Celebrating Fall Sustainably: Thanksgiving and Halloween
October is such a wonderful month. The leaves change, the air gets crisp, and we get to enjoy two special celebrations: Thanksgiving and Halloween. These fall celebrations are full of food, treats, and fun, but they can also create more waste than we might realize. The good news is that a few simple swaps and mindful choices can make these traditions lighter on the planet without taking away any of the enjoyment!

A Homegrown Thanksgiving
Thanksgiving is the perfect time to highlight the bounty of Fall. Shopping local is a simple way to support farmers and cut down on the emissions that come from long-distance shipping. Root vegetables, squash, apples, and pumpkins grown nearby are not only fresher, but they also make any meal taste better because they're picked at peak ripeness. A little meal planning means you can enjoy everything on the table without worrying about wasting food. If you do end up with extras, leftovers can always be tucked into the freezer, shared with neighbours, or reinvented into soups, casseroles, or lunches for the week ahead. Swap out paper napkins for cloth ones, use the plates and tableware you already have, and pack leftovers in reusable containers. Make sure to toss food scraps into the compost to help keep food waste out of the landfill.

Eco-Friendly Halloween Tricks
Halloween is one of the most fun times of the year, and it doesn't take much to make it a bit more sustainable. Costumes are a great place to start. Before buying something brand new, try checking out thrift shops, swapping with friends, or getting creative with what you already have at home. It often makes the costume more unique too! Decorations can be just as festive when they are homemade. Pumpkins, branches, and colourful leaves bring a cozy autumn feel and can be composted once you're finished with them. For trick-or-treating, a reusable bag or pillowcase works just as well as a plastic bucket and helps cut down on waste. When the night is over, compost those jack-o'-lanterns and recycle what you can from the evening.

James Bay Recycle Depot
For all those tricky items you are not sure what to do with, such as batteries, small appliances, light bulbs, soft plastics, and more, remember the JBNA Third Saturday Recycle Depot. It is our neighbourhood's one-stop drop-off spot for harder-to-recycle materials. Keeping them out of the landfill is an easy way we can all make a difference. For the full list of accepted items and hours, please visit https://www.jbna.org/recycle-saturday/

Let's Celebrate Together
As we gather around the table or head out for trick-or-treating this year, it is worth remembering that small steps go a long way. Choosing local food, reusing what we can, composting organics, and recycling as much as possible will help keep James Bay clean and green.

Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Halloween, James Bay!