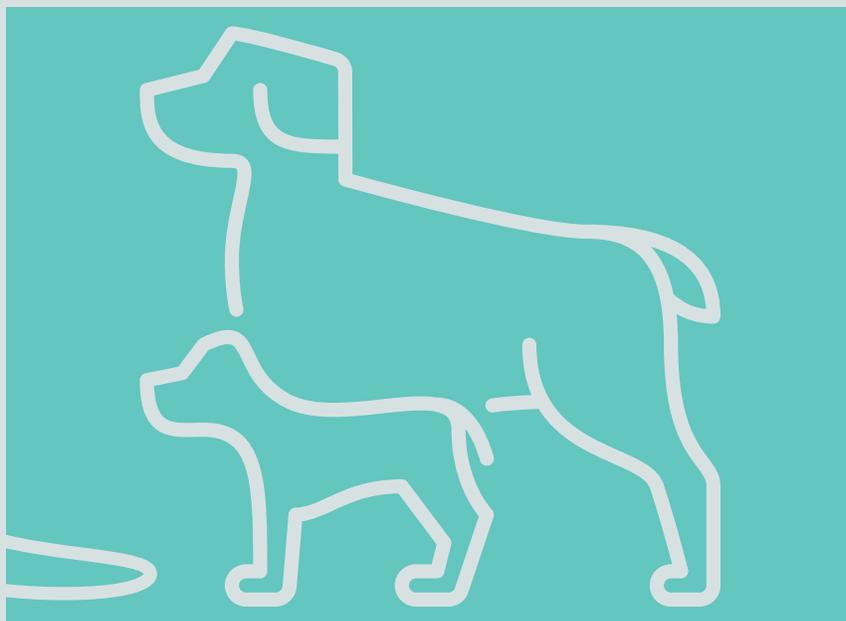


Heather Park Proposed Off-Leash Area Engagement Summary

December 13, 2021



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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Between September 23rd and October 15th, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation conducted an online questionnaire to understand respondents' current relationship to Heather Park and to gather input on the design and amenities for a proposed fenced-in dog off-leash area (OLA) in the park. The options provided in the questionnaire were based on guidelines from the People, Parks and Dogs Strategy (Vancouver Park Board, 2017), as well as feasible options based on existing site conditions.

The results from this survey will be used to inform the conceptual design for the next round of engagement. In the next round of engagement, respondents will be asked to provide their feedback on the proposed concept to further develop a plan that benefits all park users.



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND STATISTICS

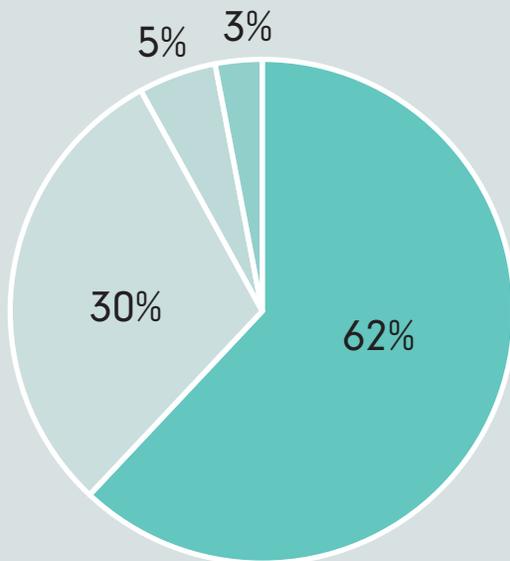
Demographics



833

Online Surveys Completed

13,860 postcards sent out to all households within a 15 minute walking radius from the park.



62% of respondents identified as being dog owners who live near the park.

30% of respondents identified as being nearby residents who do not own a dog.

5% of respondents identified as dog owners who use the park but do not live near it.

3% of respondents identified as being a park user but do not live near it.

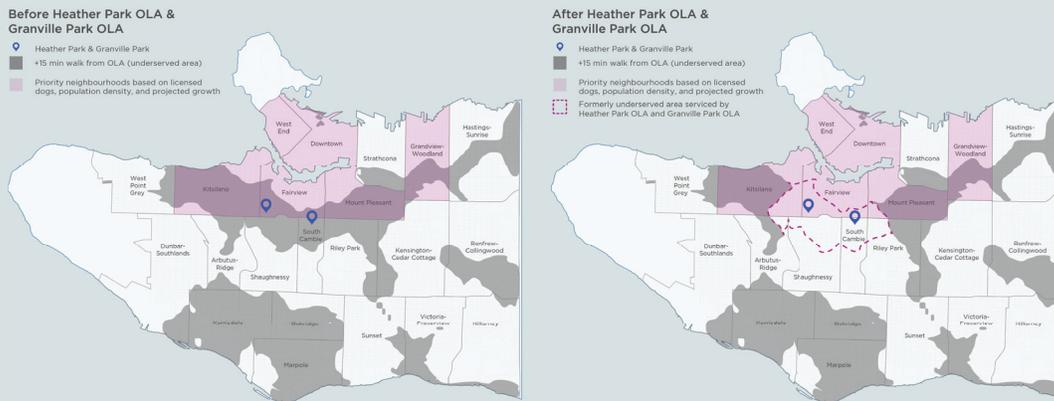
CURRENT CONDITIONS

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Heather Park is a neighbourhood park located in the north end of the South Cambie Neighbourhood in close proximity to Fairview and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhoods. The park has a lawn (0.6 hectares), a small playground, and four tennis courts. Mature street trees surround the park and provide shade during the hot summer months

The People, Parks and Dogs Strategy identified the importance of providing off-leash areas (OLAs) within a 15-minute walk for most residents. An OLA at Heather Park will increase access for dog off-leash activity in two priority neighbourhoods that are currently underserved. Heather Park has suitable space and amenities that a fenced off-leash area could be added while maintaining space for other activities.

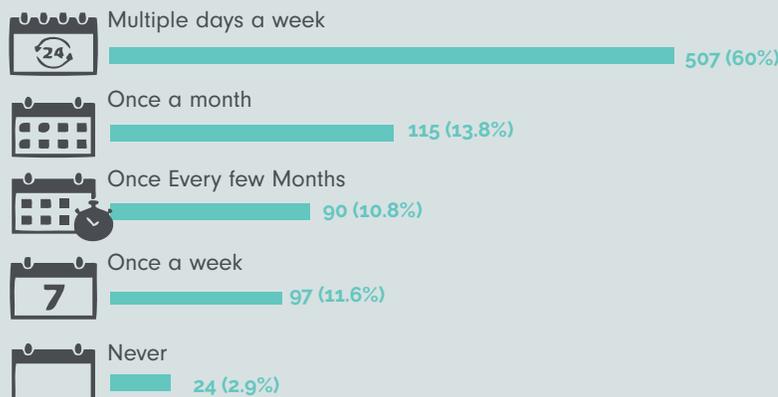
The maps below show how much of the underserved area can be serviced by off-leash areas at both Heather and Granville Parks.



HOW DO PEOPLE CURRENTLY USE THE PARK ?

We wanted to learn how people currently use the park to ensure that all users are welcomed in a park that incorporates a new dog off-leash area.

How often do you visit the park?



CURRENT CONDITIONS

What activities do you enjoy at the park?

64%



Walk my dog

55%



Walk through the park to get to other destinations

52%



Sit and relax

44%



Socialize

25%



Exercise / play sports on my own

20%



Play Tennis

10%



Participate in an organized activity/sport

10%



Other

0.1%



Lawn Bowling

LOCATING AN OFF-LEASH AREA

LIKES AND DISLIKES OF FENCED OFF-LEASH AREAS

To ensure the proposed fenced-in dog off-leash area (OLA) meets the needs of all park users, we wanted to learn from respondents what they like about OLAs.

What do you like about fenced-in dog off-leash areas?

Dog Owners

[560 Responses]



Non-Dog Owners

[273 Responses]



Key Takeaways

- 87% of dog owners like OLAs because their dog(s) can exercise in a safe space.
- 85% like that their dog(s) can socialize with other dogs.
- 62% like socializing with other dog owners.
- 59% like training dogs in a fenced-in area.
- For non-dog owners, more than half like OLAs because they know where to expect off-leash dogs.
- 43% like the fact that there would be less likelihood off-leash dogs would disturb their activities in the park.

LOCATING AN OFF-LEASH AREA

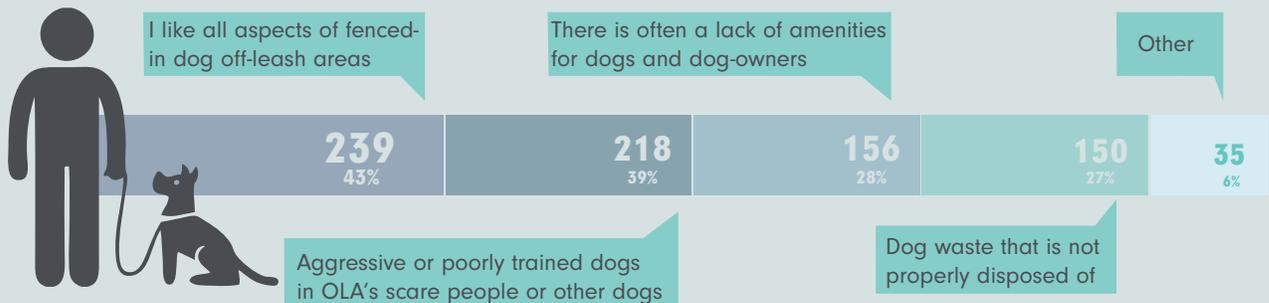
LIKES AND DISLIKES OF FENCED OFF-LEASH AREAS

Through the survey, we also wanted to know what people did not like about OLAs in order to address these issues in the proposed OLA.

What do you dislike about fenced-in dog off-leash areas?

Dog Owners

[560 Responses]



Non-Dog Owners

[273 Responses]



Key Takeaways

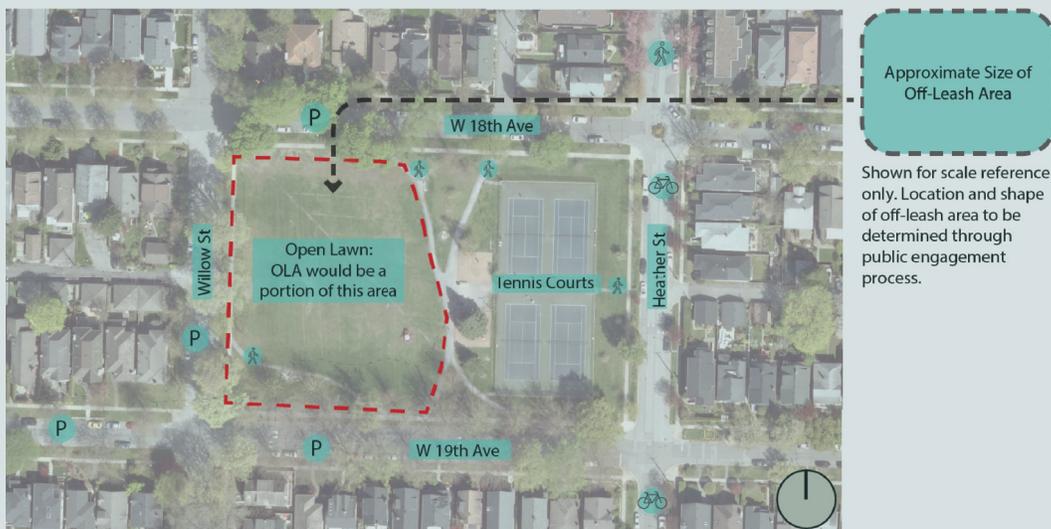
- 43% of dog owners like all aspects of OLAs.
- 39% are concerned over aggressive or poorly trained dogs in OLAs scaring or injuring other dogs and people.
- 28% did not like that dog waste is not properly disposed of.
- 61% of non-dog owners are concerned that there is less space for park activities
- 55% non-dog owners do not like that dog waste is not properly disposed of.
- Loud noises from OLAs were also a concern for 29% of non-dog owners.

LOCATING AN OFF-LEASH AREA

CURRENT CONDITIONS

What factors do you think we should consider when deciding where to place a fenced-in dog off-leash area in this park?

Locating the fenced-in dog off-leash area (OLA) appropriately within the park is important to ensure the needs of dog owners and non-dog owners are met and that conflict between park activities are mitigated. We asked dog owners and non-dog owners to share their perspectives on what we should consider when deciding where to place an OLA.



Approximate Size of Off-Leash Area

Shown for scale reference only. Location and shape of off-leash area to be determined through public engagement process.

Park Access

- Pedestrian
Sidewalks and slow streets community
- Bike
Informal bike lane/ slow street
- Bus
Nearest bus stops
On Cambie to east and Oak to West
- Parking
On street
2 hour parking

Key Takeaways: Non-Dog Owners



- For non-dog owners, the top factor to consider is interference with other activities at the park (41%).
- Daycare groups use the park for outdoor activities and playtime.
- Other activities that could be infringed upon by an OLA include organized and casual sports activities, picnics, and general hanging out on the grass.

LOCATING AN OFF-LEASH AREA



Key Takeaways: Dog Owners

- Dog owners wanted the proposed OLA not to interfere with other users and their activities in the park. As a result, these respondents suggest to locate the proposed OLA:
 1. Away from children's areas such as the playground and swings (38%)
 2. Away from the tennis courts (16%).
 3. Along Willow Street (11%)
 4. Have it at a different park, such as the nearby Douglas Park (8%). For those who want the OLA to be located in a different park, these respondents feel Heather Park is too small to accommodate spaces for humans and dogs.
- 21% of dog owners expressed the need for the proposed OLA to have sufficient amenities and features for dogs and their owners, such as water stations, dog waste disposal, benches, signage, lighting, and a leash up area.

Key Quotes

” There should still be plenty of room for people to socialize, and for the small children's playground to still exist. “

” Not too close to the kids swings and play area. “

” This park hosts preschool aged children regularly, and after dogs have been running with other dogs, they pose a threat. “

AMENITIES AND FEATURES

AMENITIES AND FEATURES

Through the online questionnaire we also asked respondents to indicate their preferences for the types of amenities and features to be included in the proposed OLA. The following section summarizes what we heard about amenities and features.



#1 Water Access : For Drinking



#2 Trees for Shade



#3 Seating



#4 Agility Features

WHICH DURABLE SURFACE WOULD YOU PREFER FOR AN OFF-LEASH AREA?

Ranked order of preference [1= most preferred, 3= least preferred]



#1 Wood / Cypress Chips



#2 Crushed Granular



#3 Sand

Our Response to Grass in an Off-Leash Area

“Unfortunately, we have observed that grass is very difficult to maintain in OLA’s of a similar size. The grass surfaces in some existing OLAs requires a great deal of upkeep and temporary closures to maintain. We have found that the other materials listed in the survey are more resilient in OLAs and help us to maintain a more consistent level of service by greatly reducing both the number and duration of maintenance shutdowns required throughout the year.”

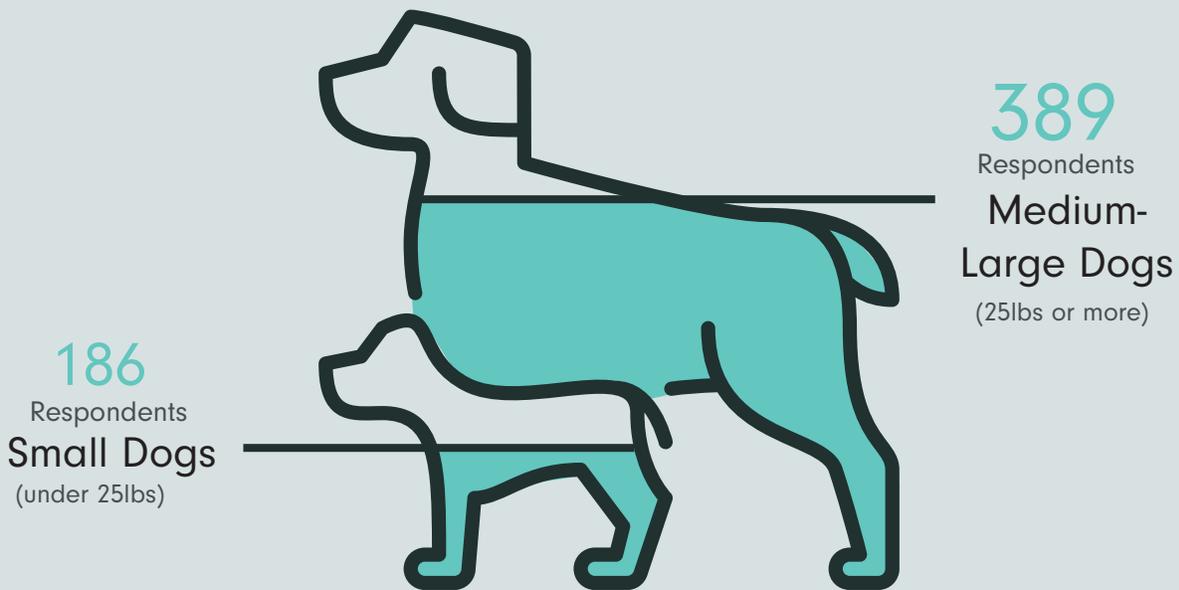
AMENITIES AND FEATURES

SMALL DOG SIZE AREA

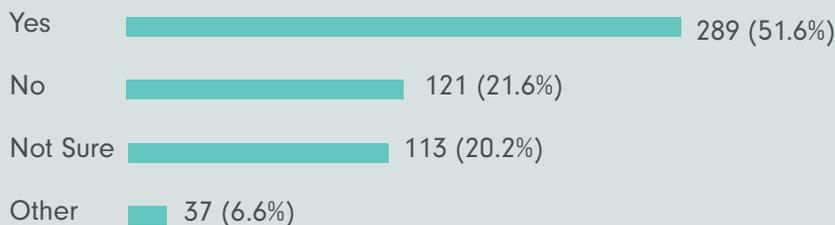
We asked respondents with dogs the size of their dog and if they would value a separate, self-managed small/shy dog area.



Size of dog(s) of respondents



Would you value creating a separate space for a self-managed small/shy dog area within the proposed off-leash area?



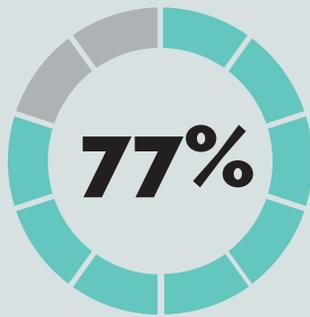
Key Takeaways

- Over half of respondents would value having a separate space for small/shy dogs.
- Some respondents expressed that they do not want to have a separate space for small dogs as there is not enough space at the park to accommodate both and/or would cause more conflict between dogs.

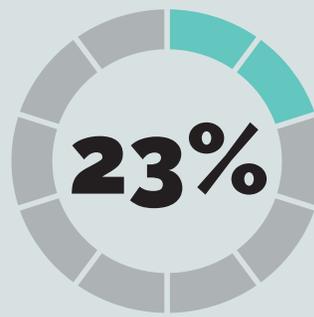
AMENITIES AND FEATURES

PREFERRED ELEMENTS FOR AGILITY

Would you be interested in any elements for enrichment and agility in the proposed off-leash area?



Yes

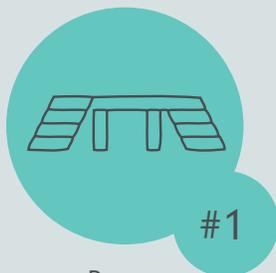


No

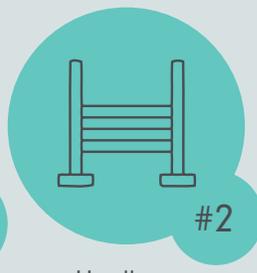
The majority of respondents are interested in having elements for enrichment and agility incorporated into the OLA. Of the elements proposed, ramps are the most preferred followed by hurdles and platforms.

What elements for enrichment and agility would you (and your dog) value most when visiting the Heather Park off-leash area?

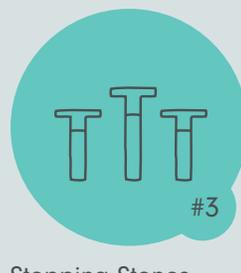
Average ranking; 1=most preferred, 7= least preferred



Ramp



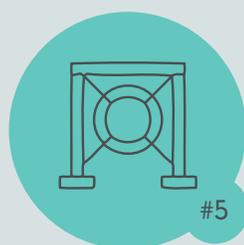
Hurdles



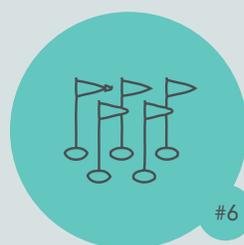
Stepping Stones



Platform



Hoops



Weave Posts



Tug Post