



People Pets and Parks Strategy

A District Wide Strategy for Sharing Saanich's Parks

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Purpose: A New Approach

Provide positive relationships between people, pets and the environment.

Issues:

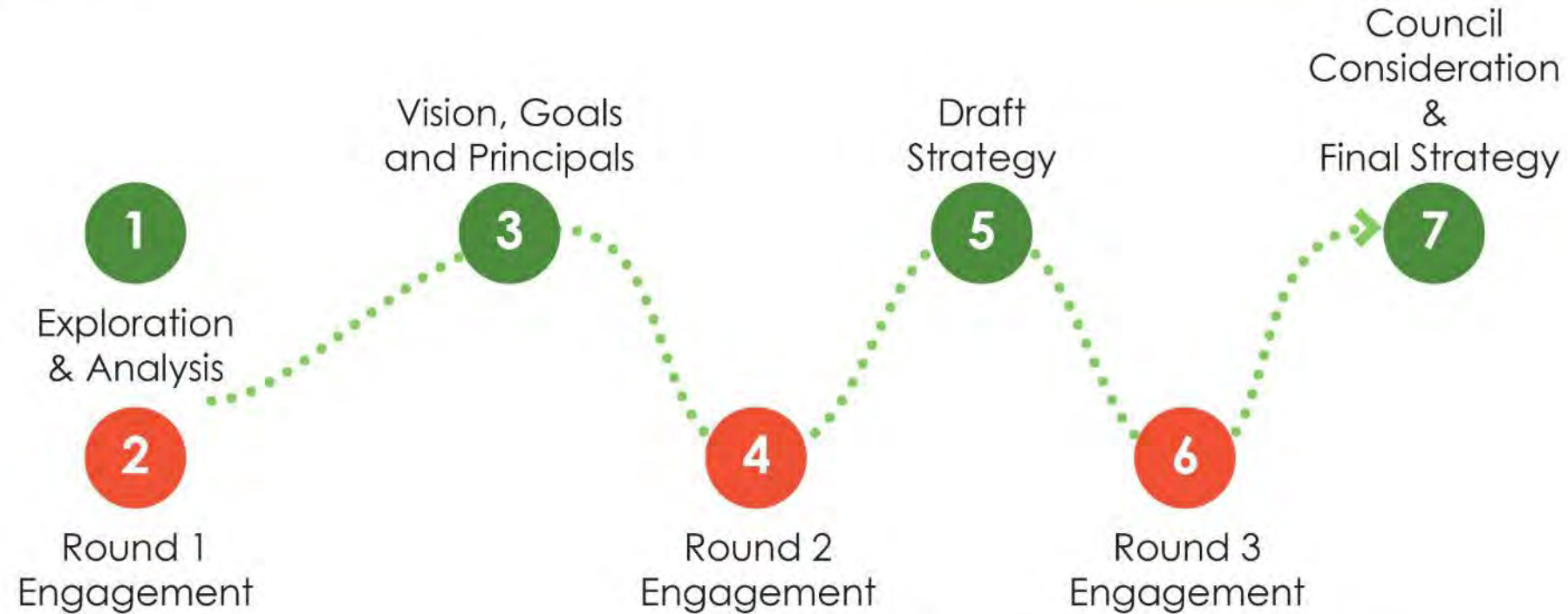
- Increasing population density
- Growing number of pets
- Pressures on open space/parks
- Conflicting park use and impacts on sensitive ecosystems and sports fields



Project Phases

Feb-Mar 2022

June 2023



Public Engagement

Spring 2022

Fall 2022/Winter 2023

Spring 2023

Round 1

Round 2

Round 3



Public Phone Survey + Online Questionnaire



Virtual Community Dialogue Sessions + Kitchen Table Workbooks



Virtual Stakeholder Workshops



Public Open House + Workbooks



Public Online Questionnaire



Virtual Information Session with Q+A



Public Online Questionnaire

Total

2,213

2,571

2,672

Engagements:

What is Valued



Open Space

- Open space for pets and their owners, as well as people without pets is important for health and well-being.



Variety of Park Spaces

- A variety of different types of opportunities is desired - there is no one-size-fits-all.



Safety

- Safety is important for both people and pets, including the range of dog personalities.



Environmental Considerations

- The community values environmental and wildlife protection, as well as having opportunities to connect with and recreate in nature.



Park Cleanliness and Waste Management

- The community values park cleanliness, and waste management.



Sense of Community

- Bringing pets to parks and interacting with other community members is important to the sense of community.



Park Equity

- There was agreement that parks should be spaces for all to enjoy and improved balance is needed.

What needs Improvement



Dog Behavior and Lack of Training/Control

- Owners not having control over their off-leash dogs.



Environmental Considerations

- Importance of environmental and wildlife protection.
- Concerns with off-leash dogs impacting wildlife, natural areas, and re-naturalized areas in Saanich parks.



Communication and Education

- Bylaws and restrictions are confusing and not well understood.
- Lack of awareness of etiquette related to people and pets in parks.



Increasing Demand

- More people and pets are putting pressure on the parks system and there are unmet needs for places to safely exercise and socialize pets, particularly in high density areas.



Visitor Comfort

- Some community members avoid parks in Saanich due to off-leash dogs being present.

Key Recommendations:

Planning, Enforcement & Education

- Bylaws & Regulations (November 2023)
- Education & Enforcement
- Stewardship
- Monitoring & Evaluation (Baseline data collection)

Leash-Optional Areas

- Leash-Optional Area Typologies
- Amenities
- Boundaries & Fencing
- Signage (design work complete)
- Maintenance



Controversy and Opposition:

British Columbia

Dog owners protest proposed leash requirements in Saanich, B.C., parks

The District of Saanich will vote on the proposed changes Monday evening



Moira Wyton · CBC News · Posted: Jun 25, 2023 11:00 AM PDT | Last Updated: June 25, 2023



Saanich set to unleash controversial new animal control bylaw

New rules focus on dogs and where they can be in parks

British Columbia

Off-leash dogs no longer welcome at dozens of parks in Saanich, B.C.

Saanich parks allowing off-leash dogs drops to 99 from 170 with new bylaw

Kathryn Marlow · CBC News · Posted: Nov 07, 2023 5:33 PM PST | Last Updated: November 7, 2023



Bylaw Amendment Nov 2023:

Recommendations put Forward from the Strategy

- Definition for 'dogs in control'
- Dogs to be on leash within 10 M of a playground
- On-leash at all beach's except one
- Fenced amenity areas for dogs in 12 parks



Council Deliberations and Changes

- Remaining 43 parks zoned P4 are leash-optional from 6am to 9am daily
- Leash Optional trail extended in one park
- Beaches off-leash except for existing restrictions (seasonal/bird sanctuary)
- Fenced areas for dogs reduced to 5
- No retractable leashes in Saanich
- No dogs in playgrounds

Trail Fencing Success





Thank you!

Park Planning: Gone to the Dogs?

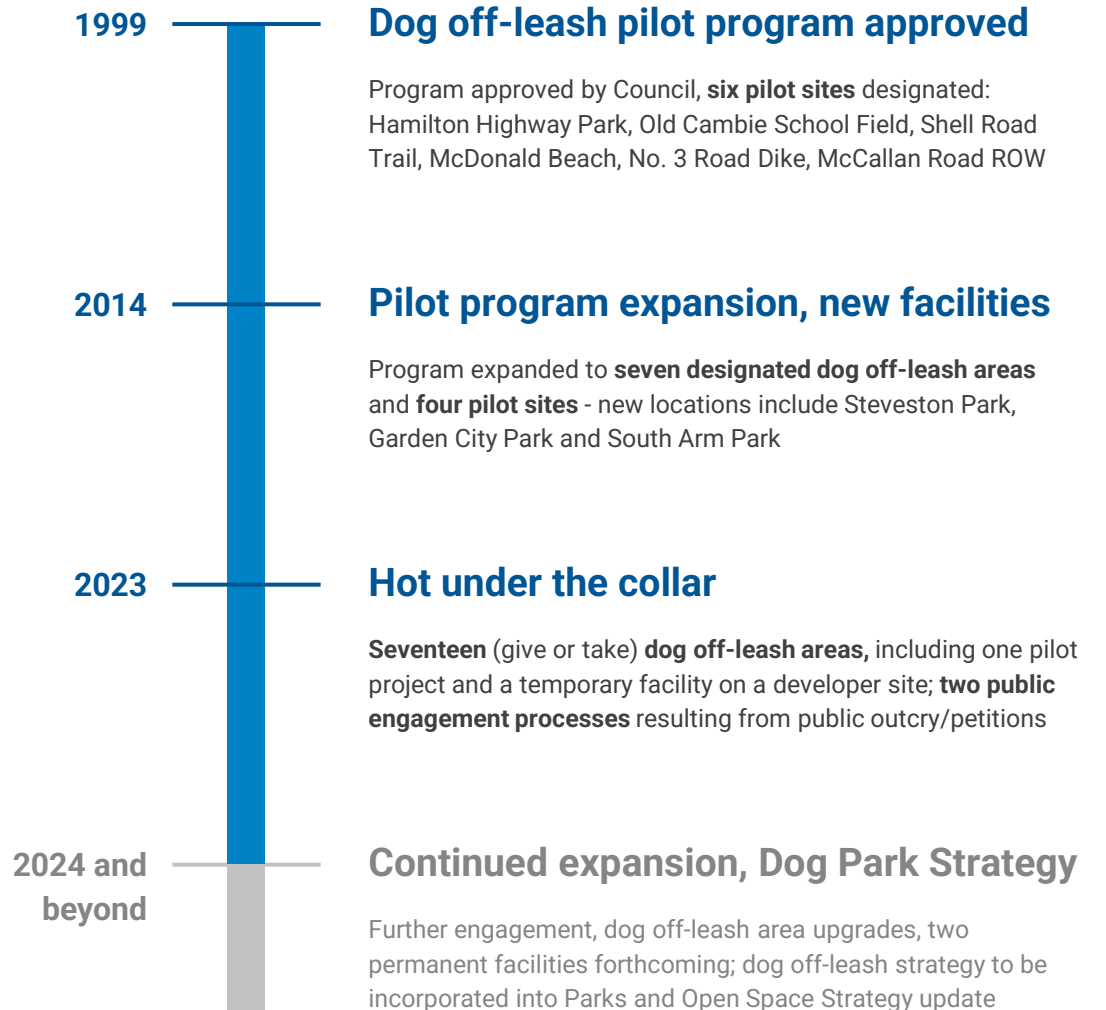


Kevin Fraser, Park Planner
City of Richmond
BCRPA Parks Professional Pathways, 2024.02.28

City of Richmond

Dog Off-Leash Areas: A Brief History

- Pilot projects
- Capital projects
- City forces vs. external
- Public vs. private
- Broad range of typologies
 - Basic to complex
 - Natural to urban
 - Trails to parks
 - Open areas to enclosures



2024 Dog Off-Leash Network

Link: [CoR StoryMap](#)

Talkin' Dogs

- Steadily increasing need/demand/expectation for public engagement
- Polarized attitudes
- Proximity to residential, conflicts between park uses, shared space
- Methods:
 - Let's Talk Richmond
 - Hard copy surveys
 - Signage
 - Postcard mailers
 - On-site open houses



You CAN teach an old Park Planner new tricks!

Lessons learned:

- Citywide strategy is essential (we're getting there)
- Surface materials
- Cost escalation, bang for buck
- Proactive engagement
- Importance of resident feedback



Thanks!



Kevin Fraser, Park Planner, City of Richmond

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