



Backgrounder

Bronson Centre by the Numbers

- located at 211 Bronson Avenue in Ottawa
- established 1996
- incorporated in 2000
- 45,000 square feet of community space
- 40 long-term tenant groups
- 300+ groups supported with short-term/occasional requirements
- 15,000+ individuals served monthly
- 850-seat theatre
- 200-seat reception hall & kitchen
- 24-bed emergency shelter
- 3 outdoor courtyards
- 9 full-time & 1 part-time staff
- 1 spacious parking lot

About

The Bronson Centre empowers people and communities to live with renewed dignity and hope. Through our affordable offices and facilities, non-profits provide direct services to diverse populations. We foster a positive environment where tenants & patrons can be productive and successful. We are a registered charity whose revenue comes primarily from facilities rentals and occasional one time grants.

Our Objectives

- provide quality space to diverse groups
- support the arts & cultural activities
- keep everything affordable
- maintain & improve our building

What's Happening

The Bronson Centre welcomes and celebrates diversity.

“What a welcoming (and affordable!) home for our office... especially for the kids, families, and seniors of our Caribbean and African communities who enjoy so many of our programs and events at the Bronson Centre.”

-- Ken Campbell, President, Jaku Konbit

“For 16 years, the Bronson Centre has been a great partner for Yet Keen, a city-wide, Chinese seniors program. The affordable rent has enabled us to continue our services in the heart of Chinatown. The Bronson Centre is one of the most popular places Chinese seniors love to visit.”

-- Anna Yip, Program Coordinator, Yet Keen

We are the go-to resource for ethnic & cultural communities, arts organizations, Indigenous peoples, at-risk youth, women, seniors of various linguistic backgrounds, mental/physical health communities, and more.

The Centre is a popular venue for the performing arts, including numerous fundraisers. Renowned entertainers such as Kathleen Edwards, Billy Talent, Hawksley Workman, and Carly Rae Jepsen have played our stage. We were the proud home of the Canadian Folk Music Awards in 2014.

The Bronson Centre's Board of Directors and voting membership are comprised of individuals who have dedicated their lives to Ottawa communities, many with the Bronson Centre from day one.

As a revenue-positive social enterprise, the Bronson Centre has always operated independent of public funding, only occasionally soliciting capital grants. Our financial model works so well that demand exceeds supply.

Centrally-located with handy access to public transit (including upcoming light rail) and bike paths, the Bronson Centre is near the thriving Ottawa neighbourhoods of Centretown, Little Italy, Chinatown, and Lebreton Flats.

The Bronson Centre and its facilities are wheel-chair accessible.

Our Reception Hall (Mac Hall)

In addition to a newly-renovated theatre, the Centre houses a reception hall and a communal kitchen. Inviting and well-equipped, these facilities are widely used by tenants and the broader community for meals, gatherings, and worship. Mac Hall now features modern audio-visual systems while the kitchen was recently upgraded with help from Employment and Social Development Canada's "New Horizons for Seniors" program.

Better Theatre, Broader Use

Our 850-seat theatre is a major asset to local cultural initiatives. Many of our tenants rely on the space to raise funds, celebrate, and deliver valuable support to the communities they serve.

To accommodate a wider range of uses, the theatre was transformed in 2013 into a more versatile facility. We now have a flattened floor in front of the stage, to be used as extra performance space, an orchestra pit, additional seating, or a dance floor. Renovated green rooms offer performers greater comfort and amenities.

Project architect Angelo Spadola says the theatre's new design "is unique and versatile for Ottawa. Audience and artist can be in one and the same space. It is a very exciting opportunity for Ottawa performers and audiences."

"Lease on Life" Capital Campaign

"Having so many like-minded not-for-profits under one roof at the Bronson Centre has proven to be invaluable to providing "one stop supports" to our at-risk client group."

-- Bryonie Baxter, Executive Director, Elizabeth Fry Society

"Thanks to the balanced, flexible and safe environment created by the Bronson Centre, our organization has been able to grow and develop important relationships within this community."

-- Erenia Oliver, Founder, Club Casa de los Abuelos

The Bronson Centre is full steam ahead with a capital campaign launched in 2013 (of which recent exterior enhancements and theatre renovations are a part).

We are actively engaging with fellow organizations, municipal agencies, businesses, and other potential donors to solicit support for further infrastructure/sustainability initiatives. Funds will be directed to:

- upgrading the meeting rooms (\$5,000 each)
- installing air conditioning in the theatre (\$150,000)
- renovating the community kitchen (\$75,000)
- replacing the 60-year old theatre seating (\$100,000)
- accessibilizing the washrooms in community hall (\$25,000)
- repairing exterior façade (\$85,000)
- replacing the main entrance doors (\$45,000)
- hanging a canopy over the main entrance (\$7,500)
- switching to energy-efficient lighting (\$50,000)
- installing energy-efficient windows (\$500,000)

With our own capital resources, the Bronson Centre has already accomplished:

- new boiler systems (\$70,000)
- north wing 2nd floor office renovations (\$100,000)
- low flush toilets (20+) throughout (\$15,000)
- expansion of main foyer washroom (\$10,000)
- new audio-visual systems for both Mac Hall (\$10,000) and the theatre (\$120,000)

Website

BronsonCentre.ca features Centre background, a tenant list, an events calendar, and downloadable forms for facilities rentals.

Media Contact

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Recent Funders

Ontario Trillium Foundation
Community Foundation of Ottawa
New Horizons for Seniors – Government of Canada



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