

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM19.3	ACTION			Ward: All
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Dogs Off Leash Area Criteria for Commercial Dog Walkers - by Councillor Dianne Saxe, seconded by Councillor Chris Moise

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Dianne Saxe, seconded by Councillor Chris Moise, recommends that:

1. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to develop criteria to determine sites acceptable for Commercial Dog Walkers and to propose a list of acceptable sites across the City, as part of the City-wide Dogs Off-Leash Area report due to City Council in the third quarter of 2024.
2. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to prohibit Commercial Dog Walkers in Ramsden Park Dog Off-Leash Area, by posting appropriate signage as required under Municipal Code Chapter 608, §608-34.1.C.

Summary

In 2023, City Council adopted 2023.IE6.8 - Citywide Approach to Dogs Off-Leash Areas, directing staff to prepare a report on Dogs Off-Leash Areas for the third quarter of 2024. This valuable report will address many aspects of the growing need for dog off-leash areas in Toronto, especially in park deficient areas of downtown, and the equally pressing need to reduce conflicts between off-leash dogs, and other users of public space.

However, 2023.IE6.8 did not direct staff to develop criteria for determining which dog leash areas should be open to Commercial Dog Walkers, who typically handle multiple dogs at a time. Use of some Dogs Off-Leash Areas by Commercial Dog Walkers can create or exacerbate conflict between dogs and neighbouring residents, especially when the Dogs Off-Leash Area abuts homes without an intervening noise barrier.

At present, some Dogs Off-Leash Areas are permitted to Commercial Dog Walkers and others are not. Parks, Forestry and Recreation does not have any criteria for determining which Dogs Off-Leash Areas should be permitted to Commercial Dog Walkers. It would be appropriate to include such criteria in the forthcoming Dogs Off-Leash Areas report.

In the interim, heavy use of the Ramsden Park Dogs Off-Leash Area by Commercial Dog Walkers is creating multiple adverse effects for abutting residents, including noise, disturbance, and parking conflicts. These residents have been unsuccessfully requesting relief from these

adverse effects for years. It is appropriate to temporarily close this Dogs Off-Leash Area to Commercial Dog Walkers until the criteria are developed.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM19.3

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-246645.pdf>