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**Item No.**  
**Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee**  
**January 8, 2015**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Community Planning & Economic Development  
Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed  
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Brad Anguish, Director, Parks and Recreation

**DATE:** December 15, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Eastern Passage Cow Bay Off-Leash Dog Park

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**ORIGIN**

At the October 28, 2014 Halifax Regional Council meeting, a petition was submitted requesting an off-leash area in the Eastern Passage Cow Bay area. Council passed a motion requesting “a staff report to look at options relating to a permanent, fenced off-leash dog park for the Eastern Passage Cow Bay area.”

As part of the June 24, 2014 Halifax Regional Council report “Decommissioning of Africville Off-Leash Dog Park” Council passed a motion to:

- II. Approve staff to undertake a review of the program and service levels for off-leash facilities to assess requirements, management and programming costs including the establishment of fenced off-leash dog parks

At the June 26, 2014 Halifax and West Community Council meeting, a motion was passed requesting that “staff initiate public consultation of Regatta Point for an Off-Leash dog park.”

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

- By-Law A-300 Respecting Animals & Responsible Pet Ownership the “Animal By-Law” Section 7 (2) (d).
- Halifax Regional Municipality Off-Leash Parks Strategy adopted 2007.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee forward this report to Regional Council as an information item.

## **BACKGROUND**

The HRM Off-Leash Parks Strategy allows for the consideration and development of off-leash dog areas in municipal parks. Currently there are seven permanent off-leash facilities and thirty five seasonally restricted off-leash facilities within Halifax municipal parks. Recent discussion surrounding the off-leash area from Africville Park has raised some questions around Halifax's off-leash area service levels. Regional Council has requested a review of off-leash services which is currently underway. A new service request was also made by Halifax and West Community Council on June 26, 2014 requesting staff to initiate the process to establish an off-leash park at Regatta Point. That off-leash park request has been folded into the overall Off-Leash Service Review requested by Regional Council. That action has been communicated to Halifax and West Community Council through an information report dated July 18, 2014.

## **DISCUSSION**

Similar to the Regatta Point request, staff believes that the request for an off-leash dog park in Eastern Passage would benefit from the program and service review which will identify the existing program and service successes and gaps as well as recommend required solutions to meet community needs for off-leash areas. Staff will be considering requirements for additional off-leash facilities, including the need and potential for off-leash service in Eastern Passage as part of that process. The Service Review will take a regional perspective to identify where and how off-leash services could be provided to better address both regional-scale and community-scale needs and will not just focus on areas where there are current requests by Council for new off-leash facilities. The outcome of the service review will provide strategic and tactical direction for Council in allocating future off-leash program investments.

The Service Review is expected to be brought to Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee in February 2015.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications at this time. The review of program and service levels will identify probability of costs if there are found to be any service gaps.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The approved 2007 Off-Leash Strategy outlines a process involving public engagement in the creation of any new off-leash areas. The Service Review report that has been requested by Council will recommend future community engagement requirements.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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