



June 29, 2022

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Grays Park Clubhouse Deconstruction Update – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the Grays Park clubhouse deconstruction anticipated to be completed by fall 2022, with the deconstructed area being returned to public use by spring 2023. This memo also provides a discussion of off-leash dog use in Grays Park, off-leash area planning processes city-wide, and current projects underway.

Background

As noted in the [June 20, 2022 GM's report](#), a \$400,000 quarterly adjustment from the Park Washroom, Fieldhouse and Concession Renovation account was approved by Council in July 2021 to fund the deconstruction of the clubhouse building at Grays Park. The building is no longer active due to structural and environmental issues and has been deemed unsafe for occupancy. The building, as well as other existing lawn bowling site elements including a storage shed, walkways, and site furnishings, will be deconstructed and replaced with accessible, open greenspace for passive flexible community use.

The park's separate washroom building, picnic shelter and other amenities will remain in place and continue to service the community and will not be impacted by the deconstruction. The existing parking lot will be used for construction staging in order to minimize impacts to the rest of the park and will be reinstated for use once the project is completed.

After project notification signage was installed onsite, staff received a number of community concerns regarding a desire to be involved and engaged on future programming for the park, including utilizing the lawn bowl court as an off-leash dog area.

Off-Leash Dog Use

The existing lawn bowling grounds are currently being used as an unsanctioned off-leash dog area. Park Operations staff regularly lock the access gate to this area, however the lock is often removed and dogs and their owners access the space. In its current condition, the lawn bowling area does not meet the off-leash area standards as outlined in the [People, Parks and Dogs Strategy \(PPD\)](#) (pages 21-31) and the [People, Parks and Dogs Implementation Guide](#).

The process to formalize an off-leash area is clearly outlined in the PPD Strategy (page 48) and requires a number of different considerations, including:

- a public engagement process to ensure all community members can provide feedback regarding a proposed change-of-use in a park space; and
- a Board decision to support the change-of-use within an existing park.

Further to these considerations, there must also be committed capital funding for both the engagement and construction for the project.



Through mapping and analysis, the PPD strategy identified areas of the city that are underserved in terms of access to dog off-leash areas e.g. walking distance (see [PPD](#) Figure 3, page 12). Although Grays Park does sit on the edge of the a small area identified as underserved by walking distance, the area surrounding Grays Park is predominantly single family detached homes and is not currently subject to significant growth.

The current priority of the PPD Strategy is to focus on service delivery in areas of high growth and population, and significant numbers of dogs based on licensing data. Maps illustrating this data are attached to this memo as Figures 1 & 2, provided from the [People, Parks and Dogs Strategy Board report](#) (see p.13 of the Analysis Section in Appendix A, p.81 of the overall report).

Based on this information, the strategy identified six priority neighbourhoods based on the number of licensed dogs, population density, and projected growth (PPD page 19).

Current Dog Off-Leash Area Projects

There are currently five dog off-leash area [projects underway](#) in identified priority neighbourhoods. New off-leash areas at Heather Park and Granville Park as well as renewed off-leash areas at Coopers' Park, Emery Barnes Park and John Hendry Park will all serve priority neighbourhoods identified in the strategy. All five projects have undergone multiple rounds of public engagement.

Design concepts for Coopers' and John Hendry dog off-leash areas have been approved by the Board and design concepts for Heather Park, Granville Park and Emery Barnes Park are expected to be brought to the Board for decision in Q4 2022.

Park Renewal Process

In addition to the local community feedback received regarding an off-leash dog area in Grays Park, other community priorities have been expressed for the park, including removal of the unsanctioned off-leash dog area as well as a desire for a bike park. These other priorities will need to be considered when making any future changes to park programming in order to appropriately identify and prioritize improvements to the park.

The 2023-2026 Draft Capital Plan identifies \$6.3 million for park renewals. Priority projects being considered for this funding are the Strathcona Park renewal, and implementation of the first phase of the recently approved John Hendry Park Renewal Plan. Given the need for park renewals exceeds the limited funds proposed in the next capital plan, staff will be developing a prioritization approach to select which parks move forward with renewals in the next 4 years. Staff anticipate presenting these recommendations to the Board for decision early in 2023.

Next Steps

Understanding the current level of community interest in Grays Park, Park Board staff will be offering information sessions at the park where residents will be able to ask questions and learn more about the designation of off-leash areas and park renewal processes. The sessions are tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 5th and Saturday, July 9th with both morning and evening opportunities to accommodate participation of people with varying schedules.

Deconstruction of the clubhouse building and lawn bowling site elements is underway and is anticipated to be completed by fall 2022, with the new greenspace to be established by spring 2023. The construction sequence includes installation of tree protection fencing, salvage and abatement work to remove hazardous materials, deconstruction of the building, shed and hard



landscape elements, followed by landscape grading and lawn seed establishment. Staff will continue to provide updates as these projects progress.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)
General Manager - Parks and Recreation

/jm/amb/ab/is/clc

ATTACHMENTS: Figures 1 & 2

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
Park Development
People, Parks & Dog Team
PB Communications

Attachments - People, Parks and Dogs Strategy – Analysis Maps

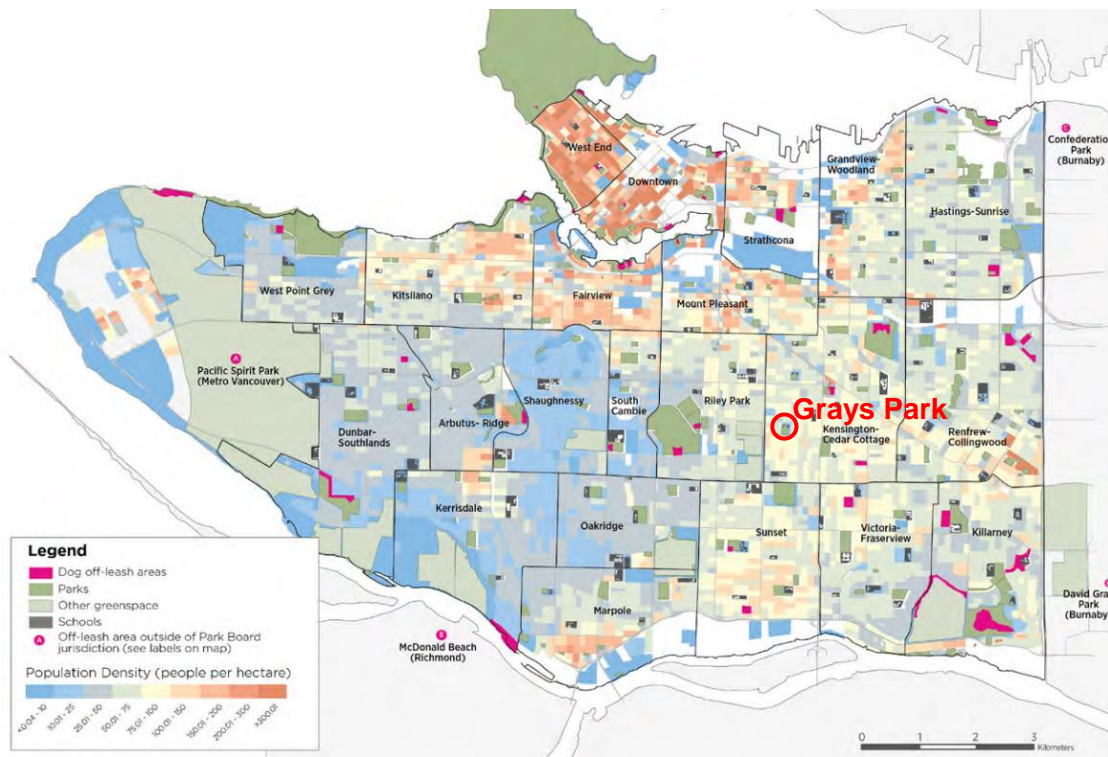


Figure 1: Distribution of people (population density) in Vancouver, based on 2011 Census data

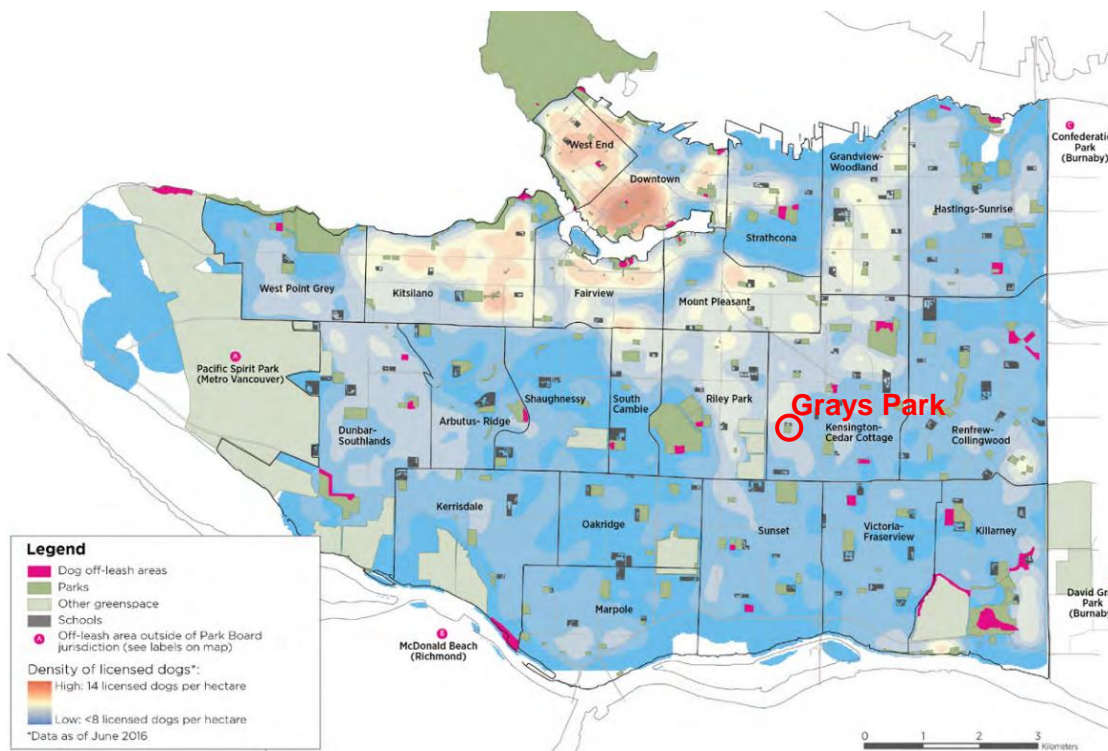


Figure 2: Distribution of licensed dogs (data from June 2016)