

Considered at the July 13, 2022

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

Paws in Port Moody Annex 1: Approaches to Education, Compliance and Enforcement

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July 2021

Overview

This annex provides additional examples from other jurisdictions to support the City of Port Moody's work on implementing recommendations related to enforcement within *Paws in Port Moody: A Guidance Report to Inform the Development of a Municipal Strategy for a Dog-Friendly Community*. City staff have indicated enforcement of animal control bylaws as a key challenge given limited resources and few bylaw officers in Port Moody.

The issue of dogs off leash in on leash areas in our parks continues to be an issue for our community. A review of local social media pages shows the frustration experienced by many residents, and a review of several news stories from the Tri Cities shows the unfortunate consequences that can occur from lack of leash by-law enforcement (e.g. off leash attacks on other dogs or people, dogs taken by wildlife). Other municipalities in BC and Canada are experiencing - and trying to address - similar issues.

While the development of a municipal strategy pertaining to dogs is part of Port Moody's 2023 budget and workplan there is need and opportunity for action in the immediate-term to prevent ongoing issues with dogs off leash in on-leash areas. This will ensure everyone in our community - dog owners and non dog owners alike - can enjoy walking our parks and trails without annoyance or anxiety. Enforcement of animal control bylaws need to be grounded in a robust approach to educating Port Moody residents around the importance of keeping dogs on-leash and the consequences of not.

Work around enforcement and education by the City needs to occur within broader implementation of the recommendations outlined in the *Paws in Port Moody* report towards building a dog-friendly city, including the need for additional off-leash areas to address root causes of people letting their dogs off leash in our parks and trails.

In alignment with the *Paws in Port Moody* report, **an immediate step the city can take to improve compliance of dogs on-leash in our community is to launch a time-limited public education campaign (e.g. via electronic billboards, social media, website, local partnerships with pet stores and day cares) supported by targeted bylaw education and enforcement in high traffic parks and trails (e.g Bert Flinn, Shoreline Trail, East Hill area).**

It is important to note the recommendations within the *Paws in Port Moody* report are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Development of a fulsome city strategy that addresses all ten recommendations is ultimately necessary to ensure Port Moody is a dog-positive community that supports enjoyment of its parks and trails for dog owners and non dog owners alike.

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Examples of Approaches to Education, Compliance and Enforcement

The below are some key examples to support city staff in identifying ideas that may work for Port Moody to replicate.

1. Media campaigns

- a. Banff launched a [public education campaign](#) in 2021 to keep dogs from becoming cougar snacks. This public education program in partnership with the Town of Canmore was spawned by a task force working to improve human-wildlife coexistence in the Bow Valley. This type of attention-grabbing approach could be broadened beyond dog-wildlife interactions and posted at key locations around Port Moody, online and social media¹.



- b. Arizona campaign toolkit for communities “[Leash Up, Clean Up](#)” includes promoting the use of a campaign hashtag, sharing why it is vital to have pets on a leash and owners cleaning up after their pets, and promoting residents to take a pledge for responsible dog ownership.
- c. The use of prizes can encourage active participation in campaigns such as is being done in [Salt Lake County](#)

¹ This campaign example also points to why the introduction of off-leash hours in on-leash parks known to be frequented by bears and other wildlife such as Rocky Point or Shoreline Trail is not recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission Dogs Issues Sub-Group given its likelihood to contribute to increased dog-wildlife interactions. Port Moody staff have also expressed concerns related to dog-wildlife interaction from this approach.

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2. Use of witness evidence to support bi-law enforcement

- a. In the [City of Saskatoon](#) it is made clear to the public that if an Animal Control Officer is not able to witness the violation a witness can provide information such as video or photo evidence, vehicle info and license plate to the city. If there is sufficient evidence, the Animal Control Officer can issue a fine or warning to the owner. Port Moody could update its online website to include a specific form for lodging dog complaints, and indicate this approach.

3. From public education to “Zero Tolerance” enforcement

- a. The City of St. Albert launched a zero tolerance campaign “[Pick up or pay up](#)” in April, 2019. For months, officers gave owners warnings, using public education as a tool to change behaviours. After the warning period individuals were fined \$250. That ticket is the most expensive in the Edmonton area for that type of offense. Although this approach is for dog waste, the city has recently looked to greater [enforcement of dogs off-leash](#).

4. Approaches to community engagement and development of a municipal dog strategies

- a. [City of North Vancouver](#) is currently undertaking community engagement to inform a municipal dog strategy.
- b. [City of Calgary](#) is undertaking engagement to update municipal by-laws related to responsible dog ownership.
- c. [City of Vancouver](#) has developed an extensive dog strategy that includes approaches to community engagement that can help inform Port Moody’s approach to developing a comprehensive strategy.