

St. Clair Reservoir Rehabilitation Proposed Changes to Sir Winston Churchill Park Dogs Off-Leash Area and Tennis Courts

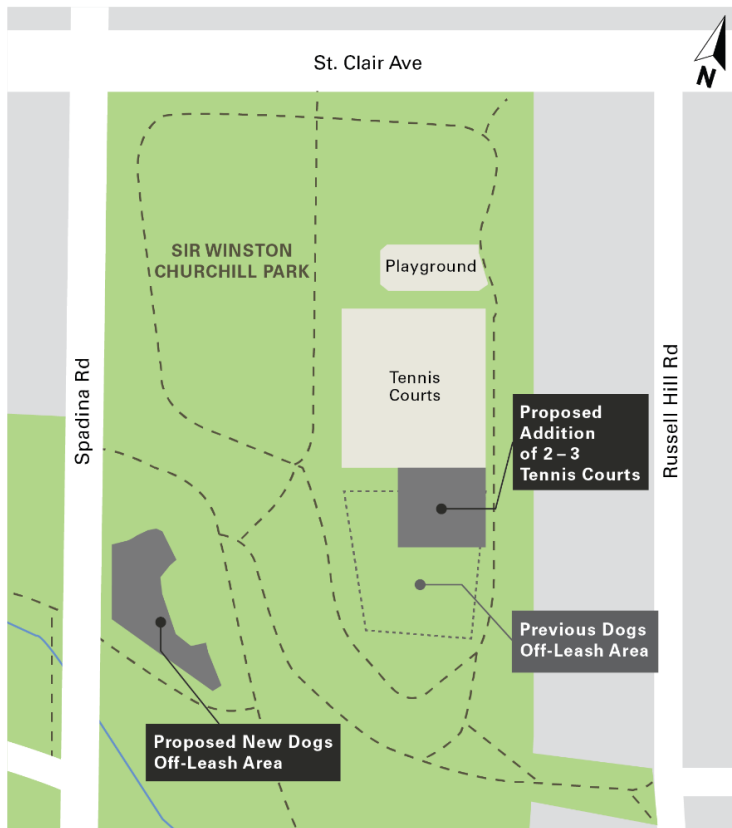
Proposed Relocation of Dogs Off-Leash Area

Q: Why is a new location for the Dogs Off-Leash Area in Sir Winston Churchill Park being proposed?

A: The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) has concerns with Toronto Water reinstating a Dog Off-Leash Area (DOLA) on top of the St. Clair Reservoir. They advised that the existing location could put the City in contravention of Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act. Toronto Water recognizes the importance of an off-leash area to the community and has worked with Parks, Forestry and Recreation to review other possible locations for a DOLA in Sir Winston Churchill Park.

Q: Where is the proposed location for the new DOLA?

A: The suitable alternate location that was identified by Parks, Forestry and Recreation is southwest of the reservoir, immediately east of the Spadina Road Bridge (*please refer to map below*). A technical site assessment was conducted to determine the suitability of the location, and included various staff from Parks, Forestry & Recreation and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). Prior to the St. Clair Reservoir Rehabilitation Project, this was a mowed grassy area.



Q: Are any other locations within Sir Winston Churchill Park being considered for an off-leash area?

A: A scan of the entire park was conducted. The proposed area is the only location that complies with the criteria for establishment of off-leash areas outlined in the *People, Dogs and Parks – Off-Leash Policy*. As well, the proposed location does not encroach upon the nearby environmentally significant areas, as designated by the City's Official Plan.

Q: Would any trees have to be removed to relocate the DOLA?

A: No trees would be removed to relocate the DOLA to the proposed site. The existing copse of trees immediately adjacent to the proposed location would not be incorporated into the DOLA. Approximately 800 new trees and shrubs would be planted around the DOLA, resulting in a substantial net increase of trees.

Q: Is the proposal to move the DOLA from Sir Winston Churchill Park into the Nordheimer Ravine?

A: No, the proposed DOLA location is entirely within the boundary of Sir Winston Churchill Park. The Nordheimer Ravine is located immediately to the west, past the Spadina Road Bridge. The southernmost portion of Sir Winston Churchill Park is located in a ravine, but the City's Urban Forestry Ravine and Natural Feature Protection Unit has reviewed the proposal and has no objections.

Q: Given the proximity of the proposed DOLA location to the Nordheimer Ravine, would there be an impact on the surrounding ecosystem?

A: Any potential negative impacts to the surrounding ecosystem would be avoided or mitigated. All relevant regulatory authorities have been consulted on the new location of the DOLA and have approved the location in principle. The proposed location complies with the provisions of the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law, and detailed designs for the off-leash area will also be reviewed by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority as part of the permit application process. A subsurface drainage system with connection to sanitary sewers would be installed to address surface level pooling and runoff during heavy rains. New rain garden plantings at the south end of the DOLA would also be installed to address potential runoff. No existing ravine vegetation would be removed. No trees would be removed or injured and many new trees and shrubs would be planted to naturalise and stabilise the lower slope surrounding the DOLA. A buffer is proposed between the steep slope and the DOLA to protect against erosion. A net benefit to the environment is expected.

Q: Would the new DOLA be the same size as the previous area?

A: The new DOLA would be approximately 2022m². Although smaller than the previous area, the proposed DOLA meets the average target size of 2000m² for an off-leash area as recommended by Parks, Standards and Innovation.

Q: Would the new DOLA have turf surfacing, like the previous off-leash area?

A: The new DOLA would conform to current Design and Development Standards set by Parks, Forestry and Recreation, which includes a 3/8" washed granite pea gravel surface.

Q: Would the proposed location have better drainage than the old DOLA?

A: Yes, a subsurface drainage system with connection to sanitary sewers would be installed to address surface level pooling during heavy rains. A rain garden at the south end of the proposed DOLA would also reduce runoff.

Q: How would the public be able to access the new DOLA?

A: The DOLA would have one public access gate on the south side fence. The area would be accessible a) from the east side of Spadina Road, b) via the stairs on the west side of the Spadina Road Bridge, c) from the west via the Nordheimer Ravine Trail, and d) from the east via the Sir Winston Churchill Park Trail.

Q: Would the new DOLA be AODA compatible?

A: The new DOLA area would comply as much as possible given the terrain and other restraints with the current AODA Parks, Forestry and Recreation accessibility standards. The proposed DOLA design features an accessible pathway and benches.

Q: If approved, when would the DOLA be open for use by the public?

A: Fall 2019.

Q: If not approved, what would happen to the proposed DOLA location?

A: If the DOLA is not approved, the proposed location would be re-sodded with grass and returned to its previous condition.

Q: Can other ideas for use of this area be considered?

A: Reinstatement of the DOLA is part of the St. Clair Reservoir Rehabilitation project construction contract. The work and cost of installing a DOLA has already been accounted for and would need to be carried out by the current contractor prior to the completion of the project. Other ideas for park enhancement are not within the scope of the reservoir rehabilitation project and will need to be considered in the future by Parks, Forestry and Recreation as part of the 10-year capital planning process for the park.

Proposed Addition of Tennis Courts:

Q: Why is the City proposing an addition to the tennis courts?

A: Moving the DOLA from its location on the reservoir creates an opportunity to add to the tennis courts. Due to the nature of the rehabilitation work, this is likely the only opportunity to add to the tennis courts for up to 75 years, until the next major reservoir rehabilitation. The Sir Winston Churchill Park Tennis Club has pledged to cover the construction costs of the additional tennis courts.

Q: Are the proposed tennis courts pushing the DOLA from its previous location?

A: No, the proposed tennis courts are not a factor in the decision to move the DOLA. In consultation with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the City has determined that the DOLA must be moved from the top of the reservoir.

Q: If approved, how many tennis courts would be added? Two or three?

A: The number of tennis courts added would depend on the amount of funding provided by the tennis club. If approved, a minimum of two courts and a maximum of three courts would be added.

Q: Will the tennis courts have floodlights?

A: Lighting will be reinstated for the original ten (10) tennis courts. The proposed two (2) or three (3) additional courts would not have lights.

Q: If the additional tennis courts are not approved, what would happen to the previous DOLA area?

A: If the additional courts are not approved, the previous DOLA area would be sodded with grass.

General Questions:

Q: What park enhancements will be carried out as part of the St. Clair Reservoir Rehabilitation?

A: The Sir Winston Churchill Park Association and various stakeholders in the community have put forward recommendations and requests regarding the restoration of Sir Winston Churchill Park and features they would like to see added or modified. The budget and construction contract for the current reservoir rehabilitation project include replacement of existing park features, but do not include installation of new or additional park features. Such requests must be considered as part of the Parks, Forestry and Recreation capital planning process in order to be funded.

Q: Will parking be added?

A: No parking was removed as a result of this work, and no additional parking will be added.

Q: Will the pathway on the east side of the Reservoir and south of the clubhouse be widened?

A: The City is aware of this request and are making all efforts to widen the pathway where possible.