

**From:** [Beverley McKee](#)  
**To:** [Clerk](#); [dola](#); [Facilities Plan](#)  
**Subject:** Toronto Dog Park Strategy  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 7, 2017 7:40:06 AM

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Good morning,

I write to you today as a commercial dog walker and a member of the dog owning community.

I am very grateful to have dog parks in our city, and offer my signature and endorsement to the following points raised by fellow dog walker Elizabeth Colquhoun, which I have included in the following paragraphs quoted below:

"Things required from a dog park for a safe, fun, enriching & once again safe experience for the dogs, owners & walkers are:

Water access in summer months, also preferably access for humans as well as dogs like at Withrow dog park where the fountain has a top & bottom bowl.

A safe comfortable ground covering for the dogs- woodchips, grass, some concrete, sand or very tiny small pebbles (like at Warden Woods park NOT like Greenwood or Coxwell Ravine surfaces).

Shade & or tree coverage for inclement weather & extremely hot days. Trees are wonderful but for new parks where the trees need time to grow, building a shade structure would be a good alternative- like the one at Stan Wadlow dog park but preferably actual coverage from the elements in places too like a full roof. Also multiple shade options as too many dogs congregating in one space can lead to fights & discomfort/ each park corner could include a structure.

High preferably 6 foot fences. 5 is good, 6 is better. Many breeds can jump the current standard fences & in any park w a surface like woodchips where they add to it often the fence will get shorter & shorter- like at Withrow where the fence is now barely 3 feet in places & dogs jump it daily for squirrels, other dogs they see or simply because they are recent rescues who spook easily but still need a place to socialize & run. Also completely enclosed parks- the Kew beach park could easily have a fence that goes further towards the water to decrease the amount of dogs tempted to wander.

More parks- lack of safe & fun options mean that many owners & walkers have to frequent a few select parks resulting in over crowding & more dog squabbles, human squabbles & an overall less safe environment. It also strains the existing parks effectiveness, surface damage, more noise for local neighbours, general wear & tear on park structures, gates etc.

Always double gated. Installing double gates in those parks that don't currently have them would also be prudent.

Continuous improvement on the existing parks, maintenance of gates, fences, dead trees, adding of info signs (more on that later), water upgrades, surface upgrades.

Less parks that aren't commercial dog walker friendly, spread us out and there will be less overcrowding at the dog walker friendly parks. Also the dogs we walk are local to the area & parks that aren't dog walker friendly are mostly empty during the day so they become a waste of space & resources.

Info signs!!! For example discuss with experienced & certified trainers for things that will improve parks safety. Ie above water dishes- 'did you know? Dogs can be resource guarders- signs of water dish guarding can be stillness, whale eye, the dog looking intently into space- whenever a dog freezes over a water dish as another dog approaches, the dog needs to be moved away quickly to prevent a potential fight' this is a quick example & obviously can be better written but signs written by accredited trainers can help spread dog body language information to increase the overall safety of the parks. Also just extra notes like 'please close both gates' at the gates would help as many people leave them open as they just don't think about the potential consequences of an open gate. Seems basic but

happens daily.

I'm sure you will hear many more suggestions but I hope you also take these notes into account. Dog walkers are providing a service to the community and there are more dogs than dog walkers & it needs to be a city focus to actively be planning & improving the available parks & creating more as fast as possible.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Colquhoun"

I fully endorse her suggestions and add my signature to her email sent to you this morning.

Thank you for this opportunity to weigh in.

Sincerely  
Beverley McKee, BA, CPDT-KA  
Petunia and Company Professional Pet Services

Sent from my iPad