

Off-Leash Dog Trails

Pilot Project Outcomes and Next Steps

Presented to:

Livable Community Committee

December 18, 2025

Presented by:

Meredith Cooper, Policy & Strategic Planning Manager



Fredericton

Outline

- Background & Context
- Pilot Project Overview
- Proposed Next Steps
- Request for Council Direction



Background and Context

- On September 14, 2023, City Council directed staff to *“identify areas in the City that may be designated as off-leash for dog walkers”*.
- On April 28, 2025, City Council adopted by-law amendments to facilitate a pilot project from May-October 2025 to allow off-leash dog trails in designated areas within Killarney Lake Park.
- The pilot project is now completed. Public feedback has been gathered, and staff are proposing next steps for off-leash dog trails based on pilot project outcomes.



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'.



Fredericton



Pilot Project Overview

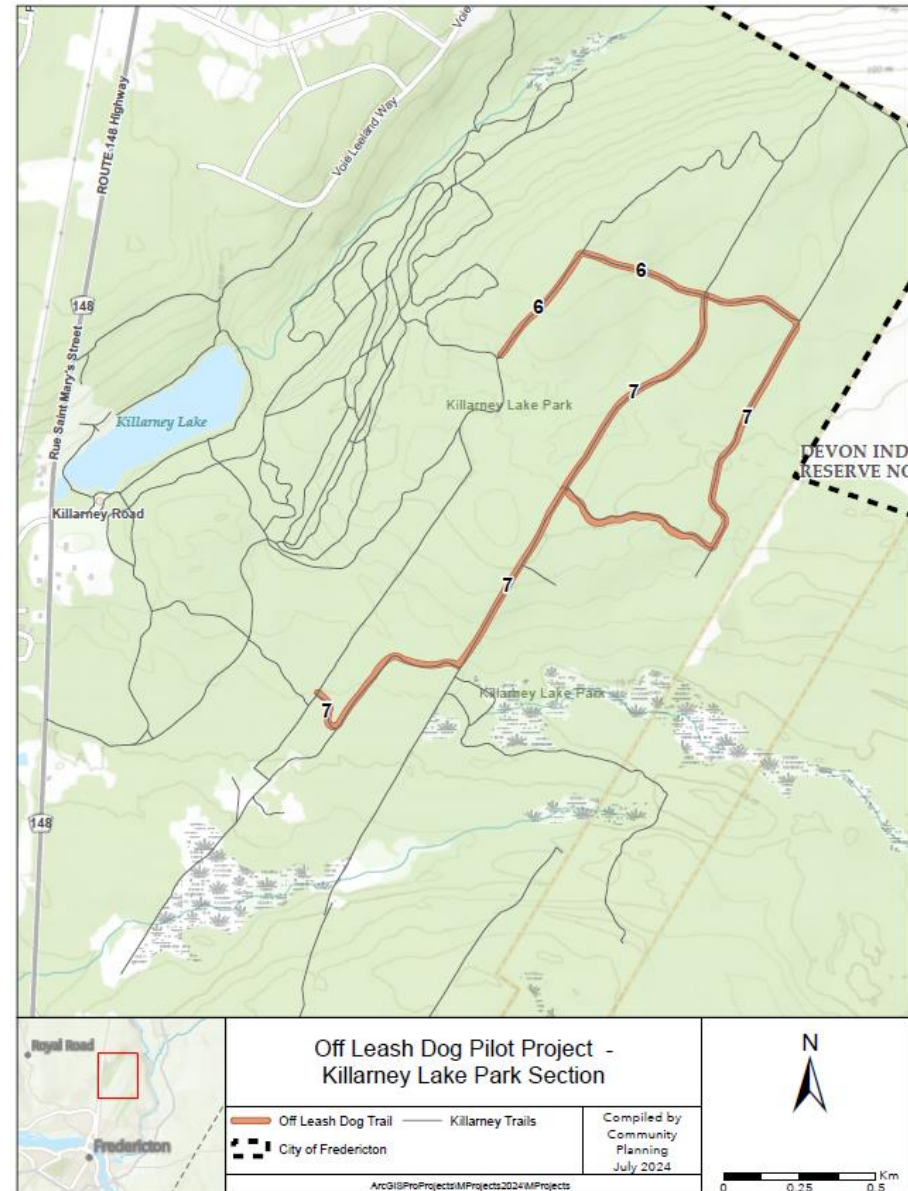
Pilot Project Purpose:

- 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 Project Overview

- 4.77km Off-Leash Trails
- Off-leash trails start 1km from parking area
- Rules and directional signage posted
- Stakeholder Engagement:
 - Fredericton Trails Coalition
 - Wostawea



Pilot Project Outcomes

Did you bring a dog when walking in the off-leash area?:

68% Yes, always | 23% No, never

How satisfied were you with the off-leash area?:

68% Satisfied/Very Satisfied | 24% Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied

How safe did you feel using the off-leash trail?:

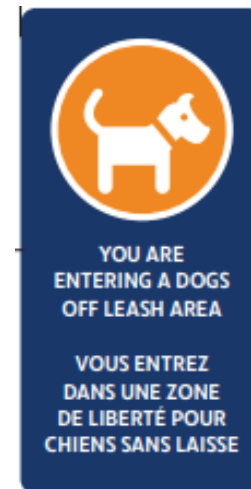
70% Safe/Very Safe | 22% Unsafe/Somewhat Unsafe

Have you experienced any issues while using the off-leash dog trails area?:

63% No issues | 20% Uncollected Dog Waste | 13% Aggressive Dogs

Would you like to see the off-leash trails continue?:

👍 80% Yes/yes with improvements | 👎 17% No



Pilot Project Outcomes

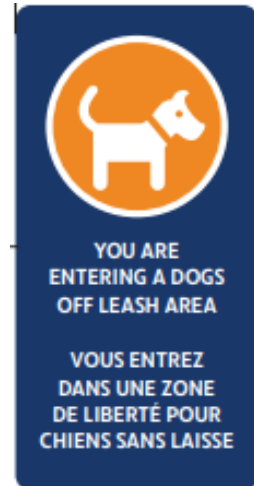
Pilot Project Outcomes:

When asked what could be improved the strongest responses were:

- More garbage cans
- Trails closer to the parking lot
- Better signage

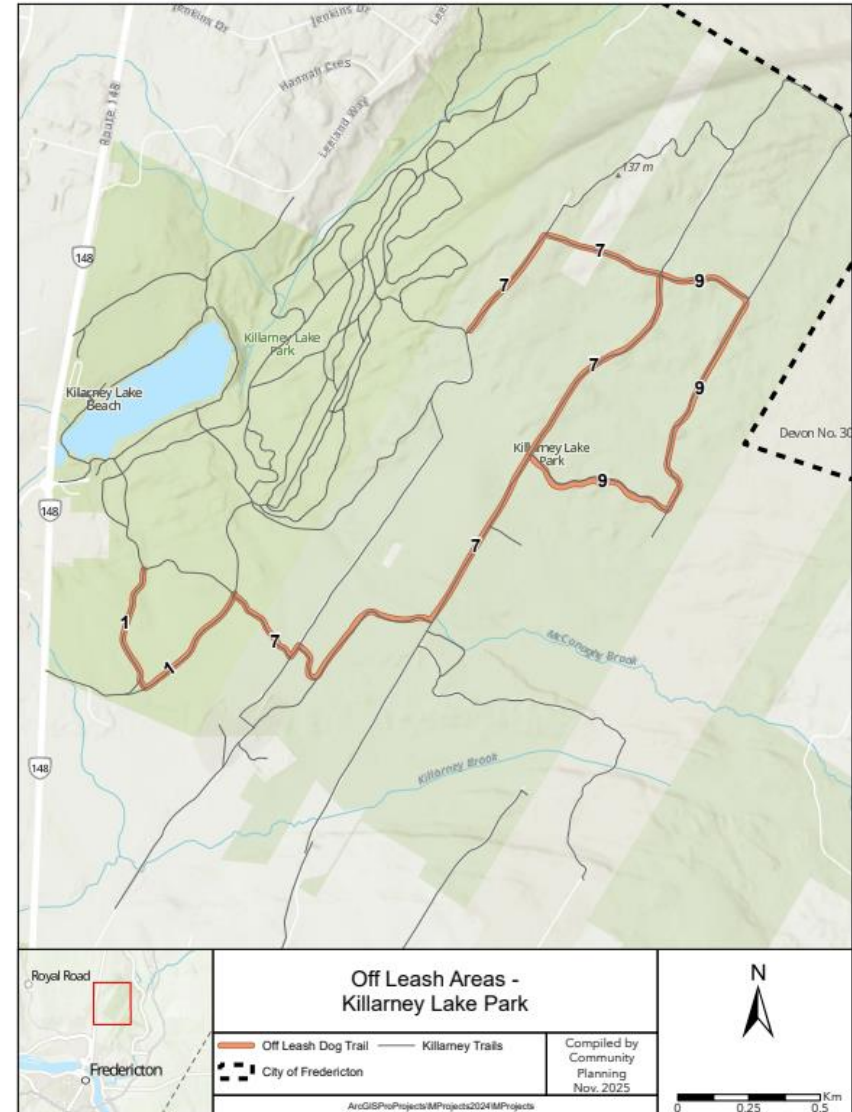
Other comments included:

- Monitoring to ensure dogs are off-leash only in designated areas (7)
- No off-leash areas (6)
- More off-leash trail areas (5)
- Fenced off-leash area (5)
- Lake access for off-leash dogs (2)
- Winter off-leash areas (2)
- Better surface material on trails (smaller granules) (2)
- Designated off-leash area (no kids, bikes, ATVs) (2)
- Benches on trails (1)



Proposed Next Steps Pilot Project Overview

- Allow off-leash dog trails in Killarney Lake Park on a seasonal basis: May – October.
- Expand the off-leash area to include Trail 1 and an additional section of Trail 7:
 - Creates an off-leash trail area closer to the parking lot; and,
 - 1.25 km trail increase for total of 6.04km off leash.
- Add and improve directional signage.
- Inform the public of seasonal off-leash use and use restrictions.
- Parks & Trees to consider feedback and develop service level standards related to garbage collection.



Request for Council Direction:

- **Option 1:**
 - **City Council adopt the following resolution to allow the seasonal use of off-leash dog trails in designated areas of Killarney Lake Park:**

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 permit Off-Leash Areas to be in effect annually between May and October, and to make such other amendments to give effect to the said changes.

OR,

- **Option 2:**
 - **City Council may wish to provide other direction to staff.**



Questions?

