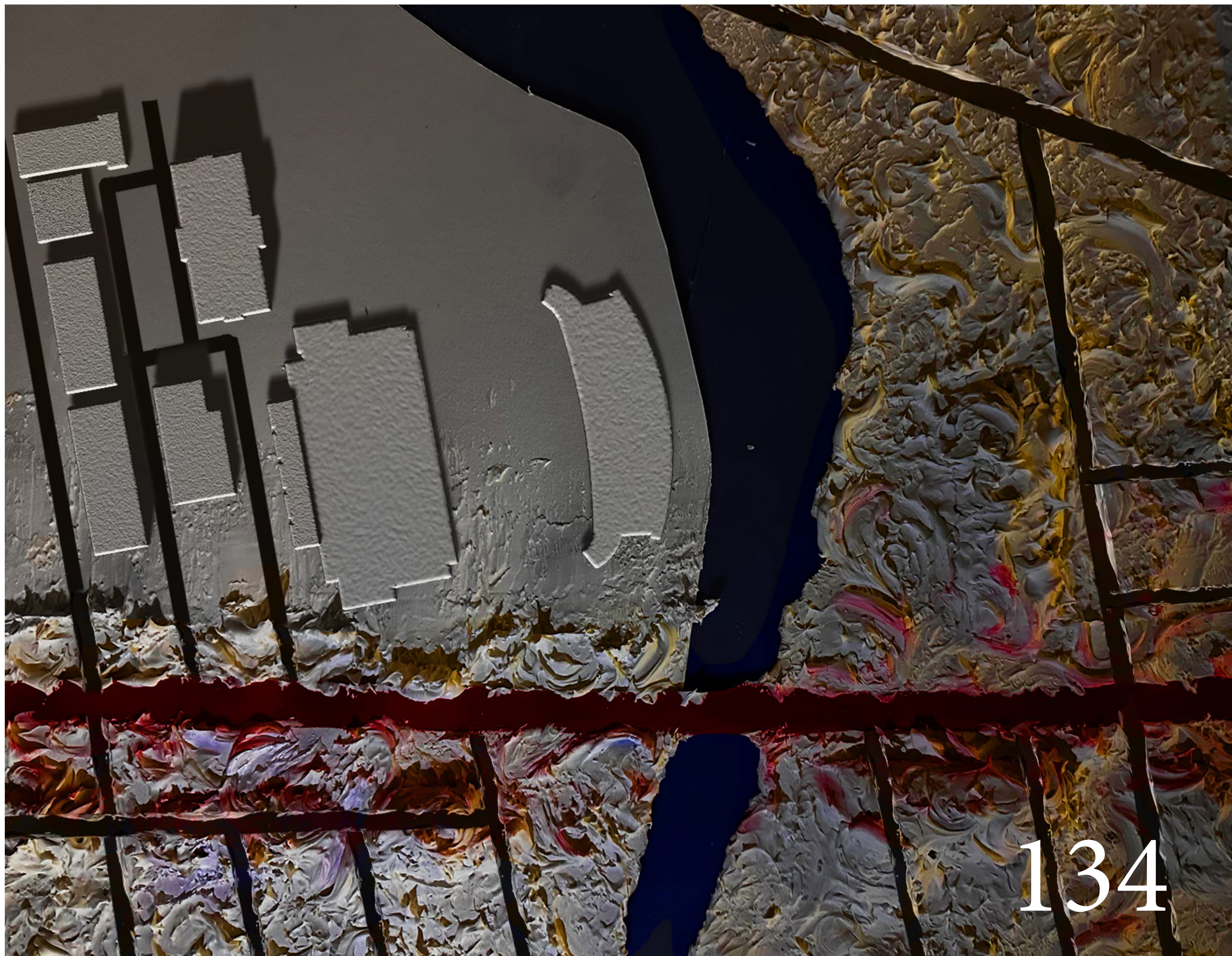
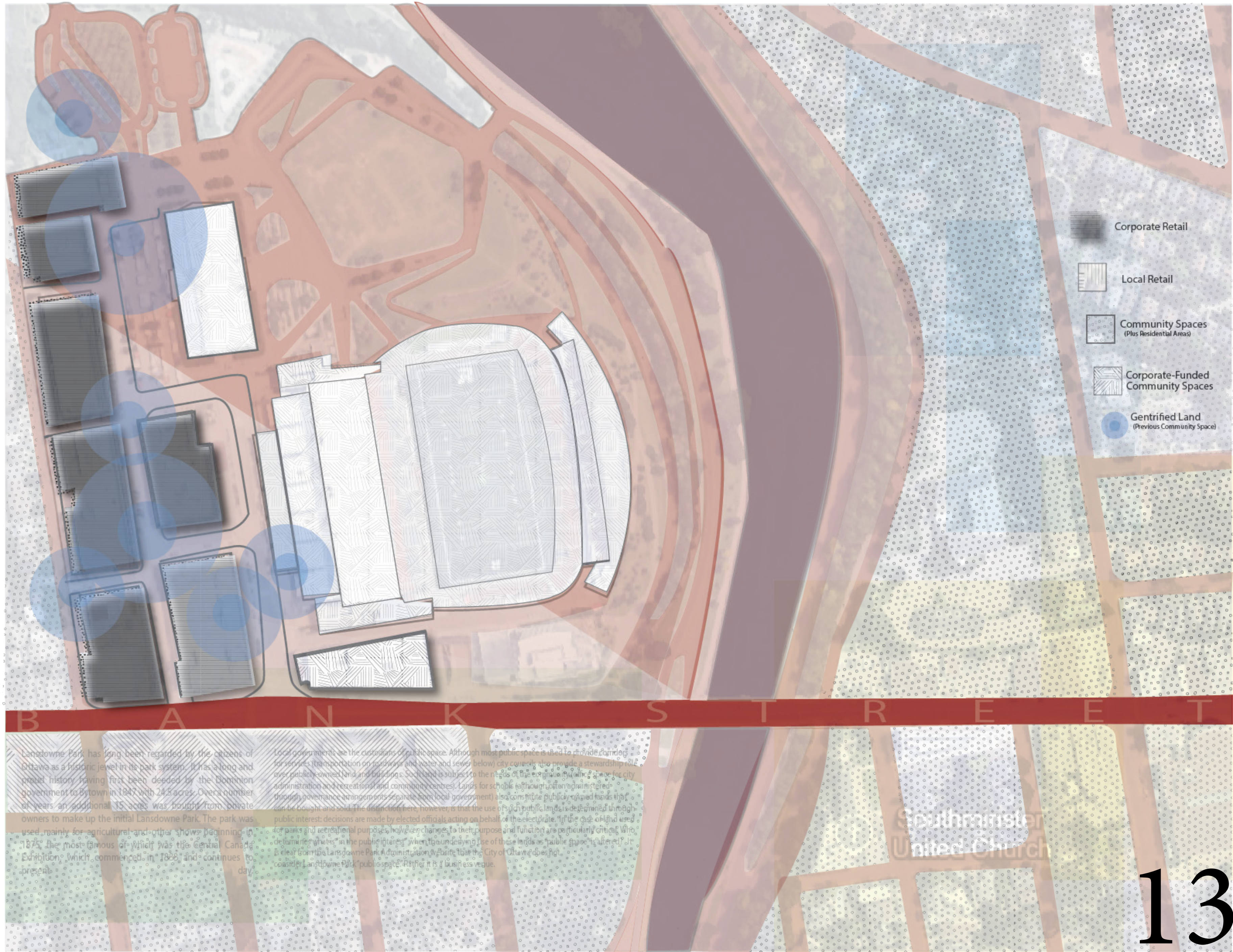




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Lansdowne Park has long been regarded by the citizens of Ottawa as a historic jewel in its park system. It has a long and proud history having first been decided by the Dominion government to Bytown in 1847 with 24.3 acres. Over a number of years an additional 15 acres was bought from private owners to make up the initial Lansdowne Park. The park was used mainly for agricultural and other shows beginning in 1875, the most famous of which was the General Canada Exhibition, which commenced in 1886, and continues to present.

Local governments are the custodians of public space. Although most public space is used to provide corridors for services (transportation on roadways and water and sewer below) city councils also provide a stewardship role over publicly owned land and buildings. Such land is subject to the whims of the elected officials who are in charge of city administration and recreational and community centres. Lands for schools (although often administered through governance arrangements separate from local government) also constitute publicly owned lands that can be bought and sold. The distinction here, however, is that the use of such public lands is determined through public interest decisions are made by elected officials acting on behalf of the electorate. If the use of land is for parks and recreational purposes, however, changes to their purpose and function are particularly critical. Who determines what is in the public interest? When the underlying use of these lands as "public space" is altered, it is clear from the Lansdowne Park Administration website that the City of Ottawa does not "consider Lansdowne Park" public space. Rather it is a business venue.

St. John's United Church

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