

# Corktown Neighbourhood Off-Leash Area (OLA)

Candidate Sites and Assessment

January 27, 2022



## Presentation

- Project Overview & Review of Community Consultation
- Corktown Common - Four Candidate Sites & Feasibility Matrix
- Corktown Common – Four Candidate Sites & Assessments
- PFR Recommendation



## Questions of Clarification



## Next Steps



# Project Overview & Review of Community Consultation

# Project Overview

Based on high demand from local residents, the City is considering the installation of a new off-leash area in the Corktown Neighbourhood. A dedicated off-leash area is needed in this neighbourhood because:

- There is a high concentration of dog owners in the neighbourhood, and therefore there is a significant demand from residents for a dog off-leash area.
- Conflicts occur often between Corktown Commons park users and dog owners who unleash their dogs in the Commons. By providing a dedicated space for off-leash dogs, these and related conflicts are reduced.



# Community Consultation – Online Survey

As part of early investigations in 2021, the City conducted an online survey to gather feedback on the feasibility of converting Lawren Harris Square into an off-leash area.

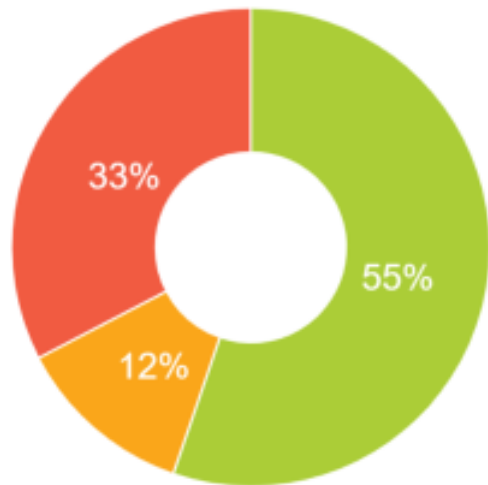
The survey was available from April 27 to May 16, 2021 and received a total of 1,191 responses. The survey was promoted through:

- Letters to local Condo Boards including Canary Park condo, and River City 1-4.
- Electronic and/or paper surveys to local Toronto Community Housing Residents at 585 King St East, 40 Lower River St., and 45 St. Lawrence St.
- Emails to the Corktown Residents Association and the West Donlands Committee
- Emails to residents through the local City Councillor's office
- Social media advertisements.

# Online Survey Results

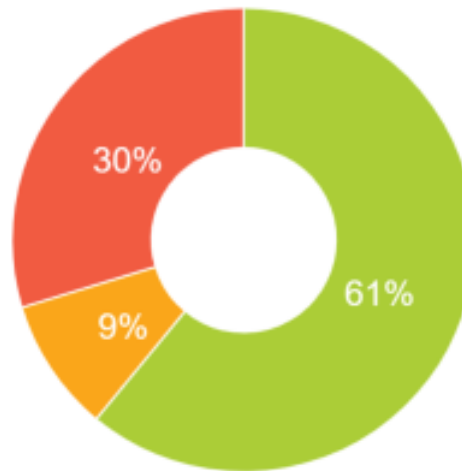
Preferences on the proposed location for an off-leash area in Lawren Harris Square received through the online survey include:

All Survey Respondents  
(1,191)



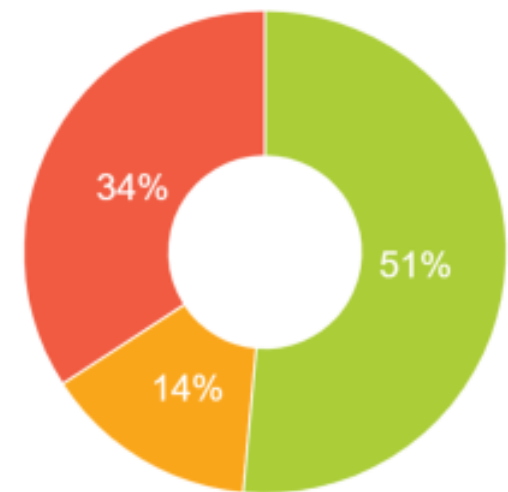
- I support this location
- I could support this location but...
- I would prefer another location nearby

Respondents who own  
dogs (707)



- I support this location
- I could support this location but...
- I would prefer another location nearby

Respondents who do not  
own dogs (313)



- I support this location
- I could support this location but...
- I would prefer another location nearby

# Online Survey Results – Top Concerns

**Too small:** The area would not be large enough, or is too small, to accommodate the volume of dogs and dog owners in the area who would use the park. Some respondents indicated the large volume and small space would lead to conflict amongst dogs.

**Noise concerns:** Many respondents identified noise concerns, as the area is surrounded by 3 condos and sounds of barking would be amplified in the area, especially at peak times (early morning and late evenings).

**Safety concerns re: high traffic area:** Important safety concerns to be considered due to the high-traffic nature of LHS and the location being surrounded by roadways on all sides. Increased risk of accidents/injuries of both dogs and dog-owners.

**Restrict access to square/monopolize public space:** Many respondents indicated that Lawren Harris Square was meant to be a public space for all local residents and visitors to use, and a potential OLA would eliminate space for pedestrians, seating, and would prioritize dog-owners over others.

## **Other concerns:**

- Some respondents identified concerns with the smell and odors that would result from the dog park.
- Dog owners still using Corktown Commons as an off-leash area.
- Square's namesake - concerns around naming a DOLA after the square's namesake, Lawren Harris.

## Online Survey Results - Outcomes

While a majority of participants were in favour of an OLA in Lawren Harris Square, the 460 survey comments from both dog owners and non-dog owners alike (with concerns and suggestions for alternative locations) strongly indicated that the proposed location would create additional community conflict.

In an attempt to identify site that would result in lower community conflict, the City began to review and assess other potential OLA candidates in the neighbourhood.

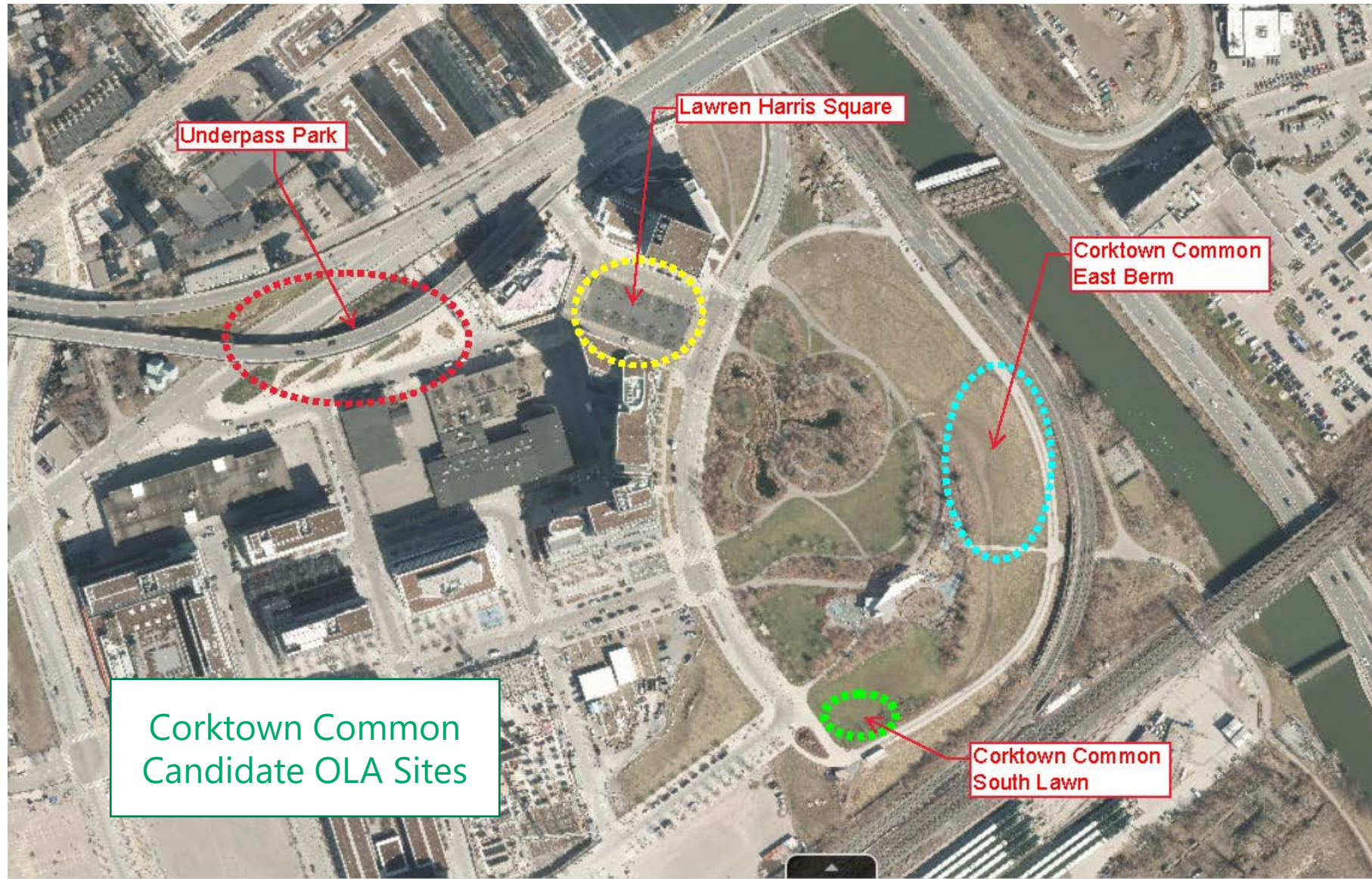
Since the Online Survey, the City has consulted with TRCA , Transportation Services, Engineering and Construction Services, and Parks Operations and Technical Services, working through options for off-leash opportunities in the neighbourhood.

**Four options were identified for further investigation.**



# Corktown Neighbourhood Candidate Site Assessment & Feasibility Matrix

# Corktown Neighbourhood - Four Candidate Sites

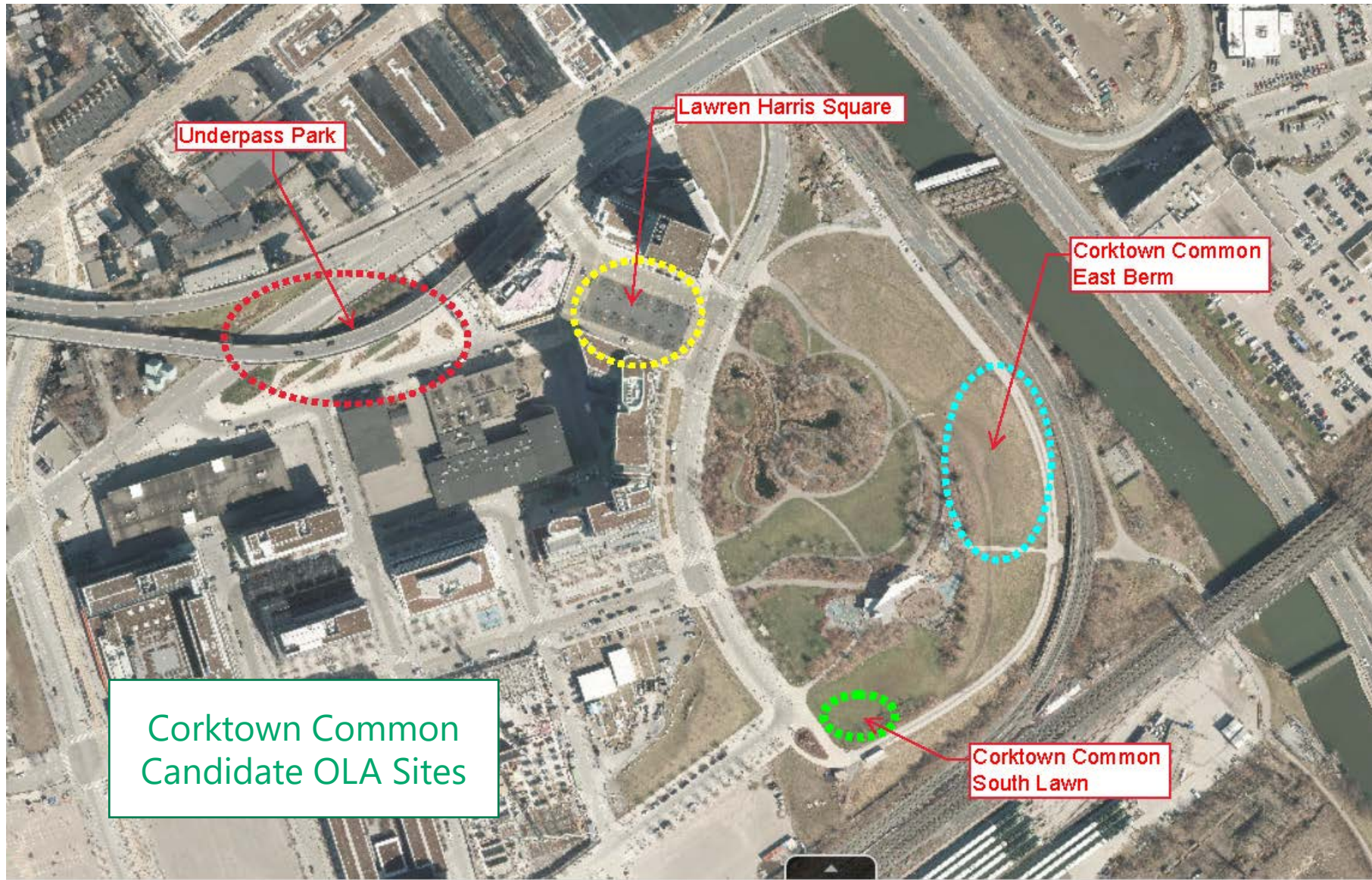


# Corktown Neighbourhood Feasibility Matrix

		Candidate Sites			
Corktown Common Neighbourhood OLA Sites - Feasibility Matrix		Lawren Harris Park (<600sm)	Corktown Commons East Berm (+/- 3600sm)	Underpass Park West End (<1800sm)	Corktown Commons South Lawn (700sm)
Policy Criteria					
Size	Minimum 2000sm*		✓		
Location	Convenience	✓		✓	✓
	Surveillance	✓		✓	✓
	Access for Emergency Response	✓		✓	✓
	Pedestrian/dog safety from traffic		✓	✓	
Timeline for delivery		✓		✓	✓
Existing services	Water	✓		✓	✓
	Drainage	✓		✓	✓
	Lighting	✓		✓	✓
Surfacing		✓		✓	✓
Proximity	Meets recommended 100m from residents (odour, noise)*		✓		
Displacement of existing programming			✓	✓	
Shade	Existing	✓		✓	
	Opportunity to provide	✓		✓	✓
Shelter	Existing			✓	
	Opportunity to provide	✓		✓	✓
Totals		11	4	14	10
*meets current City policy - Parks Forestry and Recreation					



# Corktown Neighbourhood - Four Candidate Sites





# Lawren Harris Square

**Size: 540 sq m**

## Pros

- Convenient
- Existing Infrastructure in place

## Cons

- Small footprint
- Close to existing residences, surrounded by three Condo Towers - noise concerns
- Numerous concerns raised by community through initial Online Survey
- Visually significant, central civic space as a dog park?



**Based on the results of the City's site feasibility review this site is no longer being considered.**

# Corktown Common East Berm

**Size:** 3,500 sq m

## Pros

- Best fit per current PFR OLA policy

## Cons

- Stringent TRCA Landform Requirements impact project design, cost, and management;
  - Ground Penetration
  - Flood Control Impediment concerns
  - Maintenance of vegetative ground cover
- Accessibility issues
- Shade issues
- Provision of additional infrastructure and potential amenities is both challenging and limited



**Based on the results of the City's site feasibility review this site is no longer being considered.**



# Underpass Park West

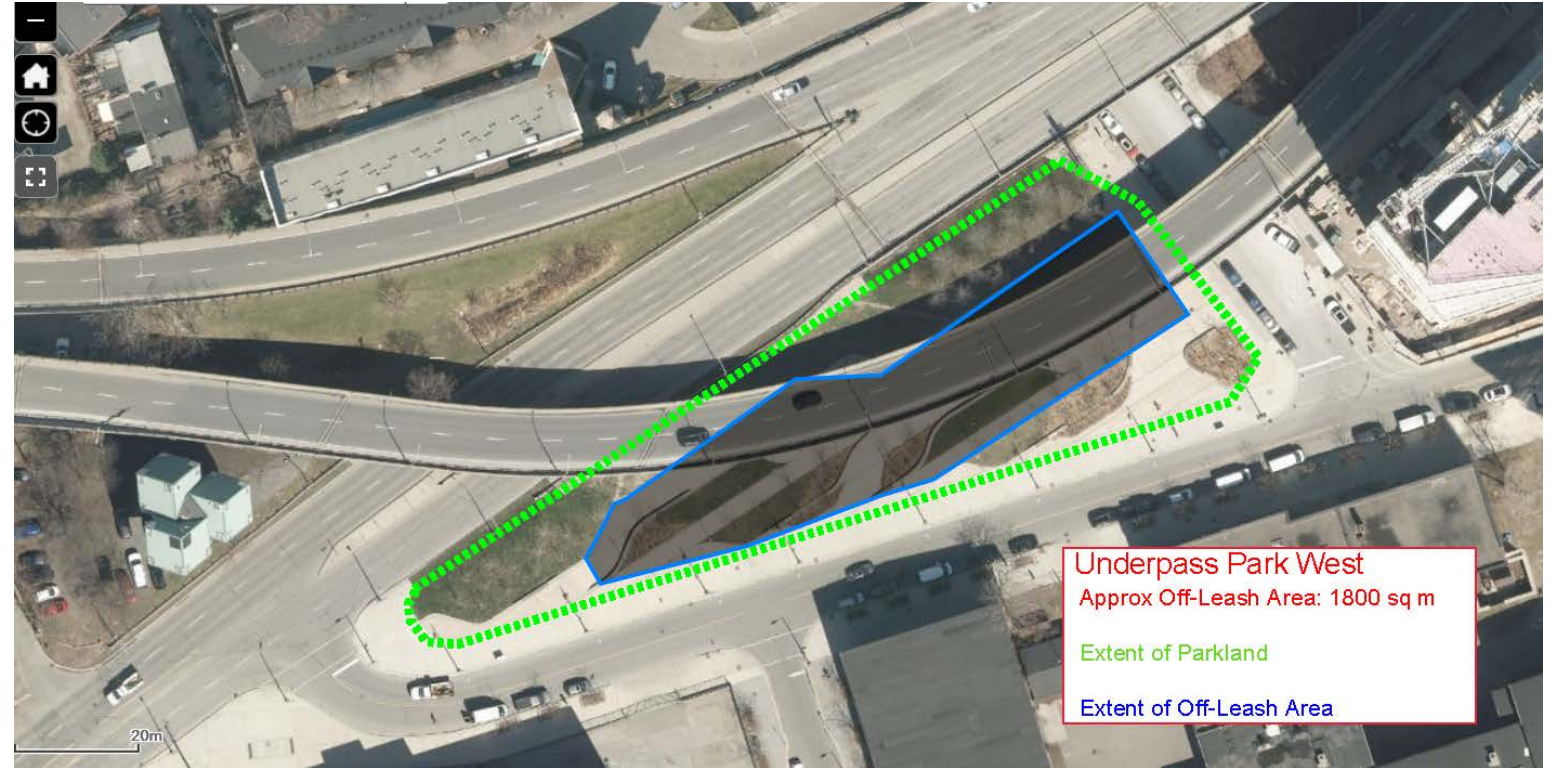
**Size: 1,800 sq m**

## Pros

- Convenient access
- All infrastructure services exist, some amenities exist (seating), others can easily be provided
- Good shade and weather protection available with O/H ramp
- Can implement OLA on PFR land now

## Cons

- Close to future residences
- TS/RCS Ramp rehabilitation program will delay portion of OLA implementation to 2024-26 (TBD)



# Corktown Common South Lawn

**Size: 700 sq m**

## Pros

- Infrastructure services can be provided
- Convenient

## Cons

- Close to future residences
- There are limited field opportunities in downtown, high demand area. Proposed OLA would displace South Lawn sports field and community use permits
- Need to accommodate tobogganing setback distance from bottom of hill
- Small footprint
- Concerns about potential contamination of water cistern and impact on park ecosystems
- Potential impacts on this area of the park due to increased Metrolinx construction activity adjacent to South Lawn.





# Parks Forestry and Recreation Recommendation

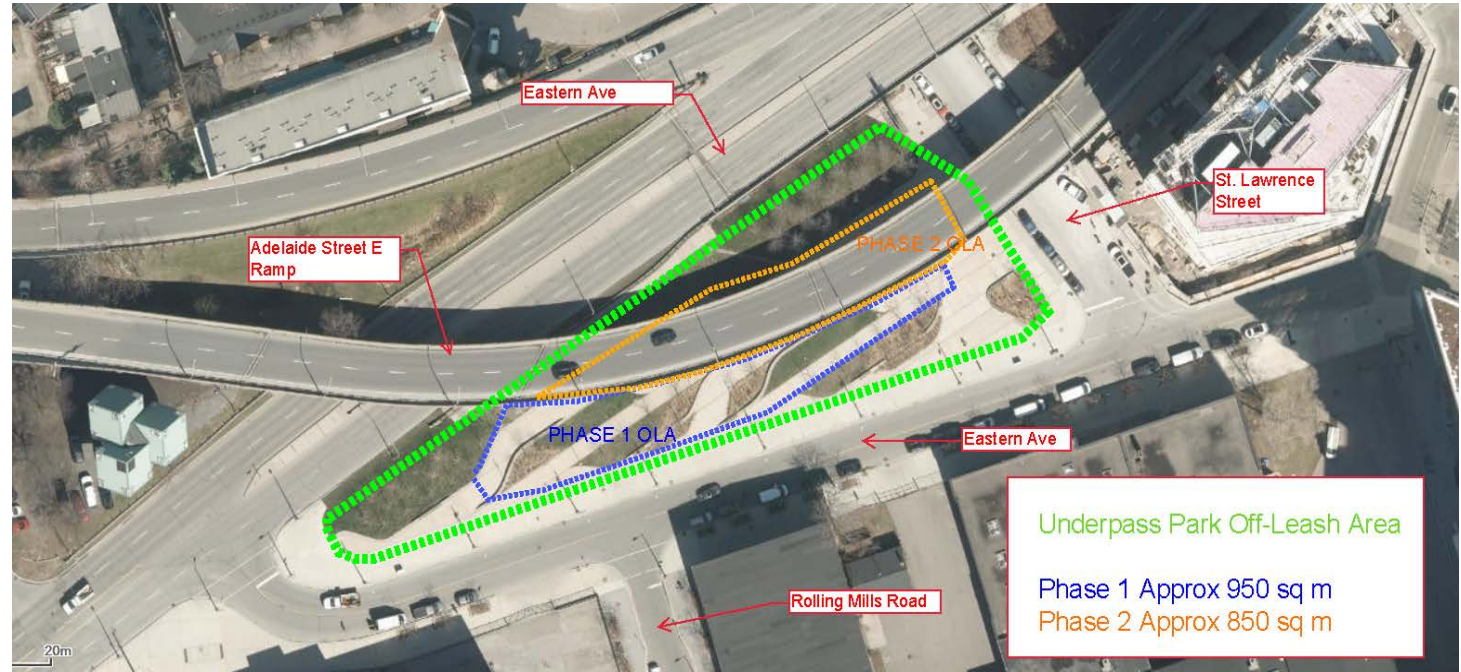
# Underpass Park West

## Dogs Off-Leash Area (OLA) Phases

**Phase 1 OLA** – approx. 950 sq m  
Construction in 2023

**Phase 2 OLA** – approx. 850 sq m  
Construct after completion of over head ramp rehabilitation program estimated 2024-26

**Total OLA Area – 1,800 sq m**



# Underpass Park West Dogs Off-Leash Area Concept

- Artificial Turf Surface
- Entirely fenced
- Drainage improvements
- Retain majority of existing trees
- Enhance existing irrigation system
- Retain existing lighting and seating
- Two gated entrances, each located at west and east ends of site





# Underpass Park West Dogs Off-Leash Area Perspective



View from St. Lawrence Street looking west. OLA is within fenced area