

# Memo



Date: May 31, 2016

To: City Manager

From: Robert Parlane, Park and Building Manager

Subject: Public Engagement for Dog Park Management Plan

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## Purpose

To update Council on upcoming public engagement that will help inform a Dog Park Management Plan.

Attachment A contains Frequently Asked Questions.

## Background

In January 2016, the City conducted a statistically valid survey to determine residents' level of support for off-leash dog areas, identify residents' tolerance level for off-leash dog areas in their neighbourhoods, and identify priority locations for off-leash dog beaches and dog parks.

The City learned that thirty-eight per cent (38%) of Kelowna households own at least one dog, and approximately half (47%) of dog owners report that their dog(s) use an off-leash dog park at least once per month. Fifty-five percent (55%) of residents feel more off-leash dog beaches are required. Seventy-six per cent (76%) of residents supported the creation of an off-leash dog park or beach in their neighbourhood.

The preferred locations for additional off-leash dog parks included the Mission (13%), Glenmore (10%), Rutland (9%) and Downtown (8%). The preferred locations for an additional off-leash dog beach included Downtown (17%), Mission (8%) and North End /North Kelowna (6%).

Council approved staff's recommendation to proceed with engaging stakeholders and neighbourhood residents on four potential off-leash dog beaches and one potential off-leash dog park on March 21, 2016.

## Phase Two: Public Engagement

City staff and a consultant will begin Phase Two of the public engagement process starting June 1. Five Discovery Sessions have been planned to explore the potential locations: Cedar Avenue Beach Access (Mission), Lake Avenue Beach Access (Downtown), Poplar Point Drive Beach Access (North End), 'mini' beach near the Sails Plaza (Downtown) and Munson Pond Park (Pandosy/KLO). The potential locations were identified to create a better distribution of dog beaches across the City, and thereby reducing travel distances for all residents.

The purpose of these Discovery Sessions is to gauge stakeholder support, as well as provide an opportunity for stakeholders to give feedback, identify concerns and explore possible solutions. Sessions will take place from 4 to 6:30 p.m. June 7, 8, 9, 14 and 15. Invitations will be sent to area residents, property owners, businesses and other stakeholder groups for the first four sessions. The June 15 event will be advertised as a Community Discovery Session, encouraging all interested residents to attend and learn about all five potential locations, and provide feedback.

Residents will also be encouraged to get involved by viewing the information boards, and providing feedback online at [getinvolved.kelowna.ca](http://getinvolved.kelowna.ca) from June 7 until June 28.

All proposed off-leash areas are subject to community input, Council approval and budget approval prior to implementation.

### Timeline

May 30 to June 2 - Invitations to stakeholder groups sent out

June 1 - News release sent out for community discovery session

June 7 to 28 - MindMixer available for online feedback

June 7 - Poplar Point Drive Beach Access hosted in Sutherland Park, 700 Ellis Street

June 8 - Lake Avenue Beach Access/ "mini" beach near Sails Plaza;  
hosted in Lake Avenue Beach Access, 128 McTavish Avenue

June 9 - Cedar Avenue Beach Access; hosted on location, 3090 Walnut Avenue

June 14 - Munson Pond; hosted on location, 2855 Burtch Road

June 15 - Community Discovery Session; hosted in Kerry Park, 1480 Mill Street

June 21 - Public Service Announcement MindMixer reminder

### Next Steps

Council will be presented the results of the Discovery Sessions and staff recommendations for consideration.

## Attachment A: Frequently Asked Questions

### *What is the purpose of these sessions?*

The purpose of these sessions is for residents to provide feedback on proposed locations. It's an opportunity to identify potential concerns and look at possible solutions.

### *Why were these locations chosen?*

Neighbourhood locations were selected to create a better distribution of dog areas across the whole City, to better serve all dog owners and reduce travel distances. Staff then assessed the neighbourhoods and choose areas to further explore based on availability of land and suitability for off-leash dogs. These areas will create a better distribution of dog areas across the whole City, to better serve all dog-owners and reduce travel distances.

### *Why is the City exploring four off-leash dog beaches and only one off-leash dog park?*

With regards to the current inventory of off-leash dog parks and beaches: approximately half (52%) of Kelowna residents believe that there are enough existing off-leash dog parks; whereas 55% feel more off-leash dog beaches are required to sufficiently meet the needs of dog owners. It should be noted a greater proportion of residents were in favour of additional off-leash dog beaches than those who actually own dogs.

### *Why is Rutland not part of the explorations when the survey indicated the neighbourhood is a top preferred location for an off-leash dog park?*

The listed explorations are only for 2016 and future areas will be explored in the following years.

Staff are focusing on water access as a top priority for this year as 55% of residents believed that there were not enough off-leash dog beaches. The exploration of Munson Pond is to cover the temporary loss of the Rowcliffe Dog Park while the site is under construction.

### *Why are there separate neighbourhood sessions and only one advertised community session?*

Adjacent neighbouring properties tend to be more affected by changes in their neighbourhood. Site signage was also installed one week prior to the event to inform those who frequently use the park.

Results from other municipal public engagement events indicate that dog owners are typically the most likely to attend these meetings, even if they do not live in the neighbourhood. The separate neighbourhood sessions allow those who are the most affected, to engage more readily with staff. The Community Discovery Session provides all residents an opportunity to learn about the areas and provide feedback.

### *How can residents provide their feedback on the potential locations?*

Residents can attend any of the five Discovery Sessions to provide their feedback. They are also encouraged to view the information boards and provide feedback online at [getinvolved.kelowna.ca](http://getinvolved.kelowna.ca) from June 7 until June 28.