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The Corporation of **THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER**
ENGINEERING, PARKS AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

INFORMATION REPORT

To: Mayor Linda Buchanan and Members of Council

From: Tenille Thompson, Parks Planner

Subject: LOWER LONSDALE OFF-LEASH DOG PARK PILOT PROJECT

Date: September 28, 2020 File No: 12-6240-20-0057/1

ATTACHMENT:

1. Map of Proposed Improvements to Off Leash Dog Park

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Waterfront Park dog off-leash area. In late 2019, staff completed installation of the fencing, surface treatment, signage, and dog area amenities. Staff also worked to complete a Lets Talk page with a survey to gather ongoing feedback from the public about the park.

Discussion:

The Lower Lonsdale Dog Off-Leash Pilot Project included three public open house meetings and associated online questionnaires in 2019. Through the public feedback, Waterfront Park North was selected for a temporary off-leash dog area. Staff communicated to the public that the intention of the dog park at this location is to develop it as a temporary pilot project to review, monitor and receive feedback for a 1 year trial. This was in part due to the upcoming Waterfront Park masterplan development and consultation originally proposed for 2020. The expectation was that the results of the pilot project would help inform the master plan process, providing opportunities to make adjustments to the alignment and location of the off-leash area before the plan is finalized. However, as a result of COVID and the subsequent adjustment of City priorities, the masterplan process has been deferred to 2022. **(Mike need you to fill in the gaps here for more details on shifting priorities and deferment).**

As a result, the temporary off-leash area will be maintained on site until the masterplan is developed. It is anticipated that the off-leash will not stay in the current location when masterplan is developed and implemented. However in the interim, staff will implement some improvements based on observations and the public's input.

The main concerns observed with the off-leash area is the size and the existing slope on the south side. The current size is approximately 1500m² with much of that area on a average 30% grade. Many respondents expressed concern about the safety of pets and dog owners to navigate the slope in order to retrieve pet toys and dog waste. Also, the existing site soils are poor, with a low degree of permeability resulting in muddy site conditions that present further challenges.

For these reasons, staff are planning to increase the size of the off-leash area by an additional 500m² (see attachment). With COVID measures large gatherings such as the annual car show and Canada Day festivities are prohibited, thus allowing for greater flexibility to implement this change. The remaining park space is still large enough for the public use and enjoyment including picnics, pick up soccer, and other smaller group activities. The additional space is on more flat open terrain providing opportunities for increased play and access. Drainage improvements including installation of below grade pipes and surface lawn basins will collect water and disperse it away from areas of use. Slope repairs will include the installation of boulders and logs to provide more flat areas and a safe access path down the slope to the bottom of the slope.

Staff will be working with a Contractor and the Operations department to implement these changes in mid-October. The Let Talk page will be updated and continued evaluation of this pilot project will continue.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Tenille Thompson
Park Planner