



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM6.17	ACTION			Ward: 14
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Request to Amend the 2019 Parks Forestry and Recreation Capital Budget for the Greenwood Park Dogs Off Leash Area Improvements Project - by Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata, recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Approved 2019 Parks, Forestry and Recreation Capital Budget to create a new capital sub-project known as the Greenwood Park Dogs Off Leash Area Improvements in the Park Development project, with a project cost of \$0.250 million and cash flow in 2019 funded by the Section 42 Above 5 percent Cash-in-lieu for 1327 Queen Street East (Source Account: XR2213-4201063) for the design and installation of artificial turf in Greenwood Park Dogs Off Leash Area, comparable to that currently being used in dog parks in other Canadian cities.
2. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to review the University District and East Village Dog Parks in Calgary, the Alex Decouteau Dog Park in Edmonton, the Bonnycastle Dog Park in Winnipeg, as well as the Mary Bartelme and Skinner Bark Park in Chicago with a view to incorporating options for innovation and design in Toronto's Off Leash Parks.

Summary

Over 2014 to 2016 improvements were made to the Greenwood Dogs Off Leash Area in order to address problems related to the drainage and irrigation problems associated with the original installation. Dog park users as well as immediate neighbours' homes were covered in dust and a bad odour permeated from the dog park into the neighbourhood. Bacteria lodged in the crushed granite caused problems for dogs' paws. All of this was well documented. The surface itself however was completely accessible.

The local Dogs Off Leash Area group raised \$10,000 towards the cost of a new surface. A solution was implemented to deal with the major issues as well as to update the entrances and add additional elements for accessibility. While many elements have proven to be highly

successful, the pea gravel which was installed as the new surface remains a significant and ongoing problem for many dogs and some dog owners. Dogs are not sure footed on the surface and it is not accessible for dog owners who are sight impaired or use wheelchairs. Last year a sight impaired dog park user fell over due to the uneven surface and broke her guide cane.

The Rick Hansen Foundation, a charity dedicated to fostering 'An inclusive world where people with disabilities are living to their full potential', describes pea gravel surfaces as inaccessible and calls for them to be replaced in play surfaces. A 2005 Safe Kids Canada report notes pea gravel surfaces "can be hard to walk on and cannot be used with wheelchairs or other mobility aides". The City of Vancouver's dog park policy also notes pea gravel has accessibility drawbacks and is hard on dog's paws.

Artificial turf designed specifically for use in Dog Parks is already being used in cold climate cities like Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg. Pearson Airport uses this turf in their dog area, and an Etobicoke condo has covered a large off leash area with this turf in Toronto. It far exceeds Toronto's current Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act standards for Dogs Off Leash Areas and is super user-friendly for dogs.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM6.17