



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 14.3.3
Halifax Regional Council
December 1, 2015

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:  Original Signed
Councillor Wayne Mason, Chair, Community Planning and Economic
Development Standing Committee

DATE: November 20, 2015

SUBJECT: Off-Leash Parks Strategy Review

ORIGIN

Motion passed at the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting on November 19, 2015

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 5 (c) of the Committee's Terms of Reference - Overseeing the progress on the Municipality's Community building and enhancing strategies and any related initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Establish the Off-Leash Park Program as permanent service to be considered as part of annual HRM business planning and budgeting process;
2. Direct staff to develop an Off-Leash Dog Parks Administrative Order (AO) that will replace the Off-Leash Dog Parks Strategy 2007 by establishing: policy objectives, service level requirements, and minimum criteria and procedures for the provision of off-leash facilities based on the Off-Leash Dog Parks Strategy 2007 with the changes and actions outlined in Attachment 1 of the staff report dated November 9, 2015.

BACKGROUND

A staff report and presentation was provided to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee on the Off-Leash Parks Strategy Review at the Committee's November 19, 2015 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Committee considered the report and endorsed the staff recommendation to proceed with the Off-Leash Park Program and to recommend to Regional Council that staff develop an Off-Leash Dog Parks Administrative Order.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are addressed in the attached staff report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is addressed in the attached staff report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental implications are addressed in the attached staff report.

ALTERNATIVES

The Committee did not provide alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff report dated November 9, 2015

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant, (902) 490-6520

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. **9.1.6**
Community Planning and Economic
Development Standing Committee
November 19, 2015

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

SUBMITTED BY: Original signed by:

Brad Anguish, Director, Parks & Recreation

DATE: November 9, 2015

SUBJECT: Off-Leash Parks Strategy Review

ORIGIN

- June 24, 2014 Halifax Regional Council motion:
Moved by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that staff 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.
- June 26, 2014 Halifax and West Community Council motion:
Moved by Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Walker that staff initiate public consultation of Regatta Point for an off leash dog park.
- October 28, 2014 Halifax Regional Council meeting:
A petition was submitted requesting an off-leash area in the Eastern Passage area.
- October 28, 2014 Halifax Regional Council motion:
Moved by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that Halifax Regional Council request a staff report to look at options relating to a permanent fenced off-leash dog park for the Eastern Passage Cow Bay area.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, Sections:
 - 61(3) The property vested in the Municipality, absolutely or in trust, is under the exclusive management and control of the Council, unless an Act of the Legislature provides otherwise; and
 - 193 (1): Without limiting the generality of Section 188, the Council may make by-laws regulating the running at large of dogs, including permitting the running at large of dogs in certain places or at certain times;

.....Recommendation on Page 2

- By-law A-700, Respecting Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership
- By-Law P-600 Respecting Municipal Parks, Sections 3 and 12;
- Halifax Regional Municipality Off-Leash Parks Strategy adopted by Regional Council 2007.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Establish the Off-Leash Park Program as a permanent service to be considered as part of annual HRM business planning and budgeting process;
2. Direct staff to develop an Off-Leash Dog Parks Administrative Order (AO) that will replace the Off-Leash Dog Parks Strategy 2007 by establishing
policy objectives, service level requirements, and minimum criteria and procedures for the provision of off-leash facilities based on the Off-Leash Dog Parks Strategy 2007 with the changes and actions outlined in Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

In June 2014, when addressing the decommissioning of the Africville Park off-leash area, Regional Council directed staff to undertake a review of the program and service levels for off-leash facilities to assess requirements, management and costs of the program including the potential establishment of fenced off-leash dog parks. The current off-leash service levels are guided primarily by the Off-Leash Parks Strategy (the Strategy) adopted by Council in 2007 as a pilot program to guide the designation of seven new off-leash areas (OLAs) in selected major parks and seasonal use sportsfields. It also served as guidance for assessing new requests for off-leash areas. The Strategy was established as a two-year pilot to create HRM's first OLAs, to monitor their short-term effectiveness, and to develop a longer-term strategy for the delivery of the service. The aim was to review the pilot in 2009 and establish a more permanent off-leash program. However, that review did not take place and the pilot in its original form has continued to guide the administration of off-leash service delivery.

The program and service review provides a high-level assessment of the Strategy and its current relevance in advancing HRM's ongoing delivery of off-leash service. This report identifies the findings of that assessment, outlines areas within the current program that could be adjusted to deliver the service more effectively and efficiently, and makes recommendations for Council's consideration to advance the Off-Leash Program. High level cost estimates to advance the program have also been included. Overall, the objectives of the off-leash service review were to better understand:

1. Current service levels and programming framework for the provision of off-leash facilities;
2. Current community needs and anticipated future needs for off-leash service; and
3. Strategic direction and outcomes for the future delivery of the off-leash parks program.

As a result of the completed review, proposed directions and recommended solutions are being presented through this report. Pending Council's approval of the proposed direction, a draft Administrative Order (AO) establishing the policy objectives along with the resulting program and service requirements would be prepared for Council's consideration in order to provide a fully updated and resourced off-leash program. It is expected that the draft AO would be able to be presented to Regional Council in the spring of 2016.

In June and October 2014, Halifax and West Community Council and Regional Council also directed staff to proceed with the process to consider new off-leash areas at Regatta Point and Eastern Passage/Cow Bay, respectively. Subsequent staff information reports were submitted which indicated that those requests for new off-leash service be deferred until the broader off-leash program and service review has

been completed. This review identified the potential service deficiencies in those areas and subsequent recommendations have been outlined in this report. Further, a petition was presented to Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council on February 5, 2015 requesting that the OLA at Shubie Park's Sunrise Beach be decommissioned. An information report to Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council on July 30, 2015 identified that information from that petition will be used as part of the service review.

DISCUSSION

This review takes a regional perspective to identify where and how off-leash services could be provided to address both regional and community needs. As a result, it does not focus solely on areas where there are current requests by Council or the community for new or changes to off-leash facilities. The outcome of the service review provides strategic direction for Council in terms of identifying needs, evaluating solutions and planning for improved infrastructure performance.

Beginning in September 2014, information was gathered through the following methods:

- an on-line survey and public engagement
- assessment of park operations in support of OLAs
- 2013 PPP user survey
- spatial assessment of off-leash facility types and distribution
- population distribution and dog licensing data
- 311 enforcement and parks patrol data
- review of the current pilot strategy criteria and procedures
- research of off-leash dog park programs in other cities
- review of program delivery costs

Overall, the results of this review indicate that while the current program is working well, some adjustments are needed for the off-leash program to better meet community needs and HRM's objectives. These include a stronger policy framework, updated planning and development criteria, and clearer procedures for receiving and approving off-leash requests. The implementation of a full program also requires capital and operating budget support to advance off-leash service as an ongoing effectively resourced program.

Off-leash parks have operated largely without conflict, with issues being able to be managed through operations and enforcement. However, there are some issues, particularly in the more heavily used parks, which require efforts to remedy concerns related to sanitation, safety, and other compliance and programming matters. Although these issues are not the norm (the large majority of off-leash users respect the rules), the potential for the minority to have a negative impact on the park and surrounding areas is a concern.

The three "E's" under the 2007 Strategy; education, enforcement, and environment (the right site for the use), can work well to manage operational issues. While all three of these components have been put into place, this review indicated areas where general improvements can be made to the overall program and specific recommendations pertaining to Shubie and Point Pleasant can be implemented. Some of these have already been actioned such as the Parks Patrol Pilot in PPP, adjustments to off-leash areas and signage in Shubie Park and a concerted focus regarding on site education of users by Animal Control. Additional improvements will be actioned as necessary.

The review of the Strategy included several components including:

- Current Program Context
- Community Input
- Education & Enforcement Review
- Level of Service Review
- Service Costs

- Advancement of the Off Leash Program

Current Program Context

In order to understand the current program context, the review considered the objectives, decision-making framework, and procedures under the 2007 Off-Leash Parks Strategy as well as supporting by-law regulation. The 2007 pilot is based on a mixed (or shared) use, low cost model where all users of a park space can benefit from a variety of recreation experiences. Further, the idea of “dedicated dog parks for the exclusive use of off-leash dogs and their owners” was not felt to be warranted. Since the extent of the required service and public demand was not fully understood, the pilot was developed to gauge that demand.

Municipal parks are predominantly planned and programmed as multi-use spaces serving a broad range of outdoor recreation, social and cultural functions and values. During the pilot, staff worked with the community to find low cost options where an off-leash activity could be integrated into a park without extensive capital investment in infrastructure. Recently, Council's direction to develop the Mainland Common dedicated off-leash dog park as a replacement to the Africville OLA has shifted that model. Its creation in January of 2015 has provided a better understanding of the role “dedicated dog parks” can play within the municipal system.

2007 Off-Leash Parks Strategy

The introduction of the Strategy in 2007 recognized the need to pilot a number of parks in different formats for off-leash use and to monitor their effectiveness over a two-year period. Since then, OLAs have generally been well received with thousands of visits each week. As a result, dog owners tend to be some of the most consistent users of municipal parks.

The existing municipal OLAs are outlined in Attachment 2. There are currently seven year-round shared-use off-leash areas located in major urban parks plus one dedicated off-leash dog-park at the Halifax Mainland Common. There are also 28 shared use sports-fields designated for seasonal off-leash use. In addition, HRM has one permanent fenced off-leash dog-park dedicated for service dogs located at Ardmore Park on Oxford Street. There is also a private user-pay off-leash dog park in Lucasville which provides an alternative service option.

Year-round (permanent) OLAs have been located in parks that can support multiple recreation uses due to their size, amenity, and environmental conditions. These support needs at a regional and district level. Seasonal OLAs have been permitted on sports-fields that are not scheduled in the off-season or those that are underused at certain hours of the day during the playing season. These fields supplement the network of permanent OLAs and tend to attract users at the local community level within closer proximity.

Current Program Administration

The administration of the off-leash program is coordinated by the Parks and Recreation Business Unit and implemented through an interdepartmental off-leash dog park committee which was established under the 2007 Pilot. Maintenance and enforcement at OLAs are carried out as regular parks operations and municipal compliance department functions. The rules for off-leash use are enforced through random patrols of off-leash parks and citizen complaints. Dog licencing is used to monitor the dog population and to align with service requirements. Currently, Halifax issues approximately 16,000 dog licenses per year which is estimated to represent one-third of HRM's dog population (using Census Canada data). It is important to understand that, under the by-law, all dogs in off-leash areas must be licenced.

Responsible Park Use & By-law Enforcement

Core to the off-leash service provision is responsible pet ownership and park use. There are two municipal by-laws that apply to off-leash areas: By-law A-700, Respecting Animals and Responsible Pet

Ownership, and By-law P-600, Respecting Municipal Parks. Users of off-leash areas must comply with both by-laws.

By-law A-700 came into force on November 14, 2015, replacing A-300 and incorporating several changes including items related to fines, registrations and noise. Owners are required to license their dogs, including special provisions for the licensing of service dogs. It also requires an owner to pick up after their dog, prohibits dogs from damaging public or private property, requires an owner to not knowingly permit their dog to make noise excessively, and prohibits dogs from attacking people or other animals. By-law A-700 also prohibits a dog from running at large, except in a municipal park where the area is designated by signage as an area where dogs are permitted to be without a leash and subject to such limitations as are posted.

By-law P-600 permits HRM to post signs in municipal parks specifying an area where specific activities are permitted, prohibited or restricted, and requires people to obey each prohibition and restriction posted on a sign. Off-leash areas are designated by sign with special rules that are unique to off-leash areas posted and enforced under By-law P-600.

The Municipality also delivers an education element within its overall enforcement program to help reinforce compliance within off-leash areas. The aim of education is to deliver clear and consistent messages to the public concerning OLA designations, rules of use, and general park etiquette for dog-related park uses. Education efforts are typically carried out through regular pro-active park patrols. Notwithstanding municipal education efforts, owners are responsible for their own behavior and the behavior of their dogs.

Current Process to Create or Alter an Off-leash Area

Under the Strategy, off-leash service provision is request based. Requests for new off-leash service or a change to an existing OLA are received from a community group, Community Council or Regional Council. This demand-based approach to service provision aligns with the Parks and Recreation business model. However, multiple avenues for requests can cause confusion related to process, priority and authority to create or alter off-leash areas for the public, staff and Council. The most successful and transparent dealings with off-leash area creation or closure during the pilot occurred through the Regional or Community Council process. Under that process, the council direction then triggers a preliminary (tier I) review to determine any potential service deficiency and a subsequent report back to Council with a recommendation. Where a potential gap in service is identified through a tier 1 review, a tier II review of need and opportunity (land + resources) can take place, at the direction of Council, including public consultation. Budgets are then allocated through the business and budget planning process, if required. This approach is consistent with other services provided by Parks and Recreation.

The pilot contains principles, goals and objectives to guide the planning and development of OLAs. The general park classification where the off-leash service exists (community, district or regional) is used. Generally under this approach and in conjunction with criteria which recommends a minimum of 2.4 acres (1 hectare) for shared off-leash areas, OLAs have been located in district or regional parks and community sports-fields. Generally due to their size, neighbourhood parks have been excluded from hosting off-leash areas. Currently, there is no typology for off-leash parks based on their function and the community they are meant to serve. However, the collection of current OLAs is evolving with regional parks tending to provide natural areas for dog walking and community sportfields providing areas for play and socialization. The dedicated dog park at the Mainland Common provides a secure and controlled environment for dogs that are being trained and younger dogs that might have difficulty in a more mixed use environment. The consultations with users during the pilot illustrated that owners want these types of choices.

Planning and development criteria for locating, siting and developing OLAs and the process for community input were established through the 2007 Strategy. A combined standards-based and needs-

based approach is used to guide decision-making for the addition of new off-leash service or a service change. For example, minimum requirements for siting off-leash parks include shared use park size, buffering from schools, community centres and residences with no dogs permitted within children's playgrounds or cemeteries. Guidelines also include generally not permitting off-leash dogs in environmentally sensitive areas or cultural/memorial sites. However, a lack of criteria for assessing and identifying those sensitive areas is a weakness under the current Strategy. The Strategy also did not account for potential needs in areas where larger size parkland is rare and the only available option is a smaller off-leash area potentially serving a smaller population.

Community Input

The program and service review also included a two week on-line survey, conducted in September 2014, to gauge satisfaction rates of OLAs and to highlight common issues and opportunities to help guide future decision-making (Attachment 4). The results of a 2013 general survey for PPP and input from community meetings held in the fall of 2014 were also considered to help understand community needs and opportunities.

Survey findings include:

- While the existing selection of OLAs is effective in providing a basic level of off-leash service for the community, the desire for fenced OLA opportunities has been raised
- Survey respondents who identified themselves as off-leash users primarily lived within the serviced areas of the municipality where residential properties tend to be smaller
- Most dog owners drive to OLAs
- There is a desire to see more OLAs more strategically distributed for improved access
- There is a desire for safer, more accessible dog parks for all users and persons with disabilities
- The overall quality of OLAs was raised as an issue affecting the park experience both for people with dogs and without dogs including crowding in some parks and certain limitations of shared-use OLAs
- The importance of OLAs as highly social spaces for both people and their dogs along with the need for design and amenities to foster a positive recreation experience within these spaces
- Issues around animal control, safety, sanitation and dog waste were raised
- The importance of supplementing enforcement with public education
- There appears to be a willingness of owners to contribute to the cost of off-leash area service improvements through their annual dog licence

The input from community aligns with the broad findings under the program and service review. Similar overall findings include a desire for more strategically located and programmed OLAs; a desire for remediation of ongoing issues around pet waste management particularly in the heavier used off-leash parks and increased safety through fencing options. Finally, a stronger focus on education and enforcement was requested to the benefit of both dog and non-dog owners.

Education & Enforcement Review

Good park etiquette and responsible dog ownership should be emphasized more through targeted and consistent education and communication as part of the ongoing delivery of the program. This will lower compliance issues and improve the overall enjoyment for people using HRM's parks. The rules of park use, along with other park etiquette matters, should be promoted as part of a proactive communications and education strategy. Although HRM's Municipal Compliance division has implemented proactive patrols of parks resulting in a combination of education and enforcement interventions, the delivery of a targeted education strategy has not taken place since the pilot was launched.

It is also important that the rules are clear, consistent across parks, and enforceable under the by-laws. In moving forward, it is important that the rules of use within a park are understood, posted and respected by users. Some of the current OLAs do not have all of the rules posted on signage which can hamper

enforcement efforts. Installing consistent and visible signs in all OLA's is an early opportunity for program improvement.

To understand off-leash compliance, enforcement data was reviewed to determine areas of concern and for improvement. Overall, the registered complaints are relatively low. However, conflicts have been identified particularly in the larger more heavily used parks including PPP, Shubie Park, and more recently Sandy Lake Park (Attachment 5). These issues are primarily related to animal behaviour, barking, dog waste management, and respect for the off-leash boundaries. A 2013 survey in PPP, the largest and heaviest used off-leash area, demonstrated that there was a 90% awareness of the park rules including off-leash requirements. Yet complaints around non-compliance have been on the rise. Such observations reinforce the need for focussed, balanced and consistent operational support including visible signage, enforcement and education efforts.

There may also be programming issues within certain parks that require a more comprehensive review to identify operational solutions to alleviate or lower conflicts and ensure a good balance between those with dogs and those without. In this regard, Shubie Park and PPP would benefit from a broader review to determine any needed program or operational adjustments to assist the ongoing success of off-leash activity and other recreational uses within the parks. A park patrol pilot which has recently been launched in PPP will provide further insights into off-leash activity including any issues and opportunities within the park for improved programming and service delivery.

Level of Service (LOS) Review

The service level for off-leash parks should reflect the goals of the community and a range of objectives that are important to the Municipality. By assessing the current program and LOS context, this review has identified strengths and weaknesses along with recommended changes that should be considered in a permanent off-leash program. While the existing network of OLAs provides multiple options for off-leash activity, there are indications that some program and LOS adjustments are required to keep pace with evolving needs for more accessible and diverse parks as well as recreation services and facilities.

The components reviewed in order to inform LOS recommendations include:

- Best Practices & Trends
- Park Distribution & Type
- Service Gaps
- Fenced Off-Leash Areas

Best Practices & Trends

Dog ownership statistics indicate that dogs are important companions with the number of households owning a canine increasing. Further, urbanizing of communities in North America continues. As these factors continue to increase, so does the need for dog-friendly open spaces.

The approach to providing off-leash spaces varies widely across the country and while best practices can be drawn from the siting and development of facilities and public process, benchmarking is not useful due to the wide variation in program scope, funding and management. By-law regulation and public education among municipalities is fairly standard with respect to the control of dogs and disposal of dog waste. Commonalities can also be drawn from the fact that most cities seek to strike a balance between mixed-use parks that offers off-leash zones and dedicated off-leash dog parks (fenced or unfenced). However, the extent to which cities are providing fenced and/or dedicated off-leash dog parks is inconsistent. Some only provide fenced OLAs, while others have few-to-no fenced areas (HRM included). Most municipalities are faced with rising community expectations for a higher quality and quantity of OLAs in urbanizing communities.

Park Distribution and Type

To maintain quality service and keep costs minimal, OLAs are generally distributed in urban areas where population densities and number of dog owners are the highest and where the location of the facility is accessible to many people. A spatial inventory and evaluation of the current distribution of OLAs was conducted to understand current service levels and potential deficiencies. The current LOS and policy framework within the Strategy enables essentially one type of OLA, which is shared-use off-leash activity within a mixed-use park setting or sports-field for seasonal use. In order to develop a well-distributed and properly programmed network of off-leash facilities that can serve the needs of the regional population, as well as specific communities, a typology of OLAs and level of service framework is recommended (Attachment 1).

In terms of land resources, the availability of parks and open space lands in higher density urban neighbourhoods can be challenging. However, these communities can have the highest need for off-leash service due to a lack of private or common yard space. Multiple park-uses can vie for the same lands, therefore, strategic planning and programming for these spaces is required. As well, OLAs at the local level could be considered on available municipal lands where the off-leash use can co-exist with neighbouring uses and other park needs through careful siting, design, and monitoring. In order to advance more strategic off-leash programming, appropriate planning and development criteria needs to be outlined as part of an AO framework. Inclusion of OLAs as a service within the municipal parks system will also assist Council in making park investment choices and better align operational and planning resources to OLAs similar to other park services.

Service Gaps

This service review included a regional and community-wide assessment of the distribution of current off-leash areas using population distribution and density along with dog licensing data (Attachment 3). This paired with input from the community survey, has identified areas of potential service deficiency and opportunity for introducing new and/or adjusted off-leash service.

In 2014, Regional Council and Halifax and West Community Council requested an evaluation of the need and feasibility for a new fenced OLA in the Eastern Passage/Cow Bay community and an OLA in Regatta Park, respectively. These requests have been reviewed in the overall program and service review. Based on a preliminary assessment; potential service deficiencies (indicating the highest regional need) have been identified in these areas.

Using a two kilometre service radius to identify where OLAs are absent or limited, and based on current requests from Community and Council indicating need, the areas that show potential service gaps include Eastern Passage and Purcell's Cove/Spryfield. Based on the tier 1 (preliminary) assessment of population density, number of licenced dogs, and current provision of off-leash service, these requests are congruent with the findings under the service review. Therefore, the current requests should be advanced to the next step of assessment to determine community input, land availability and more details of off-leash service needs in those particular communities. The result of these recommended reviews may not support the provision of an OLA within those communities or on the specific lands proposed as the review would consider multiple factors including community input and prioritization of park needs across a regional service area. It is also important to establish the right type of facility for the need including the target user-base and the appropriate LOS to meet that need. Therefore, the proposed OLA typology is a key component to future decision-making (Attachment 1).

It should be noted that not all areas can or should be serviced with an OLA, or a specific type of OLA, in a given time-frame, therefore broad community engagement, and prioritization of park service provision is essential. Furthermore, since off-leash service delivery is primarily an urban service, the provision of any new high priority facilities should be focussed on servicing communities within or close to the Urban Service boundary.

Fenced Off-Leash Areas

The current Strategy does not allow for the use of additional fencing to specifically create OLAs. At the time of creation of the Strategy, fencing was restricted as a result of concerns of additional costs, impact to park layouts, potential abdication of owner responsibility and limitations or exclusion to other park uses. However, there are strong arguments for the use of fencing in certain park settings. While staff recommend continuing with a primarily mixed use (or shared-use) park model for OLAs, the LOS should be amended to allow for the option for fencing in appropriate park settings. This would include the provision of a distribution of fenced, dedicated off-leash dog areas within the overall service provision.

When considering fencing in an OLA, it is necessary to determine the types of OLAs where fencing would be appropriate. There are two types of fenced OLAs that are supported as a result of the service review results; mixed-use park fenced OLAs and fenced dedicated off-leash dog parks. The use of fences pertains to two purposes: 1) to provide areas where dogs can be safe, not run into streets and other areas where they may be harmed, or not disturb other activities such as competitions; and 2) to cordon off an area to create a dedicated area for dogs and their owners in order to create a controlled environment exclusive of other uses. This is especially appropriate for younger dogs, dogs being trained or socialized and dogs who are a flight risk. Neither purpose is necessarily tied to the other.

Mixed-Use Park Fenced OLAs:

Fencing within a mixed-use park setting would primarily be used to decrease user conflict by providing some separation between incongruent park uses and to improve safety for dogs and people near high traffic areas. Fenced OLAs within a mixed-use park would be particularly beneficial in smaller urban parks in high density communities where alternative land for off-leash use is limited. In these situations, fencing could enable off-leash use to be incorporated into the existing park setting without compromising other park uses. Fencing could also be utilized to protect high value open space lands where off-leash dogs could compromise ecological or cultural values. There are, however, areas where such as an identified commemorative or cultural site, highly sensitive environmental site, or recreational site where a no-dogs or dogs on-leash requirement should be applied. Detailed decision-making criteria for these scenarios would come forward through the proposed AO.

Fenced Dedicated Off-Leash Dog Parks:

Dedicated dog parks are developed where off-leash dogs are the primary or special purpose use. Dedicated off-leash dog parks differ from mixed-use off-leash areas in that other activities are generally excluded. All of HRM's current OLAs, with the exception of the Mainland Common dedicated dog-park, are classified as mixed-use OLAs. Depending on the location of a dedicated dog-park, the setting and the service target (district or regional), a dedicated park can be fenced or un-fenced. Most dedicated dog parks allow the non-dog owning public who wish to interact with dogs access. A distinction would need to be made as to whether any future dedicated off-leash dog parks are to be designated as exclusive off-leash-only parks where other users would not be permitted. A user-pay model could also be employed in these situations.

Service Costs

Off-leash service is only one component of the overall service delivery under the Parks and Recreation program and must be considered within a broader financial context. The current off-leash program's relatively low operating cost is attributed mainly to the shared-use park model and the provision of only basic infrastructure and amenities. These include signage, garbage cans and dog bag dispensers (in the major parks). As a result, capital and operating expenditures have been minimal. However, as the program matures and expands, additional costs could be expected. Park infrastructure such as pathways, fencing and lighting along with enhanced amenities such as specialized furniture and landscaping can require a higher operational service standard. As the program expands, resourcing for educational and enforcement efforts will also need to keep pace. Costs to establish and operate OLAs depend on a host of variables, including materials (e.g., grass, sand, gravel, wood chips), size of fenced area, type of fencing, character and composition of the land and infrastructure. The following provides a high level

understanding of expected costs to maintain the status quo versus potential enhancements to the LOS as warranted.

Annual Program Costs:

Current operating costs to deliver the existing LOS for the off-leash program are estimated at \$135,000 per year. This is based on the current base LOS utilizing 28 seasonal-use sportsfields and 6 shared-use OLAs located in mixed-use district and regional parks, plus the enhanced LOS delivered through 1 dedicated fenced off-leash dog park located at the Mainland Common. The breakdown of operating costs includes:

- Park Operations - \$55,000 (including litter collection, maintenance and repair, and dog waste bags);
- Municipal Compliance - \$40,000 for education and enforcement; and
- Parks Planning - \$40,000 for programming assessment and review.

Capital costs to deliver and maintain the existing LOS is estimated at \$20,000 per year based on infrastructure replacement and maintenance such as garbage cans, signage, furniture (primarily for the Mainland Common dedicated off-leash dog park) and dog bag dispensers. A one-time capital cost of \$35,000 (including installation) would be required to add rules signage to all existing OLAs to bring them up to a consistent standard.

With the enhanced LOS outlined in this report, both operating and capital costs would increase annually. Operating cost increase would be attributed to a higher number of OLAs, plus increased labour associated with any additional dedicated off-leash dog parks with enhanced infrastructure and operational standards such as winter maintenance. Based on the Mainland Common example, high level annual capital costs for new OLAs requiring infrastructure investment can be estimated at a cost of \$40,000 per acre of fenced, dedicated off-leash dog area including amenities. Operating costs would increase accordingly depending on the type and number of OLAs introduced each year. For example, using the above cost estimates and assuming an enhanced LOS is adopted which introduces 20 acres of fenced OLA, a five-year estimated budget would be \$1.6 million dollars. This cost can be broken down to \$900,000 capital and \$700,000 operating (over 5 years). This includes the provision of new OLAs in the service gap areas identified in this report (fenced or un-fenced) plus potential fencing of existing mixed-use park OLAs where better separation of uses and enhanced safety is needed. However, it should be noted that these costs assume that HRM owns the land used for the off leash service. Any requirement to obtain land for the service would significantly increase the costs.

The outcome of this strategy would be a more equitable regional distribution of OLAs and diversity of facilities. At the end of the 5-year strategy, the estimated ongoing annual program operational cost is estimated to be \$150,000 - \$200,000, based on current service level costs. Specialized amenities specific for dogs (e.g., play structures) should not be considered as part of the Municipality's off-leash service delivery. With Council's direction, funding options could be explored for the provision of dedicated off-leash dog parks including the potential for a user-pay system.

Advancement of the Off-Leash Program

The results of this program and service review indicate that changes are needed to advance HRM's off-leash program. The demand for off-leash facilities is increasing which is a reflection of shifts in population, demographics and recreation preferences. The related demands for park land and financial resources to accommodate off-leash use, along with multiple recreation activities, stress the need for strategic park programming and investment. The current goal of HRM's off-leash program is to respond to the needs of dog owners in balance with other park and recreation uses and priorities. This is an equitable model that should be continued, however, recognition of off-leash activity as a recreation program is important so it is given a regular consideration along with other recreation needs. Although the current pilot strategy has worked to advance community requests, a more strategic multi-district approach to planning off-leash

areas would improve the outcomes for HRM's park users. Furthermore, current standards for parks planning and development do not explicitly recognize off-leash use as a parks and recreation function. This leaves little opportunity to consider off-leash opportunities through formal parkland planning and the development of new and transitioning urban communities.

A full list of recommend changes and actions to advance the Off-Leash Program are contained in Attachment 1 and summarized below.

Key Findings & Recommended Actions:

As a result of the review, the following findings and subsequent recommended actions have been determined:

- The off-leash pilot program should be replaced with a permanent service of off-leash areas.
- An AO framework should be developed to establish the program purpose, policy direction, and minimum requirements for off-leash service delivery.
- The service should continue to be based on a high level of owner responsibility for their dogs as required under by-laws and parks regulations.
- Shared-use (mixed use) parks should continue as the primary means of off-leash service delivery.
- The service should continue to pursue a balanced "Three E" approach to education, enforcement and environment.
- Enhancements to the current off-leash service levels must to be based on proven needs.
- LOS should be amended to allow for fenced off-leash areas when required by site specific circumstances.
- Strategically located dedicated dog parks should be options for users and considered when appropriate.
- The demand-driven model of communities requesting off-leash service should continue, however, the process should be streamlined through a centralized intake of requests and consideration of new off-leash service requests and/or program enhancements should be aligned with overall parks planning and development requests within the context of annual business planning.
- The formal OLA designation and de-commissioning step within the pilot should be replaced with Community Council initiation of potential off-leash service provision changes followed by a staff evaluation process outlined within the proposed AO. Decisions related to new or changes to OLA should be considered by Regional Council through annual business planning and budget processes for capital investments or by Community Councils for no cost OLA programming changes.
- Population density and dog licensing data should be used to help inform the distribution and LOS for OLAs with priority given to service deficiencies.
- The identified service gaps as per Council's current OLA requests for Eastern Passage/Cow Bay and Purcell's Cove/Spryfield should be considered following Council's adoption of the proposed AO.
- Detailed planning and development decision-making criteria should be developed to provide greater clarity in assessing service needs and assigning appropriate solutions to those needs.
- Alternative models for off-leash service delivery and funding through partnerships including user pay options should be explored.

Based on the findings and the current demands for service, it is recommended that priority be given to evaluating the potential need and feasibility for new OLAs in Eastern Passage/Cow Bay and Purcell's Cove /Spryfield. Completion of review of those two areas is also consistent with Council's direction. However, it is recommended that the reviews be completed after adoption of the proposed AO in order to consider the amended LOS in the assessment of the areas for potential off-leash service.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications resulting from the approval of these recommendations. The enhanced level of service outlined in this report would require additional capital funding to address potential regional service deficiencies and ongoing operational funding to maintain and develop the program. Upon Council approval of the recommended LOS and program approach in this report, staff would develop a proposed AO for Council's consideration and detailed financial implications to inform future business planning and budget. Financial implications associated with specific requests for OLA will be estimated on a case by case basis and forwarded to Regional Council for consideration in annual budget process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The general public, including off-leash area users and non-users, were engaged via an on-line survey, and public input through the Africville off-leash area decommissioning and the Mainland Common OLA development. Ongoing public consultation would continue as part of the evaluation of off-leash service requests and strategic program review as needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Protection of water resources for potable water supply, wildlife habitat, recreational enjoyment, and aesthetic value is an important objective under the Halifax Regional Plan. Water quality testing is used to identify distinct source groups of microbial contamination for beaches. This testing protocol also has the capability to test for fecal contamination by identifying sources, such as human, waterfowl, or dog waste. Such testing may be a useful tool to better understand the sources of contamination and to implement management measures in specific parks, lakes, and beaches where bacteria levels may be a concern. The Strategy recognizes environmental sustainability and cleanliness as two key guiding principles. If future environmental testing identified dogs as a concerning source of water contamination in areas where human and ecological health could be impacted, solutions would be considered.

ALTERNATIVES

- Alternative 1: Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee could recommend that Regional Council not direct staff to create an AO and maintain the current policy objectives, service level requirements, and minimum procedures of the Off-Leash pilot program for the provision of off-leash facilities.
- Alternative 2: Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee could recommend that Regional Council direct staff to proceed to public consultation to assess the need and feasibility of providing new OLAs for Eastern Passage and Purcell's Cove/Spryfield prior to the adoption of an AO. It should be noted that this would result in the sites being assessed under the current program and would not enable the proposed level of service to be considered for these areas, including a fenced designated park as requested.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Recommended Changes and Actions
Attachment 2: Existing Off-leash Dog Parks October 2015
Attachment 3: Off-Leash Dog Park Distribution and Population Density Map
Attachment 4: Off-Leash Dog Parks Survey Report
Attachment 5: Enforcement Program - Major Off-Leash Dog Parks

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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Table 1 Off-Leash Dog Parks Strategy 2007

Recommended Changes and Actions November 2015

Framework	Existing 2007 Off-Leash Parks Strategy Components	Recommended Changes & Actions
1. Policy & LOS Requirements	<u>Guiding Principles</u> – Accessibility, Affordability, Balance, Cleanliness, Environmental & Cultural Sustainability, Natural Beauty <u>Goals & Objectives</u> – Universal design principles, balanced park planning and decision-making, waste management and compliance, integrated and adaptive park management and mitigation of dog-related impacts, protection of natural beauty of parks and intervention strategies	- Change: Adopt an Off-Leash Dog Parks AO to formalize off-leash service as a permanent program and to establish policy direction and minimum service requirements. - Change: Strengthen off-leash activity as a component of HRM's Parks & Recreation mandate through a clear program purpose and parks and recreation objectives (under AO and business planning). - Change: Adopt an off-leash dog parks typology and level of service framework (Schedule 1). - Change: Update the 2007 Guiding Principles and Goals and Objectives as a framework for developing the proposed AO using the proposed OLA typology and LOS framework. - Change: Enable off-leash activity both on parkland and a broader portfolio of appropriate municipal lands such as vacant lands and utility corridors. - Change: Enable fencing as an option for dedicated dog parks dependent on the development of detailed decision-making criteria and consideration of overall park programming objectives, site characteristics, and funding. - Change: Enable dedicated dog parks as an alternative to mixed-use OLAs to accommodate specialized off-leash use such as service dog parks and dedicated dog relief areas in high density communities, with distribution allocated for highest regional access and value for investment. - Change: Replace the formal off-leash park designation step with Community Council initiation for new off-leash service requests, staff evaluation and administration and Council approval through business planning and capital budget. Action: Maintain public consultation as a minimum requirement for evaluation and decision-making including public engagement for the closure of any OLA.

Recommended Changes & Actions

Attachment 1

2. Planning & Development Criteria	<u>Evaluation & Designation Criteria –</u> - Park size (1 hectare min.), areas prohibited for off-leash use (and dogs on-leash) i.e., children's playgrounds, beaches, sports-fields during scheduled use, sport-courts, cultural heritage sites, monuments, horticultural gardens, cemeteries, and environmentally sensitive areas - Buffering of 25 metres between schools, community centres and residential properties - "Extensive" costs to develop, operate and maintain will not be considered <u>Procedures & Processes –</u> - Interdepartmental Off-Leash Committee administers the program and acts a decision-making body - Park-users and neighbours are consulted - New OLA's are piloted for one year - Formal designation occurs with Council approval - De-designation/closure of an OLA can be approved by the Committee where issues cannot be managed - Signage program stipulating rules enabled under Parks By-law - Education occurs through signage, on-line portal, and enforcement patrols	- Change: Establish criteria for locating and distributing OLAs regionally and within communities using population density and dog licensing data paired with available land resources, community input, and cost rationalization. - Change: Establish criteria for siting and developing the proposed typology of OLAs including shared-use OLAs, fenced OLAs in mixed-use parks, dedicated dog parks (fenced or un-fenced) including specialized facilities such as service dog parks. - Change: Change the 25 metre buffer to a minimum requirement to allow for increased buffers between OLAs and other uses where appropriate including vegetation to limit noise and other impacts. - Change: Allow swimming access for off-leash dogs only where environmental and neighbourhood impacts can be mitigated and/or managed. - Action: Establish detailed criteria for assessing and identifying environmentally and culturally sensitive areas including commemorative sites.
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Recommended Changes & Actions

Attachment 1

3. Program Management	<u>Operational components include:</u> - Planning & park development - Park Operations and, - By-law Enforcement A300 + P600	- Change: Establish a budget for adding signage to all OLAs and explore the feasibility of streamlining By-law A300 (Proposed By-Law A700) and P600 with respect to Off-Leash Parks. - Change: Review the OLA Rules to ensure enforcement ability under By-law regulation. - Change: Establish a centralized intake process for requests from community groups aligned with business planning and budget cycles. - Action: Explore the feasibility of alternative funding and/or models of service delivery for dedicated dog parks and specialized service levels. - Action: Continue implementation of the three "E's" Education, Enforcement, and Environment for program success. - Action: Undertake periodic program reviews and park audits to identify servicing and operational issues and strategic solutions and mitigation efforts. - Change: Inventory environmental conditions and user data to establish an information data source for parks planning - Action: Develop a dog waste management plan.
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Note: The changes and/or actions in the table represent either a new direction or implementation of a previously stated but not implemented direction (under the 2007 Strategy)

Schedule 1: Proposed Typology & Level of Service Framework

Level of Service	Off-Leash Area Type			
	Neighbourhood	Community	District	Regional
Off-Leash Function	Dedicated	Mixed-use or dedicated	Mixed-use or dedicated	Mixed-use or dedicated
Target Service Area	5 min. walk	5 min. drive 15 min. walk	10-15 min. drive 30 min. walk	20+ min. drive
Target Park Size*	Under 2.0 acres	Min. 2.0 acres	Min. 3.5 acres	Min. 6 acres
BASE SERVICE	√	√	√	√
- Garbage receptacles	√	√	√	√
- Standard maintenance	√	√	√	√
- Winter maintenance			√ Depending on overall park programming	√ Depending on overall park programming
- Rules signage (list of off-leash area rules)	√	√	√	√
- Icon signage (Establishing "Dogs on leash" area and By-law regulation)	√	√	√	√
- By-law enforcement	√	√	√	√
- Parking (on-site or street)	√ on-street	√ on-site or on-street	√ On-site	√ On-site
- Shade & buffering trees	√	√	√	√
- Lighting			√ Depending on overall park programming	√ Depending on overall park programming
- Seating	√ Depending on overall park programming	√ Depending on overall park programming	√	√
- Fencing (fully enclosed or partial fencing)	√ Where needed and feasible	√ Where needed and feasible	√ Where needed and feasible	√ Dedicated dog parks only
ENHANCED SERVICE (Basic +)			√	√
- Dog waste bags & dispensers			√	√
- Dog drinking water source			√	√
- Agility/play equipment			√ Sponsorship funding	√ Sponsorship funding

Recommended Changes & Actions

Attachment 1

Level of Service	Off-Leash Area Type			
	Neighbourhood	Community	District	Regional
- Double gated entry			√ Where feasible	√
- Shelter area			√ Where feasible	√ Where feasible
- Additional enhancements			√ Sponsorship funding	√ Sponsorship funding
- Specialized landscaping	√ Where feasible	√ Where feasible	√	√
- Swimming area				√ Limited circumstances

* The target park size refers to the useable off-leash area which may be a shared-use (unfenced) OLA within a mixed-use park, a fenced OLA within a mixed-use park or a stand-alone dedicated (fenced or un-fenced) off-leash dog park.

Off-Leash Dog Parks	Park Classification	OLA Type & Level of Service*	Planning Considerations
Shared-Use Off-Leash Areas in Municipal Parks			
Point Pleasant Park (PPP)	Regional	Type – Regional - Multi-use trails - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking, washrooms - Lighting - Signage**	- A park patrol pilot is underway in PPP and could be expanded to other major parks - Adjacent to residential properties - Potential for overcrowding of dogs - Would benefit from a comprehensive review
Shubie Park	Regional	Type – Regional - Multi-use trails - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking, washrooms - Lighting - Signage	- Ongoing complaints regarding dog noise and dogs off-leash in non-designated areas is being assessed for an appropriate solution - Adjacent to residential properties - Potential for overcrowding of dogs - Would benefit from a comprehensive review
Dartmouth Common	Regional	Type – District - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking - Signage	- Dartmouth Common Master-Plan and Legislation - Compatibility with abutting schools
Hemlock Ravine Park	District	Type – District - Multi-use trails - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking - Signage	- Sensitive plants and wildlife - Adjacent to residential properties
Sandy Lake Park	Regional	Type – District - Multi-use trails - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking - Signage	- Recent conflict (dog attack of child) has prompted additional signage for OLA boundaries and rules - Use of non-designated parts of Jack's Lake municipal open space land
Fort Needham Memorial Park	Regional	Type – District - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking - Signage	- Proposed Fort Needham Master Plan and balance with commemorative and cultural values - Need balance of regional park classification and community recreation use of the park

Dedicated Off-Leash Parks			
Service Dog Park Ardmore Park Halifax (scheduled to open mid November)	Neighbourhood	Type – Regional - Controlled access via swipe card - Fully fenced - Double gate entry - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Parking - Signage	-Existing service dog park at Rainnie Drive being relocated to Ardmore Park to accommodate new traffic roundabout
Mainland Common	Regional	Type – Regional - Fully fenced - Double - gate entry - Small dog area - Pathway system - Benches, tables, shelter - Drinking water for dogs - Lighting - Bag dispensers - Garbage cans - Washrooms - Signage - Parking	-First purpose-built dedicated off-leash dog park (2015) -Requires “learning curve” to monitor results and establish ongoing maintenance regimes (e.g. winter maintenance standards) -Planned sports-field expansion in 2015 will result in changes to part of the OLA

Off-Leash Sports Fields (Summer June 1 st – Nov. 1 st)			
Chain Lake Ball Field Crown Dr. Halifax	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	
Eddie Leblanc #3 Ball Field First Lake Dr. Sackville	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	
Glenbourne #2 Ball Field Parkland Dr. Halifax	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	
George Samuel & Nousha Crt Greenspace, 414 Kingswood Dr. Hammonds Plains	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	
Conrose Ball Field Conrose Ave. Halifax	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	
Larry O'Connell Ball Field Chebucto Rd. Halifax	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans -Parking	

Off-Leash Sports Fields (Winter Nov. 1 st to May 1 st)			
Don Bayer Sport Field Troop Ave. Dartmouth	Community	Type – Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Conrad Ball Diamond 155 Mount Edward Rd. Dartmouth	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	-Consider feasibility of de-activating off-leash use for this field due to programming conflicts
John Martin Ball Diamond 7 Brule St. Dartmouth	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	-Currently no HRM sports programming on this field
Mel Braine Park Ball Diamond Evelyn Wood Place, Cole Harbour	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Mic Mac #1 & #2 Sport Fields Micmac Blvd Dartmouth	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - rules signage -Garbage cans	
Penhorn #1, 2, & 3 Ball Fields 79 Lawson Ave. Dartmouth	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Schultz Ball Diamond 35 Howe St. Dartmouth	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Shubie Ball Diamond 30 John Brenton Dr. Dartmouth	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Cheviot Hills Ball Diamond Cheviot Hills Rd. Porters Lake	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	-One of two rural community OLAs
Conrose Ball Diamond Conrose Ave. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Glenbourne Sport Field Parkland Dr. Halifax	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Graves Oakley #1 & 2 Sport Fields, Leiblin Dr. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Larry O'Connell Ball Diamond 6691 Fourth St. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Lou Goddard Ball Diamond Highland Ave. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Merv Sullivan Sport Field 3770 Kencrest Ave. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Ravenscraig Sport Field 15 Ravenscraig Dr. Halifax	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	

Stanley Park Sport Field Tamarack Dr. Spryfield	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Tremont Plateau Park Sport Field Tremont Dr. Rockingham	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Westridge Ball Diamond Westridge Dr. Clayton Park	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	-Located next to new dedicated off-leash park at Mainland Common. -May not be needed long-term.
Correctional Ball Diamond Cobequid Rd. Sackville	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	-Potential to be decommissioned due to potential land sale within next 2 years
Eddie Leblanc #1, & 2 Ball Diamonds First Lake Dr. Sackville	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Eisenhower Field 2043 Hammonds Plains Rd.	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Highland Park Deepwood Dr. Hammonds Plains	Community	Type – Neighbourhood - Signage -Garbage cans	
Ryan Rosen Sport Field Foster Ave. Fall River	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Superstore Ball Diamond Old Beaverbank Rd. Sackville	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	
Hatchet Lake Park	Community	Type - Community - Signage -Garbage cans	-One of two rural community OLAs

- * Hours for off-leash use are generally 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted
- ** The year-round OLAs in the 7 major parks have both icon signs indicating an off-leash area and the OLA boundaries along with signage that outlines rules that are enforced under By-law P-600 (Parks). The seasonal off-leash sports-fields do not have signage that outlines rules.

Off Leash Dog Park Distribution & Population Density



Sites with permanant off leash program



Service Dog Area



Sites of seasonal winter off leash use



Sites of seasonal winter summer off leash use



2 km Service Radius



Provincial Park

Park Type



Community



District



Neighbourhood



Regional

Population Density Persons / Acre



0 - 4



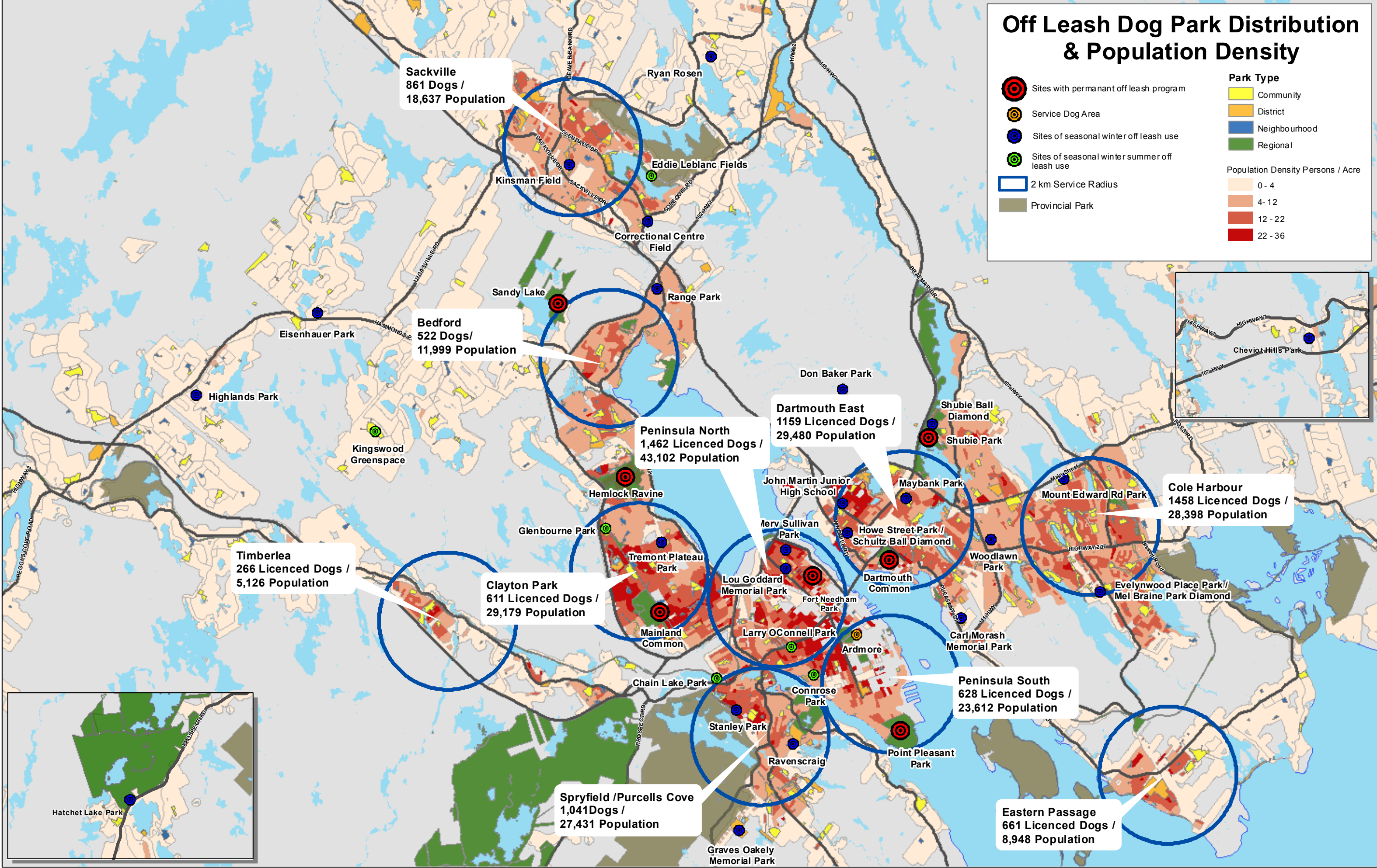
4 - 12



12 - 22



22 - 36



Off-Leash Dog Parks Survey Report

September 2014

Municipal staff issued an on-line survey, which was intended to seek opinion of park users, predominantly in those seven parks that host permanent Off-Leash Areas. The survey was a modified version of that used by the municipality of Surrey, British Columbia, which was employed as a basis upon which Surrey's Dog Park Master Plan was developed.

The Halifax survey was posted on-line September 12-25, 2014, and bears the following characteristics:

1. The survey was non-scientific, which means that respondents were not randomly chosen, and no population, sample size, nor sensitivity analysis was calculated. Rather, park users who became aware of the survey, self-selected themselves to respond. The survey is, therefore, not representative of the entire municipal population;
2. 2,178 people responded to the survey, with a completion rate of 88.4% (1926);
3. 84% of respondents owned a dog at the time of the survey, whereas 16% did not;
4. The survey was cross-sectional, not longitudinal. It was a snap-shot of respondents at a single point in time (i.e., 2 weeks), rather than polling the same respondents several times over a longer period of time (e.g., over years);
5. The survey mode was on-line, web-based, and undertaken the FluidSurveys platform;
6. Survey Promotion was by way of broad and direct notification to (and uptake by) media contacts; in-park posters; social media (i.e., Twitter (@hfxgov) and Facebook); and via the following municipal webpages: Off-Leash Park Areas and www.halifax.ca's main page (marketing box);
7. Survey results will appear on-line at www.halifax.ca/property/olps after Regional Council deliberates this report

Survey Results:

How often do you visit municipal parks? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Daily		43.3%	933
Weekly		39.6%	853
monthly		9.9%	213
Rarely		6.2%	133
Never		1.0%	21
Total Responses			2153

How often do you visit designated municipal off-leash dog areas? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Daily		34.2%	737

Weekly		32.7%	704
monthly		9.9%	213
Rarely		9.9%	214
Never		7.2%	156
I was not aware the municipality had designated off-leash dog areas		5.9%	128
Total Responses			2152

Do you feel there is a need for additional off-leash dog areas in the Halifax Regional Municipality?
*

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		78.8%	1696
No		11.7%	251
Unsure		9.5%	204
Total Responses			2151

If you answered yes, please recommend up to three specific locations where you would like off-leash dog areas to be provided:

Variable Response [Click links below to see the responses](#)

<u>Location 1</u>	The 1506 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.
<u>Location 2</u>	The 1202 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.
<u>Location 3</u>	The 861 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

Describe your response when you see dogs off leash in municipal parks, in areas NOT designated for off-leash use: *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Enjoy seeing dogs off leash		54.7%	1163
Indifferent		20.7%	441
Concerned for the safety of myself or others		24.6%	524
Total Responses			2128

Have you experienced any conflicts with off-leash dogs in municipal parks? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Frequently		11.2%	240

Rarely		36.6%	786
Never		52.2%	1120
		Total Responses	2146

Do you have any concerns with a specific location in Halifax Regional Municipality where dogs are illegally running off-leash? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		17.6%	376
No		82.4%	1766
		Total Responses	2142

If you responded "yes" could you identify those locations below.

Variable Response Click links below to see the responses

<u>Location 1</u>	The 373 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.
<u>Location 2</u>	The 166 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.
<u>Location 3</u>	The 86 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

Do you feel that designated off-leash areas help reduce conflicts between park users and off-leash dogs? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Strongly agree		52.6%	1127
Agree		28.3%	605
Unsure		9.9%	213
Disagree		5.9%	127
Strongly disagree		3.2%	69
		Total Responses	2141

Since you answered frequently, please describe the conflicts: (mark all that apply) *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Fear for personal safety		80.5%	190
Fear for dog safety		50.4%	119
Dog waste not properly managed		82.2%	194
Dogs disrupting recreational activities		61.0%	144
Dogs disrupting wildlife or wildlife		57.6%	136

habitat

Other, please specify...

	42.4%	100
Total Responses		236

Since you answered frequently, please describe the conflicts: (mark all that apply) * (Other, please specify...)

#	Response
1.	As an owner of a dog who does not appreciate off leash dogs running up to it and there are many of us and as a resident of Halifax I have a right to walk down the street or in on leash areas without dealing with irresponsible owners who have no consequences for their actions
2.	Owner's not having "full control" of dogs both on and off leash.
3.	put muddy paws on my clean clothes
4.	Dogs a threat to young children
5.	Fear for safety of children, especially
6.	I have a dog that is not dog friendly. because of that I avoid off leash areas. those who do not leash their dogs are putting my dogs, their own dogs and our own safety at risk.
7.	owners not in control of their animals and not aware of dangers they are creating
8.	This occurred in the past
9.	I have a dog that is not a fan of small dogs jumping in her face, when I go for walks in an on leash area and encounter people it poses a safety hazard for their dog and it could result with animal control problems with mine. I have had to physical pick up someone else's dog cause they were yelling from afar "its ok he's friendly" while my dog is freaking out over this off leash dog.
10.	There is a need for fenced in off leash areas so that there is no fear dogs will run into the road or take off, and would not be able to disrupt other park users. A designated off leash area with no fencing is useless.
11.	Irresponsible dog owners!
12.	getting held down by the big pit bull and shaggy tricoloured dogs
13.	...I fear for the safety of my own dog, which is leashed. Most dogs are not well - controlled off leash.
14.	1. Exposure to incessant barking/fighting from personal residence; 2. Fear for the safety of small children at Sunrise Beach in Shubie Park
15.	I am a dog trainer, so I know many owners are not skilled in understanding appropriate dog play; safe interaction structures and how to identify when things are potentially escalating. Small pathways, open, flat play spaces and too many dogs in the space can all lead to potential issues if not well-managed.
16.	As a dog trainer, I often see the issues that occur with owners who do not understand the correct use and supervision of taking a dog to a dog park/rec area. I recognize that potential flare-ups occur and behavioural problems are possible when correct dog rules and protocols are not observed.
17.	I own 2 huskies who cannot go off leash due to the breed unless in an enclosed area. When we are approached in a non-fenced in area by a dog I have no idea where the owners are and they have no control over their dog. In a fenced in area the owner is always nearby (by site) and if

	there is an issue the situation is corrected quickly.
18.	Restricts park use for people who do not like dogs or have a fear of dogs
19.	Dogs jumping on me when all I want is a walk. No Enforcement!!!
20.	Our smallest dog has been attacked by bigger dogs at shubie because both owners at separate times said "oh sorry he/she isn't good with small dogs. We feel that dogs walking off lease should be great with ALL dogs or walk on leash
21.	Dogs off leash also for many owners means dogs out of sight and control
22.	Straying into adjacent home gardens
23.	dogs jumping on those who are running through the Point Pleasant Park
24.	I cycle in the parks and dogs off leash where they aren't supposed to be is dangerous for me & them
25.	Unruly/out of control off leash dogs and owners ignoring their dog's inappropriate behaviour and refusing to control their dogs. Or dogs off leash in on leash areas that owners cannot control.
26.	dogs not under control of their owner, owners not respecting ON LEASH AREAS! Dogs getting into my yard and threatening the safety of my children, big lack of by-law enforcement, incessant barking from sun up to sun down. This is a very serious problem that no one from the city of Halifax will address.
27.	Off leash dogs where children are present
28.	Dogs approaching those who don't want to be approached. Owners always think it's cute and rarely seem concerned their dogs are bothering or going near people.
29.	dogs not properly trained/managed by owners are often off-leash which makes it unsafe for everyone.
30.	Noise level - people yelling at or for their dogs who have wandered away
31.	Property damage dogs not under adequate owner control
32.	Uneducated owners, aggressive dogs
33.	Dogs off leash in non-designated areas close to areas designed for family use ex commons playground or Oval.
34.	Dog owners disregard for the rights and concerns of non-dog owners, especially when children are present
35.	One jumped at me and ripped my shorts when I was running in the park
36.	I have 2 young children and live on emscote drive so use point pleasant park almost daily. The children are often run at by dogs. While the dogs may be friendly they are still much larger and most owners either laugh or shrug. An apology is rare. I also run there almost daily and am jumped on by dogs at least once a week. It's not tight that you can't walk a loop around the park without entering an off leash area!
37.	Dogs getting into fights with other off leash or on leash dogs.
38.	fear for child's safety
39.	In parks where dogs are meant to be on leashes I have had huge dogs approach me at speed barking viciously and been terrified. At the last minute the owner got his dogs under control and slunk away without a word of apology. What if I had a weak heart? I do suffer from osteoporosis, what if a playful unleash dog ran at me or got under my feet knocked me over and I broke a bone?

40.	I keep my dog on-leash in designated areas, but it is impossible to walk her safely when others are running at large. No quicker recipe for a fight than one on-leash, one off.
41.	Significant noise from sunrise to sunset in my backyard and neighbours yards, no more ducks in my yard or the canal (I saw a dog torment a mother duck and her ducklings in the Spring by the mouth of the canal where it was trapped and traumatized), dogs consistently not leashed at Picnic Landing where I walk my kids through to school every week day, owners fighting when their dogs scuffle. This has significantly impacted the use and enjoyment of our property.
42.	Dogs bite my bum!
43.	Disrespect for significant memorials ie. Halifax explosion, Africville etc
44.	Dogs affecting runners
45.	scaring other people who don't like dogs
46.	My 3 and 4 year olds are now terrified of dogs thanks to all the times they have been jumped on and scratched. Every time has been in a city playground or on an "on leash trail" especially in Hemlock Park and on the linear trail or BLT Trail. Also while walking my sister's dog several times it was attacked while on the leash by off leash dogs and I had to hold it back from hurting the other dogs. This also has several times resulted in several times almost violent confrontations with dog owners.
47.	Safety of young children.
48.	Noise from barking dogs; inter dog conflicts, people conflicts, near residential areas.
49.	I've been bitten and jumped upon by dogs whose owners say "he's just playing!" People don't control their dogs and there are too many off-leash dogs at Point Pleasant park.
50.	Dog attempted to bite my ankle while I cycled past on PPP trail.
51.	My toddler has a dog jump him at least twice a week.
52.	dislike of being licked, jumped upon, or leg humped by dogs clearly not under owner's control; concerns for others' safety and comfort; discomfort that rules are not followed or visibly enforced to the detriment of those not walking uncontrolled dogs.
53.	Have been attacked in the park by dogs more than once
54.	Dog owner attitude - "this an off leash park ,if you don't like it get lost"
55.	dogs aggressive barking and growling while running at you.
56.	Fear for kids and elderly, have seen several incidents
57.	Shubie Park is being damaged by off leash dogs
58.	My dogs getting charged at or attacked by off leash dogs!
59.	Dogs jumping on my grandchildren -owners say dogs are friendly
60.	dogs on leashes are stressed by dogs off leash
61.	Nesting areas for endangered Piping Plovers, as well as absolutely necessary feeding areas for shorebirds during fall migration.
62.	Dog owners bagging dog waste and leaving the bag behind.
63.	dogs jumping up on people and owners who think it's cute and their dogs are more important than people
64.	Bit by off leash dog while riding bike.....needed medical attention

65.	fear for the safety of my child and the children within the park
66.	Owners who don't understand or have the ability to control their dog; their interpretation is that once in an off leash area, the dog can run and do as it wishes without regard to other people and children. There is no concern for children in off leash areas; owners assume they do not have to control their dog with children in the area if in an off leash area.
67.	Owners are not being responsible and a dog jumping up on strangers in excitement is unacceptable
68.	Children have been knocked over by dogs - owners (not just one) then comment that it was a child's fault for making the dog too excited.
69.	At Shubie there are many people letting their dog run free, but the dog is aggressive towards smaller dogs and sometimes people will tell you that their dog doesn't like kids, but it is off leash.
70.	It's not necessarily concern regarding safety, but simply disrespect. Often my family will return from the park with dog saliva and muddy paw marks on us, and dog doo on our shoes. From dogs just coming up and jumping on us.
71.	Dog owners who walk ahead of their dogs and do not see them defecating
72.	Dogs not getting along with other dogs/owners
73.	I have never been to a park in HRM where there have not been off leash dogs
74.	I have never been to a park in HRM where there have not been off leash dogs
75.	I and my dog have been attacked - on one occasion by more than one dog at once. no one does anything about it, not the police, the vet, or councillor.
76.	Dogs attacking my bike
77.	bad owners cause dog attacks - the trails should be put back to on leash only or no dogs
78.	safety of dog when confronted by wild animal, i.e. porcupine, bear
79.	killing wildlife and hurting seniors
80.	Some dog owners seem to have an attitude towards non-dog owners, if spoken to about not tossing bags in the woods, picking up in general.
81.	fear for dog off lease's safety against forest animals e.g. porcupine, skunk, bear
82.	
83.	most people I have met with dog's off leash do not concern themselves with picking up their dog's waste
84.	dogs off leash can get into poison ivy which can then be transferred to their owners and their children
85.	killing wildlife, destroying song bird nest areas
86.	dog owner was pleased his brutes were out for blood chasing rabbits in Cole Harbour Park – typical
87.	those dogs that dig in the old grave yards in the park, are they reaching as far as the remains?
88.	dogs biting bikers and runners
89.	I pick up after more than just my dog
90.	West Lawrencetown huge dog on trail should be removed, but dogs even run up and crawl into the stroller with my children. 'oh he's just friendly, it's okay" doesn't cut it when your dog has

	traumatised my children
91.	I am a taxpayer who walks my dog in the parks and other people tell me my dog and I are not welcome there. That it's for parents and children. I pay the same taxes and my dog is often better behaved than many of the children. I refuse to leave and they threaten to report me. It's unfair as I pay taxes for parks I'm not "welcome" to use.
92.	keep them away from bikers
93.	Dog owners are not abiding by the bylaws of this city and keeping their dogs on leash. It's a hazard for those with dogs that do abide by the bylaws of this city.
94.	I frequently walk in many Halifax Parks and have seen examples of all of the indicated "conflicts".
95.	As a taxpayer, I feel that the dog owners could help cover the costs of creating secure Bark Parks with secure fences, water provided for dogs and their owners and covered waste containers. While walking in my neighbourhood, I regularly notice dog waste, even on my front lawn!
96.	Canine fees regularly found on and near off-leash areas, particularly concerning in areas where children are often present
97.	dogs running up to my small children and no owner within eyesight
98.	keep all dogs on leash, no roaming allowed anywhere
99.	dog fights are bad (esp. if children's are around) but owners calling their dogs all the times is simply annoying
100.	I know that people of the Muslim faith view dogs are unclean (especially their drool) and that many Middle Eastern people are afraid of dogs because in their countries, dogs are not pets, they are guard animals or feral (and feared).

Do you believe off-leash dog parks have positive impacts? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		90.1%	1914
No		5.7%	122
Unsure		4.2%	89
Total Responses			2125

How important to you are the following benefits. *

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Total Responses
Enhanced recreation / play opportunities for dogs	19 (1.0%)	58 (3.1%)	58 (3.1%)	343 (18.2%)	1409 (74.7%)	1887
Enhanced safety for dogs	23 (1.2%)	55 (2.9%)	86 (4.6%)	436 (23.1%)	1288 (68.2%)	1888
Social opportunities among dog owners	103 (5.5%)	97 (5.1%)	337 (17.8%)	493 (26.1%)	858 (45.4%)	1888

Limiting negative environmental impact by having designated sites	70 (3.7%)	106 (5.6%)	316 (16.8%)	553 (29.3%)	841 (44.6%)	1886
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Other:

The 300 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix. [Click here to go to these responses](#)

Do you believe off-leash dog parks have negative impacts? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		12.1%	253
No		79.6%	1664
Unsure		8.3%	173
Total Responses			2090

Please rate the following concerns. *

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Total Responses
Sustainable dog waste management	6 (2.4%)	7 (2.8%)	19 (7.6%)	69 (27.6%)	149 (59.6%)	250
Negative impacts on wildlife and habitat areas	8 (3.2%)	22 (8.8%)	43 (17.2%)	70 (28.0%)	107 (42.8%)	250
Negative impacts on water quality	16 (6.4%)	18 (7.2%)	63 (25.2%)	56 (22.4%)	97 (38.8%)	250
Safety concerns for off-leash sites that are not enclosed	17 (6.8%)	11 (4.4%)	31 (12.4%)	54 (21.6%)	137 (54.8%)	250
Wear and tear on parks from concentrated dog use	22 (8.8%)	26 (10.4%)	56 (22.4%)	55 (22.0%)	91 (36.4%)	250

Other:

The 82 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix. [Click here to go to these responses](#)

Do you believe current enforcement of dog leash and dog waste bylaws in the Halifax Regional Municipality is adequate? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
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Yes		56.9%	1172
No		33.2%	683
I'm not aware of the municipality's dog leash and dog waste bylaws		9.9%	204
		Total Responses	2059

As a park user or a dog owner, are you satisfied that parks with existing off-leash areas meet your / your dog's needs? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		23.6%	486
Somewhat		33.6%	692
No		33.8%	696
I have had little or no contact with municipal off-leash areas		9.0%	186
		Total Responses	2060

HRM uses its parks and open spaces for many purposes. Is using sport fields and ball fields as off-leash areas when not in use by sports groups an option? *

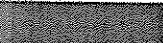
Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes it is a good use of resources		51.8%	1067
Yes, but only during the off season (Nov to April)		29.9%	615
No, shared use does not work		18.3%	378
		Total Responses	2060

Do you own a dog? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		84.0%	1730
No		16.0%	329
		Total Responses	2059

Rate your dog's response to your recall command when your dog is off leash

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Never comes when I call		0.9%	15
Returns to me about 25% of the		3.7%	63

time			
Returns to me about 50% of the time		9.1%	156
Returns to me about 75% of the time		37.7%	644
Always returns to me when I call		48.5%	828
		Total Responses	1706

Is your dog licensed?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		87.3%	1489
No		9.8%	168
I don't know		2.9%	49
		Total Responses	1706

Where do you most frequently walk or play with your dog off leash?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
At home		21.8%	372
At designated off-leash sites in Halifax Regional Municipality Parks		45.3%	774
At Halifax Regional Municipality Parks in non-designated off-leash areas		9.8%	168
At sites located outside of Halifax Regional Municipality		3.3%	56
Hiking trails		16.5%	282
None of the above		3.4%	58
		Total Responses	1710

What days are you most likely to visit Halifax Regional Municipality parks with your dog?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Weekends		29.2%	500
Weekdays		14.8%	253
Everyday		50.9%	871
I rarely visit Halifax Regional Municipality parks with my dog		5.0%	86
		Total Responses	1710

What time of day are you most likely to visit Halifax Regional Municipality parks with your dog?
(mark all that apply)

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
6 a.m. - 9 a.m.		21.8%	372
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.		51.1%	874
4 p.m. - 9 p.m.		57.1%	977
I rarely visit Halifax Regional Municipality parks with my dog		4.2%	72
Total Responses			1710

Do you currently drive to any off-leash dog sites?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		79.9%	1359
No		20.1%	342
Total Responses			1701

If yes, click on the link below for the responses

Variable

Response

How many minutes do you drive to get there?

The 1411 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

How many minutes driving time do you think is reasonable to get to an off-leash dog area?

The 1703 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

Do you currently walk to any off-leash dog sites?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		29.2%	499
No		70.8%	1207
Total Responses			1706

If yes,

The 864 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix [Click here to see the responses](#)

How important are each of the following surface materials for dog areas.

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Total Responses
Turf (grass vegetation)	50 (3.0%)	104 (6.2%)	151 (9.0%)	540 (32.1%)	839 (49.8%)	1684
Artificial turf (synthetic product)	962 (57.2%)	73 (4.3%)	548 (32.6%)	76 (4.5%)	22 (1.3%)	1681
Decomposed granite (gravel screenings, stone dust)	626 (37.2%)	215 (12.8%)	624 (37.1%)	178 (10.6%)	38 (2.3%)	1681
Wood chips (mulch)	556 (33.1%)	194 (11.5%)	627 (37.3%)	245 (14.6%)	58 (3.5%)	1680
Concrete or asphalt paving	1088 (64.7%)	144 (8.6%)	359 (21.4%)	75 (4.5%)	15 (0.9%)	1681
Sand	493 (29.3%)	228 (13.6%)	662 (39.4%)	235 (14.0%)	63 (3.7%)	1681

How important are each of the following criteria for successful off-leash dog areas.

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Total Responses
Located within walking distance	117 (6.9%)	261 (15.5%)	297 (17.6%)	518 (30.8%)	491 (29.2%)	1684
Amenities (eg. benches, fountains, shade, trees...)	85 (5.0%)	200 (11.9%)	239 (14.2%)	652 (38.7%)	508 (30.2%)	1684
Regular maintenance	36 (2.1%)	175 (10.4%)	190 (11.3%)	687 (40.8%)	596 (35.4%)	1684
Sustainable dog waste management	15 (0.9%)	38 (2.3%)	85 (5.0%)	554 (32.9%)	992 (58.9%)	1684
Safe for dogs and people	5 (0.3%)	8 (0.5%)	23 (1.4%)	347 (20.6%)	1301 (77.3%)	1684
Minimal impact to sensitive environmental areas	25 (1.5%)	74 (4.4%)	210 (12.5%)	646 (38.4%)	729 (43.3%)	1684
Opportunities to socialize and strengthen community connections	78 (4.6%)	100 (5.9%)	315 (18.7%)	535 (31.8%)	656 (39.0%)	1684
Separation of large and small dog areas	639 (37.9%)	206 (12.2%)	483 (28.7%)	194 (11.5%)	162 (9.6%)	1684

How important is the need for dedicated FENCED off-leash areas for dogs in municipal parks. *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
No need		10.9%	183
Slight need		9.5%	160
Modest need		18.2%	307
Considerable need		26.4%	444
Urgent need		35.0%	589
		Total Responses	1683

Are you willing to contribute an addition to your dog licence fee to support FENCED off-leash areas in parks? *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		56.0%	940
No		24.0%	404
Unsure		20.0%	336
		Total Responses	1680

How much more would you be willing to pay annually: *

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
No more than \$1 more per year		1.7%	16
No more than \$3 more per year		6.4%	60
No more than \$5 more per year		26.7%	250
No more than \$10 more per year		30.6%	287
No more than \$20 more per year		34.6%	325
		Total Responses	938

Enforcement Program Major Off-Leash Dog Parks

Attachment 5

Park Statistics 2012-2015 (note: 2015 statistics are up to and including August 15th)

POINT PLEASANT PARK					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2012	120	21 dogs on Sailors' Memorial way 3 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	21 education given 2 unable to apprehend 1 violation notice	14 running at large* 5 dogs on Sailors' Memorial Way 4 aggressive dogs (no attack) 1 attack 1 "lack of enforcement" 2 invalid complaints (non bylaw)	18 unable to locate / insufficient information 3 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 3 no action: unable to reach complainant, insufficient details provided 2 referred outside Animal Services 1 dog impounded (no enforcement, dog was not redeemed)
2013	69	13 dogs on Sailors' Memorial Way 3 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 2 unlicensed dogs 1 failure to obey signage	17 education given 1 SOT issued 1 violation notice	5 running at large 4 aggressive dogs 1 attack 1 failure to remove defecation	7 unable to locate / insufficient information 3 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 1 education to dog owner
2014	70	9 dogs on Sailors' Memorial Way 4 unlicensed dogs 1 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	6 education given 4 violation notices 4 SOTs	10 running at large (including a chicken) 4 attack 2 dogs on Sailors' Memorial Way 1 aggressive dog 2 invalid complaints (non bylaw)	14 unable to locate / insufficient information 2 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 1 no action, unable to reach complainant 2 no enforcement action, not by-law related
2015	66	30 dogs on Sailors' Memorial Way 2 unlicensed dogs	29 education given 2 SOTs issued 1 violation notice	4 running at large 1 dog on Sailors' Memorial Way 1 attack 2 "lack of enforcement"	6 unable to locate / insufficient information 1 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 1 violation notice issued

*Running at large includes dogs not under effective control, dogs out of sight of owner, and found dogs being held for pick up by Animal Services

Enforcement Program Major Off-Leash Dog Parks

Attachment 5

SHUBIE PARK					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2012	110	8 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 2 unlicensed dogs	7 education given 3 SOTs issued	14 running at large 5 attack 2 barking 1 aggressive dog 1 invalid complaint (non bylaw)	10 unable to locate / insufficient information 3 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 3 violation notice issued 3 no action: unable to reach complainant /insufficient details provided 2 invalid complaint (1 criminal, 1 found invalid) 1 education given 1 SOTs issued
2013	152	34 unlicensed dogs 30 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 2 unaffixed registration	30 SOTs issued 18 education given 15 violation notices 3 unable to apprehend	11 running at large 4 barking 2 aggressive dog 1 attack 1 failure to remove defecation	13 unable to locate / insufficient information 2 SOTs issued 1 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 1 violation notice issued 1 education given 1 referred outside Animal Services
2014	60	2 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 1 unlicensed dog	2 education given 1 SOT issued	14 running at large 8 barking 2 attack 1 aggressive dog	14 unable to locate / insufficient information 3 no action: unable to reach complainant / insufficient details provided 2 violation notices issued 2 education given 2 dogs reunited with owner 1 referred outside Animal Services 1 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived
2015	115	3 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 1 unlicensed dog	2 education given 1 SOT issued 1 unable to apprehend	30 running at large 16 barking 1 general ("irresponsible dog owners" and request for constant enforcement presence)	21 unable to locate / insufficient information 13 no action: unable to reach complainant / insufficient details provided 12 education given 1 SOTs issued

Enforcement Program Major Off-Leash Dog Parks

Attachment 5

DARTMOUTH COMMONS					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2012	18	1 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	1 education given	2 running at large 1 attack 1 aggressive dog	2 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 1 education given 1 unable to locate / insufficient information
2013	15	None	N/A	1 running at large 1 attack	1 unable to locate / insufficient information 1 no enforcement (complainant did not provide statement)
2014	12	None	N/A	1 running at large	1 no action, insufficient details provided
2015	5	None	N/A	none	

HEMLOCK RAVINE PARK					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints *	Complaint outcomes
2012	16	2 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	2 education given	2 running at large 1 attack	2 insufficient information (additional patrols scheduled) 1 violation notice issued
2013	19	4 running at large (off leash in on-leash area) 1 feeding waterfowl	5 education given	3 running at large 1 aggressive dog	3 no action: unable to reach complainant / insufficient details provided 1 unable to locate
2014	12	None	N/A	5 running at large 4 attacks 1 aggressive dog	4 education given 3 unable to locate / insufficient information 1 owner retrieved dog before Animal Services arrived 2 no action, insufficient details provided
2015	7	None	N/A	none	

* 7 of the complaints 2013/2014 involved the same dog owner

Enforcement Program Major Off-Leash Dog Parks

Attachment 5

SANDY LAKE PARK					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2012	20	None	N/A	1 attack	1 unable to locate
2013	3	None	N/A	None	N/A
2014	3	None	N/A	1 running at large 2 failure to remove defecation	1 unable to locate 1 education given 1 no action, insufficient details provided
2015	2	None	N/A	1 attack	1 SOT issued

FORT NEEDHAM MEMORIAL PARK					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2012	15	1 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	1 education	3 running at large	2 no action, insufficient details provided 1 unable to locate
2013	3	none		1 running at large 1 request for patrols	1 dog impounded, violation notice issued 1 no action (already patrolled)
2014	1	none		None	
2015	4	none		None	

MAINLAND COMMON (park opened Jan. 1, 2015)					
	Proactive patrols	Violations found during patrols	Outcomes	311 complaints	Complaint outcomes
2015	115	1 running at large (off leash in on-leash area)	1 education	3 running at large 1 attack 1 aggressive dog 1 failure to remove defecation 2 failure to obey signage	5 unable to locate 2 no action, insufficient details provided 1 violation notice issued