

News Release

For Immediate Release

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery's new green space is opening July 7

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery creates an accessible community-arts green space in Oshawa with funding from Government of Canada, Ontario Trillium Foundation and City of Oshawa

June 26, 2023
Oshawa, Ontario

Over the past year, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) has been working collaboratively with landscape architects [Brook McIlroy](#) and artists [LeuWebb Projects](#) to re-imagine the greenspace directly behind the gallery. With feedback from our Community Advisory Circle and staff team, our plans reimagine the backyard as a new type of public space that incorporates creativity, play and art. Featuring a new shade and performance space, seating, gardens and barrier-free accessibility to the creek, visitors will be able to explore nature differently, connect with community and dream new possibilities.

The reinvigorated outdoor space will activate and expand the possibilities of the Gallery. Last year, the pilot outdoor RMG Friday concert series and summer camps were able to experience the joy of free access to a greenspace. The free opening of The Backyard at the RMG will be celebrated on Friday, July 7, 2023, with performances by Tania Joy and the Professors of Funk. Concertgoers will also have the opportunity to: meet the designers, plant our raised beds with the Oshawa Garden Club, participate in rock painting, and enjoy refreshments from local vendors.

The [RMG](#) received funding support for these improvements from the Government of Canada through (FedDev Ontario). Additional support was also received through the federal [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#), the [Ontario Trillium Foundation's \(OTF\) Community Building Fund](#), and [the City of Oshawa](#).

The Backyard at the RMG will feature programming for all ages, abilities and interests. Follow the RMG for up-to-date information and to participate in community events. The RMG will also be seeking support for phase two of development that is hoped to launch in 2024 to commemorate the City of Oshawa's centennial celebrations.

Quotes

"The re-imagined greenspace at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery will not only help define the community through new spaces for creative expression and social interactions but also draw new residents and visitors in to enjoy the space and each other's company. Our Government recognizes the value of investing in community infrastructure, and we are happy that we could support this exciting project."

- *The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario*

"The Backyard at the RMG is a space that was reimagined as a result of the pandemic. We felt the need from our community to have an outdoor space for programming, a natural space for art and creativity. We're grateful to our funders, designers for their dedication, and importantly to our community partners that have helped to shape the vision for the Backyard."

- *Lauren Gould, CEO, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery*

“On behalf of City Council and the Oshawa community, we’re excited to celebrate the opening of The Backyard at the RMG. The Backyard outdoor space will bring even more cultural events and programming for all ages to our great city and further establish downtown Oshawa as a vibrant cultural hub.”

- *Mayor Dan Carter, The City of Oshawa*

Quick facts

- The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) believes that art cultivates connected and caring communities. As an artist-centered and community-oriented public art gallery in Durham Region, we bring people from diverse backgrounds together to engage with art that inspires new perspectives, generates meaningful conversations, and creates a sense of belonging. Annually, the RMG welcomes thousands of patrons to engage with our: exhibitions, education programs, volunteering opportunities, event spaces, shop, artist-in-residence program, and digital programming. Admission to the RMG is FREE.

Associated Links

- [The Robert McLaughlin Gallery](#)
- [FedDev Ontario](#)
- [Tourism Relief Fund \(TRF\)](#)
- [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#)
- [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#)
- [The City of Oshawa](#)

Contacts

Edward Hutchinson

Press Secretary

Office of the Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

edward.hutchinson@feddevontario.gc.ca

Sara Rodriguez

Manager, Marketing and Communications

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

srodriguez@rmg.on.ca

Shannon McFadyen

Manager, Corporate Communications

City of Oshawa

SMcFadyen@oshawa.ca

About The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

[The Robert McLaughlin Gallery](#) (RMG) is the largest public art gallery in Durham Region. We believe that art cultivates connected and caring communities. As an artist-centered and community-oriented public art gallery in Durham Region, we bring people from diverse backgrounds together to engage with art that inspires new perspectives, generates meaningful conversations and creates a sense of belonging. We build relationships with diverse artists and communities through art. The RMG works in collaboration with artists, partners, and audiences to present dynamic and inspiring collections, exhibitions and programs in an inclusive and equitable environment. Today, the RMG’s collection of over 4,700 works focuses on telling the continuing story of Canadian abstraction. Each year we present Permanent Collection exhibitions alongside special exhibitions of contemporary art and artists. We prioritize engaging diverse audiences in new and familiar ways through our programming. We foster community connections and partnerships to create a greater sense of belonging. We reimagine the gallery, making space for all. Annually, we welcome 38,000 visitors and 10,000 participants to engage with us and what we offer.

About FedDev Ontario

For 13 years, the Government of Canada, through [FedDev Ontario](#), has worked to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities and business services that support innovation, growth and job creation in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving productivity, growing revenues, creating jobs, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region. Learn more about the impacts the Agency is having in southern Ontario by exploring our [pivotal projects](#), our [Southern Ontario Spotlight](#), and FedDev Ontario's [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About the Ontario Trillium Foundation

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations celebrates 40 years of grant-making in Ontario and making a lasting impact in communities. Last year, OTF invested over \$110M into 1,022 community projects and partnerships, which included funding for the Government of Ontario's Community Building Fund. Visit [otf.ca](#) to learn more.

About LeuWebb Projects

LeuWebb Projects is the creative union between artists Christine Leu and Alan Webb, through which they apply their professional design backgrounds to produce moments of beauty in the public realm. Since 2011, they have created more than 20 site-specific artworks across the world. With each piece, Leu and Webb summon their shared artistic and architectural expertise in exploring how a site's qualities can serve as metaphors for storytelling and critical discourse.

Art and architecture share an integral relationship, meeting at many points including visual, spatial and tactile expression. The unique approach of LeuWebb Projects lives within the space shared by art and architecture, their practice fueling hybrid forms and new directions within the contemporary visual arts tradition. Light, texture and sound are key components of their practice that they weave together through the innovative use of materials and responsive technologies to create art that is not only seen, but also experienced.

About Brook McIlroy

Brook McIlroy is an award-winning landscape architecture, planning, urban design, and architecture firm with offices in Toronto, Thunder Bay, and Winnipeg. As a unique, multi-disciplinary practice, we design projects as whole environments, addressing all scales and facets from community visions to detailed design and construction administration of parks, streets, buildings, and infrastructure. Over 21 years, we have worked extensively with municipalities, post-secondary institutions, and private developers in the design and creation of streetscapes, parks, public art, waterfronts, and design guidelines. Our progressive focus on the public realm and placemaking creates lively, people-oriented spaces that combine landscape architecture with cultural interpretation and programming.

We work in the medium of the built and natural environments driven by a belief that we have been given an incredible gift in Canada, and an opportunity to get it right – to create environments where people can prosper and thrive while protecting the land, water, air and the other species that make life possible. This work is driven by a uniquely Canadian design ethos derived from research into place, diverse cultures, Indigenous world views, sustainability, natural materials, and the application of new technologies.