners, administrators, teachers and parents has earned him a reputation as someone "who listens, responds and acts in the best interests of the students and the school board."

Responsible governance

Saying that he is committed to transparency

and accountability, Di Sano says he advocates for responsible governance and effective use of resources to enhance student programs and facilities. He says his dedication to continuous improvement and innovation will ensure that the SWLSB remains a leader in education, providing students with the tools they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

He says his involvement in various committees demonstrates his "hands-on approach and unwavering commitment to education excellence," and that as chairperson, and as a former graduate of the SWLSB, he "will work tirelessly to ensure schools are not only well-resourced but also thriving as safe, welcoming spaces for all."

He says he is passionate about "creating a future where every student is empowered to reach their full potential, and is ready to lead with integrity, experience, and a clear vision for progress."

'Get out and vote,' Di Sano says

During an interview with *The Laval News*, Di Sano was asked whether he agreed with the view expressed by some candidates running in simultaneous elections at other English-language school boards in Quebec that this election is more important than previous ones.

"It's important in any election, it's important that people go and vote," he said. "You know, whether you, it's not about supporting one

candidate over another, it's a question of exercising your democratic right to vote.

"And it's a positive for us and our community that we still have that right to exercise our right to vote in our local government, in our local governance there at the school board level. And that's that's something the French sector, as you know, lost in recent years, but we've retained that as a minority in this province, and it's something that, you know, is a positive factor for us.

Quebec watching closely

"That being said, I mean, the government, we all know, is looking at this election very closely," he continued. "And it is important and it is imperative that everyone exercises their right to go and vote in this election, be it for the commissioners that are being contested, the chairs that are being contested. It is very important that people exercise their right to vote so that we can keep our school boards, our local governance.

"And you know, at the end of the day – and you visited many of our schools, so you know – that sense of community belonging, that sense of family, that sense of closeness that we retain at school boards, rather than becoming government service centers, right? So, there's what we want to protect, essentially. We want to protect our home and our family. This is the scope of this election, to really protect our home and our family."

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Federal officials touch base with English-speaking communities

'Dialogue Days' focused on social economy's role for Anglos in Quebec

MARTIN C. BARRY

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In a bid to expand the federal government's understanding of issues and challenges relating to the entrepreneurship and economic development of official language minority communities, officials with the government met online on Oct. 8 with the leaders of several Quebec English-language organizations with a related stake.

Dialogue Days

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) hosts bi-annual stakeholder consultations with official language minority communities (Francophones outside Quebec and Anglophones in Quebec), known as Dialogue Days.

This year, the consultation focused on social economy, the goal being to explore the Quebec economic ecosystem and complement other federal initiatives.

ID'ing the priorities

Discussion questions during the meeting dealt with identifying what are the top priority needs of the Quebec English-speaking communities that the social economy model could address, and what strategies/actions or other mechanisms could improve social and economic development change.

Other objectives included bringing together different stakeholders of the English-speaking communities of Quebec and actors of the social economy ecosystem, and deepening the government's understanding of the social economy as a means for social and economic development for the ESCQ and exchange on the needs and priorities of the community.

Views on English-speaking Quebec

One of the community group representatives, John Buck, president and CEO of the Montreal-based Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC), said the CEDEC is now actively promoting two Quebec English-speaking community economic development objectives and four related targets for the next ten years.

He said the English-speaking community of

Quebec "must increase its participation in and contribution to growing Quebec's economy and reap the tangible economic benefits derived from this contribution."

As well, he said Quebec's economy should be leveraged to address the economic disparities and disadvantages the English-speaking community of Quebec is experiencing.

He said that over the next ten years, the English-speaking community of Quebec should seek to create or expand 250 businesses or social enterprises, create or fill 1,000 jobs, attract \$5 million in investment, and reduce by 50 per cent the economic disparities and experiences that the English-speaking community in Quebec is subjected to.

Promoting social economy

Canada Economic Development for Quebec says it would like to pay particular attention to the role of the social economy in the long-term economic development of the regions of Quebec, in complementarity with other federal programs, and considering the Quebec ecosystem.

In that context, the ministry would like to deepen its knowledge of the sector and its players, gain a better understanding of how the social economy can contribute to regional economic development, and identify official language minority communities' needs.

CEDEC says it supports the economic development of official language minority communities with its regular programs and through the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) – Official languages.

Nationwide program

The nationwide initiative has been implemented since 2008 by the regional development agencies (RDAs) and Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED). The initiative was also renewed under the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028.

ISED coordinates the EDI at the national level for reporting, consultation, evaluation activities and conducts research and policy analysis on official language minority communities.

The research aims to expand the federal government's understanding of the issues and challenges relating to official language minority communities' entrepreneurship and economic

development and to build capacity and partnerships in this area.

Discussing opportunities

CEDEC says events like the Oct. 8 online meeting allow participants to discuss opportunities and challenges that impact the economic development of OLMCs and can help inform the

implementation of the EDI and other federal programs.

CEDEC says its mission is to promote the long-term economic development of the regions of Quebec by giving special attention to those where a low economic growth is prevalent or opportunities for productive employment are lacking.



Officials with the government met online on Oct. 8 with the leaders of several English-language organizations with a related stake.

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The CAQ MNAs for Laval make a positive assessment of the mid-term

(THE LAVAL NEWS) - October 3, 2024 marked the halfway point since the election of the 43rd Parliament. Christopher Skeete, Member of the National Assembly for Sainte-Rose, Minister for the Economy, Minister Responsible for the Fight against Racism and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region, Valérie Schmalz, Member of the National Assembly for Vimont, Alice Abou-Khalil, Member of the National Assembly for Fabre, and Céline Haytayan, Member of the National Assembly for Laval-des-Rapides, are delighted with the achievements made in the Laval region.

Significant gains in Laval

The last two years have been marked by many announcements for Laval. Key achievements include:

- \$142 million for the expansion and electrification of the STL garage;
- \$64.8 million for the City of Laval's climate plan;
- \$48.3 million for the construction of a specialized school in Laval to provide schooling services to students with severe disabilities;
- \$44 million for the construction of the Central Library and the Centre de création artistique professionnelle de Laval;
- \$13 million under PAFIRSPA for the construction of a chalet, a swimming pool and outdoor facilities at Pie-X Park, as well as work to enhance the Trait-Carré wooded site;
- \$20 million to the Laval police service to improve public safety;
- \$4.6 million for the City of Laval's Strategic Plan, Safety and Collective Well-Being, which aims to provide safe and sustainable living environments for the entire population;
- \$4.1 million to develop and modernize the research infrastructure of the Centre Armand-Frappier Santé Biotechnologie in Laval;
- \$3 million for the Carrefour jeunesse-emploi de Laval to support various programs and initiatives for local youth;
- \$2.8 million for the Avenir des femmes community housing project, which welcomes low-income single mothers and their children;
- \$2.5 million for the preservation of the Barbe stream;
- \$2 million for the creation of the Maison du Pas Sage, a dwelling with a dozen supervised units for people living with an intellectual disability;
- \$1.4 million to increase training at the Laval Skilled Trades School;
- \$1 million for the development of the Momo cultural station;
- More than \$250K for the beautification of Laval elementary school yards;
- The unveiling of Carré Laval, an urban project in Laval that will eventually house 3,500 housing units, green spaces and local services;
- The opening of La Croisée high school;
- The arrival in Laval of the Moderna Canada plant for the design of mRNA vaccines;
- The start of work on ramp 440/15 to secure and improve mobility in the area;
- The opening of the first seniors' home in Laval in Chomedey, as well as the announcement of a second one that will be in Sainte-Rose;
- Hosting the Canadian Francophone Games in Laval in 2025;
- The creation of a round table of the Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles in order to find a status that matches its potential;
- Opening of a university clinic-school led by specialized nurse practitioners (SNPs) and clinical nurses;
- Visits to hundreds of organizations, citizens and businesses to better understand Laval's needs and to adequately support them in achieving their objectives.

Replenishing Quebecers' wallets

Several important measures have been put in place to financially support Quebecers, including tax cuts and the implementation of the anti-inflation shield by Minister Girard, in accordance with election commitments. The government also capped the increase in electricity rates and tabled Bill 72. The bill aims to protect consumers from abusive business practices, including revising the display of grocery products to make it simpler and reworking the pricing accuracy policy.

Improving the efficiency of our health services

The Government of Quebec is introducing several health bills to improve the efficiency of the health and social services system. Access to front-line services has been improved thanks to a new regulation that prioritizes the care of the 13,000 vulnerable patients waiting for a family doctor. In addition to Minister Dubé's creation of the Santé Québec agency, Minister Carmant has established measures on the recovery of health care costs and opioid-related harms. For its part, Bill 68 aims to reduce the administrative burden on doctors, thus increasing the number of appointments for Quebecers by 138,000. The first government action plan for the pre-hospital emergency system was announced, accompanied by an investment of nearly \$630 million to improve ambulance services and introduce concrete measures such as the addition of four heliports. Finally, nurse practitioners specializing in primary care can now take care of people registered with the access point to a family doctor, which speeds up access to care for citizens.

Acting for youth and education

Since the beginning of this mandate, significant progress has been made in education and youth. Minister Drainville launched a major reform of education with Bill 23, which reviewed school governance practices, improved decision-making, made data more accessible, and created the Institut national d'excellence en éducation. Bill 47 was also adopted to strengthen the protection of students, particularly in the area of sexual violence. Finally, \$34 million in financial assistance was announced for some 100 youth partners, with a portion of the amount that will support the Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec. In addition, Bill 44 has made it possible to increase research funding by strengthening intersectoral synergy and reaffirming Québec's excellence in terms of research, science and innovation.

Tackling the housing crisis

Among the initiatives put in place to counter the housing crisis, the adoption of Bill 31 amends various housing provisions to counter abusive evictions, rebalances rights between landlords and tenants and increases the supply of housing in Quebec. An investment of \$1 billion was also announced to build 8,000 social and affordable housing units, including 500 reserved for homeless or at-risk clientele. To build them, a \$300 million offensive has been set up to train 4,000 to 5,000 construction workers. On the other hand, the adoption of the *Act to limit the right of eviction of landlords and strengthen the protection of senior tenants* presented by Minister Duranceau aims to protect the most vulnerable tenants, to promote the maintenance of the existing rental housing stock and to stabilize rent prices.

Thinking about the future by investing in the environment

For the environment, a major gain was the announcement of the Quebec Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, which provides for



an investment of half a billion dollars to install 116,000 charging stations by 2030. Minister Charette's *Act to respect the environmental performance of buildings and to amend various provisions relating to the energy transition* facilitates the greening of Quebec's infrastructure stock. The \$500 million National Water Plan aims to protect and restore water resources, while Minister Guilbault's Bill 61 wants to create the Mobilité Infra Québec entity to modernize and improve public transit.

Supporting vulnerable people

The government is committed to supporting vulnerable people and is implementing concrete projects to achieve this. First, the implementation of the Action Plan to Combat the Sexual Exploitation of Minors 2021-2026 continues, in particular with the launch of the national training course *Countering Sexual Exploitation, It's Everyone's Business*. Minister Biron also announced a \$4.8 million grant for 29 projects to raise awareness of sexual and domestic violence. Finally, Bill 71, introduced by Minister Rouleau, aims, among other things, to personalize and improve support for people in vulnerable situations and to facilitate access to the social assistance system.

Meeting the needs of seniors

At the beginning of this mandate, the CAQ government offered financial support for seniors. On the other hand, Minister Rouleau's \$200 million personalized allowance program is slowing down the closure of seniors' residences. It offers a fixed monthly allowance to residences based on the services provided, such as medication administration. About 650 seniors' residences, including some in Laval, benefit from it. Finally, nearly \$15 million has been invested to improve the salaries of attendants working in social economy enterprises in home care. This gesture makes it possible to improve home support for seniors and people with a loss of autonomy.

Actions for justice and safety in Quebec

Several government actions have strengthened justice and security in Quebec. For example, Minister Bonnardel's *Act to amend various provisions relating to public safety and to enact the Act to assist in locating missing persons* reaffirms the duty of police forces to collaborate with stakeholders in the communities concerned. Minister Jolin-Barrette also passed the *Act to protect consumers from planned obsolescence and promote the durability, repairability and maintenance of goods*. Minister Boulet's *Act to prevent and combat psychological harassment and sexual violence in the workplace* makes Quebec workplaces safer, and Minister Charest's amendments to the Safe Sports Act do the same for the sports and recreation sector. Finally, an allocation of nearly \$3 million is dedicated to the Government Strategy for Equality between Women and Men, in order to support this essential cause.



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How to help



Pink in the City's 'Magic of Hope' raises \$325,000 for breast cancer

Nearly 600 guests partied during gala evening benefiting MUHC's Breast Center



Denise and Bobby Vourtzoumis are seen here during the Magic of Hope gala with some of the evening's guests, including Dr. Sarkis Meterissian (far right), director of the Breast Center at the MUHC. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

MARTIN C. BARRY

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How do you keep hope alive?

For 600 supporters of the Pink in the City breast cancer foundation, this year's Magic of Hope gala was all about creating and maintaining hope – even in the face of cancer.

Nearly 600 guests turned out at the Château Royal in Chomedey last Friday evening to have a little fun, enjoy a gourmet meal, listen and dance to some exciting music, and answer the call to help raise an anticipated \$325,000 for the benefit of patients at the McGill University Health Centre's Breast Center.

Inspired to help

Pink in the City was founded in 2006 when an 11-year-old Lawrence Vourtzoumis, while driving to school with his mother Denise, heard an ad on the radio requesting volunteers to shave their heads as a demonstration of solidarity for those who had lost their hair due to chemo treatments for breast cancer.

▶ Continued on page 15



Brothers Lawrence and Steven Vourtzoumis did an exceptional job as masters of ceremony. (Photo: Harry B. Photo)



The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board's Daniel Johnson (second from right) was presented during the Magic of Hope event with a plaque recognizing his valuable contributions to Pink in the City. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

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He was captivated by the idea and asked his mother if he could participate. He wanted to shave his head to show support, which was a pretty brave thing for a pre-teen to do. Denise agreed and helped Lawrence raise the required amount of money to be able to participate.

Millions raised for MUHC

Nearly two decades and many fundraising gala evenings later, Pink in the City has raised millions for the MUHC Foundation, which remits funds to the McGill University Health Centre's Breast Clinic Wellness Program.

Pink in the City started as a single event. This heightened an already existing awareness about breast cancer in the community and the need to support those who had been touched by the

disease. It also embedded the idea that every selfless gesture of support makes a difference.

Support from the community

Over time, volunteers, sponsors, partners and medical advisors allowed Pink in the City to attain and exceed its goals. Community partners have also played a key role by supporting and attending Pink in the City's various functions and events. Partnerships have extended to

leadership programs at Laval-area high schools through the Model the Way program.

At last Friday evening's Magic of Hope gala, longtime Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board educator and administrator Daniel Johnson, who was a key player in implementing Model the Way, was among the honored guests who were presented with plaques commemorating their important contributions to Pink in the City.



Some of the many survivors of breast cancer who stepped forward during the evening to stand as living testimony to the live-saving research work done by the MUHC's Breast Center with support from Pink in the City. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)



Among the Magic of Hope gala's guests were Senator Tony Loffreda and Vimy Liberal MP Annie Koutrakis (centre). (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

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Public concern about Climate Change drops 14-points since last year. Why?

EDDIE SHEPPARD

From September 19 to 25, 2024, Abacus Data conducted a national survey of 1,701 Canadian adults (18+) to examine their perspectives on climate change and their priorities in the context of pressing immediate challenges, such as the cost of living and housing affordability. Results reveal a significant focus on short-term relief, with many Canadians prioritizing

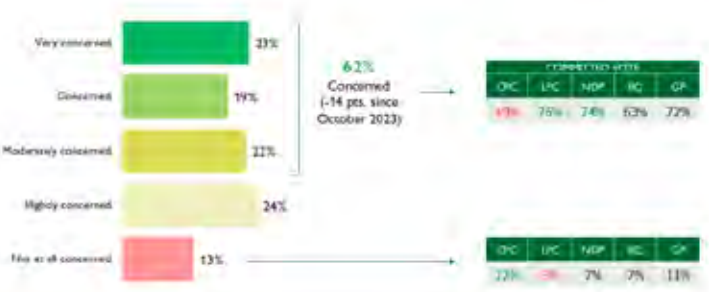
immediate socioeconomic issues over long-term climate action, while also shedding light on the political implications of these perceptions, emphasizing the critical role leaders play in navigating the intersection of immediate concerns and environmental sustainability.

Shifting Priorities Amid Immediate Challenges

62% of Canadians are concerned about climate

ABILITY TO ADDRESS CURRENT ISSUES WHILE ALSO TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

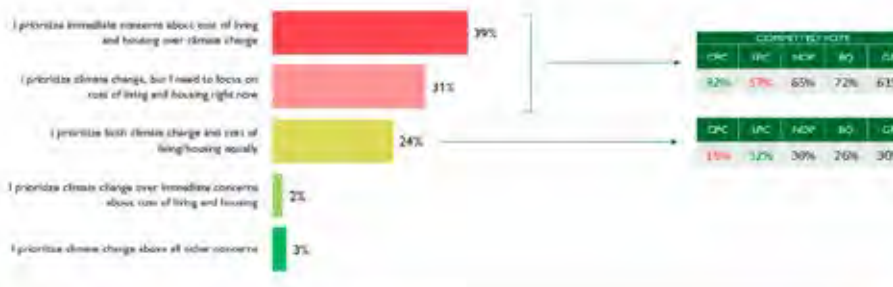
CONCERN WITH CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON OUR FUTURE



THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD PLAN FOR TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADVANCING CANADA'S GREEN ECONOMY IN THE NEXT FEDERAL ELECTION



70% of Canadians are more focused on immediate concerns than on climate change



1 in 2 Canadians believe the Canadian government should seek a balance between economic growth and climate action



change and its potential impact on our future, while only 13% indicated that they are entirely unconcerned. Liberal (76%) and NDP (74%) supporters are the most concerned with climate change, while just 49% of Conservative Party supporters share similar concerns. Further, nearly 1 in 4 Conservative supporters indicate that they are not at all concerned with climate change and its potential impact on our future (22%).

Notably, concern about climate change has decreased 14 points since October 2023, which revealed that 76% of Canadians were worried about this issue.

In exploring the reasons behind this decrease in concern, the data reveal that 72% of Canadians prioritize immediate issues over climate change, with only 5% placing a greater emphasis on environmental matters. Among those focused on immediate concerns, 82% who intend to vote Conservative Party hold this view, compared to 57% for Liberal and 65% for NDP supporters. Interestingly, Liberal supporters are more likely to recognize the importance of both climate change and issues related to the cost of living and housing equality, with 32% prioritizing both compared to just

15% of Conservative voters.

This decline in concern regarding climate change, coupled with the majority of Canadians focusing on immediate challenges, suggests that while climate change remains important for many, Canadians are increasingly preoccupied with pressing issues such as the cost of living and housing affordability and a scarcity mindset is framing their priorities at the moment. As these urgent matters demand immediate attention, individuals are shifting their focus toward short-term relief rather than long-term solutions like climate action.

Divided Opinions: Balancing Economic Growth and Climate Action

When considering what approach government should take, 55% of Canadians believe the government should strive for a balance between economic growth and climate action. This sentiment is particularly strong among Liberal (65%) and NDP (63%) supporters, while only 44% of Conservative supporters share this view.

▶ Continued on page 19

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In contrast, a significant 41% of Conservative supporters advocate for prioritizing immediate economic growth, even if it necessitates postponing climate action. This highlights a clear divide in priorities among different political affiliations regarding the relationship between economic development and environmental responsibility.

62% of Canadians believe it is possible to address immediate issues while also tackling climate change, reflecting a growing recognition that these priorities can be pursued simultaneously. This perspective is particularly strong among Liberal (77%) and NDP (70%) supporters, indicating a strong commitment to balancing urgent needs with long-term environmental goals. In contrast, only 54% of Conservative supporters share this belief, highlighting differing attitudes across political affiliations regarding the integration of immediate concerns with climate action. This divergence suggests that many Canadians are optimistic about finding solutions that can effectively address both current challenges and the imperative of climate change.

Public Confidence and Expectations in Climate Leadership

38% of Canadians consider it important for the party they support to have a robust plan for addressing climate change. This sentiment is especially strong among Liberal (55%) and NDP (51%) supporters, while only 24% of Conservative Party voters feel the same way. Notably, 20% of Canadians intending to vote for the Conservative Party indicate that climate change is not a significant factor in their voting decision. This highlights a clear divide in priorities regarding climate action among political affiliations.

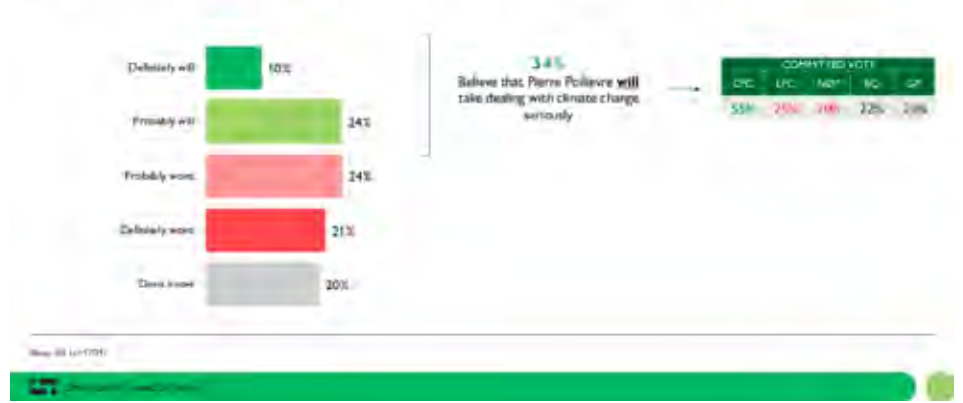
When Canadians were asked who they believe is best equipped to tackle climate change and promote the growth of Canada's clean economy, Pierre Poilievre emerged as the preferred choice for 30% of respondents. This indicates that many Canadians now view him as a capable leader on these critical issues. In contrast, only 17% of Canadians believe that Justin Trudeau is the right person for the job. This is particularly striking given that Trudeau has historically been known for his strong stance on climate action and environmental policies. His current standing reflects a noticeable decline in public confidence regarding his climate initiatives. Additionally, just 13% of respondents think Jagmeet Singh is best suited to handle these challenges.

Interestingly, on October 12, 2023, we released a report that asked Canadians who they thought was better able to deal with several issues. In this, 37% of Canadians noted that Justin Trudeau was better able to take action to deal with climate change compared to 30% who noted they believed it was Pierre Poilievre (32% didn't know who was best at the time).

With 30% of Canadians believing that Pierre Poilievre is the leader best equipped to address climate change while also promoting the growth of Canada's clean economy, it is essential to examine what Canadians expect him to do in this area. Notably, 79% of Canadians feel that if elected, Poilievre should take climate change seriously. This sentiment is particularly strong among Liberal (89%) and NDP (89%) supporters, showcasing a cross-party consensus on the importance of climate action. Even among Conservative supporters, 71% believe that Poilievre should prioritize addressing climate change.

However, a significant gap emerges when it comes to expectations versus beliefs: only 34% of Canadians are confident that Poilievre will take climate change seriously if elected. Among Conservative supporters, this belief is more

WILL PIERRE POILIEVRE TAKE DEALING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE SERIOUSLY?



prevalent, with 55% expressing confidence in his commitment to climate action. In stark contrast, just 25% of Liberal supporters and 20% of NDP supporters share this view. This discrepancy underscores varying levels of trust in Poilievre's climate priorities across political affiliations, highlighting the challenge he faces in aligning public expectations with perceptions of his willingness to take meaningful climate action.

The Upshot

In 2024, Canadians have witnessed several extreme weather events, notably the Jasper wildfire, severe flooding in southern Ontario and Quebec, and a major hailstorm in Calgary, to mention a few. Despite these events, we have witnessed a significant decline in concerns surrounding climate change and its impacts across Canada. The decline in concern over climate change raises important questions about whether Canadians are becoming desensitized to the threats posed by extreme weather events, or if the current focus on cost of living is simply overshadowing environmental concerns.

Recent shifts in public opinion indicate that

more Canadians now view Pierre Poilievre as the leader best equipped to address climate change and grow Canada's clean economy, though skepticism about his commitment to climate action remains among many Canadians (including his supporters). As many Canadians still express concern about climate change, Conservatives cannot afford to ignore this issue. To build trust among their voter base, and Canadians in general, Poilievre must bridge the gap between public expectations and political commitments, especially as public sentiment increasingly reflects the interconnectedness of economic and environmental issues.

Climate change remains one of the most politically divisive issues in Canada, particularly in terms of its salience and urgency. Advocates for climate action need to find ways to effectively link climate issues to pressing concerns like the cost of living and safety, particularly for Conservative voters, as these are issues that are far more pressing for many Canadians. It's important for Conservatives to recognize climate change as a real issue impacting Canada today, as neglecting it could become a vulnerability, particularly if short-term worries about costs begin to lessen.

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1 in 2 Canadians Say Immigration Is Harming the Nation, Up 10 Points Since Last Year. What's Changed?

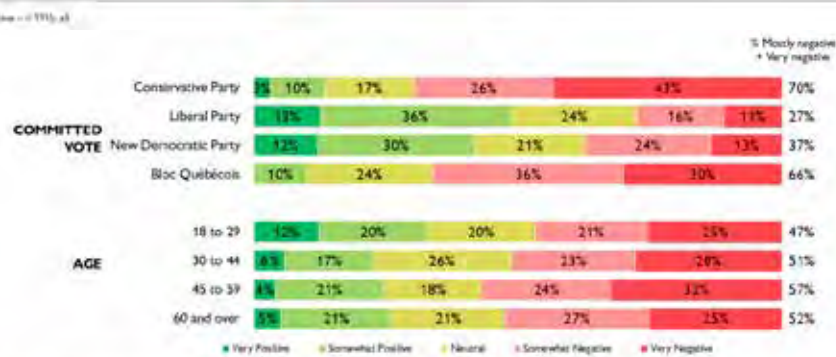
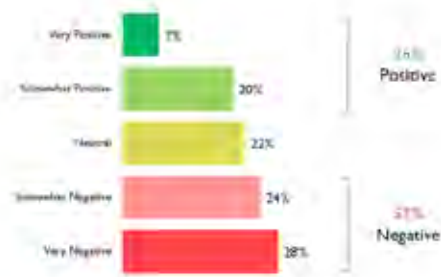
DAVID COLETTO AND EDDIE SHEPPARD

From October 3 to 9, 2024, Abacus Data conducted a national survey of 1,915 Canadian

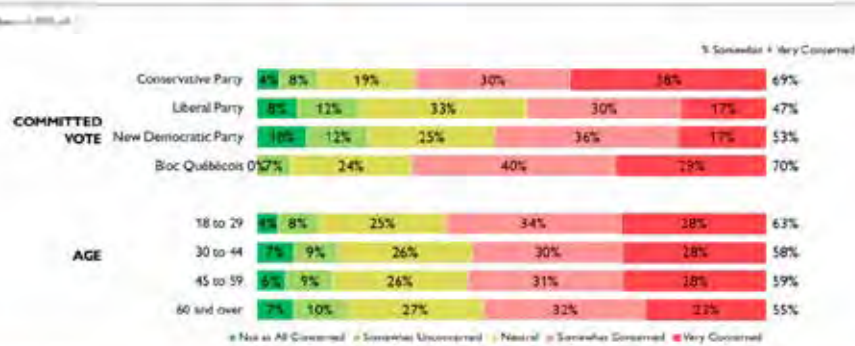
adults (18+) to gauge their perspectives on immigration and its perceived impacts.

older expressing similar concerns.

Half of Canadians view immigration negatively



57% of Canadians are worried about domestic immigration and its effects on their communities



What is driving perceptions about immigration?

Many Canadians now believe that the influx of newcomers is negatively affecting key resources such as housing availability and affordability (73%, up from 69% in November), healthcare access (62%, compared to 53% in November), and social services (59%). These results reflect a scarcity mindset among Canadians, who feel that there are insufficient resources—such as housing, healthcare, and social services—to meet the demands of the growing population, resulting in perceived shortages.

Additionally, perceptions at the community level have worsened over the past year. 60% of Canadians believe that an increasing number of new immigrants negatively impacts traffic congestion (up from 51% in November), while 53% express concerns about crime and public safety (up from 39%), and 42% believe it harms community cohesion (up from 34%).

Current Canadian Perspectives on Immigration

Views on immigration continue to shift. Currently, 53% of Canadians view immigration negatively, a trend significantly influenced by political affiliations. 70% of Conservative Party supporters report negative perceptions of immigration, compared to only 27% of Liberal supporters and 37% of NDP supporters. Age also plays a pivotal role; 57% of Canadians aged 45-59 tend to hold more negative views compared to 47% of those aged 18-39.

Concerns about Migration within Canada

Concerns about immigration extend beyond the arrival of newcomers; domestic migration is also a significant source of worry for Canadians. Nearly 58% express apprehension regarding internal migration, with 69% of Conservative supporters and 70% of Bloc Québécois supporters demonstrating the highest levels of concern. Interestingly, younger Canadians aged 18-29 are especially seized around issues related to domestic immigration.

Immigration Targets

Looking ahead, Canada plans to welcome nearly 500,000 new permanent residents in 2024. However, 72% of Canadians believe this target is too ambitious, an increase from 67% in November 2023 and 61% in July 2023. In just over a year, public opinion has shifted from a majority being resistant to high levels of immigration to a super majority now signaling concern. Even more noteworthy, almost half of Canadians now consider the projected number of new immigrants as “way too high,” reflecting a 7-point increase since November and a 10-point rise since July.

The perception that the immigration targets are too high is particularly pronounced among 87% of Conservative supporters, with 75% of those aged 45-59 and 76% of those aged 60 and

older expressing similar concerns.

When looking at key demographics, older Canadians – especially those aged 45-59 and 60 and older – are significantly more likely to believe that new immigrants negatively affect housing affordability, access to healthcare, and social services. Additionally, Conservative supporters are more inclined to think that the arrival of new immigrants has a detrimental impact across all these areas compared to Liberal and NDP supporters.

Does immigration make Canada better or worse off? Currently, 53% of Canadians believe that immigration is making the country worse off, marking a substantial increase of 10-points since November 2023 and 17-points since July 2023. Supporters of the Conservative Party (60%) and the Bloc Québécois (60%) are notably more likely to hold this view, starkly contrasting with only 29% of Liberal supporters. Interestingly, Canadians aged 18-29 are less inclined to believe that immigration is detrimental compared to those aged 30 and older, highlighting a growing divide in public opinion on immigration and its perceived impact on Canadian society.

Does immigration make Canada better or worse off?

Scarcity, not Xenophobia is Driving Resistance to Immigration

Scarcity, not Xenophobia is Driving Resistance to Immigration

Many Canadians identify shortcomings in

▶ Continued on page 21



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the current immigration system. 56% note that there is insufficient housing and infrastructure to accommodate the influx of new residents, while 49% believe immigration puts a strain on public services like education and healthcare. Older Canadians (60 and over) are significantly more likely to express these concerns, with 64% stating there isn't enough housing and 60% indicating that public services are being strained. In contrast, younger Canadians (18-29) are more inclined to view the effects of temporary immigration programs, such as student visas and temporary foreign workers, as out of control (32%). They also express concerns about perceived competition for jobs and resources between immigrants and Canadian citizens, with 31% sharing this sentiment.

Benefits of the Current Immigration System

Despite the criticisms, some Canadians do recognize the benefits of immigration. Specifically, 40% acknowledge that it helps fill gaps in the labour market with skilled workers, while 26% note that it increases cultural diversity and enrichment, and 26% believe it contributes to economic growth and innovation. However, about 3 in 10 Canadians believe there are no benefits at all to immigration.

Liberal supporters are particularly optimistic about the potential of immigration to bolster various sectors, with 48% believing it helps fill gaps in the labor market, 36% seeing it as a contributor to economic growth and innova-

tion, 25% thinking it boosts population growth and sustainability, and 21% feeling it encourages entrepreneurship and new business establishment. Furthermore, young Canadians are more likely to see the benefits of the immigration system, particularly in increasing cultural diversity and enrichment (33%), boosting population growth and sustainability (27%), promoting international connections and trade (22%), and strengthening communities through new perspectives (20%). This highlights a political and generational difference in attitudes toward immigration, with younger Canadians and Liberal supporters remaining more optimistic about its contributions to society and the economy.

Which federal political party is best equipped to address issues with immigration?

When it comes to leadership on immigration issues, 34% of Canadians believe that Pierre Poilievre is the most capable candidate. In contrast, only 16% view Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as best equipped to handle these challenges, while just 14% feel the same about Jagmeet Singh.

This divide in perceptions widens significantly among those concerned about the current level of immigration. Among individuals who believe immigration is negatively impacting the country, 50% see Poilievre as the best candidate to tackle immigration issues, compared to only 5% who support Trudeau and 11% who support Singh. Similarly, among those holding a negative view of immigration, 52% believe Poilievre is best suited to manage this issue, with just 6% favoring Trudeau and 11% favoring Singh.

The Upshot

Over the past year, Canadian attitudes toward immigration have shifted significantly, challenging the idea that immigration is broadly accepted. If any public consensus existed on the benefits of immigration in Canada, it's clear that consensus is now broken.

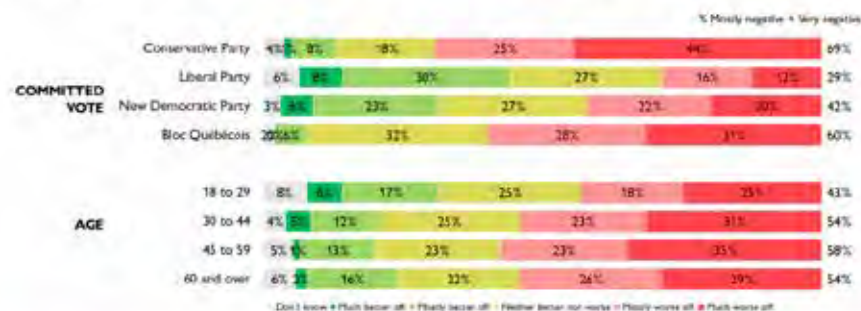
Today, a majority of Canadians view immigration negatively, a trend that highlights a scarcity mindset regarding essential resources like housing, healthcare, and social services. Older Canadians are particularly concerned about inadequate housing and the strain on public services, while younger Canadians focus more on issues related to temporary immigration programs and competition for jobs.

Concerns about new immigrants also extend to social challenges, including traffic

congestion, crime, and weakened community ties, indicating a growing unease about their impact on daily life. This anxiety isn't limited to newcomers; many Canadians are worried about domestic migration as well. The movement of people within Canada is exacerbating existing housing shortages, increasing competition for affordable living, and straining access to crucial resources like healthcare and education.

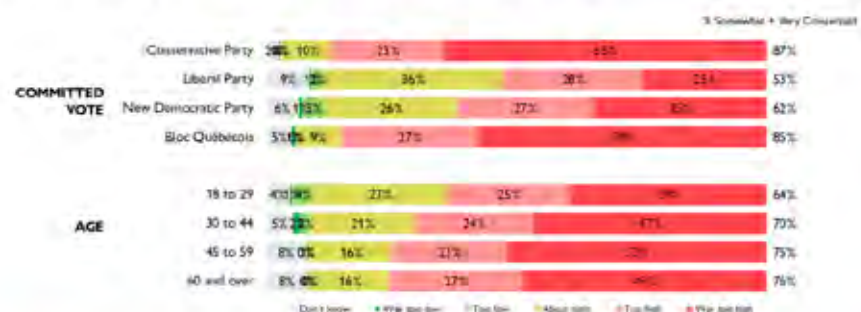
As these attitudes evolve, they carry important implications for the political landscape. Given the growing negative sentiment surrounding immigration, this trend is crucial to note, as immigration policy has the potential to play a large role in the upcoming federal election, which is something we have not seen in Canada in a long time.

Half of Canadians feel that the level of immigration is negatively impacting the country



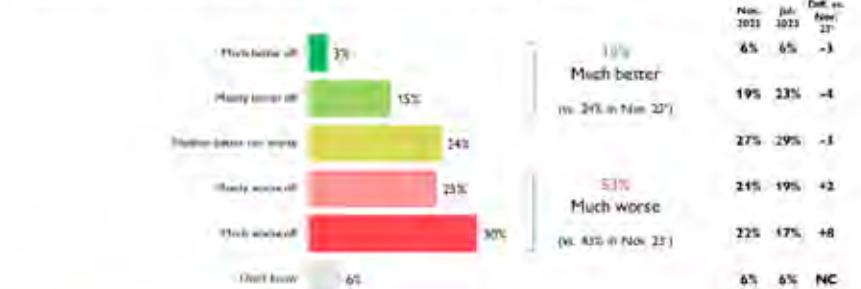
Source: TRS, 2024

PERCEPTIONS OF CANADA'S 2025 IMMIGRATION TARGETS



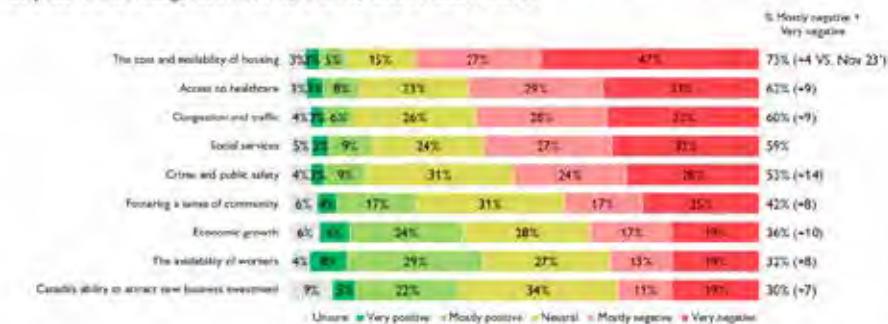
Source: TRS, 2024

53% of Canadians feel that the level of immigration is negatively impacting the country, up 10 points since November 2023, and 17 points since July 2023.



Source: TRS, 2024

More than half of Canadians think that the number of immigrants primarily has a negative impact on housing, healthcare, traffic, and social services



Source: TRS, 2024

	Total	COMMITTED VOTE				AGE			
		Conservative Party	Liberal Party	New Democratic Party	Bloc Québécois	18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and over
The cost and availability of housing	73%	81%	57%	40%	91%	63%	68%	76%	81%
Access to healthcare	62%	73%	47%	58%	71%	48%	56%	67%	71%
Congestion and traffic	60%	70%	42%	62%	65%	54%	61%	65%	60%
Social services	59%	70%	37%	51%	74%	48%	53%	55%	66%
Crime and public safety	53%	70%	58%	86%	61%	49%	51%	58%	52%
Fostering a sense of community	42%	57%	22%	32%	39%	42%	41%	46%	39%
Economic growth	36%	50%	18%	27%	58%	34%	38%	41%	31%
The availability of workers	32%	41%	18%	29%	31%	19%	38%	36%	18%
Canada's ability to attract new business investment	30%	40%	14%	18%	44%	29%	32%	32%	27%

Source: TRS, 2024

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FALL ACTIVITIES

Looking for something to do? Here are some upcoming events happening in the Laval area.

NUM FESTIVAL 2024: AN EXTRAORDINARY FAMILY FESTIVAL

From November 1 to 10, 2024, the Laval Libraries invite families to have fun with art and digital technologies as part of the 6th edition of the NUM Festival. The event, which is completely free, offers a diverse program in the nine neighbourhood libraries as well as outside, ending on November 9 and 10 at the Multicultural Library. On the program, virtual reality, musical creation, coding, outdoor artistic and musical projections, robot making, and many other activities are at the heart of the offer designed for children aged 6 and over, as well as for teenagers and parents.

"This festival is a unique opportunity for our Laval families to dive into the digital world and discover, together, the technologies that are shaping our future. It is a great opportunity for learning, creativity and intergenerational sharing that will allow our young and old to learn about the innovations that transform our daily lives, all 100% free of charge!" — Flavia Alexan-

dra Novac, Sainte-Rose City Councillor and Cultural Files Officer.

Immersive experiences and innovative interactive games

In total, about thirty unique activities are on the program of this 6th edition. For example:

- **Escape Game** | Escape in real time, into a world filled with video game characters and thrilling puzzles (ages 8 and up)
- **Robot Construction** | Use LEGO blocks or assemble Mr. Crab using mechanical parts, motors, batteries and electrical wires. (6 to 14 years old, depending on the construction workshop chosen)
- **Chromatic Echoes** | Move the blocks to compose unique melodies and admire the simultaneous visual projections (all ages)
- **Buzz Wall** | Have fun on the bright façade of the Buzz Wall, behind which hides intelligent and profound creativity. (6 years and older)



You can now register for activities that require registration by going to:

<https://www.laval.ca/Pages/Fr/Activites/festival-num.aspx#programmation>

Once again this year, the City is highlighting its partnership with MAPP_MTL, which will present the illustrations of Laval artist Luc Melanson as part of a cyclo-projection ride on November 3, 6 and 8.

ROCKET DE LAVAL

Hockey game



October 11 - April 19, 2025
Starting at 3:00 PM or 7:00 PM

Place Bell

1950 Rue Claude-Gagné, H7N 5H9

Affiliated with the Montreal Canadiens, the Laval Rocket is a professional team playing in the American Hockey League.

Visit [Ticketmaster](#) for tickets

HALLOWEEN FESTIVITIES

Halloween activity



October 12 - October 27
8:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Centre de la nature

901 avenue du Parc, H7E 2T7

Enjoy many Halloween activities: haunted house, stories, ghost train, inflatable games, horticultural activities, etc.

Free

AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Family activities



Until October 27, 2024
9 AM - 6 PM

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7901 Av. Marcel-Villeneuve, H7A 0H9

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LA TRAVERSÉE DE LA FORÊT HANTÉE

Halloween activity



Friday, November 1
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

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Laval Police seek female suspect for 'misrepresentation' fraud

The Laval Police are seeking the public's help in identifying a female suspect being sought on a charge of "misrepresentation" fraud allegedly committed on City of Laval territory.

Since last April, according to a statement issued by the LPD, nearly a dozen new complaint files have been opened about a woman who's been going around targeting senior citizens in particular.

In the scheme, someone calls a vulnerable senior by phone at home. The names most often used by the caller, according to the police, are Simon Blais and Simon Cloutier.

The caller claims to be an investigator with a

financial institution or from the federal Anti Fraud Centre, saying that the targeted senior has been the victim of a fraud on their bank transaction card.

Once the perpetrator has won the victim's confidence, they tell the victim to place the banking card in an envelope and to put it in the household mailbox so that an accomplice (often called Jessica Blais) can later pick it up for the purposes of a supposed investigation.

The phone caller then obtains the card's PIN number from the victim. An accomplice later shows up at the victim's home to pick up the envelope. Fraudulent transactions are then

made with the card only a few minutes later.

The suspect the LPD has in mind is described this way:

- Caucasian woman, age 20 to 25;
- Speaks French;
- Long blonde hair, combed into a bun;

- Was wearing a white sweater, black slacks and Nike sneakers.

Anyone with information on her is asked to get in touch with the LPD's Info-Line at 450 662-INFO (4636) or at 9-1-1. The file number is LVL-240416-053.

LPD arrest jewellery store robber, wanted for six heists

The Laval Police confirm that an appeal to members of the public in September to help identify a suspect being sought following a Chomedey jewellery store robbery last summer led to his arrest this month.

Alain Bernecky Jr., age 45, faces two charges of theft over \$5,000. He was still being detained by police last week when they issued a statement. He is scheduled to stand before a judge in Quebec Court on Oct. 28.

In addition to confirming his role in the Laval robbery, the LPD also were able to confirm the Bernecky's involvement in several more jewellery store heists over the

last few months in Montreal, the Eastern Townships and the Centre-du-Québec region.

In the robbery committed in Laval, he made off with a rack of 20 gold chains with a value of \$800 - \$1,000 each. He did this after asking the store clerk whether he could have an up-close look at the chains.

In all, the LPD was able to determine (after consulting with several other police departments) that Bernecky had committed six robberies between July and September. It was determined that he managed to steal nearly \$100,000 in jewellery during this period.

Laval police arrest teen after threats and school lockdowns

The Laval Police arrested a 14-year-old boy last week as part of their investigation into threatening calls that led to several preventive school lockdowns. The LPD said the teenager was arrested last Thursday at his family home.

After meeting with investigators, he appeared before the Court of Quebec's youth division, where he was charged with threats,

public mischief and breach of conditions. He was back in court last Monday.

Several preventive lockdowns had to be carried out at Laval schools due to "threatening" calls, which all proved unfounded.

Both L'Odyssée-des-Jeunes and Georges-Vanier high schools had lockdowns. The same thing happened at École Poly-Jeunesse and École des métiers spécialisés de Laval.

AMP scolds Héma-Québec for lack of clarity in awarding contract

Quebec's Autorité des marchés publics (AMP), which regulates the governance of public organizations, is making some recommendations to Héma-Québec after the provincial blood donation agency was found to have lacked transparency and clarity in the awarding of a recent contract for an advertising campaign.

The two-year \$294,000 contract was awarded following a call for tenders. A selection committee decided the winning contract.

Falling short

According to the AMP, Héma-Québec fell short of normal standards by failing to specify in call-for-tender documents the elements defining the minimum quality level it was seeking.

As well, according to the AMP, the blood donation agency failed in its duties when it rejected one of two offers received, although Héma-Québec later claimed it rejected the offer

on the basis that it didn't meet quality levels, which were never stated in the call-for-tender documents.

Bidder rejected

The AMP said that even though Héma-Québec failed to state whether it was shopping for an ad campaign on a monthly or annual basis, it rejected one of the tendering bids because it wasn't for an annual campaign.

Héma-Québec also rejected the bid, saying the bidder's team had an insufficient number of years experience in the advertising domain, although this was never stated as a requirement in the tendering documents.

The AMP recommended that the AMP's administrators familiarize themselves more thoroughly with the procedures to follow when calling for tenders, so that all the relevant details are spelled out clearly and transparently.

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Natural phenomena



Quiz

Are you passionate about thunderstorms, volcanoes, hurricanes and other natural phenomena? If so, test your knowledge by answering these 10 true-or-false questions.

TRUE OR FALSE

1. About 60 volcanoes erupt every year around the world.
2. The clouds that cause thunderstorms are called stratocumulus clouds.
3. The aurora borealis generally occurs 10 to 30 kilometres above the Earth's surface.
4. The terms hurricane, cyclone and typhoon refer to the same weather phenomenon.
5. Seism is another word for earthquake.
6. Tsunami waves can be more than 10 metres high.
7. The sole way to determine if a storm is a blizzard is to record the temperature and amount of snowfall.
8. The Richter scale is used to assess the strength of tornadoes.
9. Avalanches can be caused by hikers.

10. Rainbows are multi-coloured semi-circles.

- ANSWERS
1. True. There are about 1,500 active volcanoes around the world.
 2. False. Cumulonimbus clouds cause thunderstorms.
 3. False. The Northern Lights occur 100 to 300 kilometres above the Earth's surface.
 4. True. The preferred name for this weather event depends on various criteria, including its origin.
 5. True. Earthquake specialists are called seismologists.
 6. True. During a tsunami, several minutes may pass between the formation of each giant wave.
 7. False. Wind strength and low visibility are also considered.
 8. False. The Richter scale measures the strength of earthquakes. The Fujita scale is used for tornadoes.
 9. True. Avalanches can be caused by a variety of weather events. However, they can also be triggered by skiers, snowmobilers and machine operators.
 10. False. Rainbows are circular. However, their lower half is typically hidden by the horizon.

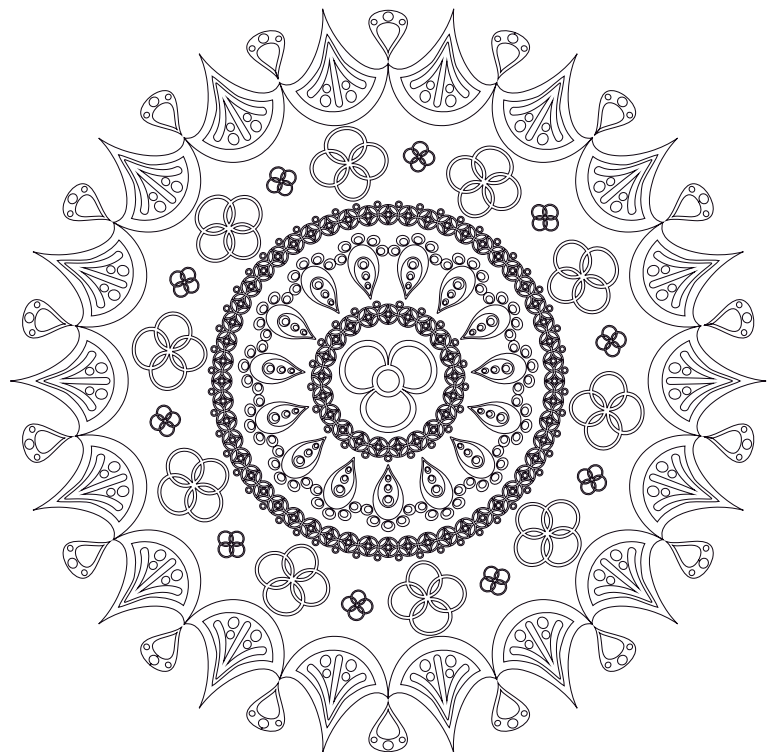
JUST kidding

Q: Why can't your nose be 12 inches long?

A: Because then it would be a foot.



Make a mandala



JUST kidding

Q: What starts with a P, ends with an E and has a million letters in it?

A: Post office.



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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Q Like many couples out there, my relationship with my spouse has been quite challenging. We've been together for the last five years and have one child. About two months ago I started emailing my neighbor's husband about work. It turned into fantasy role-playing and email tag. It lasted about two and a half weeks before we physically connected.

No, we didn't sleep together, but we did quite a bit. We met three times. Once I was pretty drunk, and the other two times I was quite sober--excited, but starting to feel guilty as hell. Things were coming to an end because I wanted to work on my relationship.

Two weeks ago I get a call from his wife saying she's in front of their computer reading an email. She wants to know what the hell is going on. I told her something was going on--I couldn't lie because I didn't know which email was in front of her--but that we hadn't slept together. Blah, blah, blah.

I'm planning to tell my spouse this weekend, away from the house, without interruptions. But man, I don't know how? He is going to freak out! Especially since one of my lines to him a while ago was, "Babe, I swear I will never cheat on you. If ever something is to happen, I'll tell you."

Not! Yes, I am feeling extremely guilty, and yes, I want to work on my relationship with my husband. Any advice would be greatly appreciated.

Janis

A Janis, it must have been a tough two weeks trying to keep your neighbor's wife away from your husband. It's like you committed a crime, you can hear sirens wailing in the distance, and you know the police are enroute to your house. You called us, as your lawyers, for advice.

As your mouthpiece, we'll review the options. Blame your husband. Accuse him of emotional neglect and lack of communication. It must be his fault. Or point the finger at the neighbor. If this Lothario hadn't pursued you, nothing would have happened. Then again, the culprit could be the neighbor's wife. She wasn't taking care of her man.

Perhaps society had a role in this. After all, everyone's doing it. Or finally, you might deny everything. It wasn't sex because you didn't sleep together.

The problem with all these defenses is you knew you were married, you knew it was wrong, and you got caught red-handed. As your lawyers we can't assist you in preparing a defense we know is false.

There is something else we know is true. There is so little connection between you and your husband this occurred. The two of you need to sit down and honestly decide if staying together simply postpones the inevitable.

Wayne & Tamara

CLOSE TO THE VEST

Q I'm 40 and dating again, which is confusing stuff. My friends tell me the man I have been dating for three weeks is moving too slow. I disagree.

We've had two dates in three weeks with the promise of him fixing me dinner next time. He calls every three or four days, and we chat for an hour or so. There have been nice hugs and kisses at the end of dates.

We are both self-employed and work 60 hours plus each week. I feel he is interested and we have a great time together, but my other single friends tell me he isn't interested because he hasn't yet tried to have sex with me. So what do you think? Taking his time

or not interested? Oh yes, he's done all the calling and asking out.

Sara

A Sara, you neglected to mention option three. Your girlfriends are jealous. A nice man, a gentleman, who is not rushing you...and there's something wrong? We think not! Share fewer details with your girlfriends, keep more within your own heart, and see what develops. Initial indicators? This one has potential.

Tamara

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

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2 EASY STEPS:

- 1** Book your basket online or by phone from Monday to Thursday
- 2** Pickup Thursday, Friday or Saturday. Delivery available

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HOROSCOPE

Week of OCTOBER 27
TO NOVEMBER 2, 2024

The luckiest signs this week:
TAURUS, GEMINI AND CANCER

ARIES
Negotiations always require effort and compromise. You'll make some significant changes that will promote your health and improve your quality of life for years to come.

TAURUS
Significant success and recognition await you, whether in the form of a promotion or a professional change. You'll also have a health win after a difficult period.

GEMINI
You may have the opportunity to find a more spacious property for your family this week. You must make changes to your daily routine to become more efficient, which will prevent conflicts among your family members.

CANCER
Don't forget to charge your electronic devices every night to avoid communication mishaps from a dead battery. Expect to play taxi driver for your family this week.

LEO
Your honesty will shine this week as you openly express what others are thinking. You won't hesitate to point out your partner's excessive spending or impulse buys.

VIRGO
You'll feel great this week! You must swiftly handle an urgent situation at work to avoid complications. You'll be promoted, and despite the changes and stress associated with this change, you'll be happy.

LIBRA
You'll soon finish a task you've been putting off. To avoid health issues, take some time to rest before taking on new challenges.

SCORPIO
Waiting for medical test results for yourself or a loved one will be stressful. However, you'll receive a positive response, which will help alleviate your worries. The prospect of a bright future will dispel anxiety and allow you to sleep peacefully.

SAGITTARIUS
Tread carefully when dealing with family or professional matters. You may need to adjust your schedule to accommodate a promotion. The pay and nature of the work will make your decision easy.

CAPRICORN
It's time to start thinking about your end-of-year vacation! Booking things in advance, regardless of whether you're going alone or with family, friends or a significant other, will make things easier and avoid complications.

AQUARIUS
You may be responsible for international assignments or training at work. You might find it challenging to communicate with people who aren't comfortable speaking English.

PISCES
You must communicate openly with your partner to reignite the spark in your relationship. You'll need to make some adjustments to avoid emotional conflicts.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 183

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14			
15				16				17			
18				19							
		20	21	22			23	24	25	26	
27	28	29		30		31	32	33			
34				35					36		
37			38						39		
40						41	42				
			43	44	45	46		47	48	49	50
51	52	53					54	55			
56				57				58			
59				60				61			

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ACROSS

- Uninteresting
- Observe Lent
- Solemn promise
- Corporate symbol
- Clarinet's relative
- Pasture mother
- Frosting user
- Colonize again
- Pea holders
- Amount
- Coop item
- Lucid
- Rushed
- Altitude
- Expert
- Flat
- Vroom
- Lookout's platform: hyph.
- Tricky
- Game of chance
- Nursery item
- Pledge

DOWN

- Tale opener
- Steed
- Give (out)
- Each
- Bullets and bombs
- Wickedness
- Gab
- Pit
- Folds over
- "___ Pilot"
- Hardens
- Narrow valley
- Ventilates
- Yuletide word
- Green with ___
- Framework
- Tract unit
- Broadway blinker
- Eden inhabitant
- Sleeveless jacket
- ___ saxophone
- Yarn variety
- Mountain call
- Mournful word
- 12:00, e.g.
- Abode
- Bossa ___
- Crop
- Slippery swimmers
- Watch secretly
- Afternoon meal
- Floating zoo
- Motion agreement

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.

PUZZLE NO. 908

	7		5	4		6	9	
6			1			3		
	1		9		2	8		
7	3				6			
				1	4			5
5		1					4	
	4		7					
8	2			9			7	
3	5			2	4			

Last Issue's Answers

CROSSWORDS

S	C	A	M		T	I	C	S		S	L	Y	
T	A	X	I		A	L	O	E		P	E	A	
E	K	E	S		P	L	U	M		R	I	M	
M	E	S	H				R	I	C	E			
				A	D	O	P	T		O	A	F	S
T	O	R	P	E	D	O			E	D	D	I	E
I	V	E		L	E	A	F	Y		E	V	E	
F	A	L	S	E		C	L	E	A	R	E	D	
F	L	E	E		T	H	U	D	S				
			V	A	S	E				S	O	F	A
T	E	A		T	A	T	A			U	P	O	N
O	W	N		U	S	E	R			R	A	I	D
M	E	T		B	E	N	T			E	L	L	S

Sudoku

7	2	6	9	3	8	4	5	1
4	8	1	2	7	5	3	6	9
5	9	3	1	6	4	7	2	8
9	6	4	8	5	3	1	7	2
8	3	2	6	1	7	5	9	4
1	7	5	4	2	9	8	3	6
2	4	7	3	8	6	9	1	5
6	5	9	7	4	1	2	8	3
3	1	8	5	9	2	6	4	7



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