

City-Wide Study of Existing Dog Off-Leash Areas

Design, Operations, Maintenance & Best Practices

Stakeholder Workshop #2
August 21, 2019

Stakeholder Consultation

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review
2. Study Purpose and Process with Update
3. What We've Heard and Key Messages
4. Overview of Best Practices
5. Site Selection Criteria
6. Proposed Case Study Sites, Description of Categories and Discussion
7. Overview of Survey
8. Next Steps

Overview

- 73 OLA sites that are owned and/or managed by Toronto Parks Forestry and Recreation
 - 54,202 registered dogs however it's estimated there are approximately 300,000 dogs in Toronto
- Largest number of fenced off-leash areas in Canada
- Multiple surface types, sizes and designs

Study Goals

- improve existing OLAs through design, maintenance and operations
- foster healthy relationships
- evaluate OLAs to provide healthy, safe, accessible and sustainable environments
- adapt OLA designs to meet operational pressures
- develop guidelines to ensure consistency
- develop design recommendations that can be replicated
- improve community involvement and ongoing partnerships

Scope of Study

- explore common issues
- review global best practices
- conduct stakeholder and public consultation to gain user feedback
- develop design solutions to improve existing OLAs
- select case studies will be chosen
 - ▶ variety of challenges and opportunities
 - ▶ OLAs of different size, context and character

Study + Consultation Process

1. **Phase One** *Spring/Summer*- Building Understanding
 - present and seek feedback on common issues (both City and users)
2. **Phase Two** *Summer/Fall*- Testing Ideas
 - OLA Case Studies
 - draft design recommendations
3. **Phase Three** *Fall/Winter*- Finalizing Recommendations
 - present and seek feedback on preferred design recommendations

Study and Consultation Process Update

1. Additional stakeholder meeting added
 - gain feedback on proposed case study site



Study and Consultation Process

Update

- thinc design has spoken to various Operations and Supervisors within all districts
 - ▶ gain perspective about maintenance and operations
 - ▶ learned most common concerns and issues
 - ▶ what's working and what needs to be improved
 - ▶ weighed in on site selection criteria and selected sites

What We've Heard + Learned

- Accessibility for all users is important
- Surfacing choice impacts dog health and enjoyment of OLAs
- Different surfaces have different installation, maintenance and budgetary requirements
- No “one size fits all” solution
 - a range of options are needed to provide all users with a safe, healthy and enjoyable OLA experience
- In addition to dogs, importance of the human experience in OLAs

Key Messages from Meeting #1

- design recommendations
 - ▶ shade/shelter, water, seating, terrain/surfaces, lighting, etc.
- communication and information recommendations
 - ▶ online platform for OLAs (DOA Reps, dog walkers, park users, the City, etc.)
 - ▶ website about OLAs
 - ▶ support ticketing system (request for maintenance)
 - ▶ desire for more communication and better relationship between dog owners and the City

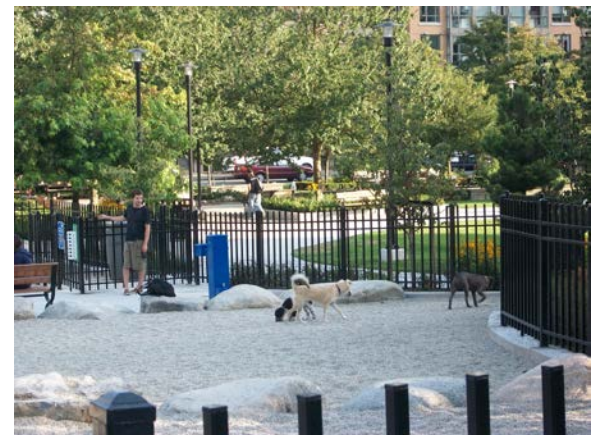
Key Messages from Meeting #1

- culture changes and relationships
 - ▶ highlight the benefits of dogs and OLAs within community
 - ▶ encourage stewardship and relationships (DOAs, City, dog owners, etc)
 - ▶ education and etiquette
- funding and implementation
 - ▶ show cost of OLAs (full life cycle, including design, materials and maintenance)
 - ▶ private funding/sponsorship

Best Practice Review

Vancouver, BC

- The City has 36 off-leash areas
 - ▶ 6 are fenced, 30 are unfenced
 - ▶ park space is shared with other park users
 - ▶ 18 off-leash areas have time restrictions. 5 off-leash areas have daytime restrictions
 - ▶ different types of gravel are used at all of the fenced off leash areas



Best Practice Review

Vancouver, BC

- 'People Parks & Dogs' Strategy in 2018
 - ▶ created hierarchy of off-leash areas (destination versus neighbourhood)
 - ▶ non fenced off leash areas needed setback distances/vegetation
 - ▶ new turf seed mix being piloted



Best Practice Review

Calgary, AB

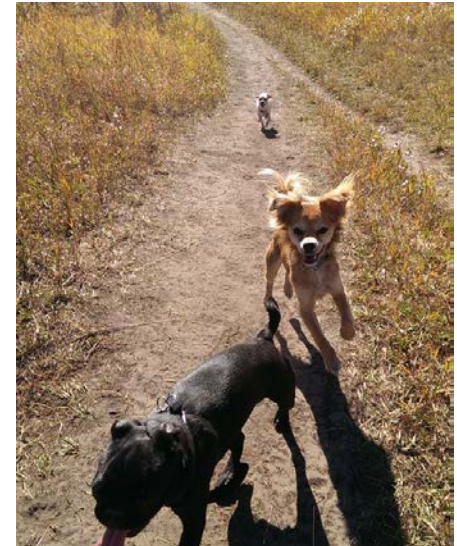
- The City has 150 off-leash areas
 - ▶ all off-leash areas are multi-use
 - ▶ City does not operate any dog-only parks
 - ▶ variety of surfacing throughout parks
 - ▶ all areas within natural environment parks are on-leash



Best Practice Review

Calgary, AB

- Calgary uses private sponsorship to fund extra amenities in OLA
- Volunteer/Ambassador program
- Hierarchy/Categories of OLAs- level of service framework



Best Practice Review

Chicago, IL

- 28 Dog Friendly Area
 - 18 pea gravel, 4 concrete, 2 beach, 1 grass, 3 artificial turf
- New dog areas require community efforts for support, organization and funding
 1. Form Community Organization to lead development
 2. Identify proposed location (set criteria)
 3. Submit application
 4. Petition, surveys, support and funding
 1. 50 Signatures Needed
 2. 8 Site Visits
 3. Letters of Support (businesses, schools, Wards (Councillors), etc.)
 4. Public Meetings
 5. Raise \$150,000 to build before construction begins

Best Practice Review

Chicago, IL

- Park District issue permits for all off-leash dogs using Dog Friendly Area (\$10 cost)
- Permit good for one year (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)
- \$500 fine is found using a DFA without a permit



Case Study

Purpose

- proposed 10 sites will serve as exemplars and have attributes/criteria that represent the 73 OLAs across the city
- information gained from the 10 sites will help inform the city-wide recommendations within the study

Case Study

Final Proposed Selection Criteria

- Reflect a range of fencing types and surfacing types
- Include at least one OLA with a small dog area
- Reflect a broad range of environments (urban, suburban and environmentally-sensitive)
- Reflect a range of OLA sizes (small, medium and large)
- Include both accessible and less accessible
- Range of amenities (water access, seating, shade, parking, lighting, time restrictions, etc)

Case Study

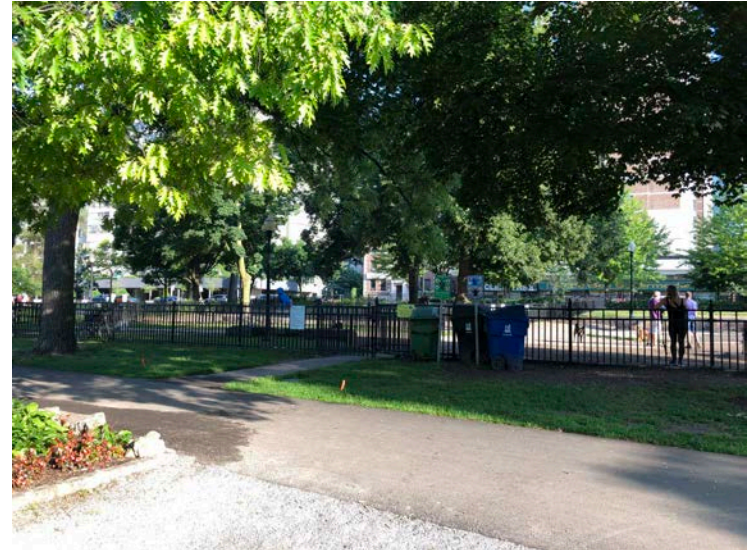
Additional Selection Criteria

- Choose sites with:
 - ▶ well-known issues
 - ▶ variety of uses
 - ▶ in parks with lots of other amenities (and in parks with limited amenities)
 - ▶ select a wide range of carry capacities

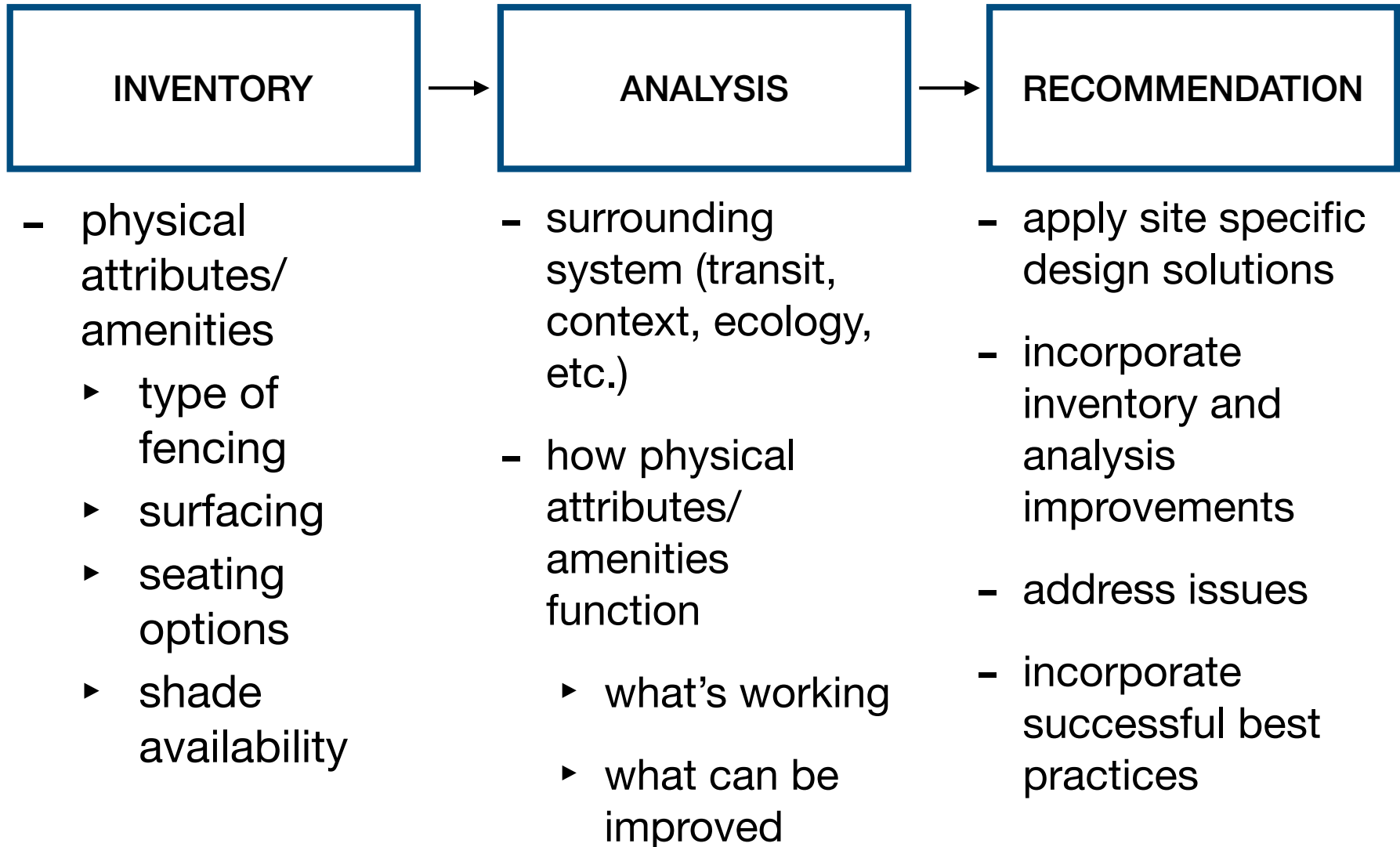
Case Study

Assessment + Inventory

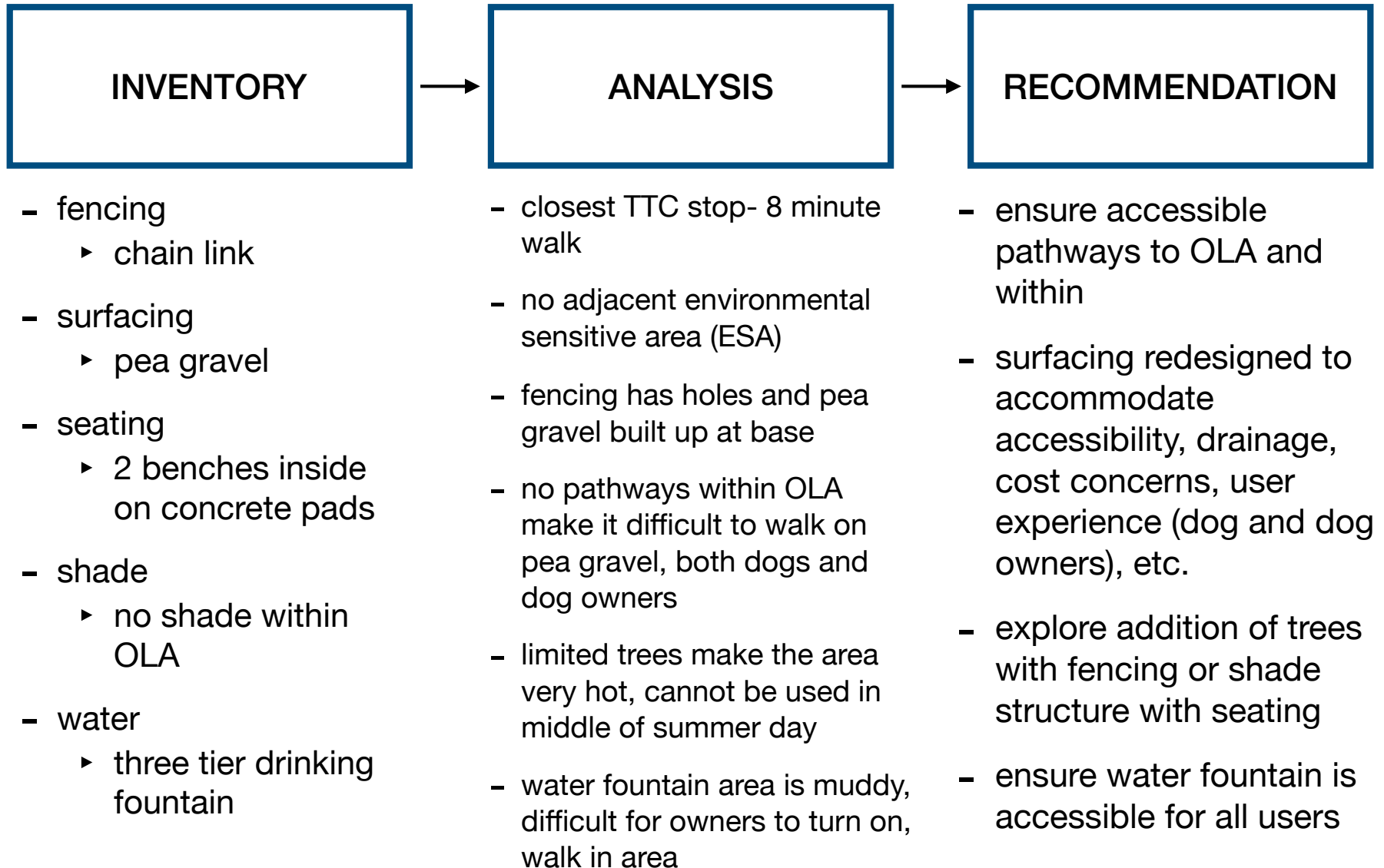
City of Toronto DOG OFF LEASH AREA									
GENERAL INFORMATION									
Name:									
District:			Main Intersection:						
Size (ha):			Shape:			Topography:			
SURFACING									
Surface Type: Engineer Wood Fiber Mulch Natural/Grass Pea Gravel Granite Chip Sand									
Surfacing Observations: Material Migration Poor Drainage Erosion Pooling/Mud Holes/Digging Root Exposure Compaction									
Surfacing Depth (mm):									
FENCING									
Fencing: Y / N			Gates: Y / N			# of Gates:			
Fencing Type: Iron Omega Chain Link Post and Paddle Wire Mesh Other:									
Gate Location:			Double Gate:						
Fence Observations: Cut Holes Large Gaps Rust Damage Warped/Sagging Unsafe Other:									
Fence Height (m):									
TREES									
Trees within OLA: Y / N			Trees providing shade within OLA: Y / N:						
If trees within OLA, are they fenced off: Y / N									
Tree Damage: Compaction Roots Exposed Damaged Canopy Urine Ring Stripped Bark Other:									
Number of Trees within OLA:			DBH:						
WATER									
Irrigation: Y / N			Dog Drinking Fountain: Y / N			Human Drinking Fountain: Y / N:			
Beach/Water Access: Y / N									
AMENITIES									
Landscape Features: Boulders Logs Play Amenities None Other:									
Signage: Y / N			Type:			Community Board: Y / N			
Lighting: Y / N			# of Lights:			Location:			
Seating: Y / N			Type:			Amount:			
# of City Bins:			Waste Bins: Green / Blue / Black						
ACCESSIBLE									
Within OLA: Y / N			To OLA: Y / N			Transit Connection: Y / N			
Walkability: Poor Satisfactory Good Great									
Adjacent Amenities: Playground Sports Field Washroom Splash Pad Other:									



Design Process



Site X Sample



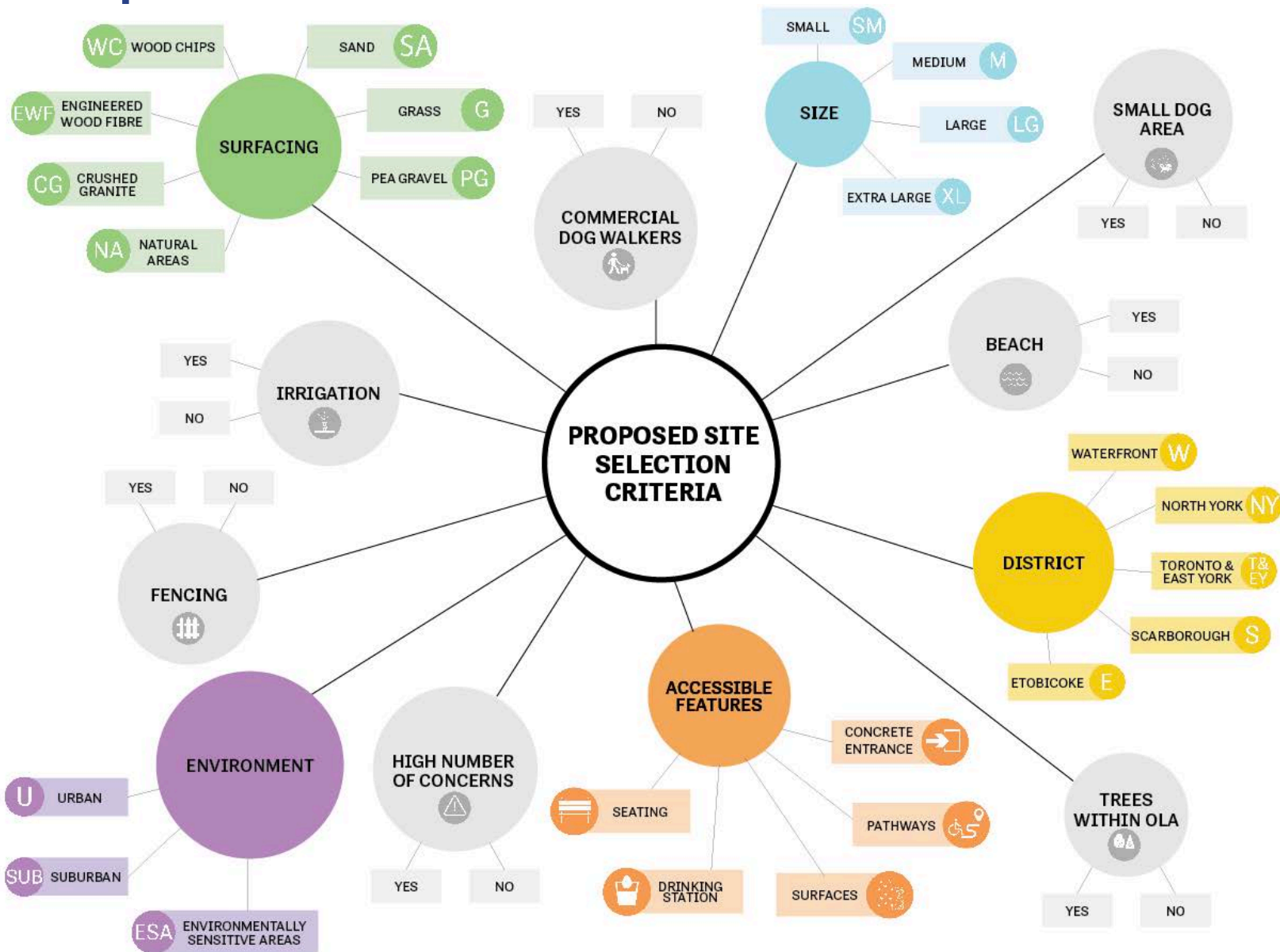
Case Study

Select OLAs to address each of the following

1. Representation from each District
2. Variety of surfacing
3. Range of sizes
4. Types of fencing
5. Small dog areas
6. Commercial dog walkers
7. Beach
8. Irrigation
9. Trees / no trees
10. Well known issues
11. Accessible Features
12. Range of environments

Case Study

Proposed Site Selection Criteria



Proposed 10 Case Study Sites

Allan Gardens

L'Amoureux Park

Bayview Arena Park

Merrill Bridge Park

Confederation Park

Cherry Beach

Earls Court Park

Sunnybrook Park

High Park

Wychwood Car Barns

Case Study

Districts

- **Toronto and East York**

- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park

- **Scarborough**

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Confederation Park

- **Etobicoke**

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park

- **Waterfront**

- ▶ Cherry Beach

- **North York**

- ▶ Bayview Arena
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

Case Study

Surfacing

- **Pea Gravel**

- Bayview Arena Park
- Confederation Park

- **Grass**

- L'Amoureux Park
- Sunnybrook Park

- **Sand**

- High Park
- Cherry Beach
- Allan Gardens

- **Natural Trails**

- High Park

- **Crushed Granite**

- Wychwood Car Barns Park

- **Engineered Wood Fibre**

- Merrill Bridge Park

- **Wood Chips**

- Earlscourt Park

Case Study Size

- **Small (under 2,000)**

- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Earls court Park

- **Medium (2,000-5,000)**

- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens

- **Large (5,000-10,000)**

- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park

- **Extra Large (over 10,000)**

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Sunny Brook Park

Case Study

Fencing

- Fenced

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ L'Amoureux
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

- Unfenced

- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park

Case Study

Small Dog Area

- **Small Dog Area**

- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park

- **No Small Dog Area**

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Coxwell Ravine
- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park

Case Study

Commercial Dog Walker

- Commercial Dog Walker

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Allan Gardens

- No Commercial Dog Walker

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park

Case Study

Beach

- Beach

- ▶ Cherry Beach

- No Beach

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park

Case Study

Irrigation

- Irrigation

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park

- No Irrigation

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach

Case Study

Trees within OLA

- Trees

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Confederation Park

- No Trees

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

Case Study

Well Known Issues

- High number of concerns

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park

- Fewer concerns

- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park

Case Study

Accessible Features

- Concrete entrance

- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

- Pathways

- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ High Park

- Drinking Fountain

- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park

Case Study

Accessible Features

- Surface

- ▶ EWF
 - Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Grass
 - L'Amoureux Park,
Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Crushed Granite
 - Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Natural
 - High Park

- Seating/Rest Areas

- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Earlscourt Park
- ▶ High Park
- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park

Case Study

Range of Environments

- Urban

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Allan Gardens
- ▶ Wychwood Car Barns Park
- ▶ Merrill Bridge Park
- ▶ Earls court Park

- Suburban

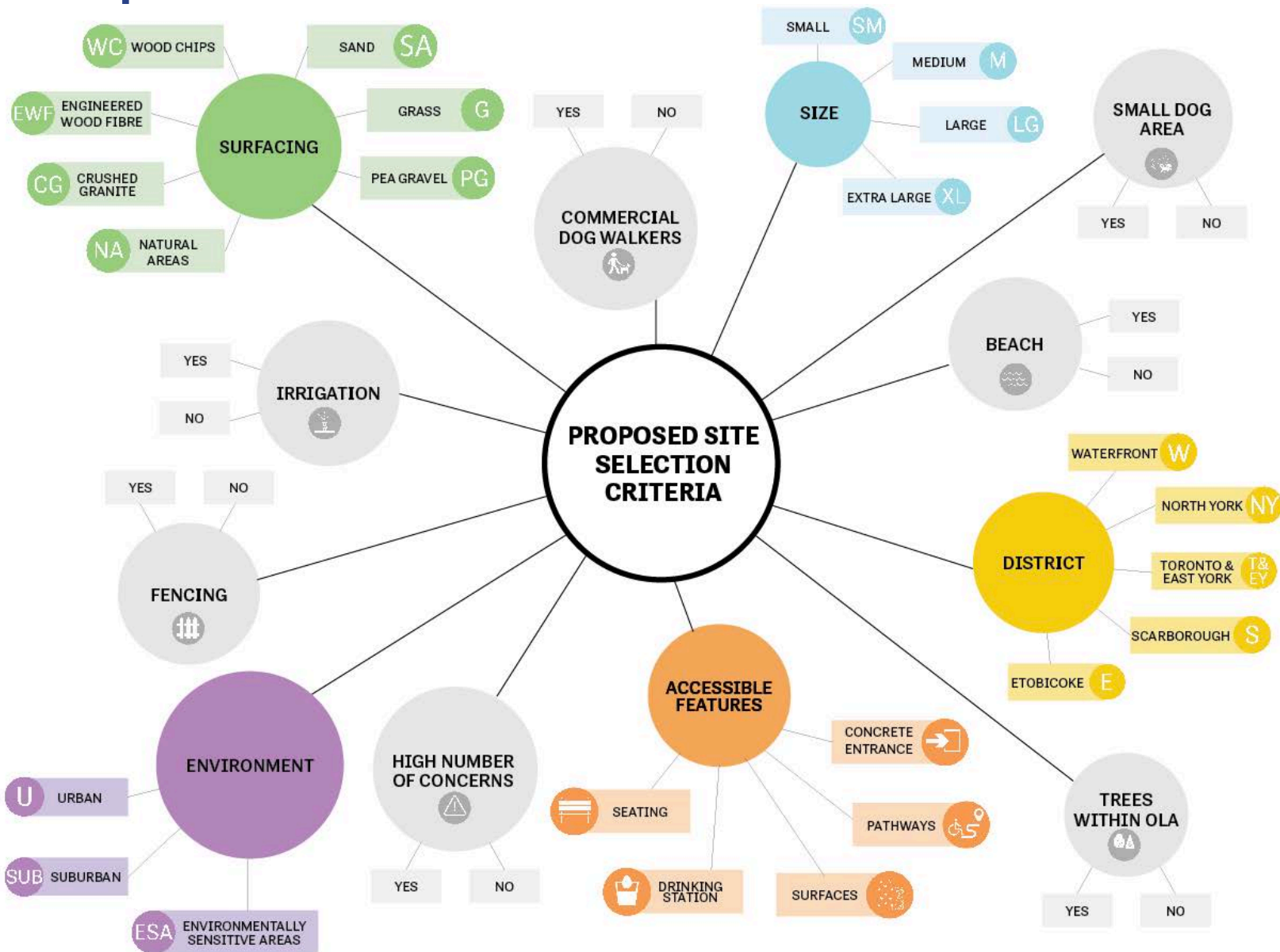
- ▶ L'Amoureux Park
- ▶ Bayview Arena Park
- ▶ Confederation Park
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

- Environmentally Sensitive Areas

- ▶ High Park
- ▶ Cherry Beach
- ▶ Sunnybrook Park

Case Study

Proposed Site Selection Criteria



Discussion

1. What do you think of the proposed structure and approach for the case study site profiles? Is there any other information you would like to see included in the profiles?
2. How well do you feel the proposed case study sites reflect the range of different OLAs across the City? How would you refine the case study selection criteria (if at all) to ensure the selected sites better represent the City's OLAs?

Overview of Survey

- Beta Survey questions (emailed August 14, 2019)
- Public Survey launch date after the Labour Day weekend
- Public Survey will be distributed through the City's social media outlets, Councillor's offices and the Study's webpage
- Public Survey has been developed and will be managed by Business Intelligence & Performance Measurement Unit (Policy and Strategic Planning Branch)

Roles and Responsibilities

Parks Forestry and Recreation

Parks Standards and Innovation (PSI)

- Manages existing off-leash area (OLA) portfolio, including outreach to other branches within PFR and other City divisions
- Manages and oversees dola@toronto.ca email account

Parks Operations

- Maintains daily operations of existing OLAs

Parks Development and Capital Projects

- Responsible for funding, design and implementation of capital projects and/or new OLAs

Urban Forestry

- Responsible for regulating Ravine and Natural Feature Protection (RNFP), Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 658, tree protection and planting

Roles and Responsibilities

Councillors/City Council

- Receives requests for OLAs
- Annual approval of Operating and Capital Budgets

TRCA

- Provides oversight and direction on land owned by them and regulates Provincial Ontario Regulation 166/06

Hydro One

- Provides oversight, direction and approval on land owned by them

Roles and Responsibilities

Solid Waste Management Services

- Responsible for the delivery and collection of garbage, recycling and organic waste bins in city-parks, including OLAs

Municipal Licensing & Standards Division

- Enforce and respond to matters that relate to Toronto Municipal Codes: Chapter 608, Parks and Chapter 349, Animals

Dog Owner Association (DOA) Representative(s)

- Act as the main contacts for the local OLA community
- Carry on-going communication between Parks Operations and their local dog community
- Foster a positive, lively dog owner community

Next Steps

1. Public Release of Online Survey #1- Early Sept
2. Interviews with DOAs from each of the 10 sites- Mid Sept.
3. Stakeholder Consultation #3- Late Sept/Early Oct.
4. 'Pup'-Ups- Early/Mid Oct.
5. Online Survey #2- Early/Mid Oct.
6. Stakeholder Consultation #4- Late Nov/Early Dec.
7. Final Report- end of 2019

thank you