

Scatter Notes

FALL '23



We acknowledge that Circle's homes are located within the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Anishnaabek, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. As an organization, Circle is committed to critically looking at what it means to own and operate housing on this land, and how we can support reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty. Please visit our website at circlelandtrust.ca to view our full land acknowledgement.



Meet Our Finance Team

When Circle Tenants are in touch with our staff, you'll usually speak with our Maintenance or Tenant Services departments, who are here to help you with the day-to-day of your housing. Back at the Circle office, our Finance team is hard at work behind the scenes, so we wanted to take the opportunity to introduce them. Our Finance team is led by Diana Nanushi, and her staff are Wendy Zhang, Hong Ye, Chetan Patel, and Chantelle Castanier.

Circle is fortunate to have the resources to provide permanently affordable homes, and to bring all of those homes into a state of good repair, but none of this would be possible without careful financial management. Our finance staff process rent and bill payments, work with our Asset Management & Maintenance department on the home repair and renovation process, and plan for Circle's longterm financial future. Wendy Zhang, our Accounting Coordinator, shares: "I have worked in a housing provider organization in Accounts Receivable for many years. I like to support Tenants and give the best to Circle." Thanks to our whole Finance team for making sure that Circle is stable, sustainable and has a solid foundation for the future!



UPDATES FROM CIRCLE

Maintenance Request Scheduling

When you submit a request for work to our Maintenance Department, our system creates a Work Order (WO). To schedule the WO, Circle staff and/or contractors will contact you to make arrangements. After three unsuccessful attempts to reach you, the WO will be closed, and you will have to submit a new one to have the work done. You can submit WOs using the Tenant Portal, by emailing maintenance@circlelandtrust.ca, or by calling 437-781-8432 ext 4.



Repair & Renovation Update

Over the next five years, Circle will be bringing all of our homes into a state of good repair.

As Tenants know, the list of needed repairs and renovations is long! In the last six months, some Tenants may have noticed more visits from us. This is because a lot of the work is now underway! Circle is also inspecting for hazardous materials, and looking into retrofits to ensure that the homes will be as safe and sustainable as possible. We recognize that the increase in visits and inspections can be disruptive, so we appreciate your patience and cooperation as we get this work done.

CLEAResult Energy Retrofits

Circle is working with the company CLEAResult to coordinate retrofits and upgrades to make our homes more energy efficient. If you've already had your home assessed, keep an eye out for updates from CLEAResult and their install partners about thermostat, appliance, and/or insulation upgrades. If you have questions or would like to participate in the program, contact Kathy Kurtz at kathy.kurtz@circlelandtrust.ca, or 437-781-8432 ext 207.



Seasonal Maintenance Reminders

With colder weather on the way, our Maintenance team has put together this list of friendly reminders to keep your homes safe and functioning well.

- In the coming weeks, Cordeiro, Torcan, and McGuire Roofing will be visiting for eavestrough cleaning and roof maintenance.
- Enercare and Reliance have begun visits for annual furnace maintenance.
- To prevent freezing, shut off outdoor hose bibs by mid-October. If you don't know how, contact Circle Maintenance.
- When the snow comes, shovel the walkway and sidewalk in front of your home. Snow-clearing is the responsibility of all Tenants, except those who live in multi-unit buildings.
- Clean dust from baseboard heaters to improve efficiency and reduce the risk of fire.

TENANT SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Taitt

For this edition of Scatter Notes, we're shining the Tenant Spotlight on Jennifer Taitt. Jennifer – or Ms J, as many call her - is a community champion, chef, youth mentor, and proud Malvern resident. Among her many accomplishments, Jennifer has raised 7 children, and has spent nearly 4 decades in community work. Below are some excerpts from a conversation with Jennifer last month about her life, work, and her recent move into a Circle home.



For many years, I lived in a row of Malvern townhouses owned by TCHC, where my family was known and deeply embedded in our community. When the longtime superintendent retired, he told me that there were a lot of youth in the neighbourhood that needed support, and that I could be a lifeline for them. So, I started a youth program - I ran it for five years out of the townhouse complex. The program provided a safe and comfortable place for children and youth to play, receive support and mentorship, and enjoy one of my famous hot meals. It was very popular – what was planned to be a program for ten

kids quickly grew to a group of almost 60. I'm so proud to say that all the participants graduated high school, and that eight are currently in college or university.

However, while the youth program was thriving, things got tough for me and my family. There was violence in the neighbourhood, and because of my work my sons and I often found ourselves at the frontlines. The stress and anxiety pushed me to put in a request for a Crisis Transfer. We needed a new home where we could rebuild.

Our request was approved, which was a relief, but what came next was a long waiting game, with many hurdles. During the transfer of homes from TCHC to Circle, my request got very delayed, but Circle's Tenant Services staff worked hard to make sure it didn't fall through the cracks. Finally, on March 5th 2023, I got the call that our transfer had gone through, and we would be moving into a Circle home on April 1st. I remember that day well: When I got my keys, that's when reality hit me. I opened up the door, I stood right there, and I cried and felt so thankful. The first night I slept on the couch. I slept until 1 o'clock the next afternoon. I couldn't believe it - I don't ever sleep past 5 in the morning. It's like my body was saying: "We did it, Jenn."

**I'm a
community
person - it's
in my blood.**

We love living in our new home, we're getting to know our neighbours, and are looking forward to putting some of my community awards – including one that was presented to me by Marcus Garvey's grandson – on the walls.

What do I want to see from Circle? The first thing you have to do is earn the Tenants' trust. I'd like to see Circle host Tenant get-togethers in Scarborough so that we can get to know each other and Circle better. There are so many great people living in Malvern, and all they need is some stability and support - I hope Circle can contribute to that dream. I also think that Circle should encourage Tenants to take pride in our homes, and care for them so that Circle can be sustainable long into the future. And, I'm looking forward to attending the

next Tenant Advisory Group meeting!

I'm a community person - it's in my blood. I can't help myself, I don't wanna help myself - I just want to keep helping people. After 38 years of giving back, look what I've got today: a home where I can be comfortable, and rest. Some people have asked me what gets me through, and I tell them what I've always told my sons: When bad things happen, good things are coming.



Join Circle's Tenant Advisory Group!

One of the best ways to give Circle staff and management your feedback and ideas is to come to a TAG meeting, which are open to all Circle Tenants. For more information, contact Ivy at community@circlelandtrust.ca or 437-781-8432 ext 3.

Keeping Homes Safe



It's important that Tenants and our Maintenance Department work together to make sure that our homes are safe. Here are a few reminders to help us get there:

- Tenants cannot refuse work that is being done to ensure safety for residents.
- No basement bedrooms are permitted in any Circle homes, due to the lack of fire exits, and the danger of gas leaks or water tank explosions.
- Circle's Maintenance staff will be marking three-foot boxes on the floor around hot water tanks, furnaces, and electrical panels, for Tenant safety and ease of contractor access.



Thanks For Joining Us!

This Summer, Circle hosted two great events. On July 24th, Circle staff and Tenants gathered in Fairmount Park and enjoyed fresh pizza from the park's wood-burning oven. Big thanks to Shauna, Allan, and Jake from Sagatay at Na Me Res for making such delicious pizza!

Later that week, Circle collaborated on an event with our construction partners at People Design Cooperative and Building Up, to bring together members of the land trust and sustainable building sectors to learn more about how Circle is working to make our renovations more environmentally-friendly.

We hope to host more Tenant events like Pizza in the Park in the future – If you'd like to see a Circle event in your neighbourhood, please get in touch with Ivy.



Rent-Geared-to-Income Updates

The next RGI Annual Income Review process will take place in 2024. All RGI Tenants will be receiving a letter with more information in early 2024. If your income or household composition has changed since your last Annual Review, you must report the changes to your Community Tenant Services Worker, or email tenantservices@circlelandtrust.ca as soon as possible.

GARDENER'S CORNER

Seed Giveaway

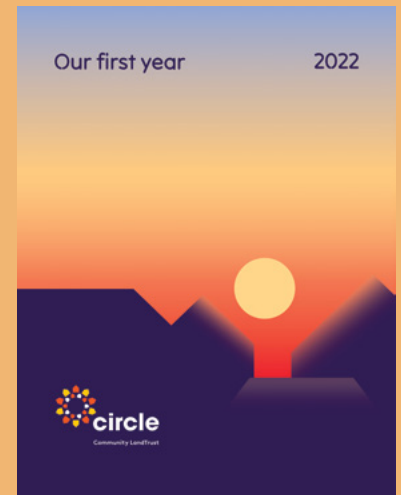


This Spring, Circle worked with the Indigenous-led landscape educators Alter Eden to create custom packages of seeds for Tenants. The seeds will produce easy-to-grow flowers in your garden that will be enjoyed by birds, butterflies, and other pollinators. Please contact Ivy if you would like a free pack of seeds. If you have received and planted some already, we would love to see photos of what you grow next Spring!

Calling All Expert and Beginner Gardeners!

Are you an experienced gardener and willing to share your wisdom with Tenants who are just getting started? Or do you dream of a garden but don't know where to start, or need help getting going? Some Circle Tenants are hoping to start a Garden Group to share knowledge, tools, and motivation. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Ivy.

Now Available at [CircleLandTrust.ca](https://www.CircleLandTrust.ca)



We're excited to announce that our **first Annual Report** – which archives the many achievements and lessons learned in 2022 – is now available in the What's New section of our website.

Circle's Tenant Handbook will soon be available online (and in-print, by request). The Handbook is filled with important information including selected policies, and a list of Tenant chargeback fees. You'll receive a letter notifying you once the Handbook is available.



Maintenance Requests

- Submit using Tenant Portal
 - maintenance@circlelandtrust.ca
 - 437-781-8432 ext 4
- This line is answered 24 hrs a day,
7 days a week, all year

Questions about Tenancy (rent, income, etc)

- tenantservices@circlelandtrust.ca
- 437-781-8432 ext 2

Share your feedback, or join Tenant Advisory Group

- community@circlelandtrust.ca
- 437-781-8432 ext 3

Our Office Location

365 Bloor Street East, Suite 1902
Toronto ON, M4W 3L4
Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm
www.circlelandtrust.ca



Resources & Discounts

Dorset Park Community Hub

It's now easier for Scarborough Tenants to meet with our staff, because Circle's Community Tenant Services Workers (CTSWs) have access to office space at the Dorset Park Community Hub. If you would like to have an in-person meeting with your CTSW at the Hub, please contact them. Not sure who your CTSW is? Contact tenantservices@circlelandtrust.ca, or 437-781-8432 ext 2.

The Hub offers lots of community resources, including programs for seniors, a Computer Lab, a Food Centre (local residents only), and a drop-in program for families with kids. You can learn more at <https://dorsetpark.com/dorset-park-community-hub>, by calling 416-292-6912, or just stop by at 1911 Kennedy Rd, unit 105.



Seniors Assistance Home Maintenance Program (SAHM)

If you are a senior or person living with a disability and need help with casual home maintenance (including lawns, snow shoveling, and housekeeping), you may be eligible for the SAHM, which is being offered by the organization Toronto Intergenerational Partnerships (TIGP).

The SAHM offers low-cost help to individuals in specific Toronto neighbourhoods including the downtown east, and parts of Scarborough. TIGP is also looking for workers (including high school and college students). For more information about being a recipient or worker for the SAHM please contact kevin@tigp.org, or call 416-531-8447 ext 1. Please note that this program is not being offered directly by Circle – We are only helping to spread the word.

Got ideas for our newsletter, or want to share your story?

Contact Ivy at community@circlelandtrust.ca
or 437-781-8432 ext 3.



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