

Toronto's Dog Off-Leash Strategy

A Citywide Approach to Dogs Off-Leash Areas

April 9, 2025



Toronto's Off-Leash Areas

- Toronto's off-leash areas are designated spaces for dogs to exercise, play, and socialize off-leash.
- Toronto has 81 off-leash areas with 13 more planned for delivery by 2027.
- Across the city, off-leash areas vary in size and design.



Towards a Strategy

- In October 2023, Council directed Parks and Recreation to review and update the City's approach to dogs off-leash areas.
- This strategy builds on the City's 2010 Off-leash Policy.
- This strategy was developed based on a jurisdictional review of best practices and public and stakeholder engagement.



Goals

- Implement a citywide and proactive approach to planning for new off-leash areas development so that off-leash areas can serve the most people and dogs
- Reinforce and strengthen the important role that residents play in creating well-functioning and welcoming spaces across the off-leash area network
- Locate and build off-leash areas to a high and consistent standard with consideration to adjacent land uses and the natural environment
- Maintain off-leash areas to a high and consistent standard
- Improve existing off-leash areas through ongoing state-of-good repair investments
- Communicate and enforce simple and consistent rules of conduct at off-leash areas to support bylaw compliance through education and enforcement
- Support Commercial Dog Walker access to off-leash areas by implementing guidance at new off-leash areas

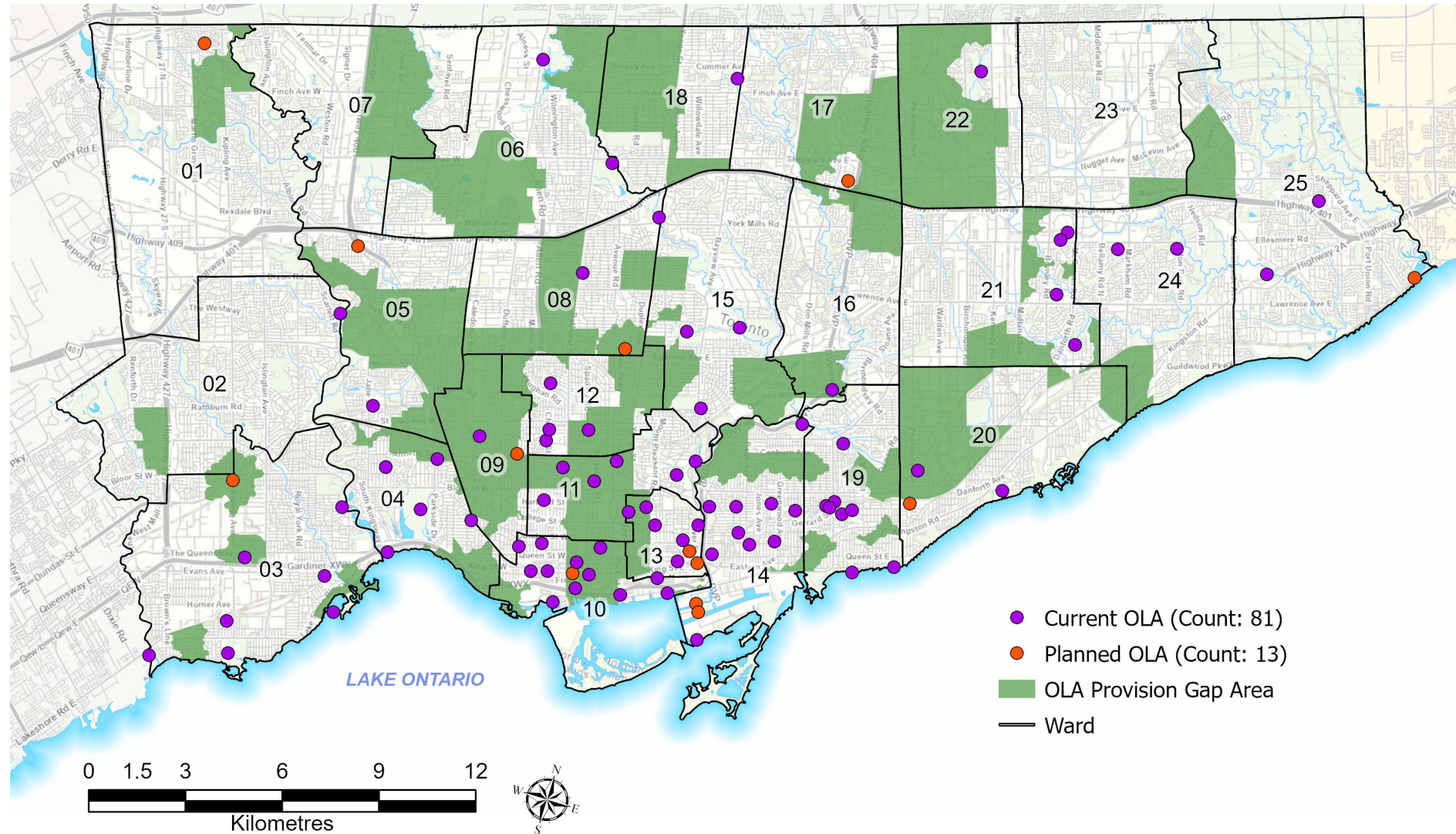
Plan, Design and Build

- Incorporate off-leash area planning into the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan
- Target new off-leash areas to where they can serve the most people and dogs
- Identify off-leash area locations using updated criteria that provide flexibility for different contexts
- Build off-leash areas to a high and consistent standard using new design guidance
- Update fencing requirements
- Strengthen environmental protection



New OLA in Bob Hunter Park

Plan and Build



Maintain and Improve

- Facilitate a positive park experience for dogs and people through maintenance and upgrades
- Consistent and transparent service standards
- Improve tracking and service response through forthcoming integration with 311
- Improve conditions at off-leash areas through state-of-good-repair work using data-driven plan



Off-leash area at Stanley Park South

Engage Community and Ensure Responsible Off-Leash Area Use

- Ensure community members contribute to important decisions involving their local off-leash area
- Create a forum for residents to support implementation through a citywide reference group
- Facilitate responsible dog ownership through enhanced education and communication



Commercial Dog Walker Access

- Support commercial dog walker access at new off-leash areas while mitigating potential for overcrowding at small sites.
- Increase the number of off-leash areas allowing commercial dog walker access (50 to 59).
- Review additional changes on case-by-case basis working with Ward Councillor and engaging with community including commercial dog walkers.



Off-leash areas at Botany Hill Park

Implementation

2025:

- New guidance and standards applied for off-leash areas
- Stakeholder reference group established
- Off-leash area expansion priorities incorporated into Facilities Plan
- State-of-good-repair early work begins (2025-2034)
- Begin to implement updated signage and communication

2025 onwards

- Maintenance, minor repairs, and upgrades of off-leash areas continues informed by regular inspections and condition assessment of all off-leash areas
- Regular review of 311 data and key performance indicators to support and monitor implementation

2030:

- 5-Year review of Facilities Plan
- Review of Location Criteria and Design Guidance



THANK YOU

