

November 7, 2019

To: Members
Community and Protective Services Committee

Re: Off-Leash Dog Park Consultation and Implementation

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council consider funding the construction of one municipal off-leash site and up to two unfenced neighbourhood off-leash sites through the 2020 budget process.
2. That CR19-35 be removed from the Community and Protective Services List of Outstanding Items.

CONCLUSION

Administration has established design criteria and proposed locations for the development of up to three additional fenced municipal scale and up to 14 additional neighbourhood scale off-leash areas, both fenced and unfenced. In 2020, Administration intends to focus available funding on the development of one fully fenced municipal scale off-leash area and the establishment of a pilot project including up to two unfenced, neighbourhood-level, off-leash areas. Additional consultation with the community will take place prior to establishment of the parks.

BACKGROUND

There are currently two dedicated off-leash dog parks and several boarded rink sites that serve as seasonal off-leash sites in Regina. These off-leash parks were established to enable dog owners and dogs to gather and socialize at the community level. The City's Recreation Master Plan acknowledges that off-leash parks are in demand and that additional sites are required throughout the city.

On March 29, 2016, Council considered a report from Administration recommending development of three additional off-leash areas in municipal reserve (MR) lands in new developments in the north/northwest, south and east areas of the city; and to develop criteria to identify and pilot two or three unfenced off-leash areas. Since then, Administration has worked with the development community to identify appropriate locations for the new facilities per Council's direction. These efforts have not yet resulted in new off-leash areas for a number of reasons, including the ongoing slow-down in residential development, as well as recent changes to the Government of Saskatchewan's *Planning and Development Act, 2007* mandating that public and separate schools be accommodated in MR space. These elements resulted in a

significant reduction in available land in new developments that could be dedicated to all recreation facilities including off-leash areas.

As a result of public interest in accelerating establishment of new dog parks in the city, at its April 29, 2019 meeting, Council directed Administration to “bring forward a report by the end of Q4 of 2019 with a plan to consult and implement off leash dog parks in the city”.

DISCUSSION

Overview of Process Developed to Identify Sites

Administration began by undertaking an analysis of each of the City’s parks, open spaces and vacant properties to find potential locations for off-leash areas within the City’s existing park and open space inventory. As part of this analysis, Administration developed criteria for site evaluation for two types of parks, *neighbourhood* and *municipal*. While neighbourhood parks are intended to be smaller, local, walkable sites, municipal parks are intended to draw residents from outside of the neighbourhood, serving a larger population base, as outlined in the following table.

Municipal Off-Leash Dog Park Development Criteria	Neighbourhood Off-Leash Dog Park Development Criteria
City-wide destinations	Local walkable sites
Larger sites >1.0 Ha	Smaller Sites .2 - 1.0 Ha
Goal of 5 total city-wide	Long-term goal of up to 1 per Community Association
Off-street parking provided	No off-street parking provided
Wheel-chair accessible	Wheel-chair accessible preferred
1.8m high (6’) fencing	1.2m high (4’) fencing*
Benches, trees, trash receptacles	Benches, trees, trash receptacles

*In locations where fencing is provided.

Through this process, which allows for neighbourhood level parks as small as .2Ha, Administration was able to identify many existing open spaces that could accommodate an off-leash area. Administration then visited each site in the spring of 2019 to assess the appropriateness based on the established criteria. This resulted in the elimination of some potential sites and the addition of others. Over the summer of 2019, Administration met with internal and external stakeholders, Community Associations, and affected user groups seeking input on the identified potential locations.

Potential Locations for Further Consultation

Based on this assessment, along with the preliminary consultations, the following sites have been identified for further consideration through a more in-depth consultation process. Appendix A provides maps of each site; it should be noted the proposed list would provide reasonable coverage across geographic areas.

Municipal: (1.0 Ha +)	Neighbourhood (.2 – 1.0 Ha +)
North Mount Pleasant (1.6 Ha)	North Iannone Park (1.7 Ha) unfenced pilot project site North West Reservoir Park (.8 Ha) Hawkstone (Future, location TBD)
West AE Wilson Park (2.2 Ha)	West Westerra (Future location TBD) Coopertown (Future, location TBD)
Central Cathy Lauritsen (existing)	Central Edgar Street Park (.5 Ha) Leslie Park (.2 Ha) small-breed off-leash area Regent Par 3 (.25 Ha)
South	South 4927 Pasqua Street (.8 Ha) unfenced pilot project site Qu'Appelle Park (.5 Ha) Harbour Landing (Future, location TBD)
East Harding Park (1.7 Ha) East Industrial (existing)	East Fines Drive Park (1.1 Ha) 485 University Park Drive (.8 Ha) The Towns (Future, Location TBD)

Administration will engage the public separately on each site, prior to inclusion in the budget process. Engagement regarding the neighbourhood-level sites will be focused within the surrounding Community Association boundary with the intent of gathering neighbourhood-specific, rather than city-wide, feedback on each park option. Once the feedback for each potential park has been gathered, Administration will report back to Council on the results and recommendations prior to undertaking detailed design and construction.

Next Steps

Administration is recommending that in 2020, a municipal level off-leash park be established at Mount Pleasant. This is in addition to the planned establishment of a neighbourhood level off-leash park at the Regent Par 3 site, which was approved by Council as part of the site development plan considered earlier this year. Administration further recommends that Harding

Park and AE Wilson Park locations be considered as the next priorities for consideration. Administration will also continue to work with the development community to plan new sites as the community grows.

In addition to these proposed fenced parks, Administration is recommending that a three-year pilot project be established to test two unfenced off-leash dog parks at 4927 Pasqua Street and Iannone Park. Subject to consultation with the community, these sites would see improvements such as additional benches and trash receptacles along with signage that designates them as off-leash areas. Administration will monitor the sites once established and report back on the functioning and impact of these areas at the end of the three-year pilot.

Should Council approve the above recommendations for development of two fenced and two unfenced parks in 2020, by the end of 2021, Regina will have a total of three municipal level parks (Cathy Lauritsen, East Industrial and Mount Pleasant), one fenced neighbourhood level park (Regent Par 3), two unfenced neighbourhood level parks (Pasqua Street and Iannonne Park) and several seasonal sites in the boarded rinks.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Through the capital budget \$170,000 has been requested for the implementation of the Mount Pleasant, 4927 Pasqua Street and Iannone Park off-leash areas. Funding for the Regent Par 3 off-leash area has been included in the 2020 budget request for that project. 30 per cent of the funding (\$48,000) for the municipal dog park site will come from SAF reserves with the remaining funds being requested through taxation.

Maintenance and operations costs for each off-leash area will vary depending on the scale of the facility. Currently the City spends approximately \$10,000 per year on the operation of each of its off-leash areas. This number, however, is expected to fall as the current use is redistributed over more sites.

Environmental Implications

The addition of several new off-leash areas in the city over the next few years is expected to lower the impact high-levels of use are having on the turf and trees in the Ross Industrial and Cathy Lauritsen off-leash areas. Development of each new park is expected to include additional trees, adding to the city's urban forest.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

While the provision of off-leash areas is not specifically referenced in *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw 2013-48* (OCP), such facilities are intended to contribute to

quality of life in the City helping to create a complete, livable, healthy, accessible, inclusive community for all of Regina's residents. The addition of off-leash areas to existing parks is consistent with the OCP's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Goal 9.6.1: *Multifunctional parks and open space will be strategically located to provide convenient access and designed to accommodate diverse and changing needs and interests.*

The establishment of three additional municipal-level off-leash sites is consistent with the recommendation of the *Recreation Master Plan (2019)* that the service level for off-leash parks be increased to 1/45,000 population by adding parks to the north/northwest, south and east sides of the city.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report

Accessibility Implications

Future off-leash areas are intended to be accessible, however not all sites may be suitable for all users.

COMMUNICATIONS

In advance of this report, Administration reached out to stakeholders and Community Associations to get preliminary feedback on the sites that have been identified. Public engagement regarding the individual sites contemplated for 2020 construction will begin in January of 2020.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The recommendation in this report is within the delegated authority of the Community and Protective Services Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Laurie Shalley, Director, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

10/22/2019

Respectfully submitted,



Diana Hawryluk, Executive Director, City Planning & Community Dev.

10/29/2019

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