PARKS REPORT for 2025/2026

By Karen Squires and Katherine Lloyd

Our partnership with Ottawa Riverkeeper continues to flourish to attract more people during our annual park clean up and 2026 was no exception. Again, we collected approximately 300 pounds of garbage and had a huge turnout of volunteers from in and around the neighbourhood. It's encouraging to see that people come from across the region to support our efforts, thanks to this partnership. As always, the area we focus on is between the St. Patrick's Bridge and Sussex Drive including the river banks. We will continue to liaise with the Ottawa Riverkeeper team to ensure we support some of their initiatives and continue to build on ours.

Leading into the summer season, the City of Ottawa added additional bins throughout the park and will remove those bins in the fall period (typically end of October) so this initiative which started several years ago seems to address some issues around garbage. However, we still see garbage left behind in areas, such as on Stanley Street where people park to attend events etc. Unfortunately, people offload their garbage (along the road and green space) despite bins being only a few meters away.

We continue to liaise with the city on better signage for bicycles, including motorized bikes and we hope those signs will be in place by spring, 2027. We will keep you updated as information becomes available, through the city.

We continue to liaise with the city on planting more trees and ensuring less mowing, in the dog park areas so tree bases are not destroyed, by equipment. Many of the newer pine trees planted have been replaced as they did not survive. In addition, due to the Canada Day storm this past summer, many trees in the park were either damaged or destroyed and the city workers were quick to remove those. However, we will have ongoing liaison regarding upcoming planting and more details will be shared in the *New Edinburgh News* when available.

On safety, Friends of the Park contacted the city this past summer regarding one tent near the Minto Bridges so the city team members can assist those interested in support.

Friends of the Park also liaised with the city on all the damage done by ice equipment during the ice-clearing period and some work has been done to repair the area, leading towards the beach.

After numerous attempts to get an update on Monarch Meadow from Ecology Ottawa during 2026, and not hearing anything back, Friends of the Park will put this on hold until further notice. This is a project on which we were contacted to support. However, Ecology Ottawa is the lead project manager so we assume they were unable to get support (from multiple stakeholders / landowners) and/or are inundated with other priorities.

Finally, we'd like to thank the City of Ottawa for painting more lines on the tennis courts so pickle ball can also be played there. This area seems to be attracting more people to work out with more infrastructure like "borrow a ball". Thanks to everyone supporting our efforts to keep our parks clean, green and safe for all!