



# Caring for and connecting people to the Yorklands

Annual Report  
2023



**YORKLANDS GREEN HUB**  
Opening green doors to the future.



# Land Acknowledgement

Yorklands is situated on the Treaty and traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation who are part of the Anishinabek peoples, and the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee as well as the Attiwonderonk (Neutral) peoples. We recognize that for thousands of years the local Indigenous peoples were excellent stewards of this land and that once Europeans came and colonialism set in, great harms were committed. More recently the establishment of the Ontario Reformatory and later the Correctional Centre, more harms were perpetrated as many of the inmates incarcerated were of Indigenous ancestry. Yorklands works to bring greater understanding to the wider community through its programming and by providing opportunities for healing while we work to preserve the site. We stand humbled and privileged to be able to be able to work and live in these territories. We are deeply respectful and thankful to First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who have cared for these lands since time immemorial and who continue to contribute to the strength of Guelph and Ontario and to all communities across the Country.

**Our mission** is to open green doors to the future by promoting sustainable conservation, environmental education and public enjoyment at the former Guelph Correctional Centre (GCC) lands.

**Our vision** is to foster environmental sustainability and public use of the former Guelph Correctional Centre (GCC) lands.

Yorklands Green Hub is a non-profit volunteer-led organization. Volunteers play an active, vital role in the foundation, growth and leadership of the organization. Volunteers are essential to Yorklands Green Hub achieving its mission and vision, throughout its history and growing into the future.

Help us meet  
our goals!

Please  
Donate



The bridge recently built by our partners the Guleph Hiking Trail Club. We are very grateful for their efforts to maintain the trails at the Yorklands site.



# Greetings from the Chair

As we reflect on the events of 2023, it becomes evident that it was a year of significant transition and resilience for Yorklands, following the unprecedented challenges brought about by the pandemic. We weathered these challenges with adaptability and determination, demonstrating our commitment to our mission and values.

**Transition in Leadership:** One notable change was the transition in leadership, as I assumed the role of Chair after the departure of our longtime Chair, Norah. I want to express deep gratitude for Norah's invaluable contributions to our organization over the years.

**Staff Changes:** Additionally, the year saw changes in our team with the conclusion of one Trillium grant and the commencement of another. This transition led to the hiring of two new staff members, Ian and Chloe, whose roles are crucial to advancing our mission. We also bid farewell to Bernadette and Kerry-Lynn as they pursued new opportunities, acknowledging their dedication and service to Yorklands.

**Partnerships and Collaborations:** We are proud to announce our collaboration with the coalition Urban Park Guelph, joining forces to advance the proposed National Urban Park at the Yorklands site. This partnership underscores our commitment to preserving and enhancing our natural environment for future generations. Furthermore, we acquired two new events from Transition Guelph, aligning with our mission to engage and educate the community: Seedy Saturday and the Tree Mobile program.

**Community Engagement and Events:** Throughout the year, we hosted several successful events aimed at fostering community engagement and raising awareness. Events such as Artspiration, Truth and Reconciliation Day, and the Tree Festival were met with enthusiasm and participation, further solidifying our ties with the community. Cont. on page 4.





**Challenges and Resolutions:** Despite our successes, challenges were not absent. The unfortunate destruction of a 4-metre section of the stone wall in August posed a significant challenge. However, we have taken proactive steps to address this issue, including engaging with Infrastructure Ontario and exploring community-led initiatives to restore the wall.

**Advocacy and Achievements:** Our advocacy efforts have yielded significant results, with over 3,000 signatures collected for a petition to establish the Yorklands site as a national urban park. This milestone underscores the widespread support for our cause and the importance of preserving the natural and cultural heritage at the site.

**Opportunities and Initiatives:** In 2023, we embraced new opportunities by assuming responsibility for organizing Seedy Saturday and the Tree Mobile program, previously headed by Transition Guelph. These initiatives align seamlessly with our mission of promoting sustainable practices and environmental stewardship within our community. We also introduced an Indigenous cultural humility training for the Board and members of Urban Park Guelph facilitated by Chloe Blair.

**Strategic Planning and Future Direction:** Looking ahead, we are embarking on a strategic planning exercise to revisit our vision, mission, and values. We invite your input and feedback as we chart our course for the future, guided by our unwavering commitment to continuous improvement and growth.

**Take Action for Yorklands:** As members, your support is crucial to our success. We urge you to join us in advocating for the establishment of the Yorklands site as a national urban park by reaching out to your local councillors and putting up lawn signs. Together, we can make a tangible difference in preserving our natural heritage for generations to come.

In conclusion, 2023 was a year marked by both challenges and achievements. As we navigate the ever-changing landscape, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission and values. We look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, confident in our ability to overcome obstacles and continue making a positive impact on our community and environment.

Wishing you all the best,

Lynn Bestari,

Chair, Yorklands Green Hub



*Thank you to all of our dedicated and awesome volunteers!! We could not do it without you*



18 walks/  
events



210 members  
engaged



65 students  
participating  
in TTT/Foodsters



2600 volunteer hours



700+ Attendees

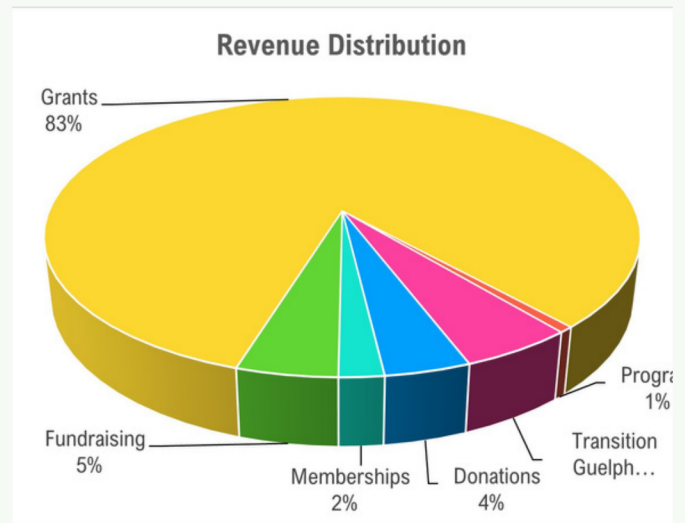


3191 Petition Signatures  
for Urban Park Guelph

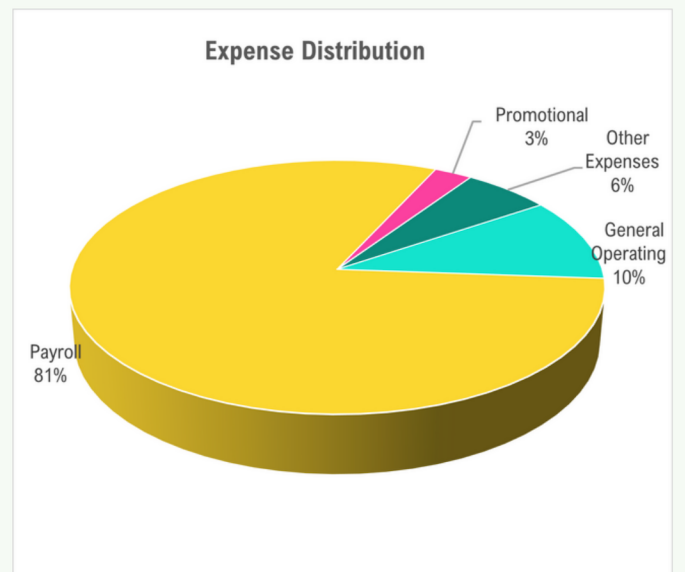


# 2023 Financial Highlights

|                          | 2023             | 2022            |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>           |                  |                 |
| Donations                | \$4,305          | \$3,925         |
| Memberships              | \$2,250          | \$2,845         |
| Fundraising              | \$5,064          | \$4,806         |
| Grants                   | \$91,100         | \$47,800        |
| Programs                 | \$740            |                 |
| <b>Transition Guelph</b> | \$5,698          |                 |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>     | <b>\$109,157</b> | <b>\$59,376</b> |



|                             | 2023            | 2022            |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>EXPENSES</b>             |                 |                 |
| General Operating           | \$8,795         | \$4,670         |
| Payroll                     | \$67,034        | \$36,959        |
| Promotional                 | \$2,180         | \$1,249         |
| Other Expenses              | \$5,024         |                 |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>       | <b>\$78,009</b> | <b>\$42,878</b> |
| <b>PROFIT/LOSS</b>          | <b>\$26,123</b> | <b>\$15,956</b> |
| <b>Total Available Cash</b> | <b>\$47,619</b> | <b>\$21,495</b> |





# List of 2023 Donors

## Individuals

Amy Barnes  
Gail Bartlett  
Pat Bell  
Michael & Elaine Bladon  
Norah Chaloner  
Margaret Fabry  
Patricia Flood  
Irene Hanuta  
Gisele Hebert  
Vern Lediett  
Anne McDonald  
Cynthia McLeod  
Margaret McGuire (Magee)  
Deborah McWilliams  
Brad Peterson  
Debbie Samson  
Maria Sergio  
Ross Schnieder  
James Shute  
Karen Silverstone  
Nina Szpakowski  
Carol Williams

## Monthly

Lynn Bestari  
Norah Chaloner  
Peter Goddard  
Alison Hall  
Patricia Hamilton  
George Ivanof  
Annette Johnson  
Speed Maxi  
Donald Prosser  
Beth Shier  
Bill Whitehead

## Corporate

Halton Dairy Farmers  
rare  
Wildlands League



An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario