

TO: CITY MANAGER

DATE: 1999 APRIL 22

FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: SEASONAL OFF-LEASH AREAS FOR DOGS

PURPOSE: To request Council to amend Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw No. 9609 and Park Regulation Bylaw 7331 to accommodate the permanent designation of the seasonal off-leash area in Fraser Foreshore Park.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw No. 9609 and Park Regulation Bylaw 7331 be amended to accommodate the permanent designation of the seasonal off-leash area in Fraser Foreshore Park.

REPORT

At its meeting of 1999 April 21, the Parks and Recreation Commission received the attached staff report on the above subject and adopted the four recommendations contained therein.



KATE FRIARS
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION
AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Attachment

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cc: City Solicitor
Burnaby Canine Society
S.P.C.A.

SUBJECT: SEASONAL OFF-LEASH AREAS FOR DOGS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the off-leash area in Fraser Foreshore Park be permanently designated as such on a seasonal basis (October 1 to March 31).
2. THAT Council be requested to amend Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw No. 9609 and Park Regulation Bylaw 7331 to accommodate the permanent designation of the seasonal off-leash area in Fraser Foreshore Park.
3. THAT the seasonal off-leash area in Barnet Marine Park be approved on a trial basis for an additional season (October 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000) until the current public planning process for the park is completed.
4. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the SPCA and the Burnaby Canine Society.

REPORT

In 1995, a delegation of Burnaby dog owners approached Commission and requested areas in public parks where their dogs could be allowed off-leash. The Commission instructed staff to work with the delegation, and a committee was formed that recommended off-leash areas be designated in portions of three parks located in the north, central and south parts of the City. Based upon public support tabulated during community meetings, the Commission approved the designation of two off-leash sites for an evaluated one year trial period. Further support for off-leash areas became evident from public correspondence in response to newspaper advertisements, questionnaires, SPCA reports and on-site interviews. As the result, two year-round off-leash areas and two seasonal (winter use) off-leash areas were proposed.

Commission approved the permanent designation of off-leash areas in portions of Confederation Park and Robert Burnaby Park on 1998 September 16. In addition, portions of Fraser Foreshore Park and Barnet Marine Park were approved for a six month trial on a seasonal basis (October 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999). The concept of allowing winter off-leash activity was perceived by the committee as a reasonable compromise to mitigate the demand for this activity in certain parks that are heavily used at other times of the year, and where migratory and ground nesting birds habitate in spring and summer.

Advertisements that encouraged citizens to express their views regarding the seasonal off-leash areas were published in two local newspapers in March. Thirteen responses were recorded to April 13th, eleven of which were in favour of the seasonal off-leash areas, or off-leash areas in general, with two against. Five spoke favourably specifically of the Fraser Foreshore Park site, two spoke favourably about Barnet Marine Park, and four were in favour of both sites or the concept in general. Five citizens requested that off-leash activity be allowed year-round, or that the areas be expanded. Some concerns were expressed about the presence of off-leash areas in proximity with other public functions, such as picnicking, or about potential conflicts between dogs and older or infirm citizens. However, it should be noted that the seasonal off-leash areas are well-demarcated with signs, and the dates when off-leash activity is allowed are clearly marked. In addition, the posted winter months were selected for their lack of conflict with other uses. Further public input may become evident in response to advertisements in the Parks and Recreation spring issue of the community newsletter distributed at recreation centres city wide on April 12th.

Further citizen response to the issue was garnered during the recent public open house as part of the Burnet Marine Park planning process. Of a total of 68 respondents to a questionnaire, 59 percent found the seasonal off-leash arrangements in the western portion of the park acceptable, 24 percent did not find it acceptable, and the remaining 17 percent had no response.

Concurrent to the process of establishing off-leash areas in Burnaby parks, several Lower Mainland municipalities have initiated their own off-leash facilities on public lands in response to public demand. Notably, Richmond recently designated six park sites for this purpose as a pilot project and expects to report back to Richmond Council in January, 2000. Vancouver recently designated hours of the day that dogs may run off-leash in certain parks. The GVRD has also allowed off-leash activity in designated regional parks.

With the previous and recent public support for off-leash areas, it is hereby recommended to designate the seasonal (October through March) off-leash area in Fraser Foreshore Park for this use permanently (Attachment #1). It is also recommended to continue the trial period for seasonal off-leash activity (October 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000) for Burnet Marine Park until the public planning process has been completed (Attachment #2).

The above recommendations would require no additional funding as all signs and equipment are already in place at all off-leash sites. Maps of all seasonal and year round off-leash areas in the City are posted at each site. In addition, the City installed several plastic bag dispensers and waste receptacles at each site to encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs which has resulted in a reasonable rate of success.

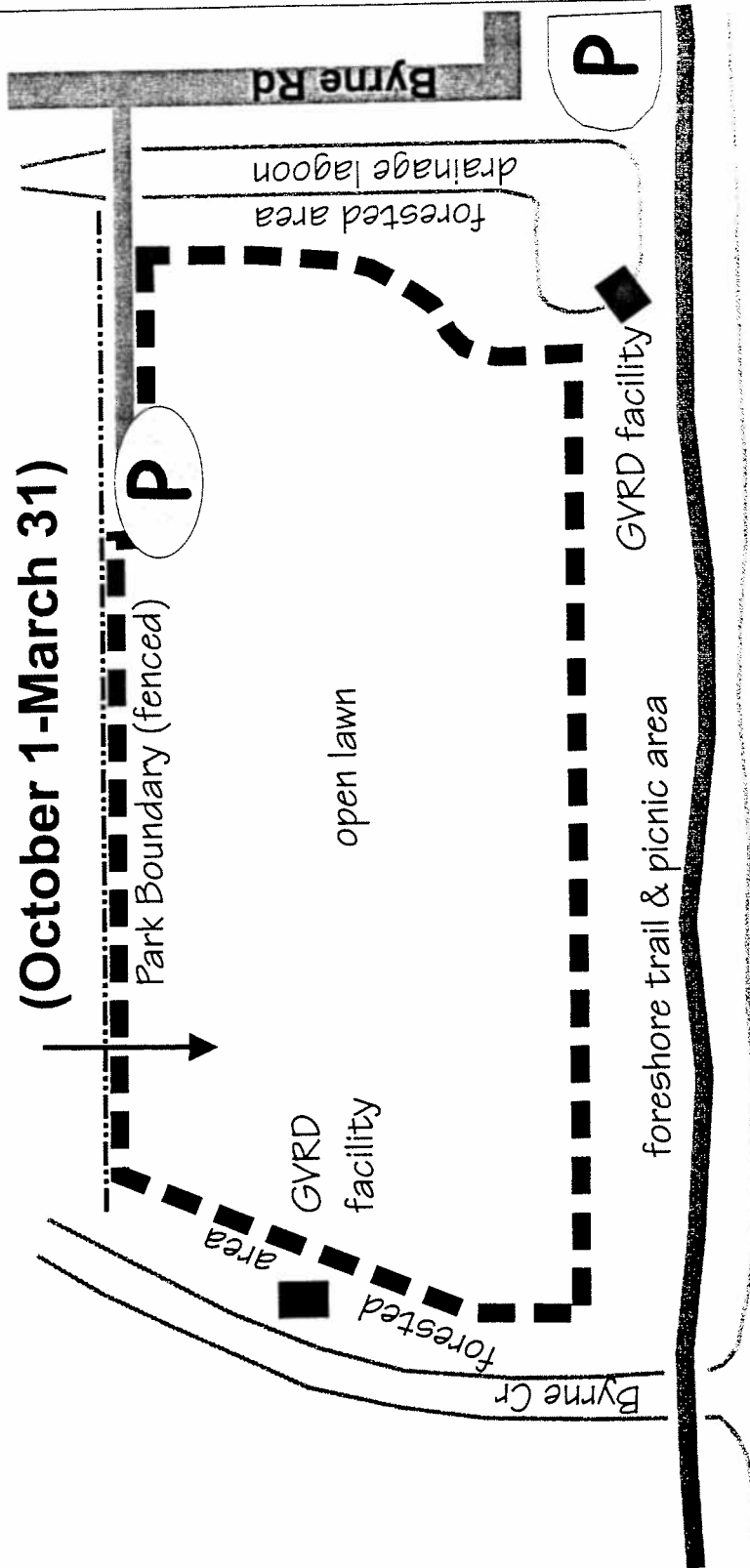
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Attachments (2)

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cc: City Solicitor
Burnaby Canine Society
SPCA

Permanent Seasonal Off-leash Area (October 1-March 31)



ATTACHMENT #1

Fraser River

corel off-leash fraser (legal)

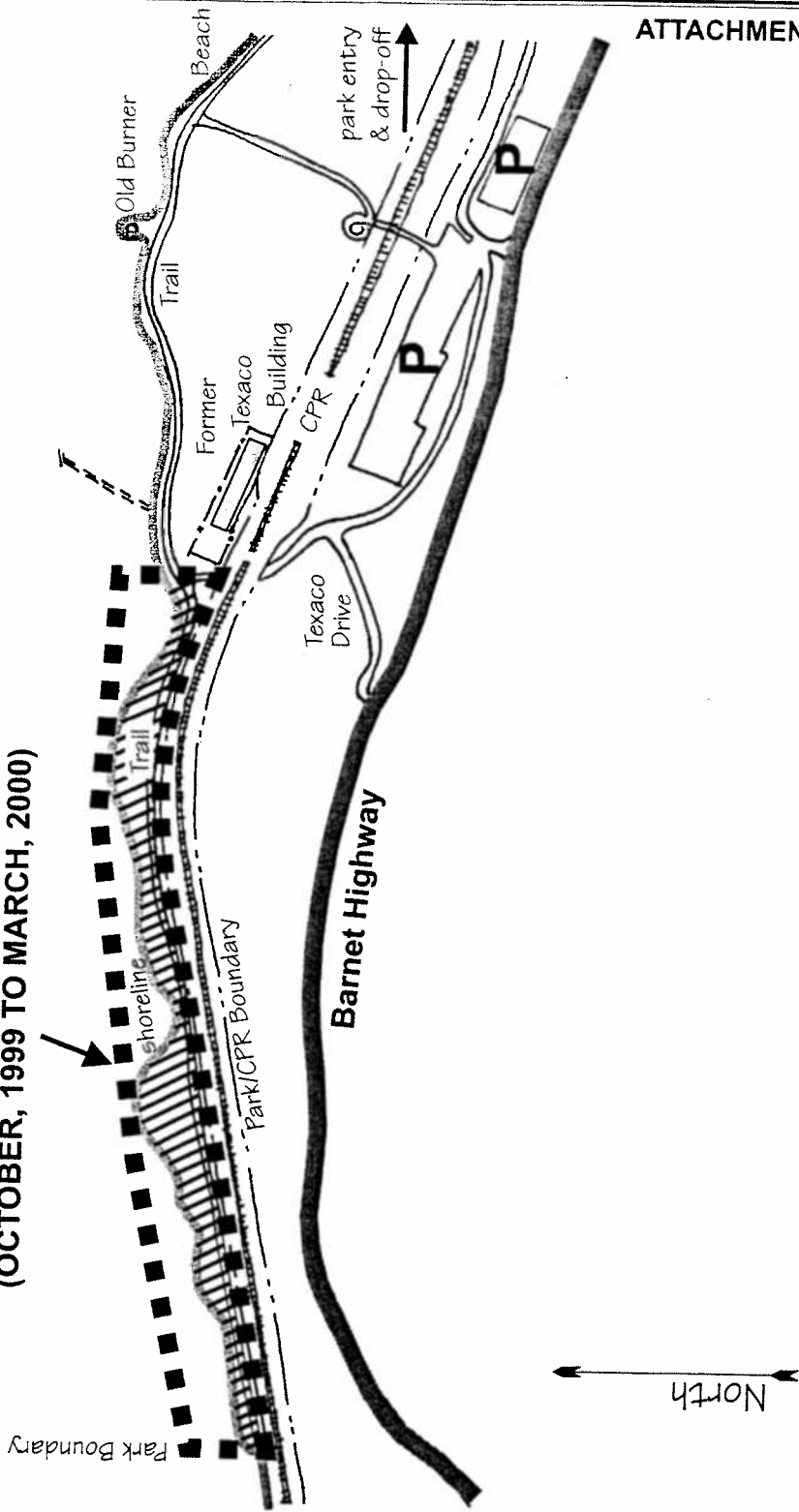
Dwg. # O.P. 23-4-62s
 Date: 99/04/09
 Scale: NTS
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PERMANENT SEASONAL OFF-LEASH AREA FOR DOGS
FRASER FORESHORE PARK



Seasonal Off-Leash Area

SIX MONTH TRIAL CONTINUANCE
(OCTOBER, 1999 TO MARCH, 2000)



ATTACHMENT #2

Park Planning & Design
cover/Off leash area.cdr

Dwg: O.P. 15-2-24s
Date: 99/04/14
Scale: nts
Drawn: hd / mb

TRIAL SEASONAL OFF-LEASH AREA FOR DOGS **BARNET MARINE PARK**



