

# Background

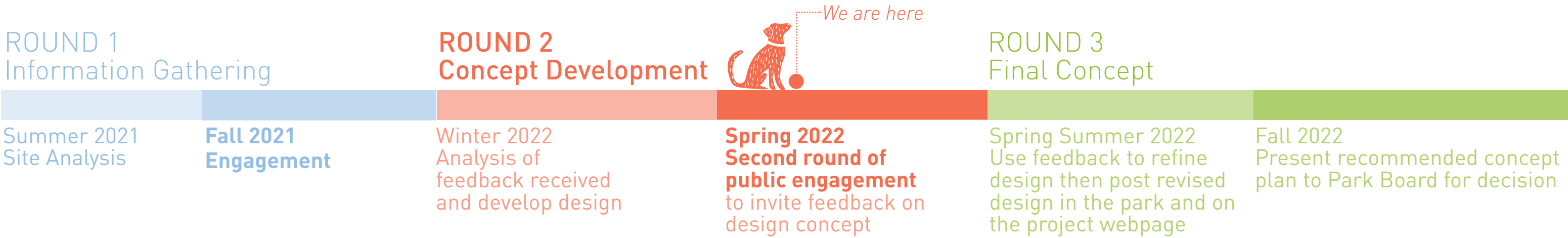
The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation approved the **People, Parks and Dogs Strategy** in 2017 to help deliver carefully designed parks for people with and without dogs. The strategy identified Downtown as being in need of additional and renewed off-leash areas (OLAs) to support the high number of licensed dogs in the neighbourhood. Improvements to the OLAs are necessary to address ongoing safety and maintenance issues as well as to accommodate the growing number of dogs in the area.

Emery Barnes Park is located in the heart of Yaletown at the intersection of Seymour and Davie streets. The park is well-loved and balances a variety of features including the OLA. The OLA here serves the second highest number of licensed dogs living within 1km of an OLA.

We’re planning a renewal of the existing off-leash area (OLA) and proposing an expansion for a separate small/shy dog area which would add to the overall OLA space in the park. Currently, the potential expansion area is a small lawn with a bench and two trees. The design concept was created based on what we heard in the first round of engagement in Fall 2021. In this second round of public engagement, we are seeking your input on the design concept.



# Timeline



The Site



# Round 1 Engagement: What We Heard

## 1 PROVIDE A BIT MORE SPACE

We identified an opportunity to expand the OLA into a small area to help accommodate the high number of dogs while maintaining the existing activity spaces in the park. The space we indicated for the proposed expansion is a small lawn area, southwest of the existing OLA, with a bench and two trees. This spot seems to be ideal for an expansion as a separate small/shy dog area as it would not require any changes to the existing circulation and would have a minimal impact on other activity spaces in the park.

- 80% of survey respondents agree with expanding the OLA
- 67% of survey respondents value creating a separate space for small/ shy dogs

## 3 IMPROVE EXPERIENCE + COMFORT

The Park Board and survey respondents have all identified the need to improve the experience on site and provide increased comfort for visitors. We heard an interest in:

- Managing odours from waste receptacles and surfaces
- Providing more shade
- Adding a dog-friendly drinking fountain
- Considering a dog washing/rinse station

## 2 IMPROVE SURFACING + ACCESSIBILITY

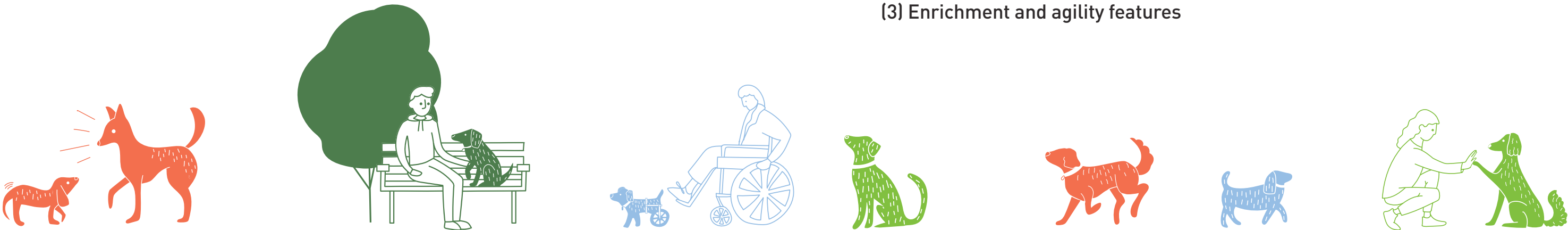
The existing surface of pea gravel is causing maintenance and safety challenges and needs to be replaced. Pet-specific synthetic turf will be piloted at this location as it is a high quality and durable surface, suitable for a relatively small area with a large number of dogs.

- Survey respondents ranked rubber as their preferred surface to be installed in addition to the synthetic turf
- The current site is not universally accessible due to slope and surfacing

## 4 OPTIMIZE SPACE + PROVIDE MORE PLAY OPPORTUNITIES

Research shows that \*enrichment is just as important as physical exercise for a dog’s well-being. Integrating enrichment activities into a dog’s regular exercise can reduce hyper-arousal behaviors that can contribute to conflict with others (\*enrichment refers to activities that are designed to mentally stimulate the dog’s brain).

- 90% of survey respondents agree they would be “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to engage with their dogs using equipment or features intended for enrichment.
- The top 3 amenities that survey respondents valued were:
  - (1) Open areas for running, fetch, and playing with other dogs
  - (2) Shade trees and
  - (3) Enrichment and agility features



# Emery Barnes Park OLA Design Concept

## 1 PROVIDE A BIT MORE SPACE

The concept design utilizes the adjacent lawn area to expand the existing off-leash area and create a distinct zone for small/shy dogs.

## 2 IMPROVE SURFACING + ACCESSIBILITY

Recognizing the issues with the existing pea gravel, the concept design proposes a diversity of durable and accessible surfacing including:

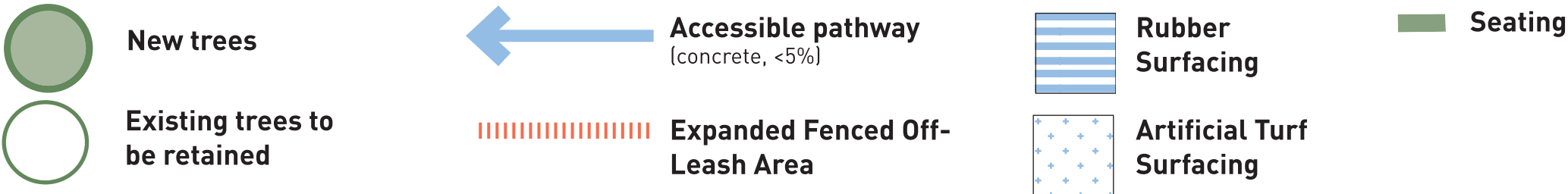
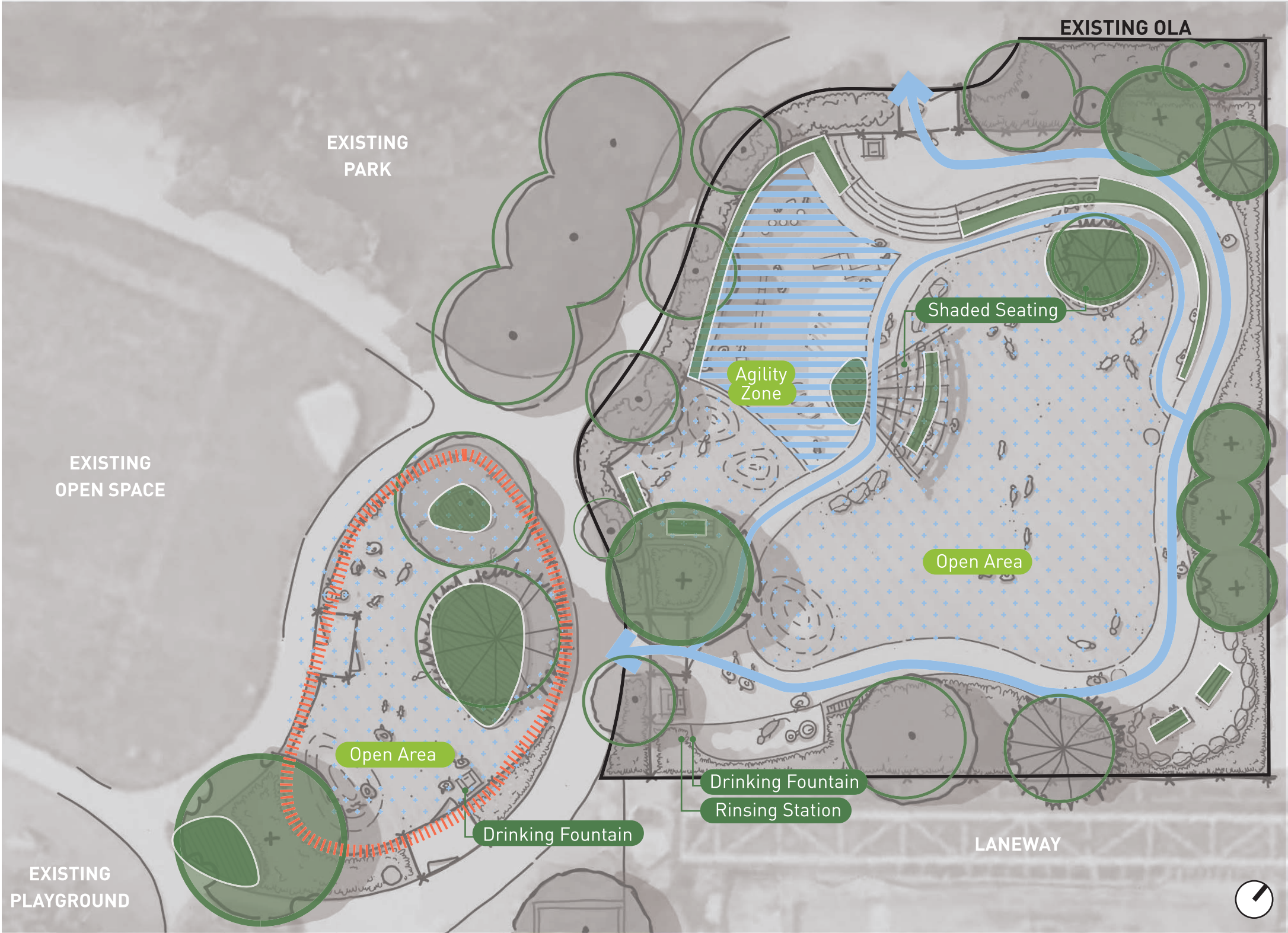
- Synthetic turf for open spaces
- Rubber for agility area
- Concrete for pathways

## 3 IMPROVE EXPERIENCE + COMFORT

In an effort to improve the experience and comfort of all users, the concept design maximizes green space, offers additional shade, integrates a diversity of seating, and provides a water drinking and rinsing station for warm and thirsty dogs. The increase in planting area and updated surfacing will help to address odour-issues and related maintenance challenges.

## 4 OPTIMIZE SPACE + PROVIDE MORE PLAY OPPORTUNITIES

The concept design offers a diversity of experiences for visitors while maintaining a large open space for running, fetch and play. Responding to the desire for more engaging features, the plan includes an Agility Zone that offers enrichment opportunities for dogs by engaging in focused mental and physical exercises with their owners.



Emery Barnes Park OLA  
Design Concept



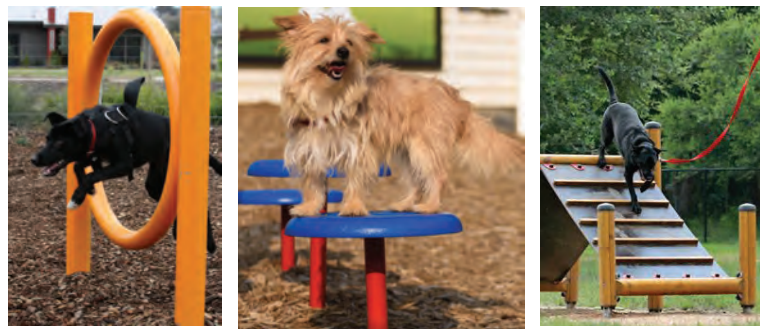
Drinking fountain for dogs



Seating decks for people and pups



Synthetic turf mounds at a dog park



Agility elements for enrichment, play and training



- |  |                         |                            |                            |                                 |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Double-gated accessible entry | <b>3</b> Secure fencing | <b>5</b> Drinking Fountain | <b>7</b> Seat wall         | <b>9</b> Shade structure        |
| <b>2</b> Accessible walking path       | <b>4</b> Waste bins     | <b>6</b> Seating decks     | <b>8</b> Enhanced planting | <b>10</b> Synthetic turf mounds |

Proposed Expansion

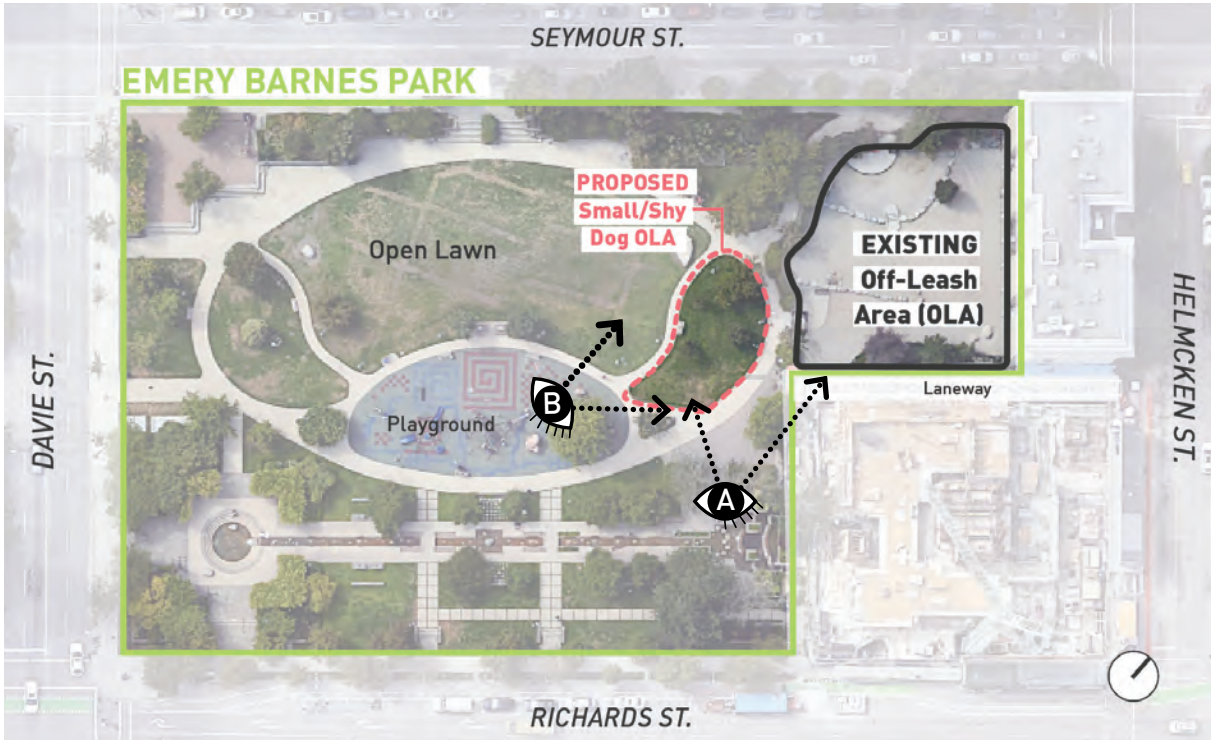
Emery Barnes is a well-loved park that balances a variety of spaces including the off-leash area (OLA). In all of Vancouver, Emery Barnes Park serves the second highest number of licensed dogs living within 1 km of an OLA.

In our first round of engagement, we identified an opportunity to expand the OLA to help accommodate the high number of dogs in the neighbourhood, while maintaining the existing activity spaces in the park. The area identified for the proposed expansion was a small lawn area southwest of the existing OLA.

In our survey, we heard that 80% of respondents agreed that expanding the OLA would be beneficial. We also heard that 67% of respondents would value a \*self-managed, separate space for small/shy dogs.

By expanding the OLA to include a small/shy dog area, we would be able to accommodate a growing number of dogs while also maintaining the existing park uses and circulation.

*\*At a self-managed small/shy OLA, dog owners determine whether their dog is the right size and/or has the right temperament to use the space. Communication between owners is encouraged.*



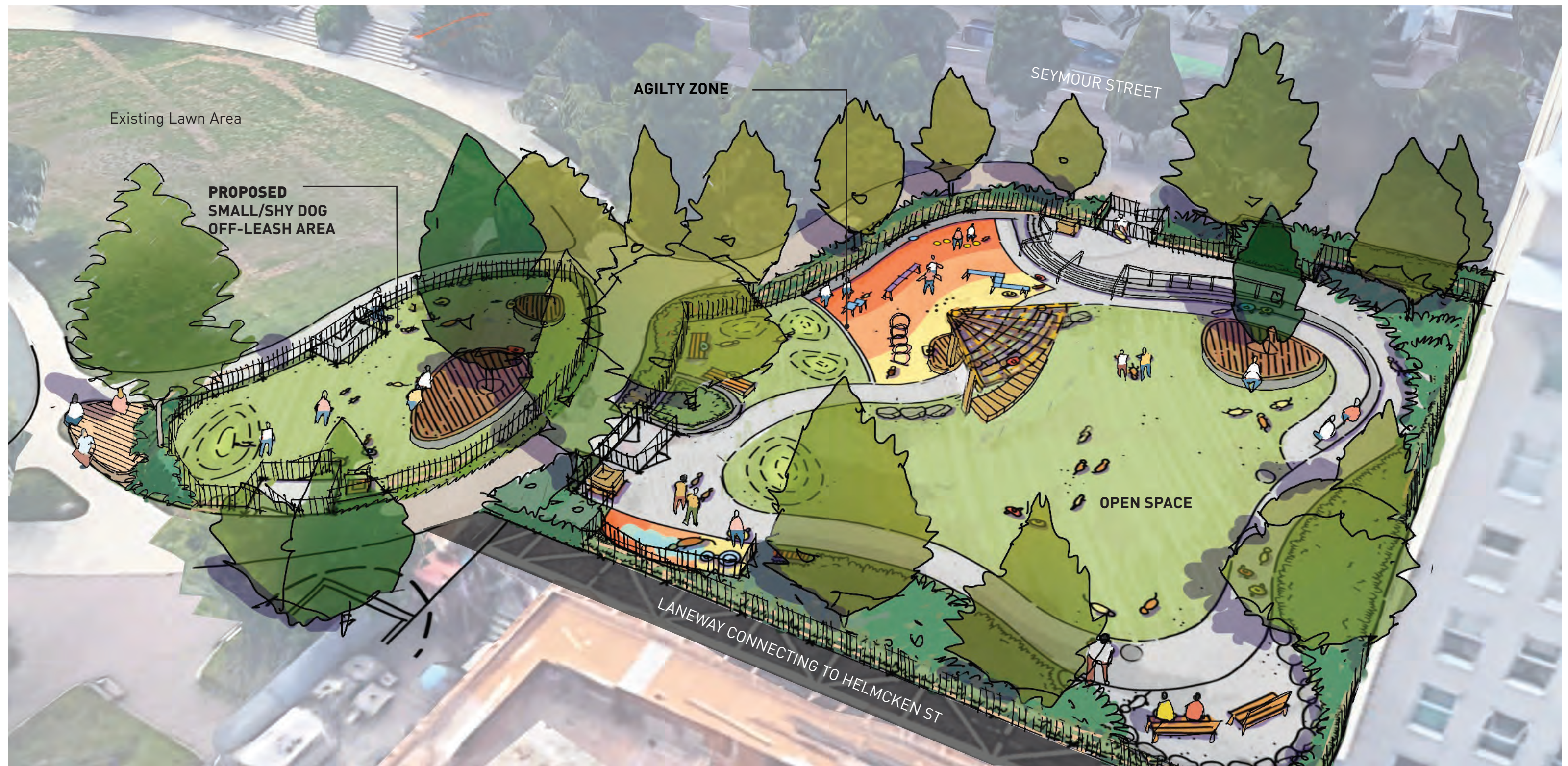
Key Plan for Perspective Views



Perspective View A: Looking toward Seymour Street from path between the two off-leash areas.



Perspective View B: Looking from the existing playground towards Seymour Street and the proposed Small/Shy Dog Area

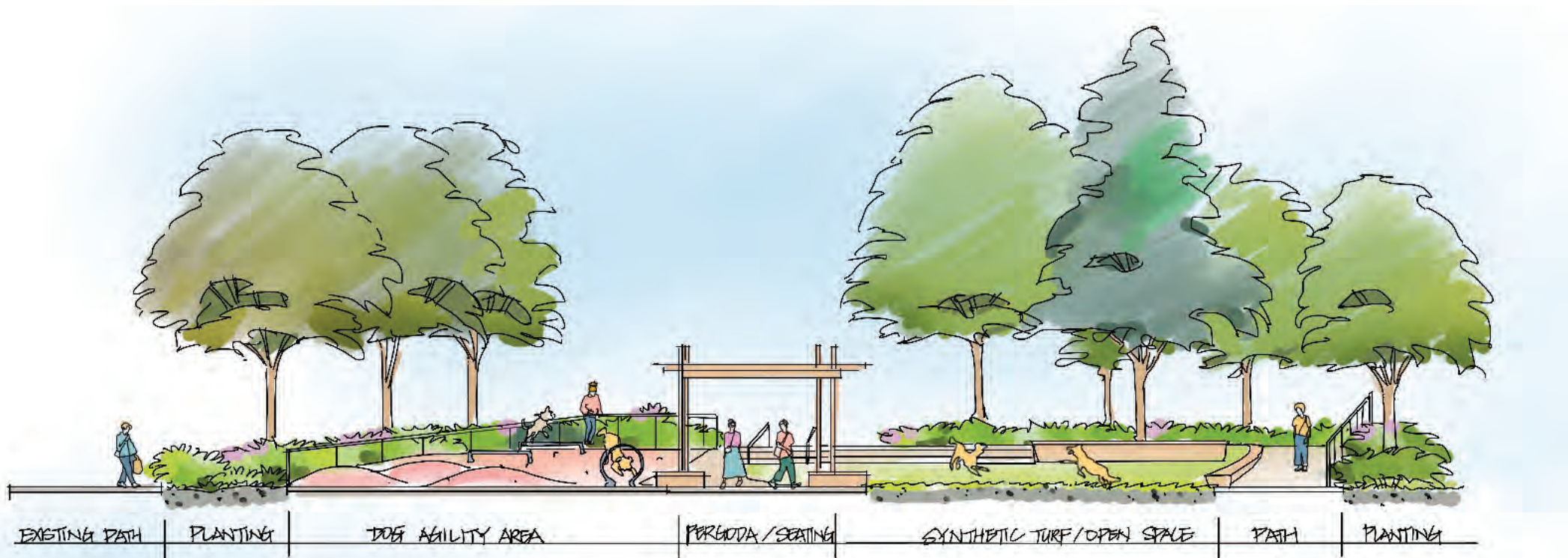


Bird's Eye View: Looking toward Seymour Street

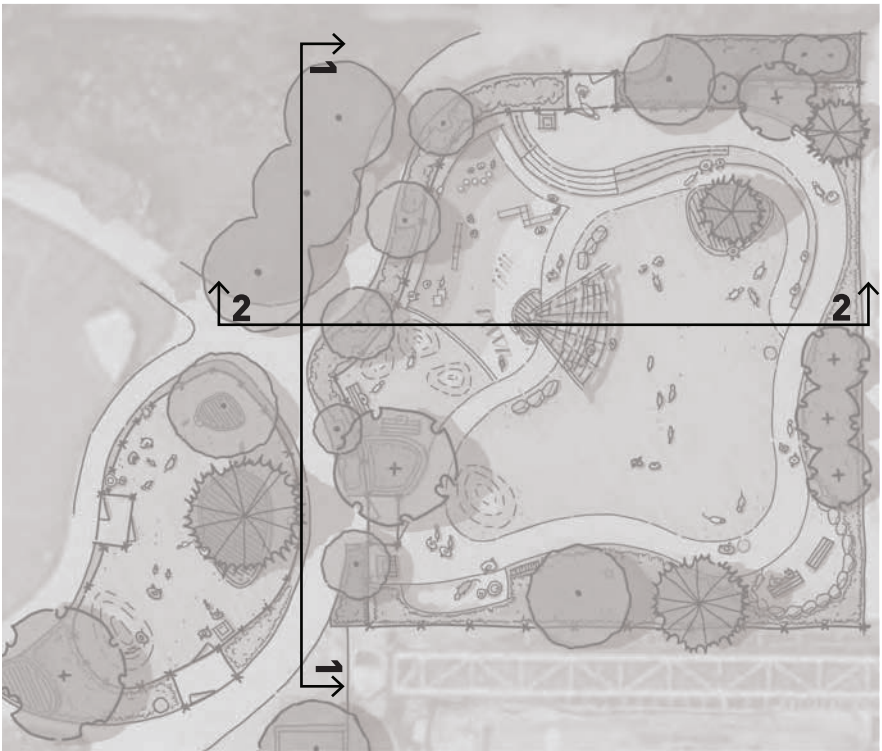
Sections Through Renewed OLA



1. NORTH-SOUTH SECTION OF RENEWED OFF-LEASH AREA



2. EAST - WEST SECTION OF RENEWED OFF-LEASH AREA



Next Steps....

Your feedback will help us refine the design concept, which will be revealed in spring/summer 2022. The recommended concept plan will then be presented to the Park Board for decision in the fall.

Let us know what you think of OLA renewal and proposed expansion at Emery Barnes Park. For future updates on this project and other off-leash area initiatives, sign up to be added to our mailing list:  
[shapeyourcity.ca/emery-barnes-park-ola](https://shapeyourcity.ca/emery-barnes-park-ola)



Example Images



Synthetic turf open space



Seat wall along the edges of play/open space



Agility features



Turf mounds for play



Rubber agility feature



Agility features engage owners and dogs



Shaded seating



A diversity of play spaces with shaded seating and robust planting



Concrete pathway with artificial turf



Seating decks protect trees and provide shaded seating