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Griffintown Parks and Lachine Canal Spots for a Lunch Break

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In this article

1. The short version
2. Parc Mary-Griffin: a name on the map, not yet a park
3. Place des Arrimeurs
4. Parc du Bassin-à-Bois
5. Parc du Bassin-à-Gravier
6. The Lachine Canal path
7. Rules: alcohol, picnics, dogs, barbecues
8. Three lunch-break plans
9. A bit of history to read while you eat
10. Seasons and what changes in winter
11. What is still to come
12. Sources

The short version

Griffintown has fewer finished parks than its maps suggest. Several names you will see on signs and in news coverage (Parc Mary-Griffin, Parc des Eaux-Cachées, Place William-Dow) refer to sites that are planned, temporary or still under construction. What you can actually use on a weekday lunch break in late October 2026 comes down to three city spaces and one federal site, plus a temporary square that was only announced until the fall:

Space	Where	What is there	Season notes
Place des Arrimeurs	Corner of Rue Ottawa, Rue William and Rue Guy	Paved public square, public art, links to canal walkways	Open 6:00 am to 11:00 pm every day
Parc du Bassin-à-Bois	Between Rue William and the canal, at Rue Guy	Refrigerated rink, service pavilion	Rink surface is a multipurpose space in summer; first skating season 2026-2027
Parc du Bassin-à-Gravier	1492, rue d'Ottawa	Children's play structure, water jets, bioretention basin	Water jets mid-May to end of September
Parc Mary-Griffin	Corner of Ann and Ottawa streets	Vacant lot; temporary square in summer 2026	Square announced as open "until the fall"
Lachine Canal National Historic Site	Old Port to Lake Saint-Louis, passing Griffintown	13.5 km path, walking trail, waterfront parks	Path maintained April 15 to November 15

Place des Arrimeurs and Parc du Bassin-à-Bois sit next to each other at the foot of Rue Guy, and both connect to the canal. Bassin-à-Gravier and Mary-Griffin are further east along Rue Ottawa. For terraces and cafés with seating, see our separate guide to [outdoor workspaces in Griffintown and along the canal](#); this page sticks to public green space.

Parc Mary-Griffin: a name on the map, not yet a park

The name is official. The Commission de toponymie du Québec made "Parc Mary-Griffin" official [on June 4, 2018](#), in memory of Mary Griffin (1768-1855), a businesswoman. The Commission's record places the park at the corner of Rue Dalhousie and Rue William; the City and the press describe the same lot from its [Ann and Ottawa corner](#).

The park itself has not been built. In August 2026, Journal Métro described the site as [a vacant lot and former parking lot](#) where a retention basin was built in 2019, "but since then, nothing more." The City is waiting for CDPQ Infra to decide where and how the Griffintown-Bernard-Landry station of the Réseau express métropolitain (REM) will be built, and the lot is one of the options. That decision belongs to the planning phase CDPQ Infra, the Government of Québec and the City [launched on June 16, 2026](#): construction could begin in 2028 and no opening date has been set. The REM's station page places the station [between Ottawa and William streets, with its entrance on the Dalhousie side](#), which is the block the Commission de toponymie gives for the park.

This is not new. When the City presented the Griffintown park concepts in May 2018, it said the Mary-Griffin design could not be detailed yet because [the William retention structure and REM construction](#) would affect its schedule. In 2023 the Le Sud-Ouest borough told the Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM) that the site [had been used as a logistics area for REM work](#), might be used again to build the future station, and that no timeline could be confirmed.

What was there in 2026. From July 30, 2026, the lot hosted the Piazza di Mano, which Journal Métro describes as a temporary installation run as [a collaboration between the MR-63 Corridor Culturel, the restaurateur Mano Cornuto and the Ville de Montréal](#), with food service, a pétanque court and a program of activities. It was set up "for the warm season" and announced as accessible only until the fall, with no published closing date. Treat it as closed from November.

Place des Arrimeurs

Place des Arrimeurs is a city square at [the intersection of Rue Ottawa, Rue William and Rue Guy](#), in the Bassins du Nouveau Havre sector. The Ville de Montréal lists it as:

- opened in 2022;
- universally accessible and stroller-friendly;
- home to a public artwork by Marie-Michelle Deschamps;
- open every day from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm;
- connected by bike paths and pedestrian walkways to the Lachine Canal.

The City's listing does not mention tables, toilets or drinking fountains, so treat it as a place to sit and eat what you brought, not a picnic site with services. Its main use for a lunch break is as a gateway: you can start here and continue onto the canal walkways or into the neighbouring Parc du Bassin-à-Bois.

Parc du Bassin-à-Bois

This is the newest green space in the sector. The City's 2021 design plan describes it as one of a series of Griffintown public spaces that also includes [Parc des Eaux-Cachées](#), [Place William-Dow](#), [Place des Arrimeurs](#) and [Parc Mary-Griffin](#). The plan called for a refrigerated outdoor rink, a pavilion, grassy flowerbeds and planting islands, 96 trees and 1,700 square metres of shrubs and herbaceous plants.

What the City lists today, on its [place page](#) (French only), is a refrigerated rink, a universally accessible service pavilion and landscaping inspired by the site's history. In summer, the rink surface becomes a multipurpose space for activities and events. The address given is Rue des Bassins; a City event notice locates it [between Rue William and the Lachine Canal](#), at Rue Guy.

The City's Griffintown project page scheduled [construction of the rink and pavilion for 2025](#), and in July 2026 the City presented it as the new park, holding a public information kiosk in its pavilion on June 22, 2026 and [free Saturday afternoon shows in August and September 2026](#). Winter 2026-2027 is therefore the rink's first skating season. The place page lists no hours; under the borough's park by-law a park is open at all times unless an ordinance sets closing hours ([Règlement sur les parcs](#), art. 3).

Parc du Bassin-à-Gravier

Parc du Bassin-à-Gravier is listed by the City at [1492, rue d'Ottawa](#). When it opened in July 2016, La Presse called it [Griffintown's first family park](#): it sits between Rue du Séminaire and Rue Richmond, cost \$3.2 million, has play structures and water jets for children 12 and under in its north part, and a bioretention basin planted with 24,000 native plants in its south part.

For an adult lunch break, the south section with the planted basin is the quieter half. Expect children around the water jets in summer: the City says the fountains run [from mid-May to the end of September](#), with hours that can be extended to 11:00 pm during heat waves. The City lists no hours for the park itself.

The Lachine Canal path

The canal is a federal site, the Lachine Canal National Historic Site, run by Parks Canada. Its [13.5-kilometre path runs between the Old Port and Lake Saint-Louis](#) and is part of the Route Verte cycling network. Parks Canada's [facilities page](#) adds:

- the path opened in 1977;
- it is maintained from April 15 to November 15, while the historic site is open year-round;
- cyclists can ride it end to end in about sixty minutes;
- in certain sections, a trail reserved for walkers runs alongside it, covered with stone dust, with no significant slopes and easily accessible to people with reduced mobility;
- public restrooms along the canal are open in the summer season and according to navigation hours;
- waterfront parks along the way are suited to picnics.

The site is [open every day from sunrise to 11:00 pm](#), and restrooms and other facilities are accessible only during operating hours. The 2026 navigation schedule on that page ended on October 12, so in late October do not count on canal restrooms being open.

For cycling and paddling on the canal, see our [Lachine Canal cycling and kayaking guide](#).

Rules: alcohol, picnics, dogs, barbecues

Two sets of rules apply: Parks Canada's on the canal banks, and in the borough's parks and squares two Le Sud-Ouest by-laws: the [peace and order by-law \(R.R.V.M. c. P-1\)](#) and the [park by-law \(R.R.V.M. c. P-3\)](#). Posted signs add to these rules.

Topic	Lachine Canal (Parks Canada)	Griffintown city parks and squares
Alcohol	Prohibited at Parks Canada sites in general; on the canal the municipal by-law applies, so only in picnic areas as part of a meal or at a permitted event	Only with an outdoor meal in the part of a park where the City has installed picnic tables, at a licensed terrace or at an authorized event (P-1, art. 3); fine \$100 to \$150 for a first offence (art. 13)
Barbecues and fires	Barbecues prohibited; no fires	No fires in a park, subject to the fire-prevention by-law (P-3, art. 6); no City page lists a barbecue area in these spaces; fine \$100 to \$300 (art. 21)
Dogs	Leash at all times; pick up after your pet	Leash required (P-3, art. 6); 1.85 m maximum, halter or harness for dogs of 20 kg or more, annual permit; off-leash only in dog parks
Swimming	Prohibited in the canal	n/a
Garbage	Bins at several points along the banks	Not listed on the City pages we checked
Hours	Sunrise to 11:00 pm	Place des Arrimeurs 6:00 am to 11:00 pm; others not listed

A few more canal rules matter at lunchtime. Parks Canada asks path users to [respect the signage and use the lanes reserved for them](#). Cyclists must adapt their speed and ride single file, and [e-bikes with a throttle may only be ridden on roads](#). Fishing is forbidden within 10 m of a lock, approach wharf or bridge, and commercial drone flights need Parks Canada authorization.

In practice: a sandwich and a beer at a picnic table, on the canal or in a city park, is within the rules; a can on a bench, or on the paved squares where the City has installed no picnic tables, is not. Neither by-law defines a "meal", so bring actual food.

Three lunch-break plans

No walking times here, because they depend on where in Griffintown you start. These are combinations of spaces that sit next to each other.

1. **Square and canal.** Pick up lunch, sit at Place des Arrimeurs, then walk down to the canal and use the walkers-only trail where a section exists. Works in any season, since the square has posted daily hours.

2. **Bassin-à-Bois and the water.** Eat in Parc du Bassin-à-Bois, next to Place des Arrimeurs, then walk along the canal side of the park. Check the City's event listings first: on programmed days the rink surface may be in use.
3. **Market and canal picnic.** Buy food at Atwater Market, west along the canal (see our [Atwater Market guide](#)), and eat at a canal-side picnic area. If you want a drink with it, this is the setup Parks Canada's rule describes.

Bassin-à-Gravier works better for a lunch with children, or outside the water-jet season when it is quieter.

A bit of history to read while you eat

The basins these parks are named after belong to the canal's history. The City notes that [the Lachine Canal was built between 1821 and 1825](#) and was officially closed to commercial navigation in 1970. The canal path opened in 1977, and boaters today cross the canal's [5 locks](#). The names Bassin-à-Bois and Bassin-à-Gravier recall those old port basins, and Parc Mary-Griffin recalls [Mary Griffin \(1768-1855\)](#), the businesswoman whose name the neighbourhood shares.

Seasons and what changes in winter

- **After November 15:** Parks Canada stops maintaining the canal path for the season, though the historic site stays [open year-round](#). Expect an unmaintained surface in snow or ice.
- **Restrooms:** tied to the summer season and navigation hours, so not a winter option.
- **Bassin-à-Gravier water jets:** mid-May to end of September only.
- **Bassin-à-Bois rink:** a refrigerated rink in its first winter; the City had not published an opening date by late October 2026. Watch the [park's page](#).
- **Piazza di Mano:** seasonal and temporary; do not count on it in winter.

What is still to come

Two more spaces in the series are not yet open. In 2023 the borough told the OCPM that work on [Parc des Eaux-Cachées](#) and [Place William-Dow](#) should start in 2026, [with reservations](#), and that a park of this type usually takes about two years to deliver. In June 2026 the City still described Parc des Eaux-Cachées as [to be developed soon](#). Parc Mary-Griffin has no timeline until the REM station planning that began in June 2026 settles the site; with construction possibly starting in 2028, do not expect a park there for several years.

The 2018 concept planned three parks [less than 300 metres apart](#), at Saint-Thomas and Ottawa, Peel and Ottawa, and Ann and Ottawa. Once they are built, Rue Ottawa will have a string of small green spaces between the canal-side squares and the Bassin-à-Gravier.

2727 Coworking, at 2727 Rue Saint-Patrick, is on the Lachine Canal, so the canal path is the easiest of these spaces to fit into a break from a desk or meeting room there.

Sources

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- Visitor guidelines, Lachine Canal National Historic Site (Parks Canada)
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- Design plan for Parc du Bassin-à-Bois and Place des Arrimeurs (Ville de Montréal)
- Parc du Bassin-à-Bois (Ville de Montréal)
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- Parc du Bassin-à-Gravier (Ville de Montréal)
- Chiens (Ville de Montréal)
- Parc Mary-Griffin (Commission de toponymie du Québec)
- La Piazza di Mano : Griffintown accueille une nouvelle place publique (Journal Métro, 2026)
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- Réponse de l'arrondissement du Sud-Ouest, consultation sur l'avenir de Griffintown (OCPM, 2023)
- Griffintown inaugure son premier parc familial (La Presse, 2016)
- Règlement concernant la paix et l'ordre sur le domaine public (R.R.V.M. c. P-1), Le Sud-Ouest codification (Ville de Montréal)
- Règlement sur les parcs (R.R.V.M. c. P-3), Le Sud-Ouest codification (Ville de Montréal)
- Griffintown, un quartier en transformation (Ville de Montréal)
- Launch of the planning phase for two additional REM stations, June 16, 2026 (CDPQ Infra)
- Griffintown-Bernard-Landry station (REM)

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

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