



# PEOPLE PARKS & DOGS



## A Strategy for Sharing Vancouver Parks

Park Board Committee Meeting  
October 23, 2017





## Purpose

To seek Board approval for the People, Parks, Dogs Strategy, Implementation Guide and the Implementation Plan.







# Summary

- Summary
- Background
- Strategy
- Consultation
- Implementation

- People, Parks and Dogs Strategy themes:
  - **Access** – Improve access to dog off-leash areas throughout the city.
  - **Design** – Provide a variety of dog off-leash areas with effective boundaries, supporting people with and without dogs.
  - **Stewardship** – Support the success of dog off-leash areas through effective management, communication and education.
  - **Enforcement** – Improve compliance and enforcement for dog-related by-laws.
- Implementation:
  - Quick Starts and Pilot Projects



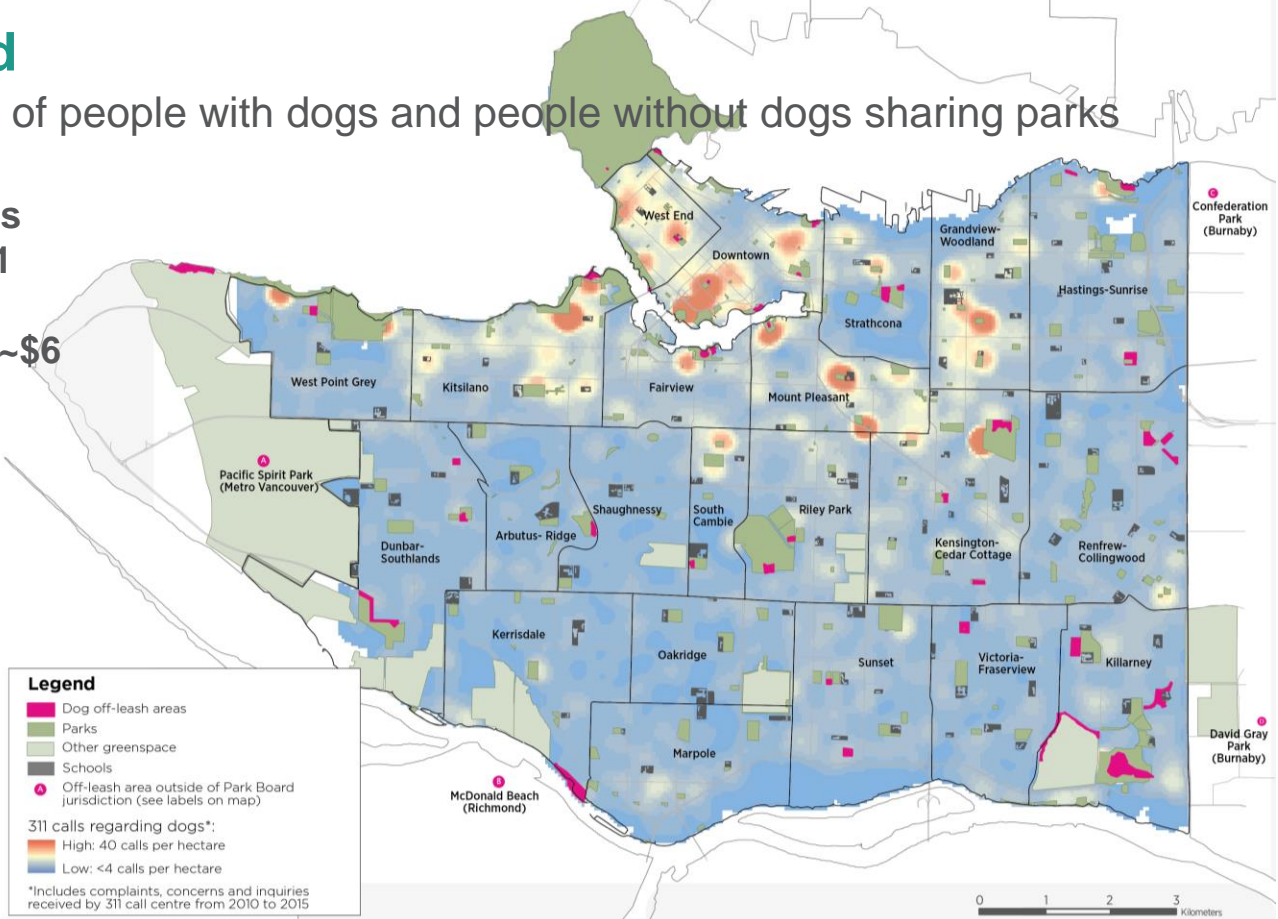
Cosimo Cavallaro, Flickr



# Background

The challenges of people with dogs and people without dogs sharing parks

Over 30,000 calls annually to 3-1-1 regarding dogs. Each calls cost ~\$6



- Summary
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# Background

The unique challenge of people & dogs using parks in high density, urban Vancouver

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Lower density municipalities:

Edworthy Park, Calgary



J. MacPherson, Flickr

Blackie Spit, Surrey



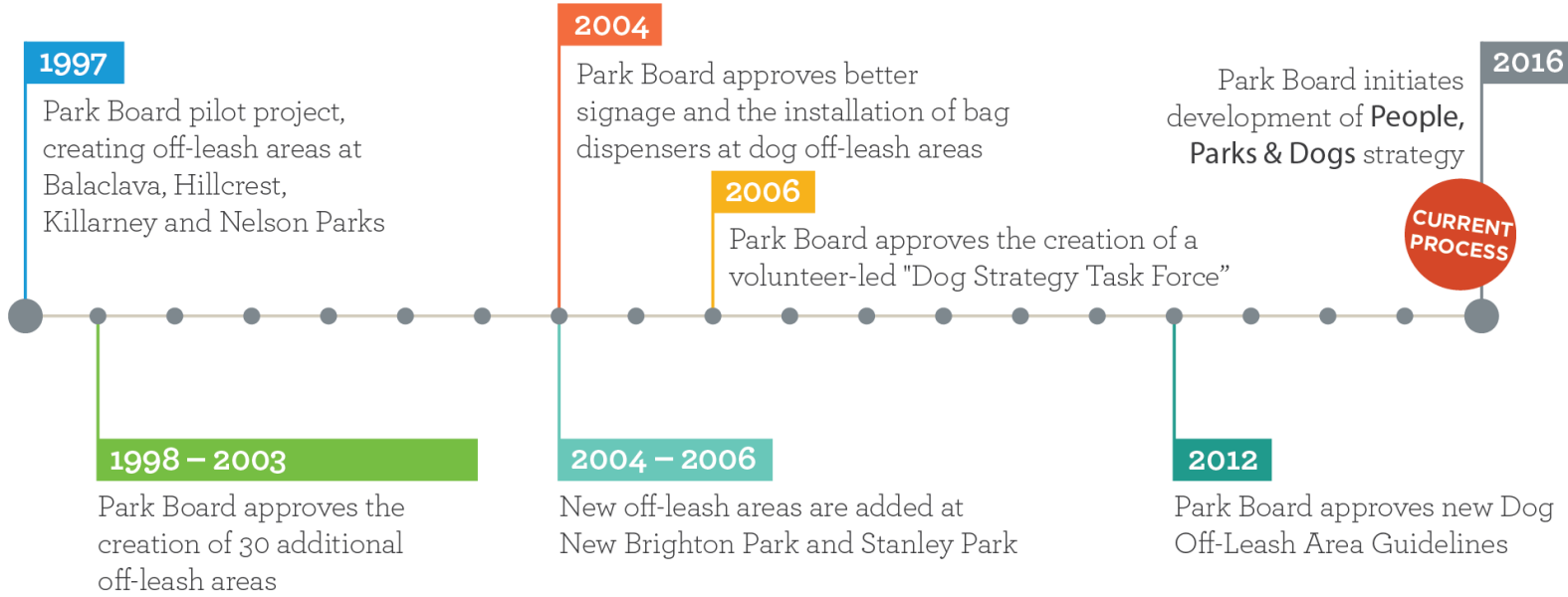
Pat G., Yelp



# Background

## History of Dogs in Vancouver Parks

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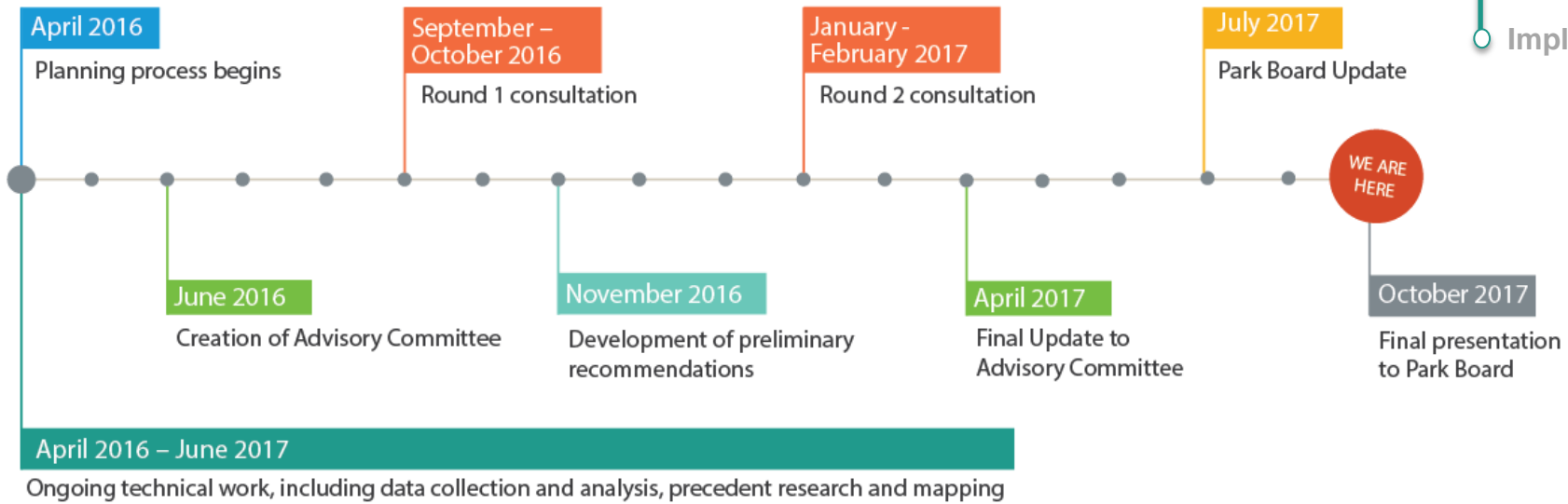




# Background

## Project Schedule

- Summary
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## Background: Data Driven Approach

- Summary
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Workshops with Park Board staff and City of Vancouver Staff, and an online staff survey



Mapping and Analysis



Advisory Committee Meeting



Reviewing records of previous work



In-person surveys in dog off-leash areas



Statistically-valid phone survey



Learning from other cities



Consultation Surveys and Events



## Vision for People, Parks and Dogs Strategy

To promote the *comfort* and *safety* of all park users by fostering responsible dog ownership and clarifying rules, boundaries and etiquette for dog off-leash activity in Vancouver parks; to integrate a variety of appealing and safe dog off-leash spaces in our parks, easily accessed by local residents who directly support their success.

- Summary
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# Recommendations Fall Under Four Themes



- 1. Access
- 2. Design
- 3. Stewardship
- 4. Enforcement

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# 1.0 Access

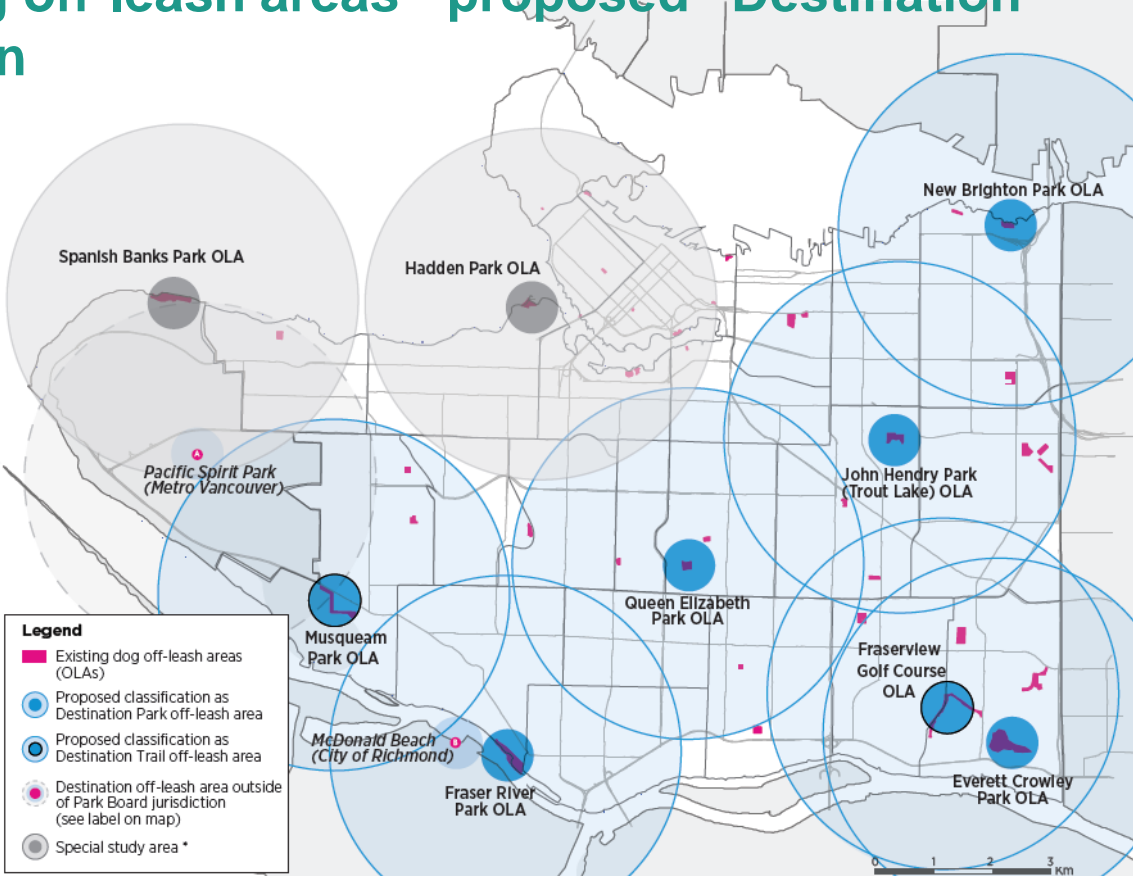


Improve access to dog off-leash areas located throughout the city.

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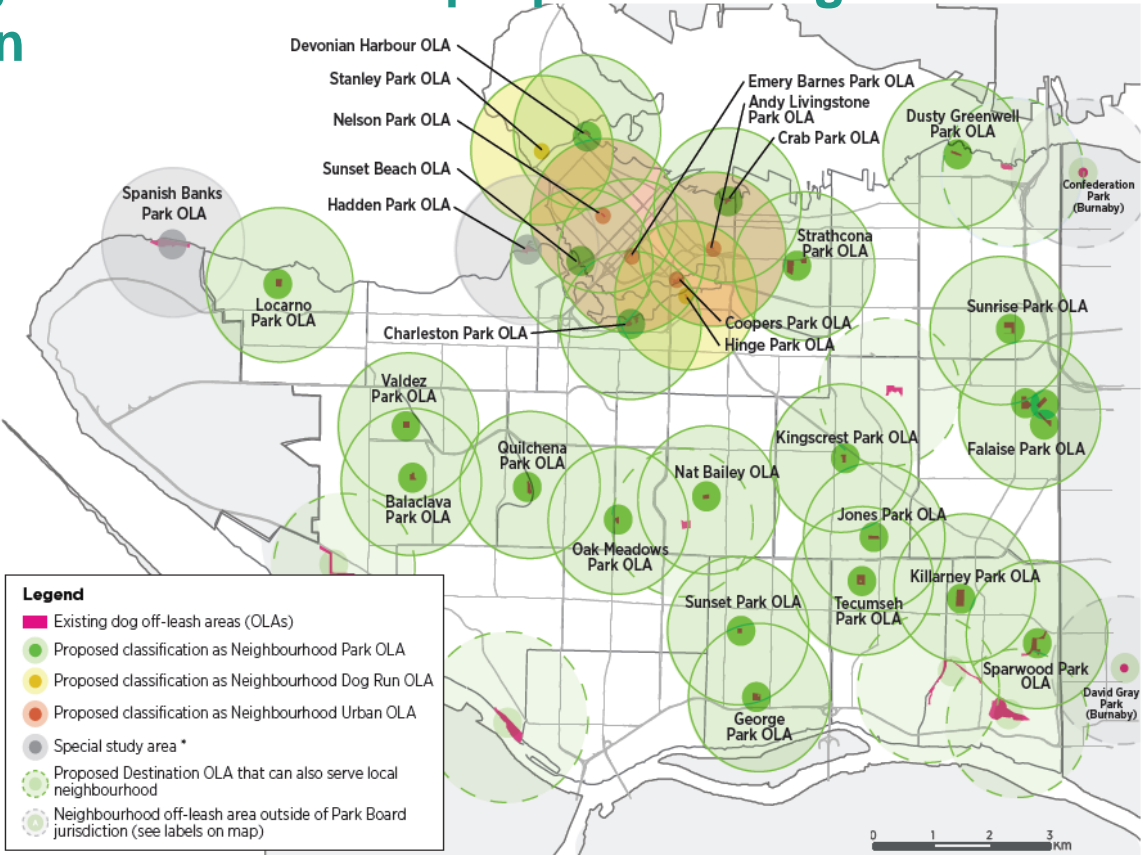
# Existing dog off-leash areas - proposed “Destination” classification



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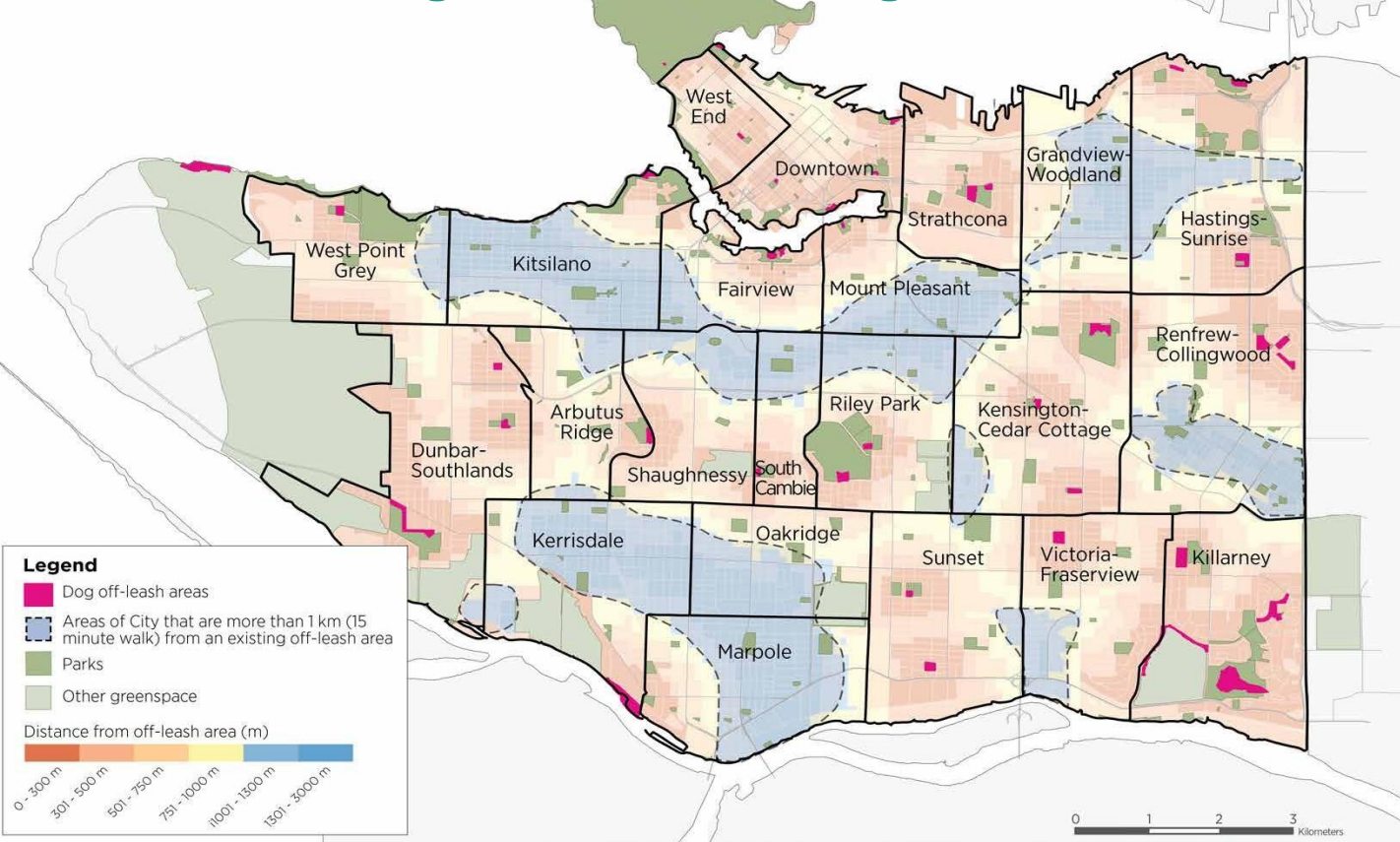
# Existing dog off-leash areas - proposed “Neighbourhood” classification



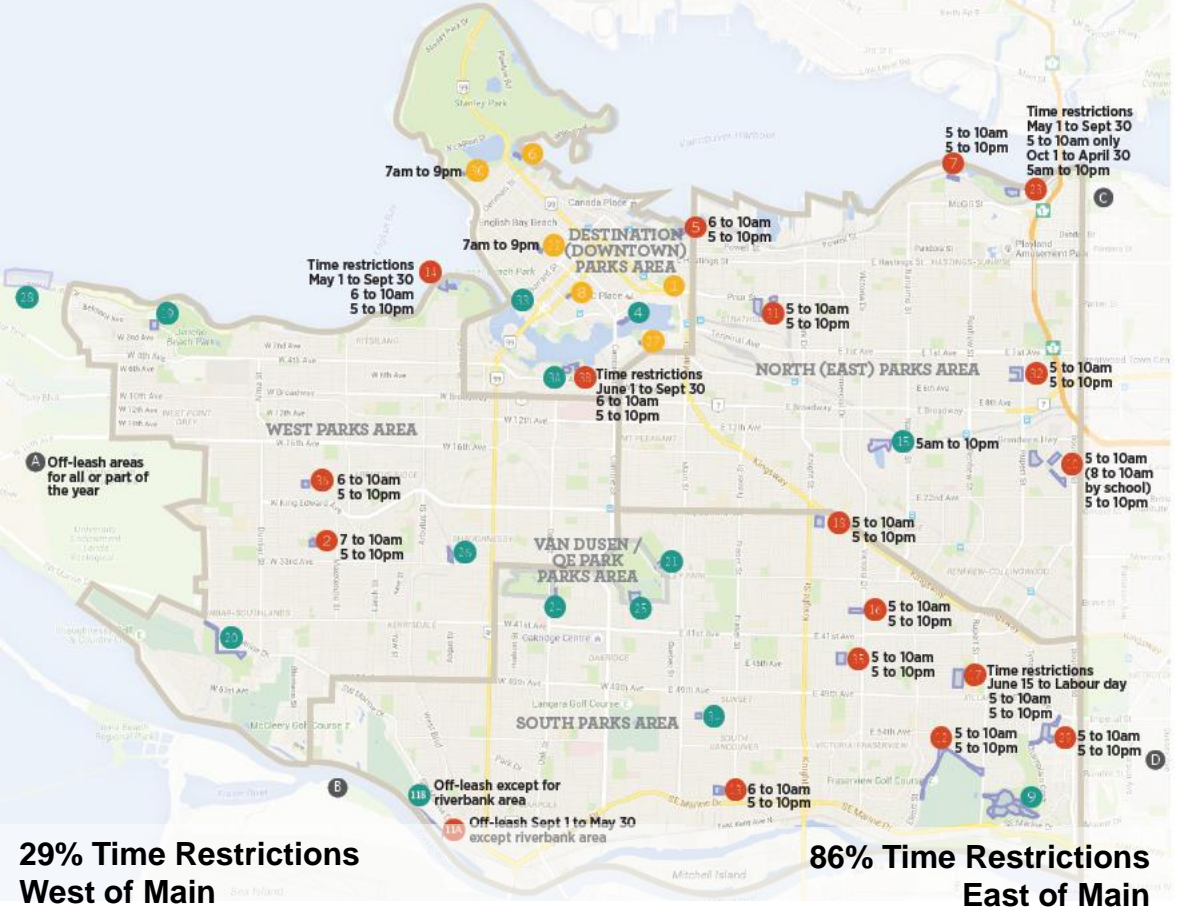
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# Underserved Neighbourhoods - target 1 km service area



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70% of survey respondents support removing time restrictions

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## 2.0 Design



Provide a variety of dog off-leash areas with clear and effective boundaries, and support the needs of people with and without dogs in parks with dog off-leash areas.

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# Make off-leash areas appealing to use

Recommendations include:



Size



Universal access



Standard & Special Amenities



Use, number and type of gates



Site Circulation



Appropriate vegetation

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# Standard Amenities

# Special Amenities

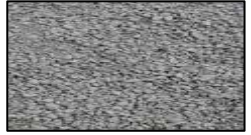


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# Surfacing Options

## Currently in Use



Fine-crushed gravel



Grass (natural turf)



Sand



Concrete



Wood Chips

## Pilot Project Recommendations



Synthetic turf ('zeofil' infill)



Grass-gravel 'schottenasen'



New types and blends of durable, drought resistant grasses

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# Clear, concise and consistent signage



**PLEASE BE COURTEOUS AND RESPECTFUL**

-  PICK UP AFTER YOUR DOG
-  KEEP DOGS FROM BEING AGGRESSIVE WITH PEOPLE AND OTHER ANIMALS
-  KEEP DOGS WITHIN SIGHT AND UNDER VOICE CONTROL

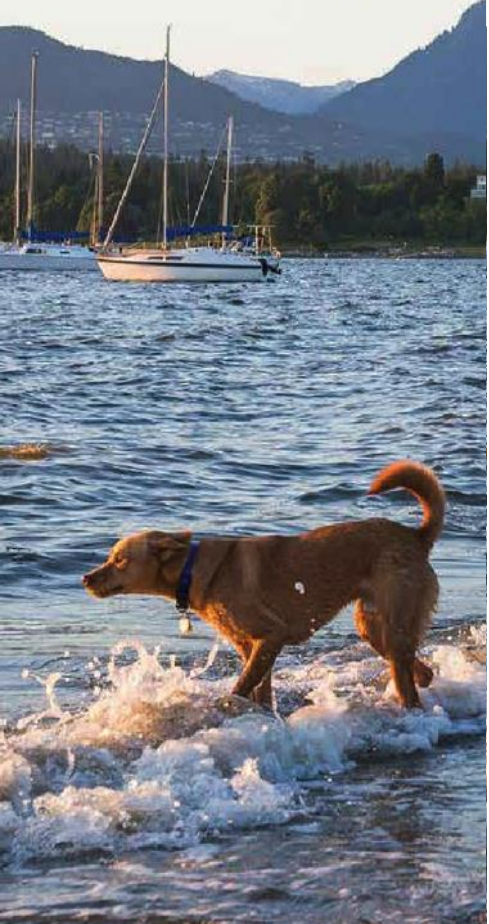
**ETIQUETTE FOR PEOPLE WITH DOGS USING DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS**

- All dogs must be licensed
- No persistent barking
- No digging
- Maximum 3 dogs per handler
- Dogs must be on leash when entering and exiting off-leash area

**FOR ALL PEOPLE USING DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS**

- Be prepared to encounter dogs off-leash
- Supervise children closely
- Limit open food
- Do not approach a dog without owner permission

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## Environmental Considerations

- Biologist assessments
- Setbacks
- Wildlife-friendly fencing
- Educational signage
- Dog waste management
- Water run-off
- Soil erosion and compaction

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# Suite of Potential Boundary Tools

Recommending site specific decisions based on site conditions and adjacent uses

## Secure Boundaries



## Non- Secure Boundaries



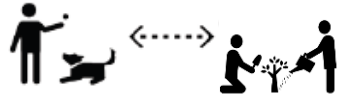
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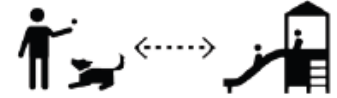
# Incompatible uses adjacent to dog off-leash areas

Secure fencing or a minimum setback of 50 to 75 meters from dog off-leash areas

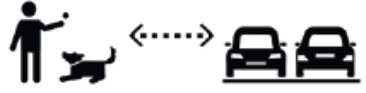
Community Gardens



Playgrounds



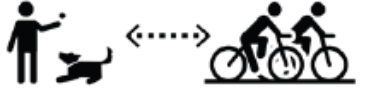
Busy Roads



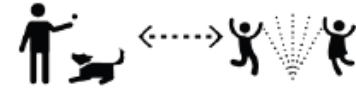
Playing Fields



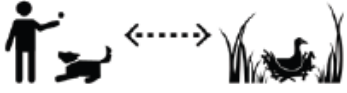
Multi-use Pathways



Splash Pads/  
Wading Pools



Environmentally Sensitive Areas



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## 3.0 Stewardship



Support the success of dog off-leash areas through effective management, communication and education.

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# Formalize resident's role in dog off-leash area stewardship

Peer education was identified as the most important role for volunteers.



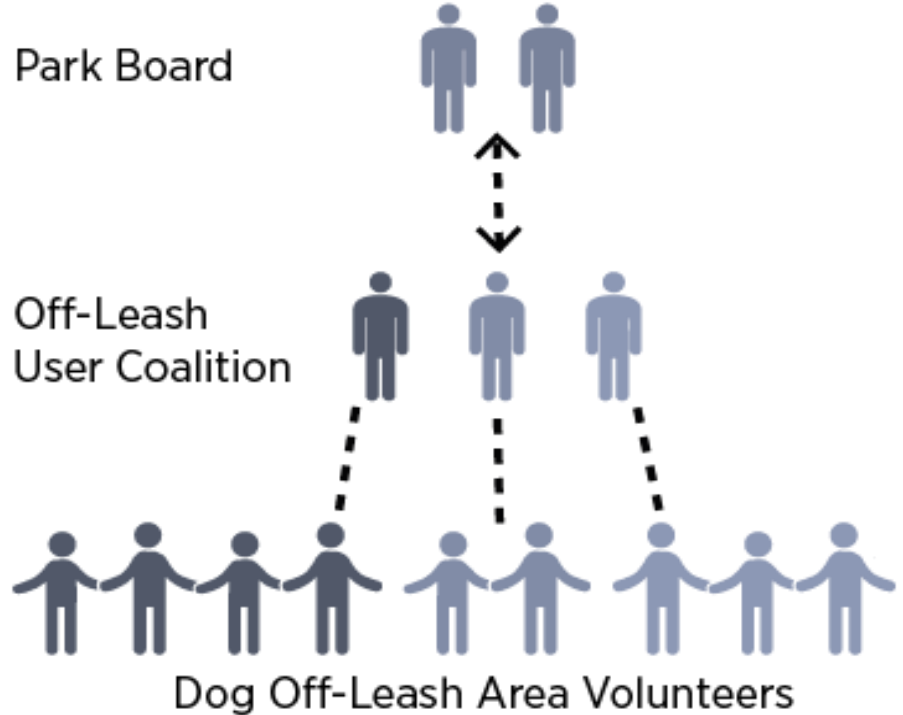
Nantwich Litter Group ([www.nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk))

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# Formalize resident's role in dog off-leash area stewardship

People who use dog off-leash areas are interested in ensuring the long-term success of those spaces.



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# 4.0 Enforcement



Improve compliance and enforcement for dog-related by-laws

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# Educational initiatives

Foster responsible dog ownership, improve understanding of dog behaviour, promote safety in off-leash areas:

- Educational signage
- Off-leash training courses
- Incentivize dog training
- Education sessions in off-leash areas
- Shared education strategies with the City



**7 REASONS TO LEASH YOUR DOG**

- 1 Dogs off-leash can approach other people ...they might be scared of dogs!
- 2 Dogs off-leash can approach other dogs ...they might need space!
- 3 Dogs off-leash can chase wildlife and trample vegetation...and cause harm (and maybe vet bills)!
- 4 Dogs and people on wheels don't mix...and can lead to accidents and injuries!
- 5 Dogs off-leash can distract drivers...you may know your dog won't run into traffic, but the driver doesn't!
- 6 Dogs off-leash can go where they're not permitted...like a playground, or road!
- 7 Dogs off-leash can be pirates...and steal food or toys!

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## Specific topics

### Parks Control Bylaw consistency with Animal Control Bylaw

- Maximum leash length
- Fines

### Powers

- Require park users to produce ID
- Improve Park Rangers' ability to ticket

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## Consultation – Events and Participation



### Round 1 Consultation

September 8 – October 14 2016

- 135 people attended four open houses
- 117 people attended four small group meetings
- 4,057 people completed surveys
- 50 people mailed or emailed feedback
- 4,373 stakeholder interactions



### Round 2 Consultation

Jan 30 – Mar 10 2017

- 104 people visited 7 in-person events
- 2,548 people filled out a survey
- 32 people mailed or emailed feedback
- 2,684 stakeholder interactions

**Over 7,000 total stakeholder interactions through consultation**

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## Consultation – Wide ranging feedback

More dog off-leash areas, equally distributed across the city that are safe and appealing.

**60%** of respondents agree with the recommended amenities, surfacing and sizes of Destination and Neighbourhood dog off-leash areas.

**70%** of respondents agree with removing time-of-use restrictions.

**65%** of respondents agree with a proposed pilot project to add off-leash hours in selected downtown parks.

Enforce keeping dogs on-leash outside allocated spaces, owners taking responsibility for dog activity and picking up dog waste.

**165** additional comments on the need for increased enforcement of bylaws.

**124** additional comments requesting improved dog waste enforcement and management.

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## Implementation - Plan

- Identifies existing less compatible adjacencies and surfacing challenges in parks with existing off-leash areas.
- Provides an estimate of probably cost for future research, consultation and in-park changes.
- Establishes a priority list linked to the next 3 capital plans.
  - Priority A – 2019-2022 Capital Plan = \$765,000 to \$3,520,000
  - Priority B – 2023-2026 Capital Plan = \$280,000 to \$1,180,000
  - Priority C – 2027-2030 Capital Plan = \$475,000 to \$1,675,000
  - Total Cost ranges from \$1,520,000 to \$6,375,000

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## Implementation

- Board updates every 2yrs, major projects approved by Board
- Quick Starts and Pilot Projects
  - Host stewardship group forum
  - New signage
  - Use guidance on new Off-leash areas under development at Sunset and Renfrew Parks.
  - Collaborate to update VanConnect
  - Remove some time of use restrictions
  - Address overlapping uses
  - New Pilot Sites: Granville Loop, George Wainbourn

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## Recommendation

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the “People, Parks & Dogs Strategy”, as outlined in this report and attached as Appendix A, to guide the planning and design for people and dogs in Vancouver parks;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the “People, Parks & Dogs Implementation Guide: Considerations for Delivery”, as outlined in this report and attached as Appendix B, to guide the implementation of the People, Parks & Dogs Strategy; and
- C. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the “Implementation Plan” for the People, Parks & Dogs Strategy, as outlined in Appendix C, to guide planning and resourcing implementation projects.

