

NECA Traffic and Safety Report – 2022/23

With respect to traffic and safety in New Edinburgh, the past year has been one of relative stability without any major incidents or disruptions.

The years of reduced motor vehicle traffic in the neighborhood due to covid-19 restrictions are behind us. We are back to steady, busy peak traffic periods that we can expect to continuously get even busier in the years ahead as the city population increases and New Edinburgh densifies. The community looks for traffic calming enhancements commensurate with the increasing risks of vehicular collisions to be installed throughout the years ahead.

Most Dangerous Times and Places

Peak traffic periods are the most dangerous times so those are the most important cycles to start capturing traffic data on and focus traffic calming efforts towards. Peak periods in New Edinburgh are:

- School days (Monday-Friday, September-June, holidays excluded)
- Morning: 7:45 AM - 8:45 AM
- Afternoon: 2:45 PM - 6:30 PM

Despite searching, we've never seen any meaningful traffic count data for the residential streets of New Edinburgh, so we've made requests to the City of Ottawa to start formally tracking this.

The intersection perceived to be the most dangerous within New Edinburgh based on responses to surveys and other community input we've received is MacKay and Beechwood. Here's the other intersections with the most community interest for traffic calming (like bulbouts or raised intersections) in order of priority:

- Crichton and Dufferin
- Crichton and Keefer
- Crichton and Union
- Stanley and Keefer
- Stanley at the crosswalk between the New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse and the pathway on the public grass space across the road
- MacKay and Dufferin

Road Improvements

By the end of this calendar year, New Edinburgh arteries like Springfield, MacKay, Crichton, and Stanley will have smooth asphalt from recent road resurfacing constructions. Some of these projects coincided with water main and sewer renewals. Some of them included new speed humps for traffic calming. Additional flexible posts have also been installed as traffic calming measures, including on Crichton Street, Springfield Road, and a notable cluster protecting the crosswalk in front of the New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse.

Winter maintenance to the Fieldhouse

The Rideau River Eastern Pathway through New Edinburgh was intermittent until the Fall 2020 installation of a link between the playground to the Stanley Avenue bend. Overall, this link improved safety and access to the area around Fieldhouse as cyclists, roller-bladers, pedestrians and other users were no longer driven to veer into Stanley Avenue motor traffic along their way. However, accessibility and safety concerns remain especially during the winter months.

Snow and ice present hazardous barriers for pedestrians and cyclists traveling the sidewalks and multi-use pathway to the Fieldhouse. This particularly busy section of New Edinburgh Park can be perilous for lack of a complete pedestrian route with winter maintenance. Pedestrians traveling toward the river along the east side of Dufferin Road encounter a snowbank at the Stanley Avenue bend and are forced to the roadway. Since there is no road crossing or maintained sidewalk on the opposite side of Stanley Avenue (at the end of River Lane), pedestrians walk into oncoming traffic as they head toward New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse - the busiest recreational node in New Edinburgh.

Recently the Crichton Community Council (CCC) lobbied Councillor King's office and the National Capital Commission (NCC) for winter maintenance on this 120 meter section of the Rideau River Eastern Pathway. The pathway falls under NCC jurisdiction, but it's the City that provides winter maintenance of the sidewalk on both ends of this short stretch.

The ask was for the City's sidewalk snow plow to clear the pathway between the east side of Dufferin Road and the Fieldhouse, thereby providing continuous sidewalk maintenance on the river side of Stanley Avenue. Inexplicably, the small plow currently moves on to the roadway in between clearing Stanley Avenue and Dufferin Road sidewalks. At no cost or difficulty, the winter maintenance route could be made continuous by simply continuing service along this short section.

The following aerial photograph shows the area of New Edinburgh Park in question. The existing sidewalk snow plow route is shown in yellow; the dashed line segment along Stanley Avenue indicates where there's no sidewalk therefore the plow drives past without plowing. Shown in blue is the proposed additional winter maintenance that the NCC has refused to permit along its multi-use pathway. This proposal would have the City's snow plow deviate slightly from its existing route to provide pedestrians with an uninterrupted path.

