

# ANOTHER FAILURE FOR OSHAWA RIB FEST NO MORE Read The Real Reason

OSHAWA - Oshawa's waterfront since 2002 and the longest-running ribfest in Durham Region will not go on this year, with organizers of the Oshawa Rotary Ribfest & Music Festival hitting pause until the "time is right" to return.

From the inner politics at the Rotary club to the lack of proper advertising and promoting. To now forced parking fees. Not to mention the crime, drugs and lack of quality of life at the event site. Vendors questioned the value of setting up in Oshawa.

Oshawa in the past few years has lost various outdoor events due to many factors.

Some include the deterioration of life. As for example, in some car shows there have been concerns over the concern of homeless interfere. Others have noted the parking issue

Oshawa Ribfest Community Chair Grant Desjardins said in a post on Facebook. "After careful consideration we have decided not to move forward with Oshawa Rotary Ribfest in 2026." Desjardins said expenses for infrastructure, security, logistics and supplies have all risen "significantly" in the past three years, with those economic pressures impacting both local business and attendees.

Attracting more than 30,000 visitors annually, Oshawa Ribfest features acclaimed professional ribbers, live entertainment and a midway and has raised more than a million dollars for its charitable partners over the years.

It has not been made clear either by the City of Oshawa or the Oshawa Rotary Club as to what happens now to the \$30,000 grant extended for the event by the city.

Meanwhile, after a year of absence due to loss of venue, the Bowmanville Ribfest is back at its debut location.

Both the Rotary Club and the City of Oshawa have released statements on the event cancellation in Oshawa while citing the grant, but have remained silent on whether it will stay with the Rotary Club or be returned to the city.

The cancellation has been a popular topic on social media with some residents saying paid parking for non-registered visitors at the Lakeview Park venue, may have been a contributory factor. Several have not been complimentary about the event mainly critical of food restrictions and pricing. Meanwhile, the city said Ribfest is one of Oshawa's signature community events, attracting tens of thousands of visitors each year. Over the past 25 years, the event has raised nearly \$1 million, with proceeds reinvested directly into our community through local charities and not-for-profit organizations. Rotary club member that did not want to be identified stated. "This has long been coming. Within the Rotary there are issues that just can't be repaired. Volunteers are not what they use to be and hard to come by. This compounded with what is going on in Oshawa. No one wants to risk being

hurt." One of the rib masters stated, "Oshawa is not what it use to be. You feel like you are in some military compound. Security all around you and it does not feel family oriented. We use to fear for our equipment. For us it is not worth the risk for the return."

Even as Ribfest 2026 in Oshawa stands cancelled, Bowmanville Rotary Club has confirmed that Bowmanville's Rockin' Ribs & Brews is back this year.

After a year of absence due to loss of venue the Ribfest will be held from June 12-14 at the Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex—the very site of Rotary's first-ever Ribfest more than 15 years ago.

Ribfest 2026 will also officially return to its original name: Ribfest.

"In 2017, the Ribfest moved to Clarington Fields, but with construction at the new South Bowmanville Recreation Centre, we're returning home. Last June, we ran a scaled-down "Street Eats" event in the Rickard parking lot, but this year, we're going full Ribfest: delicious ribs, music, a midway, a carnival for the kids, and some of Ontario's top ribbers!" said an event statement.

Ribfest is also Bowmanville Rotary Club's biggest fundraiser, helping institutions like the Grandview Children's Centre, Marigold Hospice, Bethesda House, and many others to scholarships, summer programs for special needs families, and international initiatives like polio eradication and clean water projects.



By John Mutton  
CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

## Karmageddon

By Mr. 'X' ~ John Mutton  
CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

### When Good Intentions Go Wrong

The Bike Lane Problem in Bowmanville There's a difference between smart infrastructure and ideological infrastructure. Right now, in parts of downtown Bowmanville—particularly corridors like Liberty Street and King Street East—we're not seeing thoughtful planning. We're seeing the forced application of a one-size-fits-all policy that ignores the physical realities of the road.

Let's be clear: this is not an argument against cycling. Cycling infrastructure, when done properly, improves safety, reduces congestion, and enhances communities. But when it's forced into corridors that were never designed to accommodate it—by stripping away existing traffic lanes—we create the opposite outcome: congestion, driver frustration, and, ironically, new safety risks. What we're witnessing is a classic case of policy over practicality.

Downtown Bowmanville is not a wide, multi-lane urban grid. It is a constrained, functioning corridor that already balances commercial access, parking, deliveries, and commuter traffic. Removing a live traffic lane in that environment doesn't "calm traffic"—it compresses it.

The result? - Increased bottlenecks - Reduced emergency response efficiency - More aggressive driving behavior due to congestion - And in some cases, greater risk for both drivers and cyclists There is a better way—and it already exists.

Across Europe, municipalities have moved toward dedicated, off-road cycling networks wherever possible.

These are: - Physically separated from vehicular traffic - Integrated with parks, boulevards, and secondary corridors - Designed for safety without compromising primary road function.

This is not theory. It's proven. Instead of forcing bike lanes onto already constrained arterial roads, municipalities like Clarington—and across Durham Region—should be asking a simple question: Where can cycling infrastructure be built properly, not just conveniently?

That means: - Leveraging hydro corridors - Utilizing parkland connections - Creating parallel cycling routes off main streets - Designing infrastructure that works with traffic, not against it Because good planning isn't about checking a box—it's about outcomes.

Right now, the outcome in parts of Bowmanville is clear: more congestion, more confusion, and a growing disconnect between policy and lived experience. If we actually care about safety—for cyclists and drivers alike—we need to stop forcing infrastructure into places it doesn't belong and start designing it where it does. That's not anti-cycling. That's just good planning.

## Health Department begins 2026 West Nile virus surveillance program

Whitby, Ontario – Durham Region Health Department will begin its West Nile virus (WNV) surveillance and control program for the 2026 season between May 11 and June 8. This program includes surveillance for larval mosquito activity, administering larvicide in catch basins and surface water sites, and adult mosquito trapping to test for WNV throughout Durham Region. As a reminder, the Health Department will no longer mail forms to private property owners for owners to request larviciding of catch basins located on their properties. Residents can submit a request to the Health Department to have larvicide administered to private

property catch basins by completing an online application form at [durham.ca/BYCBlarvicide](http://durham.ca/BYCBlarvicide). To submit complaints for stagnant water sites on public property visit [durham.ca/ReportStagnantWater](http://durham.ca/ReportStagnantWater). WNV is a mosquito-borne disease spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito: it is not spread from person to person. In 2025, Durham Region reported 21 human cases of the virus and 26 WNV positive mosquito batches identified through the Health Department's adult mosquito trapping activities. It is important to eliminate sources of stagnant water to remove breeding sites for

mosquitoes which helps to lower the spread of the virus. Residents can help by: Applying for larviciding of any backyard catch basins on their property. Adding chlorine to rain barrels or cover barrels with mosquito screening. Draining water from pools and chair covers, ceramic pots, wading pools, bird baths, planters, etc. Checking that roof gutters are cleared and draining properly. Cleaning and maintaining swimming pools and outdoor hot tubs. Removing any unused tires from your property. Ensuring that drainage ditches are not backed up

and holding stagnant water. To help reduce potential exposure to WNV, residents are encouraged to take the following precautions: When outside, wear shoes, socks and light-coloured clothing with long sleeves and full-length pants, espe-

cially overnight – between dusk and dawn – when mosquitoes are most active. Use insect repellent containing Picaridin or DEET on exposed skin, following Health Canada's safety tips on using personal insect repellents.

Ensure door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good repair. Keep grass, shrubs and hedges trimmed. Turn over compost piles regularly.