

September 16, 2010

Re: Baird Park Dogs' Off-Leash Area Review, Consultation and Development

In the Spring of 2010, Parks, Forestry & Recreation received feedback from the community regarding the designation of the western portion of Baird Park for dogs off leash area. At that time, staff arranged to meet with the community for a second public consultation on July 13th 2010.

At the public meeting, the community outlined concerns, primarily focusing on existing uses of the proposed western area including recreational uses by residents, nearby schools and community organizations. In addition, many residents expressed concerns with respect to the proximity of the proposed area to the playground and risks associated with children playing adjacent to off-leash dogs.

During the meeting, the community provided endorsement for an off-leash area in the eastern part of Baird Park. Many community members felt this is a more suitable location as it extended the distance from the playground and maintained the open recreational play area for the community.

Staff collected and reviewed all feedback given through the consultation process with other Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff including Urban Forestry representatives who conducted an assessment of trees within the eastern portion of the park.

Staff has concluded that with the use of fencing, a dogs' off-leash area can be constructed in the eastern portion of the park with some restrictions, including the use of post and paddle fence (Cedar material with wire screening) and appropriate setbacks from the trees. Surface treatment must also be implemented to avoid soil compaction, erosion and other damage to the surface of the off-leash area (please see attachment for site details.)

Staff and those members of the community present, also recognize that the area is in closer proximity to the houses across the street than the original site. In order to provide a satisfactory off-leash area that does not create nuisance for the neighbours to the east, the following will be implemented:

- Commercial Dog Walkers will not be permitted. This is a neighbourhood off leash area.
- The Dog Owners Association will work with their neighbours and with Parks staff to ensure responsible use of the site. This will include ensuring dogs refrain from excessive barking. We will all need to work together to ensure everyone's enjoyment of the park.
- The proposed hours of operation are 7 am to 10 pm, Monday through Sunday.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division values community feedback relating to all off-leash area proposals; as such, we welcome residents' comments in writing to dola@toronto.ca on or prior to September 30, 2010. A final decision will be announced in October following the review of residents' feedback.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to thank all residents for their participation in this community process.

Yours truly,



Sandy Straw
Manager of Parks
Toronto & East York District

Cc Councillor Gord Perks
Carol Cormier Manager Standards & Innovation