

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by 

SUBMITTED BY: Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 4, 2018

SUBJECT: Off-Leash Dog Area – Don Bayer Park, 26 Troop Ave, Dartmouth

ORIGIN

January 16, 2018 Regional Council motion:

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

1. Adopt Administrative Order 2017-013-OP, *Off-Leash Dog Areas Administrative Order*, as set out in Attachment A of this report;
2. Adopt By-law P-601, amending By-law P-600, the Municipal Parks By-law, as set out in Attachment C of this report;
3. Approve the continuation of the existing Off-Leash Dog Areas approved pursuant to the 2007 Off-Leash Strategy within Point Pleasant Park, Fort Needham Park, Mainland Common, Hemlock Ravine, Shubie Park, Dartmouth Common, Sandy Lake, and Ardmore Park;
4. Approve the continuation of the existing seasonal Off-leash Dog Areas as listed in Attachment E; and
5. Direct the CAO to identify potential additional Off-leash Dog Areas, pursuant to Administrative Order 2017-013-OP, for the communities of Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Spryfield area, and Dartmouth. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, S.N.S. 2008, c.39

Section 61(3) The property vested in the Municipality, absolutely or in trust, is under the exclusive management and control of the Council, unless an Act of the Legislature provides otherwise.

Section 79(1) The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for... (k) recreational programs; ... (x) lands and buildings required for a municipal purpose; ... (ah) playgrounds, trails, including trails developed under an agreement made pursuant to clause 73(c), bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities; ...

HRM Administrative Order 2017-013–OP Respecting Off-leash Dog Areas Within Parks (Off-leash Dog Areas Administrative Order)

5. All or a portion of a Park may be designated as an Off-Leash Dog Area.
7. The process to consider the establishment of an Off-Leash Dog Area shall be initiated in one of the following ways: (a) by a motion of Regional Council, which may include directions for public consultation, to consider the establishment of an Off-Leash Dog Area within a specific park or community;
8. Once initiated, proposals to consider the establishment of an Off-Leash Dog Area shall be referred to staff for consideration and evaluation.
9. Staff shall review potential Off-Leash Dog Areas against the criteria set out in Section 14.
11. Staff shall submit a staff report with recommendation regarding:
 - (a) the proposed Off-Leash Dog Area to either Regional Council or the Director, whichever initiated the process, and
 - (b) any proposed regulations to the Director, along with a summary of comments received during the public consultations.
- 15(1) If the process was initiated by Regional Council, Regional Council shall consider staff's recommendation respecting the proposed Off-Leash Dog Area and may approve, modify or refuse the designation of the proposed Off-Leash Dog Area.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the general area identified on Map 1 within Don Bayer Park, 26 Troop Avenue, Dartmouth, for designation as a dedicated Off-Leash Dog Area pursuant to Administrative Order 2017-013-OP with requirements for hours of operation and other regulations pursuant to the Parks By-law (P-600), to be effective upon completion of the necessary capital work to Don Bayer Park;
2. Direct staff to include this project in the capital prioritization exercise for consideration in the 2019/20 Capital Budget for the development of the Don Bayer Park Off-Leash Dog Area; and
3. Direct staff to continue with the off-leash work program as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

Off-Leash Dog Area Program

HRM's off-leash dog area program dates back to 1998 when Regional Council passed By-law D-100 (Respecting the Registration and Regulation of Dogs) which contained provisions regarding the designation of off-leash areas within municipal parks.

On November 9, 2004 Regional Council requested staff develop a master plan for off-leash dog areas within HRM to respond to an increasing demand for formalized off-leash dog areas. The requested master plan took the form of the 2007 Off-Leash Dog Strategy adopted by Regional Council on June 26, 2007¹.

¹ Link to Staff Report and 2007 Off-Leash Parks Strategy:
<http://legacycontent.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/070626cow4.pdf>

The Strategy was a pilot program to create new off-leash areas and monitor their effectiveness. Numerous public consultations sessions were held and seven off-leash areas were developed through the implementation of the strategy.

The Off-leash Area Program was formally reviewed between 2014 and 2015 and on November 19, 2015 Regional Council approved the off-leash program as a permanent service and directed staff to develop an administrative order to replace the 2007 Strategy². Subsequently, in January 2018, Regional Council confirmed the continuation of the existing off-leash areas, previously implemented as part of the pilot program.

The program as it exists today consists of off-leash areas within eight parks, as well as the use of 30 sports field locations (6 available for summer use and 29 available for winter use). A list of the existing off-leash areas can be found in Attachment A and is illustrated on Map 2.

Administrative Order

On January 16, 2018 Regional Council approved, as policy, Administrative Order 2017-013-OP (Respecting Off-Leash Dog Areas in Municipal Parks). The Administrative Order formalized:

- the philosophy on which HRM's off-leash program is based: To recognize the public health benefit of dog walking; to provide adequate, appropriate and safe areas for dogs to be off-leash; and to provide a level of service that economical and environmentally sustainable;
- The process by which new off-leash areas are designated, modified, or closed;
- An off-leash classification system (shared or dedicated); and
- The criteria by which potential candidate off-leash areas are evaluated.

Work Program

On January 16, 2018 Regional Council directed staff to identify additional potential Off-leash Dog Areas, pursuant to the new administrative order, where there are underserved areas or issues with existing off-leash areas. Those included:

- Cole Harbour: where the former Rehabilitation Lands were identified;
- Eastern Passage: where the Eastern Passage Common and the Shearwater Flyer Trail Park, abutting the Trans Canada Trail were identified as possible locations within the community;
- Spryfield: where Long Lake Provincial Park or another nearby location was identified; and
- Dartmouth: where a dedicated off-leash area was to be considered, namely to help address issues of over use at Shubie Park and to address a service gap for a dedicated off-leash area, with Burnside Business Park identified as a possible location.

For the workplan, given the popularity and issues of over use at Shubie Park, staff placed a priority on identifying an additional location in Dartmouth. The aim of this is to relieve the pressure on Shubie Park that has resulted from its popularity. The remainder of this report focuses upon the possible establishment of a dedicated off-leash area in Don Bayer Park in Burnside Business Park and on providing an update on the remainder of the identified workplan.

DISCUSSION

Dartmouth

The site selection process for the community of Dartmouth focused primarily on the Burnside Business Park due to the inventory of municipally owned lands. Further, the lands within that area have the ability to

² Link to 2015 Staff Report: <http://legacycontent.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/151201ca1433.pdf>

avoid land use conflict issues with established residential areas. From this review, Don Bayer Park was identified as being most suitable.

Don Bayer Park

Don Bayer Park is a 5.44 hectare (13.4 acre) district park located in Dartmouth (Burnside) at the corner of Akerley Boulevard and Burnside Drive. It contains a parking area, baseball diamond and a sports field which is used by rugby and ultimate frisbee groups. The sports field is also currently part of the off-leash program as a seasonal shared off-leash area from November 1 through May 1. This report does not propose any changes to the status of the sports field within the off-leash program. The baseball diamond is currently undergoing a capital improvement project to install lighting which will allow extended hours for which the field can be scheduled. There is, however, an area to the north of these features that has been identified as being suitable for a dedicated off-leash area.

Subject Site (Map 3)	Don Bayer Park (PID 40611931) 22 Troop Avenue, Dartmouth (Burnside Business Park)
Park ID	485
Park Classification	District Park
Polling District	District 6 – Harbourview-Burnside-Dartmouth East
Size of Site	5.44 hectares (13.44 acres)
Site Features and Characteristics	The site contains a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball field; • Sports Field (scheduled for Rugby and Ultimate Frisbee); and • Parking Area The site is within the Urban Service Area and was constructed on a decommissioned landfill.
Regional Plan Designation	Primary Designation: Urban Settlement Secondary Designation: Business / Industrial Park
Community Plan Designation	Industrial under the Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy
Zoning	I-2 (General Industrial Zone) under the Dartmouth Land Use By-law.
Surrounding Use(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale commercial businesses to the east and south; • PID 41103482 (discussed below) and Burnside Drive to the west; and, • The Burnside Expressway corridor which will link Burnside to Bedford, and an engineered wetland, and to the north.

Proposed Concept

The proposed concept for a new dedicated off-leash dog area is illustrated on Map 1. The concept plan shows two areas of the planned development: Area A is wholly within Don Bayer Park and represents a complete off-leash area proposal. Area B is a 0.59 hectare (1.45 acres) HRM owned triangular shaped property (PID 41103482) located between Don Bayer Park and Burnside Drive, and contains a 10m wide easement for a 323.9 mm gas pipeline - it is not currently classified as parkland. Area B may be required for the intersection alignment for the future provincial Burnside Expressway. However, should Area B not be developed for right-of-way purposes, it could be available as an addition to Don Bayer Park to expand the proposed off-leash area, and has therefore been included in the concept plan and financial analysis (below). The addition of Area B would increase the park size of Don Bayer Park to 6.03 hectares (14.9 acres).

The proposed off-leash area would be located at the north end of the park and:

- Be accessed by a 700 metre looped walking trail that circles the playing fields;
- Be fully fenced with two areas which could be used to separate dogs, as illustrated on Map 1. Note that at the Mainland Common dogs are separated based on size, however, these areas could also be used to divide dogs based on age, energy level or activity (fetch, training, free play);

- Include sun/weather shelters; and
- Contains a potential future agility training area (located in Area B).

Should Don Bayer Park be designated as a dedicated off-leash area, per the staff recommendation, it would be the second dedicated off-leash area available to the general public within HRM's off-leash program.

Review of Administrative Order

Administrative Order 2017-013-OP (the AO) contains evaluation criteria to determine the appropriateness of a candidate site for inclusion within the off-leash program. Staff has reviewed Don Bayer Park relative to the evaluation criteria (Attachment B) and advise that the site is appropriate for the establishment of a dedicated off-leash dog area. The following items have been identified for detailed discussion:

Compatibility of the Proposed Off-Leash Dog Area with Surrounding Uses and Existing Park Uses – Section 13(e), (f) and (i) of the AO

Given the park's location within the Burnside Business Park, it is not anticipated that any compatibility concerns will arise. Nearby uses include a home furniture warehouse and an office interior furniture business. The buildings in the area have large footprints (>10,000 square feet) and sit on large lots (>50,000 square feet) which is typical of a business/industrial campus. This form allows sufficient physical separation of uses, and should additional screening or buffering be required Don Bayer Park has adequate space to accommodate any additional measures.

Attention has been given in the development of the proposed design of the off-leash area to ensure that no existing park features will be negatively impacted. The ball diamond is scheduled daily for adult baseball and the sports field is used by ultimate frisbee and rugby groups. The proposed concept for the off-leash area is to utilize the unused portions of the park with minimal disruption to current users.

Size of the Proposed Off-Leash Dog Area - Section 13(c) of the AO

The park, which is 13.44 acres, exceeds the minimum 2.5 acres park size required to consider an off-leash area. The other dedicated off-leash dog area available to the general public, located at the Mainland Common, is approximately 2 acres in area, inclusive of the fenced wooded area containing trails. The proposed dedicated off-leash area shown on Map 1 is designed to be approximately 1 acre without the addition of Area B. This is anticipated to be of a sufficient size to suitably accommodate the volume of park users.

Physical and Environmental Suitability of the Park - Section 13(g) of the AO

Don Bayer Park was developed atop a buried landfill. There is significant ditching present along the east and north sides of the park. The proposed design depicted on Map 1 accounts for these physical landscape characteristics. Additionally, the landfill was buried using large material which has caused voids to form and holes to appear in the park. This is an issue that staff are aware of and regular inspections are conducted and maintenance is performed to address the issue. This would be further addressed in the complete design and construction of the off-leash area.

Site Specific Restriction - Section 13(l) of the AO

Given the Parks location within the Burnside Business Park no specific restrictions are recommended for the proposed off-leash area. Park hours would be as per the P-600 Park By-law (5 am to 10 pm).

Opportunities for Physical Activity of Dog Owners – Section 13(m) of the AO

The inclusion of the 700 m walking trail into the park design will provide dog owners with the ability to engage in passive recreation while attending the park with their dog. While there is currently limited potential to connect to a greater trail network there is the planned Burnside Greenway (a multi-use active transportation trail) along Burnside Drive which could provide an on-leash opportunity for users to walk their dogs to the park.

Results of Community Engagement – Section 13(n) of the AO

The community engagement process for this project is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was consultation, achieved through:

- Providing information and seeking comments through the HRM website;
- Notification mailed to property owners within 152.4 m (500 feet);
- Electronic correspondence to current user groups who schedule the sports fields in the park; and
- A public information meeting was held on June 25, 2018. Attachment C contains a copy of the minutes from the meeting.

Concerns were raised regarding: the importance of timely maintenance; drainage; regular patrols with an education component; and, effective signage.

No concern was raised with respect to the location of Don Bayer Park for the development of a dedicated off-leash area.

Should Council approve the staff recommendation, the HRM website will be updated accordingly with information regarding the next steps for the project. Upon completion of the development of the new off-leash area a press release will be issued to inform the public when the area is open and any regulations that will apply.

Dog Licensing and Ownership data – Section 13(b) of the AO

During the 2014/15 off-leash program review it was reported that approximately 16,000 dog licenses have been issued since 2008 when HRM began collecting this licensing data. It was also estimated that only approximately one third of the dog population is licensed. Information for Dartmouth East showed 1159 licenses had been issued between 2008 to 2015. However, attempting to compare the 2015 data to the information on record today has proved challenging. The manner in which the information is captured does not make it ideal for comparison purposes. For example, if a dog is microchipped it is provided with a lifetime license and only captured in the data set once. Dogs who are licensed yearly are captured multiple times. Staff's best estimate is that there have been an additional 306 licenses issued in Dartmouth East since 2015, however this issue has revealed that improvements are required to how the licensing data is captured to assist in planning for the off-leash program service delivery.

Conclusion

The establishment of a dedicated off-leash area will fill a recognized service gap in the Dartmouth area and may relieve some pressure from Shubie Park. The opportunity at Don Bayer Park would create an off-leash area that does not have a material impact upon existing park uses and would be of a size and configuration, so as to allow for the creation of a walking path and activity areas for dogs. The proposed off-leash area responds favourably to the criteria within the Administrative Order and is therefore recommended for Regional Council's approval. Should the staff recommendation be approved, this project will be added to the list of capital projects for prioritization with other capital requests and Regional Council's consideration for completion within the 2019/2020 fiscal year.

Remainder of Workplan

Work on the remainder of Regional Council's Workplan is already well underway and the following is presented as updates:

Cole Harbour

Staff has been looking at the former Rehabilitation Lands for a shared off-leash area, but there is also the consideration of a broader park planning exercise. On June 5, 2018 Regional Council passed the following motion:

“THAT Halifax Regional Council request staff prepare a comprehensive park plan for the Rehab Lands on Bissett Road, to be completed as a 2019/20 Business Plan deliverable, which shall incorporate community engagement, the Cole Harbour Open Space Plan, and consideration of an Off-Leash Dog Park. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.”

As such, the former Rehabilitation Centre Lands will be examined for potential inclusion in the off-leash program as part of the comprehensive park planning exercise.

Eastern Passage

The Eastern Passage Common on Caldwell Road is currently undergoing a comprehensive park plan review and will also be examined for its off-leash potential. Public consultation for the Eastern Passage Common is expected this fall. While there may be some opportunity for an off-leash area to be considered, there are numerous other recreation and institutional uses that may make it challenging to accommodate this activity. Therefore, staff will also continue to review other alternatives.

Spryfield

On August 14, 2018 Regional Council passed the following motion:

“That Halifax Regional Council request a staff report to look at potential of off leash dog parks in the Long Lake Provincial Park Area; excluding the new trail system off North West Arm Drive. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.”

Staff are currently working with the Department of Natural Resources to further examine a potential partnership for the Long Lake Provincial Park and other potential candidate sites within the community.

Other Locations

In addition, staff continue to look at other locations for seasonal off-leash dog park sites including any requests to designate ball diamonds and sports fields, or other open space sites.

Licensing Data Collection

Staff will be examining how improvements can be made to the dog license data collection system to provide more accurate records for future reviews.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost to develop the proposed off-leash area, as illustrated on Map 1, is estimated to be \$800,000. The cost of Area A is estimated to be \$540,000 and will be included for Regional Council's consideration in the 2019/20 capital budget process. Area B will be included in future budget planning should the land become available for park purposes. Based on the proposed design of the off-leash area the ongoing cost for maintenance is estimated to be approximately \$80,000 for equipment and maintenance and \$25,000 for

additional human resources. These costs will need to be planned for and accommodated within the operating cost of capital budget.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report. Section 16 of the Administrative Order authorizes the Director of Parks and Recreation to modify, close or change regulations to an off-leash area if the area is causing or has the potential to cause conflict, nuisance or safety issues. Additionally, Section 18 of the Administrative Order allows Regional Council, at any time, to modify or close an off-leash area.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A public information meeting was held for the consideration of the off-leash area at Don Bayer Park. See the Discussion Section above.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The designation and development of the Don Bayer Park as a dedicated off-leash dog area does not conflict with any Council approved environmental policy. Environmental considerations will be considered at a more detailed level as part of the design process of establishing the off-leash area.

ALTERNATIVES

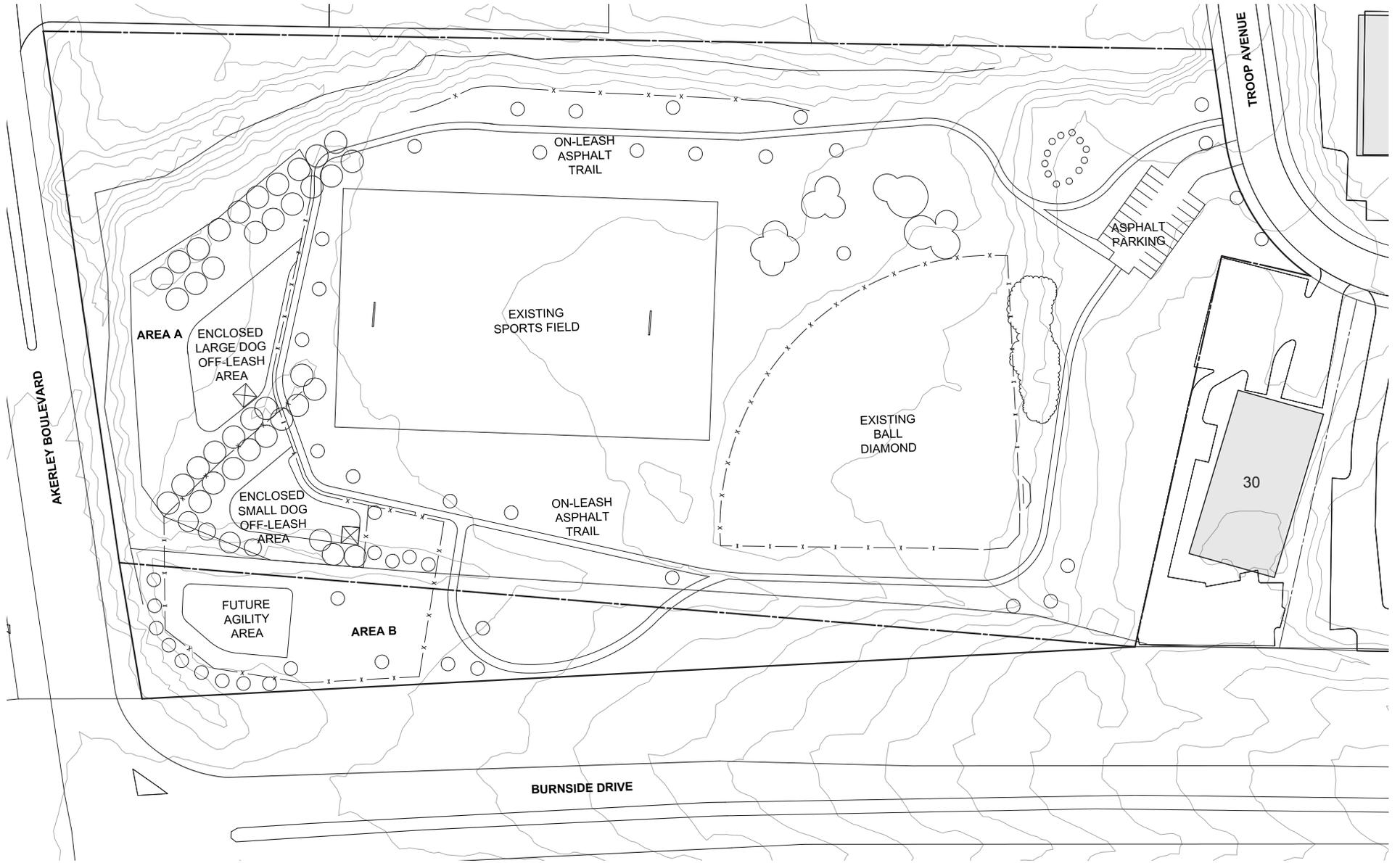
1. Regional Council may choose to approve the dedicated off-leash area identified within this report with modifications. This may necessitate a further staff report, depending on the magnitude of the proposed changes.
2. Regional Council may choose to not proceed with the designation and development of a dedicated off-leash area at Don Bayer Park and direct staff to identify an alternative Dartmouth location. This may be a suitable alternative, but staff's recommendation has been based upon a review of locations in the area.
3. Regional Council may choose to maintain the current level of service offered under the existing Off-Leash Dog Area Program. This is not recommended as a service level gap has been identified in the program for the community of Dartmouth, and the addition of a dedicated off-leash area is expected to improve the current program with minimal impact on surrounding properties or other existing programs and services.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1:	Don Bayer Park Concept Plan
Map 2:	Existing Off-Leash Dog Areas
Map 3:	Don Bayer Park Site Map
Attachment A:	List of Existing Off-Leash Dog Areas
Attachment B:	Review of Administrative Order 2017-013-OP
Attachment C:	Minutes from Public Information Meeting

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Jacqueline Belisle, Real Property Policy Coordinator, 902.490.3970
 Richard Harvey, Manager of Policy and Planning, Parks and Recreation, 902.476.5822

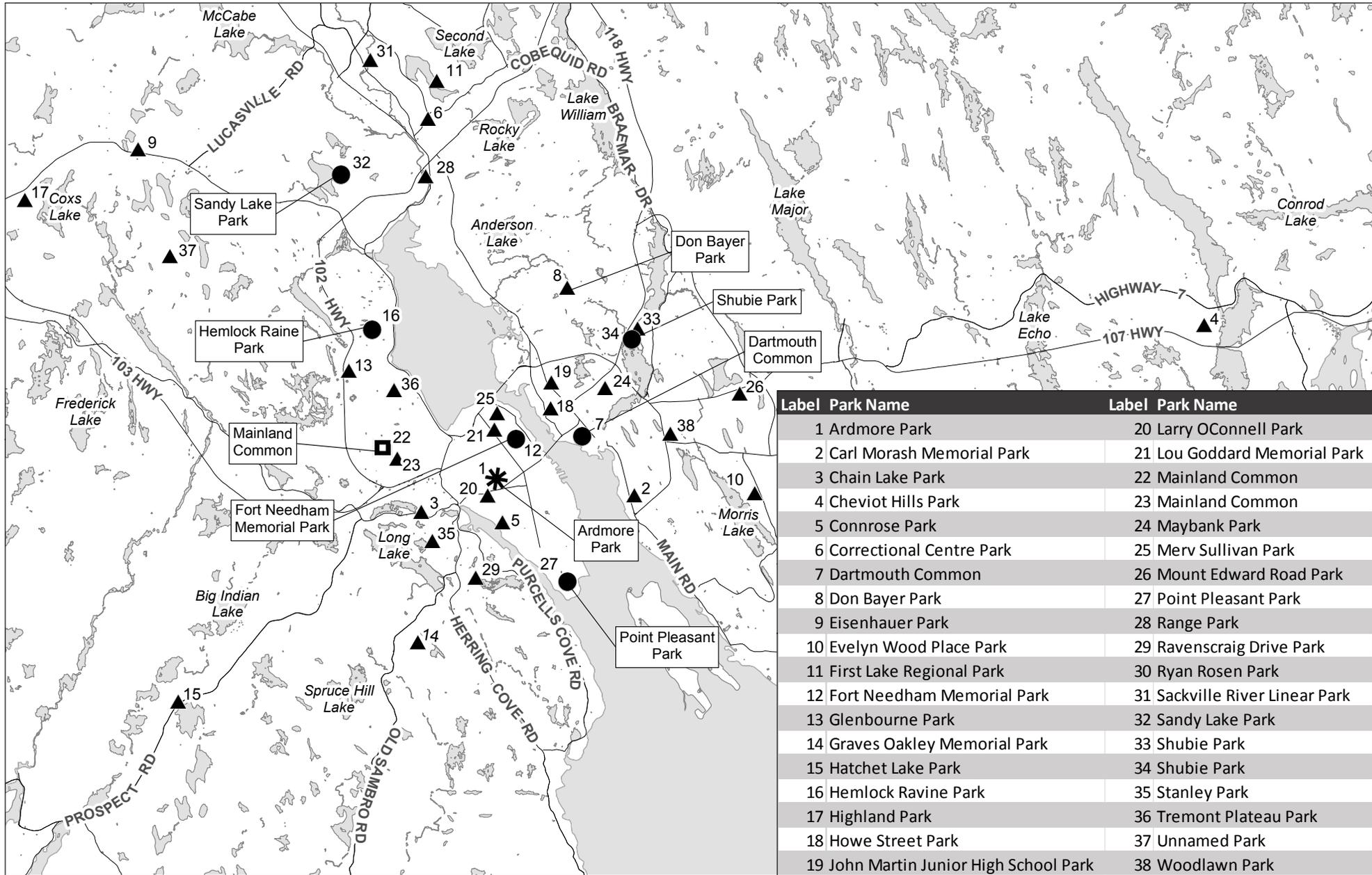


Don Bayer Park - Concept Plan

HALIFAX
Parks & Recreation
Policy & Planning



August 1, 2018

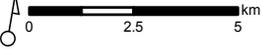


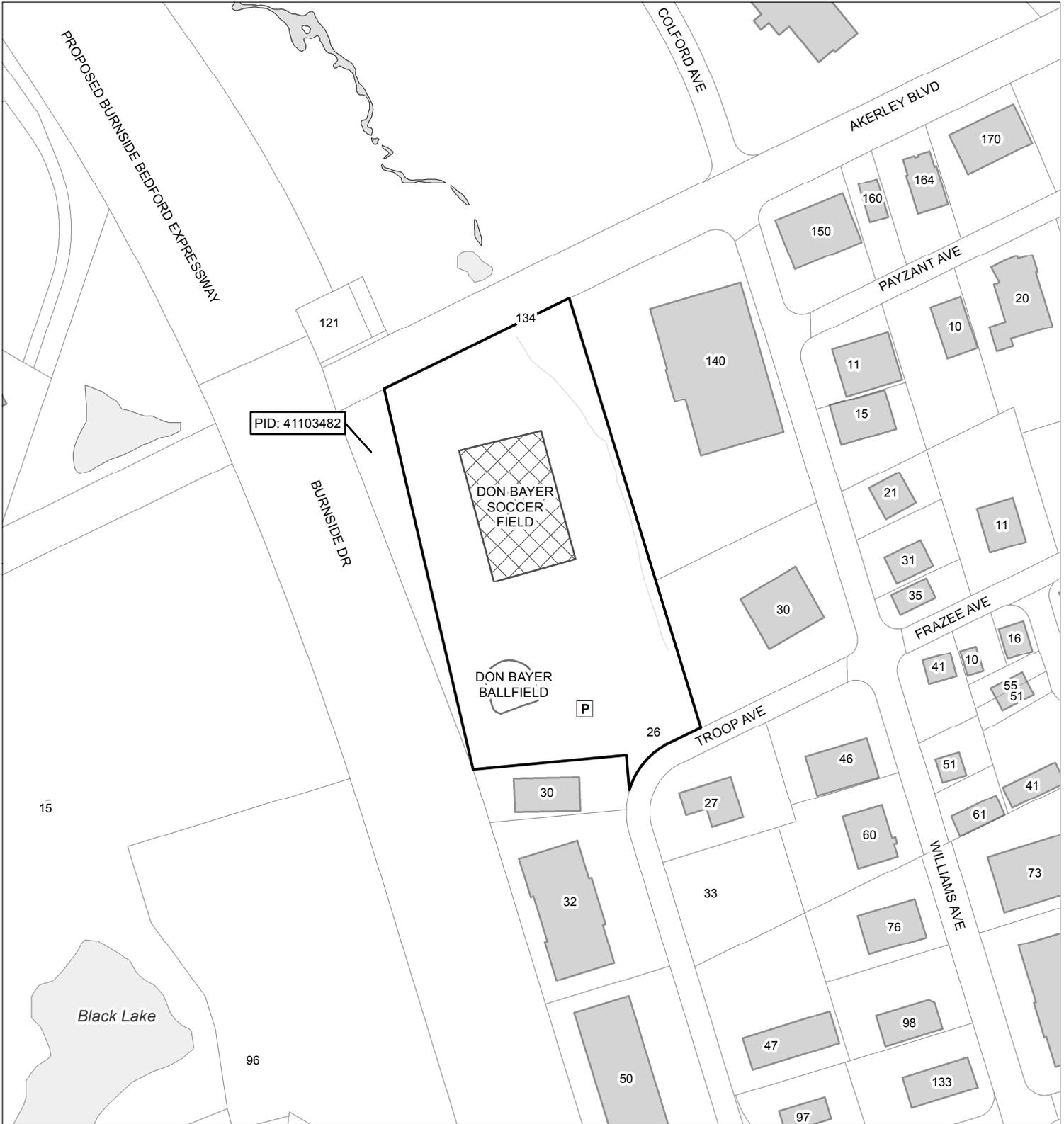
Label	Park Name	Label	Park Name
1	Ardmore Park	20	Larry OConnell Park
2	Carl Morash Memorial Park	21	Lou Goddard Memorial Park
3	Chain Lake Park	22	Mainland Common
4	Cheviot Hills Park	23	Mainland Common
5	Connrose Park	24	Maybank Park
6	Correctional Centre Park	25	Merv Sullivan Park
7	Dartmouth Common	26	Mount Edward Road Park
8	Don Bayer Park	27	Point Pleasant Park
9	Eisenhower Park	28	Range Park
10	Evelyn Wood Place Park	29	Ravenscraig Drive Park
11	First Lake Regional Park	30	Ryan Rosen Park
12	Fort Needham Memorial Park	31	Sackville River Linear Park
13	Glenbourne Park	32	Sandy Lake Park
14	Graves Oakley Memorial Park	33	Shubie Park
15	Hatchet Lake Park	34	Shubie Park
16	Hemlock Ravine Park	35	Stanley Park
17	Highland Park	36	Tremont Plateau Park
18	Howe Street Park	37	Unnamed Park
19	John Martin Junior High School Park	38	Woodlawn Park

Map 2 Existing Off-Leash Dog Area Locations

-  Dedicated Year Round Service Dog Off-Leash Area
-  Seasonal Municipal Sports Fields
-  Dedicated Year Round Off-Leash Area
-  Year Round Off-Leash Areas

HALIFAX
Parks & Recreation
Policy & Planning





Map 3 Don Bayer Park Site Map

-  Parking Lot
-  Don Bayer Park
-  Existing Seasonal Off-Leash Area at Don Bayer Park
-  Land Parcel
-  Building

HALIFAX
 Parks & Recreation
 Policy & Planning



**Attachment A:
List of Existing Off-Leash Dog Areas**

Year-Round Off-Leash Dog Areas with Municipal Parks:

Park, Community	Type of Off-leash Area
Ardmore Park, Halifax	Dedicated Service Dog Park – not available to the general public
Dartmouth Common, Dartmouth	Shared
Fort Needham Memorial Park, Halifax	Shared
Hemlock Ravine Park, Halifax	Shared
Mainland Common, Halifax	Dedicated fully fenced area augmented with seasonal use of the Westridge ball diamond
Point Pleasant Park, Halifax	Shared
Sandy Lake Park, Bedford	Shared
Shubie Park, Dartmouth	Shared and augmented with seasonal use of Shubie ball diamond

Seasonal Municipal Sports Fields:

Summer Use Sports Field (June 1 – November 1, 5:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	
Field, Park	Civic Address
Halifax	
Chain Lake Park	531 Crown Drive
Glenbourne #2, Glenbourne Park	655 Parkland Drive
Conrose Park	6510 Jubilee Road
Larry OConnell Park	6691 Fourth Street
Hammonds Plains	
Unnamed Park (Green Space between George Samuel and Nousha Court)	414 Kingswood Drive
Sackville	
Eddie LeBlanc #3, First Lake Regional Park	385 First Lake Drive

Winter Use Sports Field (November 1 – May 1, 5:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	
Field, Park	Address
Bedford	
Bud Bremner Soccer Field, Range Park	1800 Bedford Highway
Cole Harbour	
Mel Braine Park Diamond, Evelyn Wood Place Park	70 Evelyn Wood Place
Dartmouth	
Conrad Ball Diamond, Mount Edward Road Park	192 Mount Edward Road
Don Bayer Sport Field, Don Bayer Park	26 Troop Avenue
John Martin Ball Diamond, John Martin Junior High School Park	7 Brule Street
Mic Mac #1 and #2 Sport Fields, Maybank Park	1088 MicMac Boulevard
Penhorn #1, #2, and #3 Ball Diamonds, Woodlawn Park	50 Athorpe Drive
Schultz Ball Diamond, Howe Street Park	35 Howe Street
Shubie Ball Diamond, Shubie Park	30 John Brenton Drive
Woodside #1 and #2 Ball Diamonds, Carl Morash Memorial Park	6 Mount Hope Avenue
Fall River	
Ryan Rosen Sport Field, Ryan Rosen Park	60 Foster Avenue

Halifax	
Chain Lake Sport Field, Chain Lake Park	531 Crown Drive
Conrose Ball Diamond, Conrose Park	6510 Jubilee Road Conrose Avenue
Glenbourne Sport Field, Glenbourne Park	655 Parkland Drive
Graves Oakley #1 and #2 Sport Fields, Graves Oakley Memorial Park	104 Leiblin Drive
Larry O'Connell Ball Diamond, Larry OConnell Park	6691 Fourth Street
Lou Goddard Ball Diamond, Lou Goddard Memorial Park	3566 Highland Ave.
Merv Sullivan Sport Field, Merv Sullivan Park	3791 Noalea Drive 3740 Kencrest Avenue
Ravenscraig Drive Park	15 Ravenscraig Drive
Tremont Plateau Park Sport Field, Tremont Plateau Park	45 Trailwood Place End of Tremont Drive
Westridge Ball Diamond, Mainland Common	69 Westridge Drive
Stanley Park Sport Field, Stanley Park	56 Tamarack Drive
Hatchet Lake	
Hatchet Lake Ball Diamond, Hatchet Lake Park	2101 Prospect Road
Hammonds Plains	
Eisenhauer Field, Eisenhauer Park	2043 Hammonds Plains Road
Highland Park	21 Deepwood Drive
Lower Sackville	
Correctional Ball Diamond, Correctional Centre Park	191 Cobequid Road
Eddie LeBlanc #1 and #2 Ball Diamonds, First Lake Regional Park	385 First Lake Drive
Superstore Ball Diamond, Sackville River Linear Park	67 Old Beaver Bank Road
Porters Lake	
Cheviot Hills Ball Diamond, Cheviot Hills Park	50 Cheviot Hills Road

Attachment B:
Review of Administrative Order 2017-013-OP

The tables below contain the staff evaluation of the proposed additional off-leash dog area at Don Bayer Park as depicted on Map 1 of the staff report against the policy criteria set forth in Sections 14 and 13 of Administrative Order 2017-013-OP.

Review of Administrative Order 2017-013-OP	
<i>14. The following shall be considered in determining whether any Park is appropriate for the establishment of a dedicated Off-Leash Dog Area:</i>	
Evaluation Criteria	Staff Comment
<i>(a) The criteria in Section 13</i>	See table below
<i>(b) The Park's ability to accommodate regional users; and</i>	Don Bayer Park is located within the Burnside Business Park which benefits from a road network designed for goods movement with multiple access points and wide right-of-way widths to accommodate a high volume of traffic. The site contains a 720 square foot (7,750 square foot) parking lot which can accommodate approximately 30 vehicles and has additional area onsite which could potentially allow for future expansion. Troop Avenue is also of a sufficient width to accommodate on-street parking. Bus service in this area of Burnside is provided by Route 64, with a stop to the north of the park on Akerley Blvd, though any park user accessing the off-leash area via bus must adhere with Halifax Transit policies and guidelines respecting pets which stipulates that pets must be properly restrained in a closed pet container.
<i>(c) The long-term impact of the dedicated Off-Leash Dog Area on the Park.</i>	Given that the proposed location of the off-leash area is situated at the rear of the park, it is expected that there will be more wear on the existing parking area and trail leading to the baseball diamond and sports field. This impact can be monitored and maintenance performed as required through the regular park maintenance cycle.

<i>13. The following shall be considered in determining whether any Park is appropriate for the establishment of a Shared Off-Leash Dog Area:</i>	
Evaluation Criteria	Staff Comment
<i>(a) the existing Off Leash Dog Area system with respect to:</i>	...
<i>(i) the relationship and distances of candidate sites to existing designated Off-Leash Dog Areas and service gaps; and</i>	Currently, the only two dedicated off-leash areas in the municipality are the off-leash area at the Mainland Common, and the service dog park at Ardmore Park in Halifax. The introduction of a new dedicated off-leash area in Dartmouth would provide an alternative to HRM residents who reside to the east of Halifax Harbour. With respect to the overall off-leash program, the community of Dartmouth has previously been identified as having a service gap which is primarily a result of the off-leash area located at Shubie Park

	operating beyond its capacity. As Don Bayer Park is in relative close proximity to Shubie Park (~10km via the road network), it would provide a relatively convenient alternative for the users of Shubie park without concentrating any of the adverse impacts off-leash areas can produce.
(ii) <i>extent of conflicts in existing parks where there are existing Off-Leash Dog Areas;</i>	There have been issues at nearby Shubie park regarding dogs trespassing on adjacent residential properties and noise from dogs barking impacting residents. An off-leash area at Don Bayer Park is expected to help alleviate issues at Shubie Park.
(b) <i>population distribution and dog licensing and ownership data;</i>	The current dog licensing information shows approximately 1,465 dog licences have been issued in Dartmouth East since data collection began in 2008. This is an increase of 306 licenses from 2014/15 when the last review of the off-leash program was conducted. It is estimated that only 1/3 of dogs are licensed. Please see the body of the report for further discussion.
(c) <i>whether the proposed Off-Leash Dog Area is of sufficient size to accommodate the expected level of usage, with a minimum Park size of 2.5 acres generally being required to accommodate an Off-Leash Dog Area;</i>	Don Bayer park is 5.44 hectares (13.44 acres) in area. This exceeds the minimum 2.5 acres park size required to consider an off-leash area. The other dedicated off-leash dog area available to the general public, located at the Mainland Common, is approximately 2 acres in total, inclusive of the fenced wooded area containing trails. The proposed off-leash area presented on Map 1 is designed to be approximately 1 acre without the addition of Area B. This is anticipated to be of a sufficient size to suitably accommodate the anticipated usage.
(d) <i>the existing function and classification of the Park;</i>	Don Bayer Park is a District Park. It contains a baseball diamond and a sports field.
(e) <i>the compatibility of an Off-Leash Dog Area with recreational activities and events that occur in the Park;</i>	The ball diamond is scheduled daily for adult baseball and the sports field is used by ultimate frisbee and rugby groups. The proposed concept for the off-leash area is to utilize the unused portions of the park with minimal disruption to current users.
(f) <i>whether an Off-Leash Dog Area will negatively impact any other uses of the Park such as:</i> (i) <i>play structures;</i> (ii) <i>wading pools or splash pads;</i> (iii) <i>beaches that are supervised;</i> (iv) <i>sports fields during active seasons;</i> (v) <i>sports courts including tennis courts and basketball courts;</i> (vi) <i>environmentally sensitive features;</i> (vii) <i>cultural features;</i> (viii) <i>monuments and public art;</i> (ix) <i>gardens including community gardens;</i> (x) <i>memorial parks; or</i> (xi) <i>other similar facilities or features.</i>	Attention has been given in the development of the proposed design of the off-leash area to ensure that no existing park features will be negatively impacted. The park is named in memorial to Donald A Bayer (1939-1990) who was the City of Dartmouth's Director of Planning & Development from 1970-1990 and founding member of Dartmouth's organized soccer program. There is a monument adjacent to the parking area in appreciation to Mr. Bayer. It is not anticipated to be impacted by the development of the proposed off-leash area.
(g) <i>whether the use is compatible with the physical and environmental capabilities of</i>	As discussed in the report, Don Bayer Park was developed atop a buried landfill. There is significant

<p><i>the Park and is designed to take into account topography, hydrology, vegetation and property configuration;</i></p>	<p>ditching present along the east and north sides of the park. The proposed design depicted on Map 1 accounts for these physical landscape characteristics. Minimum intervention to the existing land is required to implement the concept plan.</p>
<p><i>(h) whether the use as an Off-Leash Dog Area would jeopardize public safety;</i></p>	<p>The park is located at the intersection of Burnside Drive (an Expressway) and Akerley Blvd (an Arterial) which are two busy roadways. Adequate fencing is vital to ensure no dogs are able to leave the park which could result in harm to the dog, dog owner, other park users, or motorist should a dog enter the travelled way.</p>
<p><i>(i) the type and proximity of nearby land uses outside of the Park, and whether there are adequate separation distances or mitigation measures available to provide a sufficient visual and acoustic buffer from such uses;</i></p>	<p>Don Bayer Park is located within the Burnside Business Park. Nearby uses include a home furniture warehouse and an office interior furniture business. The buildings in the area have large footprints (>10,000 square feet) and sit on large lots (>50,000 square feet) which is a typical form in a business/industrial campus. This form allows sufficient physical separation of uses, and should additional screening or buffering be required Don Bayer Park has adequate space to accommodate any additional measures.</p>
<p><i>(j) the availability of sufficient and appropriate parking;</i></p>	<p>The existing parking lot at Don Bayer Park is a gravel lot which can accommodate approximately 30 standard parking spaces, and has the potential for expansion if required. Troop Ave can also accommodate on street parking.</p>
<p><i>(k) the intended level of service to be provided, the park infrastructure required for the Off-Leash use, and the design of the Off Leash Dog Area;</i></p>	<p>Don Bayer Park is of a sufficient area and configuration to accommodate the proposed dedicated off-leash area as illustrated on Map 1.</p>
<p><i>(l) any appropriate site-specific restrictions on use, including hours of operation and seasons of use</i></p>	<p>No specific restrictions are recommended for the proposed off-leash area. Park hours are as per the P-600 Park By-law (5 am to 10 pm).</p>
<p><i>(m) the opportunities for active use by dog owners, such as the provision of off-leash trails that encourage greater physical activity by dog owners;</i></p>	<p>While there is currently limited potential to connect to a greater trail network there is the planned Burnside Greenway (a multi-use active transportation trail) along Burnside Drive which could provide an on-leash opportunity for users to walk their dogs to the park.</p>
<p><i>(n) the results of community engagement, if applicable; and</i></p>	<p>A public information meeting was held on June 25, 2018. Please see Attachment C for a copy of the minutes and the body of this report for additional information.</p>
<p><i>(o) the financial implications of establishing the Off-Leash Dog Area.</i></p>	<p>The establishment of the off-leash area will require a capital investment as outlined in the body of the report. There will also be ongoing maintenance and enforcement costs associated with the off-leash area that will be incorporated into future budgets.</p>

Attachment C:
Minutes from Public Information Meeting

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Public Information Meeting

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

Monday, June 25, 2018
7:00 P.M.
East Dartmouth Community Centre
50 Caledonia Road, Dartmouth

STAFF IN
ATTENDANCE:

Jacqueline Belisle, Real Property Policy Coordinator, HRM Parks and Recreation
Richard Harvey, Manager Policies & Planning, HRM Parks and Recreation
Stephen Cushing, Landscape Architect, HRM Parks and Recreation
Penelope Kuhn, Program Standards Planner, HRM Parks and Recreation
Denise Schofield, Manager Program Support Services, HRM Parks and Recreation
Alicia Wall, Legislative Support

ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Tony Mancini, District 6

PUBLIC IN
ATTENDANCE:

Approximately 10

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to order, purpose of meeting – Jacqueline Belisle

Belisle advised they are the planner/facilitator for this application and proceeded to introduce staff members and Councillor Tony Mancini, District 6. They explained the purpose of the Public Information Meeting (PIM) is to provide information on the project, explain the process involved, receive feedback, hear concerns and answer questions regarding the proposal.

2. Presentation of Proposal – Jacqueline, Belisle

Belisle began by outlining changes adopted by Regional Council on January 16, 2018 to *Administrative Order 2017-013-OP* (Respecting Off-leash Dog Areas Within Parks) which directed staff to identify potential additional off-leash dog areas in Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Spryfield and Dartmouth and to continue with the existing off-leash areas. Dartmouth has been identified as an area having a capacity issue. In HRM currently there are off-leash areas approved for summer and winter only use only and there are 8, year-round off-leash dog areas including:

- Mainland Common (dedicated)
- Dartmouth Common (shared)
- Fort Needham Memorial Park (shared)
- Hemlock Ravine Park (shared)
- Point Pleasant Park (shared)
- Sandy Lake Park (shared)
- Shubie Park (shared)
- Ardmore Park Service Dog Park (dedicated)

Dedicated refers to areas that are fully fenced in and shared are more of a ball field style and can have multiple users at one time, not just dogs.

Don Bayer Park is currently approved for winter use only and HRM would like to consider a year-round dedicated use. Belisle further outlined the process involved with the park receiving this designation.

Upon investigating HRM dog registration records, Dartmouth appears to have a large number of dogs with few dedicated off-leash areas despite only about one third of dogs in HRM being registered. When considering these changes things taken into consideration include traffic and parking, the number of other off-leash areas in close proximity, impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and long-term impacts on the park. The minimum park size for an off-leash area to be considered is 2.5 acres.

Belisle displayed a map showing the park which is located near the intersection of Burnside Drive and Akerley Boulevard. Don Bayer Park is classified as a District Park meaning it is intended to serve different communities. The park is roughly 13.5 acres in size and the concept is to have $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre for large dogs, $\frac{1}{3}$ of an acre for small dogs and a 750 metre walking loop. The sports field and baseball diamond in the park are currently being used and there is an existing capital project underway to install lights on the baseball diamond.

The site was formerly a landfill and was infilled using large boulders and fill material which can result in holes called voids which occur when earth settles around big materials such as boulders. HRM is aware of the problem and urge residents to notify HRM if any activity is observed.

Belisle spoke to the type of feedback being sought prior to opening up the floor to the public.

3. Questions and Comments

Belisle asked if anyone used mainland common. A couple of people raised hands.

George Hickey, Halifax, stated with respect to the Mainland Common, in August of 2017 needed repairs were not done in a timely fashion resulting in a sink hole and a dog having to be put to sleep. They feel drainage and mud would be an issue at Don Bayer Park as it is located in a hollow and stagnate water can cause dogs to become ill with things such as leptospirosis. They like the idea of having a small dog and big dog area and feel the location is good.

Jennifer Richardson, Dartmouth, would like to see animal control patrolling regularly and educating people about picking up poop and the importance of keeping them leashed in the parking lot. They feel metal detectors should not be allowed in the parks as they create holes which can lead to dog injuries. They have called 311 to report holes and was

satisfied with HRM's response. They would like to see more trail parks and suggested the old rehab lands located on Bissett Road in Cole Harbour.

Belisle stated they are looking at the rehab lands and Council has requested a comprehensive site plan of the lands.

Stephanie Legros and Marina Cole, Dartmouth, questioned how much of the park would be dedicated to on-leash and feel there is a lack of signage with respect to on-leash and off-leash areas in existing parks and feel signs should be placed at eye level to be effective. As for calling 311 for complaints, they feel there is no recourse.

Belisle has observed people in the parking lot with dogs not on leash and understands there are some enforcement issues. They want people without dogs to feel comfortable as well.

In conclusion, Belisle referenced the off-leash website for information and indicated there will be a press release every time a new off-leash area opens.

4. Closing Comments

Jacqueline Belisle thanked everyone for coming and expressing their comments.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:43 p.m.