

Off-Leash Dog Trails

2024 Pilot Project

Presented to:

Livable Community Committee

September 24, 2024

Presented by:

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Fredericton

Outline

- Bottom Line Up Front
- Background & Context
- Pilot Concept
- Request for Council Direction



Bottom Line Up Front

- On September 14, 2023, City Council directed staff to *“identify areas in the City that may be designated as off-leash for dog walkers”*.
- Staff are seeking City Council direction for piloting off-leash dog trails in a designated area within Killarney Lake Park.



Background & Context

- **The City currently has two off-leash dog parks (fenced):**
 - Cityview Avenue
 - Grant-Harvey Centre
- **Installation of additional downtown off-leash dog parks (fenced):**
 - Beaverbrook Street / McLeod Avenue (newly opened)
 - Westmorland Cloverleaf (eastbound to Regent Steet) (in progress)
- **Off-leash dog trails successfully exist in other communities:**
 - Hanwell, Saint John, Halifax, etc.



Background & Context

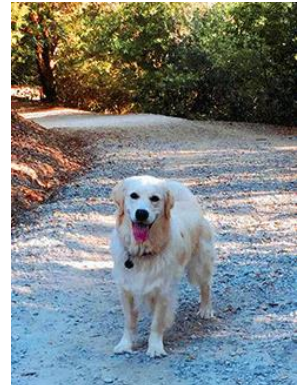
Benefits of Off-Leash Dog Trails:

– Happy Dogs:

- Alternative to fenced off-leash areas.
- Social interaction.
- Freedom of movement.
- Space to explore, use their senses, and gain mental stimulation.

– Healthy Community:

- Enhanced amenities for residents living in denser housing forms.
- Immersion in nature for dogs and their humans.
- Increased physical activity for dogs and their humans.
- Community building.
- More 'eyes on the park'.



Pilot Concept

A Pilot Project would:

- Introduce the concept of off-leash dog trails.
- Establish a set area for shared use where all trail users can be informed that off-leash dogs may be present.
- Create a wider variety of park visitor experiences.
- Allow the operational feasibility and public response to be monitored and assessed.



Pilot Concept

Seasonal Off-Leash Dog Trails Pilot Concept:

- **Location:** Killarney Lake Park (portions of Trails 6 and 7)
- **Timeframe:** Spring – Fall 2025
- **Approach:**
 - Promote
 - Sign
 - Educate
 - Monitor
 - Consult



Pilot Concept

Killarney Lake Park:



Pilot Concept

Preliminary Stakeholder Consultation:

- Fredericton Trails Coalition
 - Informed pilot location
- Wostawea Ski Club
 - Concerns regarding conflicting uses (skiers/walkers/dogs).
 - Pilot will not operate during winter months. Any permanent / winter locations will consider the potential for such conflicts.



Pilot Concept

Considerations:

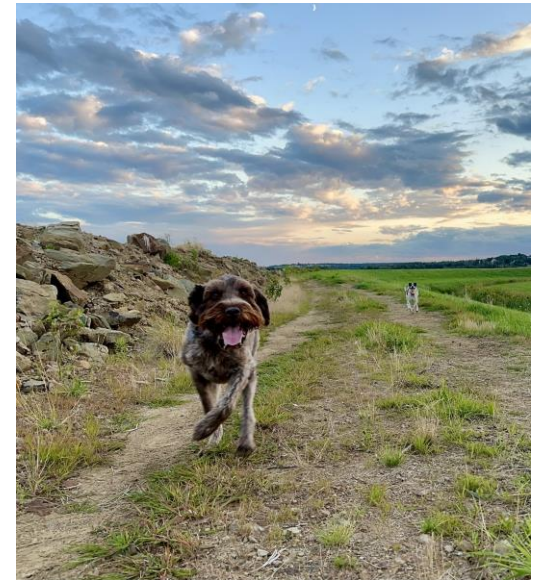
- **Shared Trail Usage**: Pilot areas would continue to be available for all users (i.e. walkers, cyclists, etc.). Signage would make users aware they are entering an off-leash dog area.
- **Enforcement**: The pilot will not include dedicated enforcement. Issues will be monitored and addressed as required.
- **Environment**: ‘Off-leash’ means dogs will travel through natural areas adjacent to pilot trail sections, which could impact the natural environment or disturb wildlife.
- **Unfenced off-leash**: Means there is potential for increased dog-dog, dog-wildlife, and/or dog-person incidents. Pilot project would employ best practices to mitigate risk.



Pilot Concept:

Next Steps Pending City Council Direction:

- By-law Amendment(s)
- Signage (for all users)
- Public Education & Communication
- Monitoring
- Stakeholder Consultation
- Public Engagement (upon pilot completion)
- Assessment and Report back to City Council



Request for Council Direction:

- **Option 1:**

- **City Council adopt the following resolution to initiate an Off-Leash Dog Trails Pilot:**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council for the City of Fredericton hereby directs the Legal Division to prepare an amendment to By-law No. S-11, A By-law respecting Animal Control, to designate an off-leash area within the municipality, to establish rules associated with the use of such area, to amend the definitions of dog, owner and running at large and to make such other amendments to give effect to the said changes. Sections relevant to the “Off-Leash Areas” are part of a pilot project which will be in effect between May 2025 and October 2025.

OR,

- **Option 2:**

- **City Council may wish to provide other direction to staff.**



Questions?

