

People, Pets and Parks Strategy Virtual Information Session - May 29, 2023 6 to 8pm

Record of questions answered during the session

Questions (note: general comments received will not be responded to)	Answers provided
Has there been a jurisdictional scan? What have other municipalities tried that worked or didn't work.	live answered
How many people are attending tonight please	We had over 200 registrants for tonight's session and we'll know how many people attended at the end, once the session is over. Some folks might be coming in and out, so final numbers will be posted in the engagement summary.
Is it possible to have a private off-leash facility in Saanich that would be run/operated by a private land owner. I have done this in Sooke and have people come from all over the southern island area.	live answered
Could you please clarify that you are recommending that Mount Doug Park will be a leash optional area and that you do not intend to recommend fencing off any area of the park?	live answered
What is the story on Knockan Hill, its not named or mentioned?	live answered
Is there not an option or consideration to have bylaw officers in an ambassador role, thus keeping the status quo of offleash and supporting and monitoring to ensure good off-leash behavior, not in a negative role of issuing restrictions and fines for having dogs off leash. This would be ore akin to how we police people. Free to enjoy the community but police step in when bad behavior occurs.	live answered
When will this be presented to council?	June 26, 2023
Has there been any consideration that to maintain the lifestyle people currently enjoy that what must be restricted is more development and population growth, not the healthy lifestyle activities its current citizens enjoy?	live answered
How is the information that will support decisions made by Council being developed, will it include revisions and corrections to remove the current pro leashing narrative in the summary materials and present a complete picture of the information from this study?	live answered
Please expand on pkols: what exactly is changing there.	live answered
Where does the fact that 2/3 of Saanich resident have no issues with dogs off leash in parks or beaches get included in your analysis	live answered

When accomodating the needs of park users what is the minimum threshold that warrants action? 1? 100? 1000?	live answered
you have identified dog walkers. what about dog trainers who utalize parks for training.	live answered
How would the size and location of fenced off-leash areas be decded?	live answered
Will the PKOLS area off leash be fully fenced?	live answered
Is there any thoughts on how Saanich will fund the capital and staff expenses with these strategies?	live answered
Could you please clarify your plans for the beach areas that don't have concerns for migratory birds?	live answered
I hope the off leash / leash optional area are large enough to allow dogs to fully exercise. We have 2 BCs that require larger areas to run.	live answered
Thank you for all your work on this. Why is King's Park included as leash optional when it is an important wildlife habitat with rare access to fresh water? Can you clarify if there will be a designated fenced area to protect wildlife and habitat?	live answered
In the definition for "under control", says immediate recall. Would you consider what other municipalities call for: a return within three calls?	live answered
People and pets with mobility challenges often need off-leash areas to keep their hands free for canes and other support devices. The proposed restrictions would negatively impact them. How do you fit their needs into this plan without forcing them to travel long distances to find off-leash areas outside of their community?	live answered
If parks are showing to be leash-optional, are the rest of Saanich Parks areas where dogs must be on leash?	correct. It is being recommended that dogs be on-leash in those parks
Is it true that Saanich rec'd about 300 complaints about dogs/owner behaviour, over 3 years (eg 4 per year)? If yes, why focus on shifting to on leash as the default? doesnt seem to be an actual problem to solve	live answered
What is happening at Cadboro Bay - on leash or no dogs?	There is no change recommended. Dogs would continue to be allowed on-leash in the park and along the beach
Hello, thanks for this. What is the plan for Cuthbert Holmes? On leash except for a new off leash, fenced area to be created somewhere?	on-leash except for a new fenced area in Cuthbert Holmes (at the berm along the highway)

<p>The 1.5 Km loop what trail is that in Mount Doug Park? Each trail has a name so it would help if you included that.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>As I understand it from the Gov't of Canada website, the boundary of the Migratory Bird Sanctuary is "waters below the high-water mark, in Portage Inlet, the Gorge Waterway, . . .". So as I understand it, Cuthbert Holmes Park above the high-water mark is not actually part of the MBS</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>Has there been any discussion regarding consistency throughout the community by making the on-leash default municipal wide, instead of just park spaces? It is not unusual to see dogs off-leash in neighbourhoods on roads, sidewalks, etc.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>How was the 1.5 km loop in PKols chosen? We walk on other trails for the exercise - not interested in just the 'easier' areas of the park.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>Could you please reshew the slide about the different types of leach/optional leash parks? I'd like to see that the areas are evenly spread throughout Saanich. Thanks!</p>	<p>The Draft Strategy is now available online. You can view that list in that document. It is available at saanich.ca/peoplepetsparks</p>
<p>Mt Doug is VERY important to us for off leash - our dogs require and get up to 2 hours a day to run / explore while on our walks. A 1.5 km loop is pretty much a waste of time..</p>	<p>You can continue to hike in the park with your dog - however in the majority of trails your dog would be required to be on-leash</p>
<p>Can you please share what/where the sensitive areas are in P'kols that you are trying to protect with this VERY limited access for off-leash? You are basically saying the entire mountain - all sloped areas - are sensitive?! The 1.5 km loop is a low lying flat area.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>The south end of PKOLS is all restored by Pulling Together volunteers - all endangered ecosystems - why any dogs off leash there?</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>I would like to see the evidence that it is dogs specifically who are responsible for environmental degradation in parks, if you have made a decision on this basis then we as residents are entitled to see clear evidence.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>CRD bylaw and current language in Saanich bylaws regarding definition of "under control" states dog has to be within line of sight and return when called. But it should also say dog must also be on trail. Otherwise they're still running through the understory</p>	<p>live answered</p>

I'm curious if professional dog handlers were engaged in this process? ie dog trainers, commercial dog walkers, etc?	live answered
It doesn't seem that you have addressed the option of determining times that dogs can be off leash. For example, from 6 am to 10 am a certain area of ok for dogs off leash, thereafter the dogs will need to be onleash or completely disallowed. Was this option considered? It worked for decades in some areas.	live answered
Will there be signs put up to indicate what the park allows?	Yes - Signage and Communications is a key recommendation in the strategy
Does this strategy mean that if a park has a designated fenced area for leash optional, then is the rest of that park leash required? So 12 parks are leash required?	live answered
What do you know about the tendency of fenced areas to create dog-fights because dogs feel trapped, cannot get away and become defensive or aggressive	live answered
Megan, It is important to delve into complexity on this topic. By not nuancing the timing / seasonal needs you are not meeting the needs of the park users. My question is: how can you consider yourself reponsible to dog owners when you are making such a black and white decision?	live answered
Will commercial dog walkers be allowed to walk dogs off leash in natural parks areas?	live answered
Will Cordova Bay beach be the main beach leash optional area?	correct - that is what is being recommended. All other beaches would be on-leash
Most stores no longer provide plastic bags, which were ridiculously large for poop and non-biodegradable anyway. What kind of bags do you see people putting in your bag stations?	live answered
As a citizen, I more often see people - not pets - behaving badly towards wildlife - eg children chasing birds and adults throwing rocks at wildlife and water fowl as target practice. Is there a bylaw that addresses that, or an officer I can call to the scene when I witness people harming wildlife? As a woman, I feel very uncomfortable talking to people myself about it.	live answered
Does the regulation on not chasing wildlife or entering fenced sensitive environments apply to people as well as to pets? It is not clear from the information provided this evening.	live answered
Part of Knockan is within View Royal - what are their rules?	live answered

Reading the report, it appears that Cordova bay beach is the only off leash beach? Is this accurate? And if so, can you elaborate on the restrictions (if any) and why this decision was made?	live answered
is consideration being given to regulating leash length	live answered
Further to the response re Knockan, does this mean that any park not named on the map will not have any opportunity for any dog to be off-leash ever?	live answered
For clarification purposes, you are NOT deciding on anything, but make recommendations/suggestions to the Saanich Council. Correct?	live answered
If these changes are adopted, will there be an opportunity to revisit after a certain period and make changes if and as appropriate?	live answered
Is there any consideration for providing poop bags, as many other jurisdictions presently do? This is low cost compared to the other costs in this strategy and could lead to success.	live answered
Waste management was raised as an important issue - has there been any consideration of additional or larger trash cans or increased pickup if the small cans are maintained?	live answered
Will all the questions posted tonight (so long as they are polite) be posted with the recorded transcript?	live answered
at the moment Cordova Bay is leash optional till 9 am. Does this mean the time might change?	live answered
What is the # 1 concern of folks who are not in favour of off leash dogs? Is it the waste management i? which i agree needs improvement or just fear of free range dog? I agree that leaving poop bags on trails should be penalized a much as not even picking up after the dogs	live answered
how are the two concurrent processes of this parks, pets strategy and King's Rd Community Nature Green Space strategy interacting? if Kings Rd is going to council June 5 and this one to June 26 may there be potential conflicts or are they entirely consistent?	live answered
Please clarify: If a park does not have a leash optional area, as per Elk Lake Park, does this mean that the entire park is leash only?	correct - except Quicks Bottom, Swan Lake/Christmas Hill and Rithet's Bog conservation area would remain as no-dogs allowed.

<p>Can you include a map of Elk Lake/Beaver Lake park? It would be so helpful to have a map of the areas which will be on leash only. Thanks!</p>	<p>The Draft Strategy is now available online. You can view the map of designated off leash areas in that document. It is available at Saanich.ca/peoplepetparks</p>
<p>Can you include a map of Elk Lake/Beaver Lake park? It would be so helpful to have a map of the areas which will be on leash only. Thanks!</p>	<p>Elk/beaver Lake is a Regional Park, not a Saanich Park.</p>
<p>Would you please reconsider more nuanced park access - considering time of day, day of week, and seasonal restrictions? You seem to be prioritizing simplicity, and perhaps an assumption about park users' inability to process differences? We have many other things in our lives where access is different based on time of day/week/season. Why not add off-leash access to this? This may require some education initially, but then it can become a natural part of our dog culture. A more nuanced approach would maximize access and equity.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>I'd like to see a dog friendly beach area at Elk Lake. As the weather gets hot in summer dogs really benefit from being able to take a dip. Kelowna has a wonderful dog beach that is well used. I'd like to see this</p>	<p>Sorry, Elk/Beaver Lake is not managed by Saanich Parks - it is managed by CRD Parks</p>
<p>was any consideration given to having certain parks open to off leash at certain times of the day? this could allow those that want off leash access and those that don't want to run in to off leash could avoid at those times.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>By limiting off leash to small parks and small areas in parks with 73% of daily users being dog owners, most of whom walk off leash, won't this create intense pressure on these areas?</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>There is very low compliance of on-leash at Cadboro Bay - will dogs be allowed at Gyro - Cadboro Bay and will fines be cumulative and increased if individuals refuse to follow the law?</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>This link is not working, unfortunately. "Page not found"</p>	<p>https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-community/parks/parks-trails-amenities/saanich-ppp-strategy.html</p>
<p>Will dogs be prohibited from children's playgrounds?</p>	<p>There is existing Saanich regulation that requires dogs to be on-leash within a 10 meter radius of playgrounds or spray pads - This applies to 55 parks in Saanich (about 32% of parks)</p>

can someone explain why when over 70% of Mt Doug Park users are dog owners, you are restricting access so severely?	live answered
Will people without dogs still be welcome in off-leash areas? I note that the proposed off-leash area in CHP has some desirable viewpoints. Will they be told they have to put up with all dog behaviour, or will their still be expectations of good behaviour?	live answered
Why are off leash dogs impacting drainage more than on leash dogs, given the same amount of traffic?	live answered
More re the MBS and Cuthbert Holmes - the Gov't of Canada map does not seem to include any part of Cuthbert Holmes, not even the creek - see at https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-bird-sanctuaries/locations/victoria-harbour.html#toc2	The estuary area is considered part of the sanctuary
Has some thought been given to banning horses in Pkols?	live answered
Why were certain parks selected as Fenced areas such as Layritz Park?	live answered
When the strategy was being developed, was the issue of the protection of ground-nesting birds (song birds, quail, etc.) considered?	live answered
I must admit I find the presentation rather confusing at this time, as you have not clarified that this is a recommendation that City Council needs to vote on. Please confirm that what is currently presented is not ratified - yet!	live answered
Please answer question about dogs completely out of playgrounds!!	live answered
will you be publishing and perhaps addressing the questions that you have not answered in this presentation?	If we did not get to your question, feel free to email parks@saanich.ca and we respond directly. Questions will be recorded and summarized as part of feedback in this phase. Note: All questions and comments have been recorded and we are working on providing answers for all those questions that remain unanswered. This will be posted to the project website.
There are underserved members of the community here - specifically, we dog owners who hike the trails in Pkols for our own health as well as that of our dogs. You have effectively cut us off. A flat 1.5 km loop does not serve us at all.	live answered
This strategy seems to be based on Model 4: Restrictive. Is that correct?	live answered

<p>There is misunderstanding about the Cordova bay restriction. It is leash-optional until 9am, and then no dogs on the beach at all - even with a leash - in the area between Walema and the Doris Page access points. That is a long stretch not open to dogs for the months of may, june, july and august. At the south end of the bay it is leash optional all day every day. But that is a small area when the tide is not out. So it sounds like we will be able to have dogs on any area of Cordova Bay beach all day every day on-leash, but off-leash in the the leash optional area all day every day. Is that correct? That would be a nice increase in use to be able to walk our dogs onleash along the beach to the offleash area in those 4 summer months when the road/sidewalk is hot.</p>	<p>Correct that is what is being recommended. no time or date restrictions along this beach.</p>
<p>If I am hearing you correctly several beaches that are dog friendly will no longer be permitted. There will now be one beach. Instead of having managable numbers of dogs on severl beached there will now be an inundation of with dogs from accross Saanich assending on to Cordova Bay Beach. How is this fair to the residence of Cordova Bay.</p>	<p>Dogs will be able to visit other beaches but they will be required to be on-leash</p>
<p>why isn't the largest park in the municipality (Mt.pkols) being more equitably divided for off-leash usage, when the statistics gathered show that 2/3 of saanich residents that responded have no issues with dogs being off leash in Saanich parks?</p>	<p>live answered</p>

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People, Pets and Parks Strategy

Frequently Asked Questions (some not answered during the information session)

Questions (note: general comments received will not be responded to & have not been shown)	Answers
Can you show a map of the off-leash area for Cuthbert Holmes Park pls	Please refer to page 63 the draft strategy. This is conceptual only. Exact details of fenced area will be confirmed during a future detailed design phase.
How will the environmental protection related to people and pets in parks be integrated into the community's overall environmental plan to also restrict development of roads, buildings and housing in these same "protected" areas?	More information can be obtained by referring to the District of Saanich State of Biodiversity Report which was considered when developing the People Pets and Parks Draft Strategy. https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/resilient-saanich-environmental-policy-framework/biodiversity-conservation-strategy.html
If this has a 4-6 million dollar cost over 5 years, what is the cost of status quo with better waste and fencing?	For a more detailed breakdown of costs please refer to the Implementation Section of the strategy on page 46.
Will there be follow up to ascertain the seriousness of the small minority (11%) who stated they to not feel safe around dogs - have they had a serious injury, is it anxiety or fear-based, or annoyance based?	The strategy is not based on a one set of data presented from the engagement sessions. It is the result of a 16-month community engagement and planning process examining: increasing park and outdoor amenity usage; community expectations; conflicting park uses; park management requirements and environmental impacts. The draft strategy flows from the common vision, goals, values, and challenges that were identified Research on best practices, environmental impacts, other jurisdictions also contributed.
Is there anything in the presentation to Council that will include two-thirds of residents didn't have a problem with unleashed dogs and that three-quarters felt there are benefits to off leash dogs in parks?	
I have been emailing Saanich Parks for a few years regarding Beckwith Park and having the environmentally sensitive area (duck ponds) enforced as on-leash. The adjacent soccer fields are fine for off-leash, but I can't understand why dog owners can't snap a leash onto their dog while transiting through the sensitive areas. I'm sure this is the same in other Saanich parks. All that's needed is a couple of signs and enforcement. Can you make this happen?	For the unfenced leash-optional parks, consideration will be given to additional fencing or other measures to protect sensitive areas and play spaces. It would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis during a future detailed design phase.
I just took my two dogs up the Blenkinsop trail this morning and I can not imagine trying to do that with the dogs on leash. They can scale the rocks with much more ease than I can so they would climb up each new face and wait for me at the top.	We recognize that some people will need to adjust their routines to accommodate the on-leash rules in certain locations.

<p>It think is important that you understand that what are recommending is a very significant change to decades of use of Mount Doug Park by dog owners. How do you intend to assist Saanich council to deal with the political fall out if they do decide to follow your recommendations?</p>	<p>Council will be provided the same details and information presented to the community giving them all the information to make an informed policy decision.</p>
<p>If there is going to be an increase in license fees, will there be ability for those with low incomes to have the fees reduced?</p>	<p>It has been recommended that the current fee structure and administration be reviewed (but no decisions have been made) and that efforts be made to ensure as many dogs as possible are licensed on an annual basis.</p>
<p>"Under-control" seems a very problematic term as it could be easily abused and could send inconsistent messages to other park users, including people with dogs, about an area being off-leash or on-leash only. Did you find evidence to support leaving "under-control" in the language of the document?</p>	<p>It has been recommended that the term 'under control' be redefined. Proposed language can be found on pages 27 & 28 in the draft strategy.</p>
<p>Why aren't we taking more effort for keeping PKOLS leash optional and ecologically safe!?</p>	<p>PKOLS and other parks are being recommended as on-leash parks for different reasons. However, all P-4N (natural parks), which PKOLS is zoned as, are being recommended as on-leash parks for the protection of those spaces. The recent State of Biodiversity Report highlights that Saanich has over 800 hectares of parks, of which 500 hectares (62%) are in a natural state. Saanich is home to some of BC's most unique and rare ecosystems such as Coastal Douglas-fir forests and Garry Oak meadows all of which are the responsibility of the municipality to care for. Saanich has invested over many years to removing invasives and restoring areas in parks, especially through its leading-edge program, Pulling Together. Areas that have been restored need to be protected for the long term to protect those investments.</p> <p>https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/resilient-saanich-environmental-policy-framework/biodiversity-conservation-strategy.html</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>see previous page</i></p>
<p>large natural area parks are not just for recreational purposes. They are regional, if not provincial and national assets and treasures. It would be foolhardy to not care for these public assets. Would not be good management to allow destruction and loss.</p>	
<p>Have you considered that the trail network around Mt. Doug is one of the few locations in Saanich that is appropriate for dogs to be off leash due to the space and ability to distance yourself from nearby roads? The vast majority of the other parks and public spaces in the area are less appropriate for off leash dogs (due to nearby roads) and would be better suited as "on leash" areas. Mt Doug really should be the last of the off-leash areas being considered for dog restrictions.</p>	
<p>How is it reasonable to leave only 1.5 km of more than 20 km of trails as off leash in PKOLS?</p>	

<p>I hear comments that people who don't want to encounter dogs need spaces, which is true. However, of the 10 parks with trails in Saanich, 4 already completely restrict dogs or require leashes. So what is the rationale for further restrictions of off leash in other parks?</p>	
<p>How is 1.5 km enough space to safely allow for that many dogs in PKOLS and how do we get exercise in that small of an area?</p>	
<p>Can you not have PKOLS totally off leash? Surely Saanich could have 1 park for off leash. 85% want it off leash. Can you please listen to your community.</p>	
<p>Why is Saanich considering additional restrictions on dogs in parks such as PKOLS, or Cuthbert Holmes and so forth, when almost half of its large parks already restrict off leash dogs?</p>	
<p>I understand the points about keeping both off leash and on leash areas, but it seems like off-leash areas are decreasing under this new plan proposal and there are already so few of them compared to on-leash. There are already MANY places for people to go who want dogs on leash. The issue is taking away more off leash.</p>	
<p>This isn't a question per-se, but I wanted to state that I appreciate the recognition that cat owners also walk their leashed cats in the parks. We cannot walk them in areas where there are numerous unleashed dogs, as these spaces are not "cat safe." Some dogs see cats as prey or as play toys. As more Saanich residents are keeping confined cats which appreciate regular walks, areas where dogs must be on-leash become more and more important.</p>	<p>The intention is the updated bylaw will improve clarity, recognize diverse needs, reduce conflicting uses and protect environmental values. NOTE: currently in PKOLS all trails are designated as off-leash</p>
<p>If education and compliance is such a priority - why wouldn't a "stay on the trail" campaign work for PKOLS? A good portion of PKOLS is already on-leash; clamping down on the rest of the park (a former mine) is overkill.</p>	
<p>Please provide more clarity on what is occurring with PKOLS/Mt Doug regarding area of leash optional?</p>	<p>A conceptual drawing of the proposed leash-optional areas in PKOLS can be found on page 63 of the draft strategy. The detailed design and final layout of off-leash areas will be determined at a later stage. NOTE: People are still welcome to walk dogs on all trails in PKOLS, however the recommendation</p>
<p>Mount Doug Park has 21 kms of trails. 1.5km seems a very small area.</p>	

<p>The area for off leash dogs at Mount Doug, needs to be much larger or there will be conflicts. Free of spear grass as well.</p>	<p>is that dogs will be required to be on-leash unless in designated leash-optional areas.</p>
<p>That small area for off leash walking at PKOLS will make it a very busy area. When you have a lot of dogs and people in a small area you risk more dogs acting out. There are some quiet areas in PKOLS where it could be good to have additional off leash walking.</p>	
<p>One thing that concerns me with the blanket 'on leash unless designated' from the current model, along with limited leash optional areas, is going to lead to a large volume of dogs in concentrated areas. For example, that 1.5km loop at PKOLS will see the volume of dogs that would have been spread throughout the park. Have you considered this in your recommendation?</p>	
<p>Off leash in Mount Doug is important as we hike for up to two hours. The dog stays on the trail but we have different paces. The 1.5 km loop is a bit of a stroll.</p>	
<p>Could someone please explain to me how, now that I will have to drive my car out to Beaver Lake every day, since I can't hike with my dog off leash on Mt. Doug anymore, this is better for the environment? There will be hundreds of us...</p>	
<p>The pop-up parks were a good idea to gauge demand, but most were so small they didn't allow enough area to fully exercise.</p>	<p>When it comes time for implementation size and area will be assessed to try and accommodate the most appropriate facility for the space.</p>
<p>so essentially Saanich changes the default from off leash unless otherwise required to on-leash unless specifically allowed?</p>	<p>Correct. The current bylaw states that dogs must be under effective control, which is challenging to create a common understanding of and to enforce. The proposal is to move from that model to a model that is on-leash unless otherwise noted, which is more consistent with our neighbouring municipalities of View Royal, Esquimalt, and Victoria (see Appendix C).</p>
<p>How do dogs go from using all the parks to so few? How many do the dogs get to use of leash?</p>	<p>Dog owners will be welcome at all the same parks as they are now. 57 parks will however be designated as unfenced leash-optional parks or have a fenced leash-optional area for dogs.</p>
<p>Why did you not provide a less restricted model than the status quo? Has Saanich already decided to move forward with increased restrictions or is there a possibility that the status quo will be accepted as the most equitable way of sharing park resources?</p>	<p>This system is more inline with policies implemented in the neighbouring municipalities of Victoria, View Royal and Esquimalt (see Appendix C for more details).</p> <p>Currently Saanich allows dogs to be off leash in most its 170 + (only 6 parks have restrictions for the entire park).</p>

<p>How to stress to people that ultimately the responsibility for their pet(s) is their responsibility and they may have to consider walking their pet in their own neighbourhood rather than trucking them to parks to let loose.</p>	<p>Communication and education are both recommendations found in the strategy</p>
<p>It was mentioned that an online tool may be? available so users ca help monitor and evaluate "Natural Elements." I am hoping that shade trees are considered in the planning already. I have noticed a lack of shade in a number of children's playgrounds as well as some of the proposed fenced dog areas.</p>	<p>We invite you to familiarize yourself with the District of Saanich State of the Urban Forest Report and State of Biodiversity Strategies: https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/trees/urban-forest-strategy.html https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/resilient-saanich-environmental-policy-framework/biodiversity-conservation-strategy.html</p>
<p>Maintaining the environment keeps getting mentioned but I'm not hearing anything about who this ties into the overall district plan for protecting the environment. To use another district's example, Goldstream is now on leash yet there are plans to take out all the trees along Goldstream salmon spawning area to widen the road. Hypocritical. In Saanich, there are restrictions on Lochside, school grounds and Cordova Bay beach yet there is development along Doris page park and Haliburton to clear out a bunch of trees to rezone it for housing. How does this not invalidate concerns re: the impacts by pets? If it is ok to take down the trees, then would this not render the on-leash bylaw invalid?</p>	
<p>I have asked a number of times if the fencing could be higher, especially in Hyacinth Park, as my dog is very adept at jumping the fence. I have not been able take him to the pop-up off leash areas because of this.</p>	
<p>Might off leash areas fenced park trails have the opposite effect of creating a more free for all situation like in a dog park such that walking a dog on a leash in this environment is not as comfortable.</p>	<p>Monitoring and evaluation will be an impotent element when implementing the strategy. Changes may result from the results of these actions.</p>
<p>If dog walkers refuse to follow on leash rules will there be a consideration for removing them from natural parks and beaches - compliance is low!!!</p>	

<p>Why would dog people be driving more than others?</p>	<p>Dog owners will be welcome at all the same parks as they are now. The difference is they will now be required to leash dogs in certain parks. Choosing to drive to access off-leash area will be their choice.</p>
<p>The Cordova Bay beach area that is leash optional in the summer months is not very big except on low tide days. Can it be opened up to more of the beach area, or at least on leash until you get to the off-leash section to allow for longer walks? As well, the access to the off-leash area is via a steep hill so not optimal for people with mobility challenges.</p>	<p>The strategy is recommended that the entire beach from D'Arcy to Parker be off leash. There are currently 8 access points along this beach (Parker, Agate, McMorran and Cordova Bay Parks as well as 4 beach access points)</p>
<p>Sorry, the majority section of Cordova Bay is dog friendly until 9 a.m., during the summer not leash optional. There is section where dogs are allowed all day. Does this mean the whole beach would be open to dogs at any time all year as it would be the only off leash dog beach?</p>	
<p>Just to provide input to the process, but making Cordova Bay beach the only leash optional beach will be concerning as there are over 700 new units to be built in the next few years at the Trio, Tides, and one other development site scheduled for Cordova Bay Road. I would encourage the planners to consider Parker beach as well (for the same area) , Island View and Mount Doug and Arbutus Beach. This would spread out the use, prevent unnecessary car travel and other negative factors. It will definitely need bigger trash cans. :)</p>	
<p>Other jurisdictions do not allow dogs on public beaches - why has this strategy not followed this best practice?</p>	<p>One of the goals is to create a strategy that has a diversity of opportunities for people and their pets</p>
<p>Can you please reach out to the general population of dog owner with the request for input .. I belong to 2 FB groups that have over r100 members.</p>	<p>We have reached out far and wide to many individuals through this process inviting them to participate in several opportunities to express their opinions. To date we have received 5,000 comments and responses.</p>
<p>The City of Victoria provides bags along Dallas Road and Pemberton Park for those owners who need one. Nothing about leave a bag, etc. Was this not considered?</p>	<p>Currently Saanich does not have a dog-bag program as the responsibility dog waste is seen as a dog handlers' responsibility (picking up as well as supplying bags). There is a recommendation to consider sponsorship should a group, business or organization wish to fund a station (cost of station as well as the supply of bags).</p>
<p>There are no bags in bag stations as a general rule. All dog owners should be providing their own biodegradable bags.</p>	

What type of dog bags??	
I often find more marine garbage, and human picnic and toys garbage than dog waste on the beach. As part of the waste mgmt. plan, might this be integrated into the consideration for the size and number of the garbage bins	Our Waste Management program will be improved with the addition of an additional truck and crew in 2024 and then again, another increase in 2027.
In one of your slides you equated the federal law that states dogs cannot be “at large” to mean dogs must be “on leash”, but I believe the federal law does not define the meaning of “at large” and it may be argued that it means out of control, not “off leash”. Is this the case?	In a fact sheet provided to municipalities by the Canadian Wildlife Service it states: <i>Can I let my dog off leash in these MBSs?</i> <i>No. Section 5(1) of the MBSR states: No person who owns a dog or cat shall permit the dog or cat to run at large in a migratory bird sanctuary. Further, Section 3(2)(a) of the MBSR states: No person shall hunt migratory birds in a migratory bird sanctuary.</i>
Will the bylaw change be conditional on the acceptance of all aspects of the strategy?	Implementation will not be immediate as regulatory bylaws will need to be adopted. A timeline for this action has not yet been established but could be in late 2023 or early 2024.
do we have a sense of timeline for when these changes will actually come into effect?	
What is the rationale for making Cuthbert Holmes almost entirely on leash?	In 2015 a Management Plan was completed for the park where it was noted that impacts could be reduced by controlling movement by dogs (along with bikes and people). Since then, Saanich has invested heavily in restoration efforts in this park.
Yes, it would be nice to know of the complaints made, by how many different people are they made (or is it the same few people) and how serious are the complaints (injury vs annoyance).	Calls into parks included concerns about dog waste, digging in sports fields, need for additional signage, request for leash restrictions, requests for enclosed dog parks, dogs in baseball diamonds during restricted times, dogs out of control, request for no dog use of tennis courts, dogs attacking other dogs, dogs not under control, dog owners wanting more access to beaches in the summer, dogs jumping on children in playgrounds, dogs off leash in playgrounds, requests for dog bag dispensers etc.... During this process we have received some messaging about how happy dogs are accessing parks off leash.
why can't we try education, better signage, and more garbage bins - try for a while first and reassess before taking away off leash areas. because once its gone, its gone	Communications, Education, Signage and Waste Management are all recommendations found in the strategy.
Megan, your response re: nuanced restriction will not unify the community. It treats us as simple-minded. There has never been concerted effort to educate and provide good signage and consistent messaging. Let's treat Saanich and CRD residents as intelligent, responsible citizens.	
elk/beaver lake doesn't show anything on the map in the strategy document on the website.	Elk/Beaver Lake is not managed by Saanich Parks. Management of that park falls to the CRD. For information on CRD Parks please see Appendix C.

<p>Are there any recommendations within the Strategy being provided to council for improvement of Animal Control Bylaws and education around the need for spay/neuter, etc. to limit the increasing pet population due to its increasing footprint on the environment and negative impact on wildlife?</p>	<p>Education and Enforcement Recommendations can be found on page 35 in the draft strategy</p>
<p>I hope 100% of the cost of this strategy is going to be paid for by dog owners. Please explain how dog owners are going to be paying for this?</p>	<p>Costs for implementing this strategy come from future Saanich budgets.</p>
<p>How is this work being funded? How can we get a list of funding sources (donations and influence groups) that have gone into these studies and the resulting operational costs?</p>	
<p>Eva mentioned common goals and vision - but whose? It seems from the survey the vast majority have no issue with dogs in parks and the status quo re: maintaining off-leash if under control. Isn't that the common vision, so no need for any new action?</p>	<p>The vision statement, goals and principals originated from the Round 1 & 2 Engagement activities (see Appendix E & H). The final version can be found on page 24 of the strategy.</p>
<p>2/3 of Saanich residents have no issues with off leash dogs in parks and on beaches and nearly 3 in 4 think there are benefits to parks being off leash in Saanich that doesn't appear to being taken into account in deciding space for leash optional..... has there been consideration for volunteer Park Stewards like the CRD which has been successful in addressing several of the priorities listed....thanks. I have many examples of where people have been irresponsible and harmful in the park more than pets. :(</p>	<p>Recommendations for Stewardship can be found on page 36 in the Strategy</p>
<p>RE the loop in PKOLS, this area is where the largest volume of Garlic Mustard (invasive species) exists. This plant has to be removed every Spring. Will there be locked gates/access points for staff and volunteers to continue to deal with this plant?</p>	<p>There would be detailed planning required for each proposed fenced area which would consider the specific needs for each individual site.</p>

<p>Paul brought up a good point about muddy surfaces. When I walked in Goldstream park with my dog ON-leash, the mud and slippery rocks was dangerous for us both by keeping him on leash. Off-leash would have been much safer. Can there be some consideration of when it makes sense due to our often poor weather to reconsider the stringency with which these on-leash bylaws are enforced?</p>	<p>That is not being recommended in the draft strategy.</p>
<p>Will the public be able to address council in person at a council meeting regarding the on-leash area at Mount Doug?</p>	<p>Yes, the public will be able to address Council on June 26. For more information on how to participate please visit the Council Meeting Information webpage: https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/mayor-council/council-meeting-information.html</p>
<p>If there is wildlife impact by pets, then it would be equally impacted by people, as Megan pointed out. Are there any parks that restrict people from using them?</p>	<p>Yes, there is parkland in Saanich that is not developed for public access.</p>
<p>why wasn't a dog professional added to the consulting team to bring balance</p>	<p>The consultants were chosen using a rigorous purchasing process and were selected for their experience working on similar strategies in the past.</p>
<p>How is it fair to charge commercial dog walkers hundreds of dollars a year to walk in a small 1.5 km trail in a large park?</p>	<p>The details and parameters for this program have not yet been set. For more details on the recommendation please refer to page 34 in the draft strategy.</p>
<p>With more park users every year and more dogs, will the addition of restrictions be offset with providing new or expanded off leash areas in other, less ecological sensitive areas? If not, how is this a sustainable initiative</p>	<p>See note regarding leash optional areas in newly acquired parkland at the bottom of page 30 in the draft strategy.</p>
<p>Many other jurisdictions have leash length - 2.4 m - is this considered best practices?</p>	<p>The proposed recommendations have not included any regulations regarding leash lengths.</p>

<p>Establishing a max leash length is best practice in other municipalities and needs to be addressed as part of this strategy. Otherwise, you will open the door to rampant abuse and enforcement issues and an on-leash default will be rendered useless.</p>	<p><i>see previous page</i></p>
<p>Studies have demonstrated that wildlife regard dogs on long leashes as a threat, similar to them being off-leash. This is particularly relevant on Cadboro Bay Beach where foraging avian wildlife is frequently disturbed by fast-moving dogs on extended leashes. While consistency across the district is important, so are the birds. Can an exception be made for Cadboro Bay? That being a maximum leash length of 2 m?</p>	
<p>Will there be a discussion on Cadboro Bay beach? Will there be more enforcement?</p>	<p>No changes are being recommended for the existing bylaws at Cadboro Bay. It is now on-leash year-round. Enforcement is adjusted on an 'as need' basis.</p>
<p>Can humans go into off-leash areas?</p>	<p>Yes, it would be expected that park visitors can enter an off-leash area.</p>
<p>Will there be any beaches with no dogs - as most other jurisdictions have come to the conclusion?</p>	<p>No, there have been no beaches recommended as 'no dogs allowed'.</p>
<p>Why was the term "restrictive" used to describe the last model, when it was actually the most environmentally friendly? This is not a neutral term, when the rest were all neutral. It suggests that it is restrictive, without people even understanding why it has value. Why was a neutral term not chosen to match with the rest?</p>	<p>It is recognized that 'Restrictive' may not have been the best choice of word - however that was only a term utilized in for the Round 2 engagement sessions.</p>
<p>How are shorelines within the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary not considered to be Conservation areas on par with Swan Lake and Quigg's Bottom?</p>	<p>That would be a question for the Government of Canada who have set the Regulations for Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. At present the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary does not restrict visitation to these areas.</p>
<p>Could you please explain why you think having dog owners walk in tiny parks with their dogs is a good thing? The owners get no exercise!! And because we are the bulk of trail users in Mt. Doug, you have now disenfranchised the majority. Why???</p>	<p>Pets are not restricted to leash optional parks; they will continue to be welcome in most of Saanich Parks.</p>

<p>But the big issue is the need for OFF LEASH access. You seem to be avoiding this.</p>	<p>The strategy outlines a new approach for sharing Saanich parks to better align with the community's values, and to improve upon the challenges heard from residents</p>
<p>How is Saanich using feedback on how people feel about dogs in public spaces, compared to how it is using objective data, such as number of dogs, number of licensed dogs, frequency of visits to parks, number of complaints to Saanich and the nature of complaints?</p>	<p>The People, Pets and Parks Strategy is the result of a 16-month community engagement and planning process examining: increasing park and outdoor amenity usage; community expectations; conflicting park uses; park management requirements and environmental impacts, especially given that Saanich is home to some of BC's most unique and rare species-at-risk and ecosystems</p>
<p>What is the cost for the PPP Strategy initiative.</p>	<p>In 2021 Saanich Council approved the budget of \$175,000 plus \$20,000 to for meetings, materials, and public engagement activities.</p>
<p>This seems to be a non-issue, if Saanich received fewer than 10 complaints about dog behaviour per year. Can you explain how an issue that has generated so few complaints was seen to require the expensive and lengthy PPP Strategy</p>	
<p>The Restricted model shows a highly polarized responses (42% highly supportive, 6% somewhat supportive versus 43% very unsupportive, 6% somewhat unsupportive). This seems like a recipe for ongoing conflict; can you explain why you are recommending it?</p>	<p>The 'Restrictive' model shown in Round 2 of public engagement suggested that dogs would be required to be on-leash except in designated, enclosed off-leash areas only. This is not what is being recommended in the draft strategy.</p> <p>The strategy outlines a new approach for sharing Saanich parks to better align with the community's values, and to improve upon the challenges heard from residents such as: dog behaviour and lack of training/control; environmental considerations; communication and education; and increasing demand.</p>
<p>Thank you everyone - it's not easy I'm sure to satisfy all perspectives, but I do hope the full evidence will be used to guide the strategy.</p>	<p>Thank you for your interest in the strategy.</p>
<p>Thank you for the information</p>	
<p>thank you!</p>	