

Changes proposed for dog parks

(Penticton, BC – October 13, 2023) – City staff are proposing capital upgrades to existing off-leash dog parks and are looking for the go-ahead to pilot leash-optional areas in several parks throughout Penticton.

“There is a clear desire from dog owners for improved and expanded access to City parks,” says Len Robson, the City’s director of public works. “The proposals put forward are designed to make an initial change in the quality of existing dog parks and also allow us to test off-leash practices as we develop a longer term strategy.”

Under the proposal, which goes to Council on October 17, staff is proposing an immediate investment of \$200,000 for investments in the six off-leash dog parks currently in operation.

In all areas, the following is proposed:

- Increase maintenance standards
- Weekly inspections with follow up maintenance
- Frequent vegetation control
- Increased litter pick up and removal
- Improve & update signage
- Install self-closing gates
- Improve accessibility
- Review and improve litter receptacle availability
- Enhanced Bylaw Services presence

As well, staff have detailed specific work to be done in each park to improve the surfaces and accessibility.

As the City looks to develop more off-leash areas, staff is recommending a pilot project of leash-optional areas.

“We’ve picked areas that are located largely in existing parks and can be found throughout the community,” says Robson. “The pilot project will allow us to see how it works in practice and also gives us time to hear from the public.”

He notes there will be a period of transition and the pilot project will require public messaging of the changes, as well as signage, trash receptacles, dog bag dispensers, additional monitoring by parks staff and by Animal Control and Bylaw.

Proposed leash-optional areas include:

- Riverside Park – 187 Riverside Drive
- Okanagan Park – 45 Lakeshore Drive East
- Skaha Lake Park – Main – 3661 Parkview Street
- Skaha Lake Park – East – 3895 Lakeside Road
- Water Treatment Plant Entrance – 1900 Penticton Ave

The estimated capital cost of the pilot project is roughly \$15,000 and would be funded out of the Gaming Reserve.

-30-

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