Minute No. 525
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services – May 12, 2014

Item No. 1 Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the "Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Park in Winnipeg" report be received as information.

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to conduct further research on the matter and report back to the Executive Policy Committee in July, 2014.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Mayes,

That the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 21, 2014, the Executive Policy Committee did not concur in the recommendations of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services, and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the "Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Park in Winnipeg" report be received as information.

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to conduct further research on the matter and report back to the Executive Policy Committee in July, 2014.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Further on May 21, 2014, the Executive Policy Committee received from Donna Henry, Director, Winnipeg Network of Dog Owner Groups (WINDOG), a communication dated May 21, 2014, in opposition to Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 12, 2014, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: **Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg**

Critical Path: **Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services – EPC - Council**

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
David A. Domke	B.W. Sacher, P.Eng.	M. Ruta	D. Joshi A/CAO

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council endorse this "Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Park in Winnipeg" report as a guide the Public Service will refer to when making decisions about existing and future off-leash dog parks.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

In the January 30th 2012 Administrative Report to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services, the Public Service identified that many off-leash sites in the City have specific issues and concerns related to their use as off-leash dog areas. These include adjacency to busy roads, sharing the site with incompatible uses, too many users in too small a space, and increased public demand for amenities, etc. Other concerns include sites that are prone to development pressure due to their proximity to, or location on private property not under the control of the City of Winnipeg.

In response to these issues and concerns, the Public Service commissioned a study by Dean Spearman that included a jurisdictional review of other dog parks, existing facilities in Winnipeg, and guidelines for the development of existing and future dog parks. The study entitled "Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg" is attached as Schedule A.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The implications of these guidelines are:

- more strategic decision making will be made by the Public Service regarding future location of Off Leash parks and their required infrastructure and amenities,
- the risk associated with future and existing off leash areas will be mitigated by designing safer off leash areas as prescribed in the report,
- citizen and user satisfaction will be enhanced by following the recommendations summarized by the public consultation outlined in report, and
- although there is no financial implication in endorsing this report, when future capital is identified for the development of existing or the establishment of new off leash areas, reference to the guidelines will result in better use of limited resources.

HISTORY

Presently, Off Leash Dog Areas are the primary responsibility of the Public Works Department (By-laws 85-2009 and 92-2013). The City of Winnipeg maintains eleven off leash dog areas, and is involved directly with two off leash dog area groups (Maple Grove Dog Park Owners Assoc. and Kilcona Park Dog Club Inc.). Although there are no statistics on usage, it appears the demand for the off leash dog areas is significantly increasing.

The City currently has a number of off leash dog areas which are functioning within multi-use park areas as well as other spaces that have been designated as Off Leash Dog Areas. This designation was made on an ad hoc basis in the absence of an overall plan or schema.

Many of these areas are temporary in nature, located in Manitoba Hydro areas, streets rights of way, or on otherwise vacated park land. While an excellent use of land, the fact these sites are not secure in the longer term is an impediment to proper development of these spaces as an off leash facility.

Other sites are under development pressure and/or prone to development pressure due to their location on sites not under the control of the City of Winnipeg. Currently, two of the City's sites are under development pressure due to proposed transportation projects (Rapid Transit Phase 2, and an extension of the Charleswood Parkway).

In a response to these concerns, the Winnipeg Public Service identified the need for a constituting document for Off Leash Dog Areas including:

1. Cross Jurisdictional Review
2. Local review of current off leash dog areas and their carrying capacity
3. Review of the issues and concerns
4. Public consultation with community stakeholders
5. Mapping of existing off leash dog areas, identification of future community & regional sites
6. Identification of new criteria for off leash dog areas, including role of dog groups
7. Identification of standards for maintenance including carrying capacity
8. Identification of standards for enforcement of By-laws
9. Current capital costs for the establishment of off leash dog areas
10. The identification of operating maintenance and enforcement budgets

The consultant assignment was awarded on June 5, 2012 to Dean Spearman, Landscape Architect.

Scope and Anticipated Fees included:

- Fact Gathering Stage (including cross jurisdictional and local site analysis).
- Consultation Stage (including consultation with stakeholders: POS, Animal Services, Risk Management, Strategic Parks, and Executive of Kilcona, Maple Grove and Little Mountain Park)
- Synthesis Stage (including review of by-laws, criteria and standards for off leash areas, potential future sites, cost estimates and budgets for the establishment and maintenance of sites).

The Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg has been submitted to Parks and Open Spaces for review (Appendix A).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: April 17, 2014

Project Name:

Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg

COMMENTS:

There is no financial impact associated with the recommendation of this report at this time.

"Original Signed by D. Stewart, CA"
D. Stewart, CA
Manager of Finance & Administration

CONSULTATION

In preparing this report there was consultation with: n/a

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: J. Ewart, Superintendent East Area & D. Domke, Manager of Parks and Open Space
Date: May 5, 2014

Attachment:
Appendix A – Guidelines for Off Leash Dog Parks in the City of Winnipeg 2012-2013


Dog Park Guidelines Deans I