

## APPENDIX A

### Stakeholder Workshops Summary

# SAANICH PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS STRATEGY

## ROUND 2 - STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP SUMMARY

### OVERVIEW

Between round 1 and round 2 of our public engagement touch points, three workshops were conducted to present and discuss key directions before gaining further input from the broader public. We brought together specific groups to get feedback on the draft vision and goals, and to better understand what needs to be included in each topic area of the Strategy. Invites to the virtual stakeholder workshops were sent to representatives from a [variety of groups](#).

The overall objectives were to collaborate with key community and governmental organizations, build buy-in, and inform draft recommendations. The consulting team will use the initial feedback from the workshops with community organizations to help further refine the key directions for the Strategy.

TARGETED GROUP	DATE	ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED	# OF PARTICIPANTS
Dog Owner Interest and Advocacy Groups, Trainers & Professional Dog Walkers	Thursday, November 24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialized Individualized Training</li> <li>• Animal Instinct Pet Care</li> <li>• Westshore Pet Service</li> <li>• Mission Paws Dog School</li> <li>• Happy Dogs of Saanich Parks</li> <li>• Pawsentials Pet Services</li> <li>• Commercial Dog Walkers</li> <li>• Citizen Canine</li> </ul>	11

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROAM BC</li> </ul>	
Intergovernmental Groups	Tuesday, November 29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District of Saanich</li> <li>• District of Central Saanich</li> <li>• CRD Bylaw and Animal Services</li> <li>• City of Victoria</li> <li>• Swan Lake &amp; Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary</li> <li>• Town of Oak Bay</li> <li>• Town of View Royal</li> </ul>	10
Environmental & Stewardship Groups	Thursday, December 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society</li> <li>• Friends of Victoria Migratory Bird Sanctuary</li> <li>• Animal Alliance Canada</li> <li>• Canadian Wildlife Service</li> <li>• Saanich Parks – Pulling Together Program</li> </ul>	16
<b>Total</b>			<b>37</b>

## VISION & PRINCIPLES

*Looking at the People, Pets & Parks draft vision and principles, what aspects are most important to you? Is there anything missing or that could be improved?*

- **Clarity on Key Terms**
  - "Pet amenity" – need to define
  - "Pet control" – need more clarity
    - In Victoria the bylaw defines "under control" as within view and the dog returns within 3 calls from the guardian
    - CRD states that "under control" is when a person in possession of a dog or domestic animal in a regional park has a clear line of sight to the dog or domestic animal at all times and the dog or domestic animal immediately returns to the owner when called or signalled
  - Consider change of language from pet "ownership" to pet "guardianship"
  - More definition to key words is needed
- **What's Missing...**
  - **Safety**
    - Should add language around increasing safety as many people don't feel safe with off-leash dogs
  - **Healthy Environment**
    - Should centre and prioritize minimizing impacts on wildlife and the environment
    - Parks are natural spaces / habitats before they are areas for human and pet activity (vision and principles are too focused on human use)
  - **Stewardship**
    - Consider responsibility of everyone at parks
    - Stewardship first
  - **Diversity of Use**
    - The diversity of park uses needs to be highlighted
    - Individual parks do not have to be everything to everyone
- **Implementation**
  - Owner education is very important (for pet etiquette and environmental stewardship)
  - Unclear on how this will be enforced
  - Need to consider implications of principles- we should not "over accommodate" (i.e., every park cannot meet the needs of every park user)

## ACCESS

### *What type of areas do you want to take your dog to?*

- **Large, Open Spaces**
  - Small, enclosed areas are for dogs who don't have recall or can't handle open spaces (unsafe for dogs who aren't socialized for these type of areas) – most dogs need open spaces
  - Space and distance to provide dogs and people with good, long distance and stimulating exercise
  - Consideration for senior dogs who need wide open spaces to move and not be with young dogs
- **Non – Natural Areas**
  - To protect sensitive plants and habitats
  - School or sports fields (more non-natural, "lawn" spaces) – more appropriate because they are not environmentally sensitive
    - Repurposing golf courses?
    - Sports fields could have co-benefits given the user groups
  - Significant need for off leash dog parks, including areas of significant size. Saanich may have to give up areas in parks that are being used for other purposes, to protect its natural parks from damage by pets
  - People like going to & bringing pets to the nicest beaches/forests, etc. but they may be environmentally sensitive and not resilient enough to have dogs. Places that are not vulnerable to dog activity should allow dogs so owners can enjoy them too
  - Control over dogs in sensitive areas should be priority
- **Trails**
  - Quiet and wide trails- more space between other dogs and other uses (i.e., trail runners/hikers/horses, etc.)
  - Increasing trail sizes and fencing trails may help with environmental sensitivity
  - Trails that are near perimeters and create a buffer for natural areas, rather than those that run through the middle, is a better approach
- **Feedback on Pop-Ups**
  - Pop-up dog parks were too small, and many people couldn't bring their dogs there
  - Engagement with individuals who used the popup dog parks only captures the feedback from owners whose dogs are appropriate for those types of parks
  - Beckwith Park was too small for larger dogs
- **Education & Signage**

- Better signage is key for communicating where dogs can and can't go
- Need to reinforce education for dogs who are out of control. It's difficult for dog owners who have good control of their dogs

*Are there specific parks where you think off-leash dogs should be (or types of parks)?*

- **Parker Park**
  - One of the last beaches in the region where dogs can be off leash in the summer. Given that there are probably no large forest areas left in Saanich to turn into off leash parks and no additional beaches, areas like this are requested for off leash
- **PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park)**
  - For its size and open space
  - Similar to Parker Park, access to forested areas and beach/waterfront is desirable
- **Centennial Park in Brentwood Bay**
  - Has some trails that people can pass each other with dogs, and fencing around many of the sensitive areas
- **Hyacinth Park**
  - Successful pilot dog park
- **Houlihan Park**
- **University of Victoria (now closed)**
  - Gave the ability for dogs to remove themselves from other dogs via trail access
- **Ambassador Park**
  - Many people use the baseball diamond there
- **(Parks similar to) Cy Hampson Park**
  - Although in North Saanich, this park is notable for its fencing, large green and open space, benches for owners
- **Horner Park**
  - Off-leash dog area was successful here
- **Rutledge Park**
  - Surrounded by apartments, playground nearby

## *Are there any criteria missing?*

- **Neighbourhood Context**
  - Higher Density Areas - Dog parks should be in higher densities neighbourhoods (there was more positive feedback on dog park pop-ups in higher density areas – most likely because there is less access to green space)
  - Noise levels should be considered in/around residential neighbourhoods
  - Nearby and adjacent land uses should be considered
  - Community Support - Ensuring neighbourhood support and involvement in process (through engagement/consultation)
- **Environmentally Intact Areas (Natural Areas)**
  - Should have controls over dogs in all natural areas, especially where restoration efforts are underway
- **Park Amenities**
  - Washrooms
  - Waste Receptacles
  - Water Features (especially on hot days) + access to water body (e.g., Elk Lake)

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION + STEWARDHIP

### *What type of areas do you think are especially sensitive to dog activity and need more protection?*

- **Natural Areas**
  - “Not all grass is equal” (lawns vs. sensitive grassy ecosystems)
  - Anything other than open grass area should be protected – vegetated areas shouldn’t have off-leash dogs in them
  - Need to consider the space that plants need, although people will want to be around natural areas (trees, meadows, etc.)
  - All natural ecosystems in local parks should be considered ESAs
- **Sensitive Species and Ecosystems**
  - All are mapped in Saanich GIS system
  - All ecosystems in Saanich should be considered ecosystems at-risk
  - Garry oak meadows are at-risk
  - Dune grass
  - Yellow sand-verbena
  - Wildlife – wherever we allow dogs off-leash, wildlife will be pushed back from those areas and will create “ecological dead zones”

- Even in some of the smaller, neighbourhood parks this should be considered
- Birds - protection for both migratory and local, resident birds as well as ground nesting species
- **Seasonal Restrictions**
  - Considering time of year and growing seasons
  - For specific parks – however, natural parks should be on-leash all times of the year
- **Trails**
  - Encouraging people to stay on main trails to prevent dogs from creating new pathways
  - Delineation of trails – “main” vs “rogue” trails (clearer separation so you know when you’re going off trail)
- **Rithet's Bog** – impacted by feral cats

### *Are there specific locations in Saanich that need protection?*

- **Cadboro Bay** – (dune grass, yellow sand-verbena, migratory bird sanctuary with heron habitat) With Bylaws and fewer dogs, they’ve seen some positive changes, but still some challenges exist with compliance
  - Sensitive areas should be fenced off and protected
  - Dogs are supposed to be on-leash, but many do not comply
  - Dog owners will throw balls & sticks at herons and other migratory birds for dogs to chase
- **Cadboro-Gyro Park** – rare plants should be fenced off with educational signage
- **PKOLS (Mount Douglas)** – existing P4N zone, severely damaged by pets
- **Glencoe Cove Park** – 3 different species at-risk where dogs harm critical habitat at this park

### *How can we work with community organizations and other stewardship groups?*

- **Existing Stewardship Groups**
  - Sanctuary Volunteer Ambassador program (Christmas Hill) – receives funding from federal government
  - PKOLS volunteer park ambassador program – could grow to include others (i.e., Cuthbert Holmes Park)
    - Not focused on dogs, but could expand mandate



- Pulling Together – environmental volunteer group has had many negative encounters in parks with dogs/dog owners

### *Are there any other considerations?*

- **Co-Management** – encouraging more responsibility in the way we co-manage our green spaces and protect sensitive or endangered ecosystems
- **Waste Management** – making waste disposal widely available (waste bags can cause more harm than good if not properly disposed)
  - Specifically, at PKOLS
- **Capacity Demands** – Saanich parks are struggling to manage the increased recreational usage in the park system
- **Communication & Education** – humans have just as much of an impact on sensitive areas as dogs (maybe more). We should be communicating the value of protecting these ecosystems from both humans and pets, not just pets
  - Need the educational piece and signage so people understand why ecosystems should be protected (e.g., a guidebook for people who register for a pet license)
  - Signage and outreach (articles in newspaper, communications, etc.) to notify park users is important – e.g., Central Meadows & Uplands Park seasonal closures
- **Type of Regulation**
  - “On-leash” vs. “under control” – significant difference that may vary park to park
- **Clear Barriers** – when decisions are made about what needs to be protected, it should be clear so there is no confusion on where dogs should not go
  - Seal Bay and Nymph Falls in Comox area are examples of good boundaries
- **Enforcement** – need stronger bylaw presence in ESAs
  - Could have community volunteers from environmental groups help with educating people about the rules and regulations

## COMMUNICATION + ENFORCEMENT

*What type of information would you like to see? Do you have any other suggestions on how to best reach and inform Saanich residents?*

- **Training** – for volunteer ambassadors (there have been instances of negative encounters with members of the public)
  - Bylaw officers should deal with any confrontation
- **Signage** – clear, simple signage so expectations are clear, educational
  - Could partner with other orgs like Canadian Wildlife Service to provide signage in parks on sensitive plants and habitats
  - Especially for rogue trails, trails that are closed for restoration, and meadows
  - Ensure signage is permanent and effective – e.g., fence signs in PKOLS were taken down
- **Education & Awareness** – access to basic training for Saanich dog owners (i.e., basic recall) and information sharing (re. regulation)
  - Should start with education and awareness
  - Free training could be an incentive/benefit of license registration
  - “Pop-up/intercept” events - educational presence in popular parks with bylaw officers, volunteers, training help, etc.
  - Education initiatives at Cadboro-Gyro seems to be working
  - Include people who live adjacent to parks
- **Information Sharing** – Pamphlets or guides to give dog owners
  - Adopting a Code of Conduct – for dog owners
  - Reaching dog owners directly through shops, rental apartment buildings, etc. (with handouts on best parks to take dogs, etc.)
  - Brochures to explain “pet-iquette” and expectations for “control”
- **CRD Bylaw Presence** – need flexibility to employ Bylaw officers and increase presence to different times of the day/evening
  - Reports from CRD are provided to municipalities and they are open to hearing about additional parks that may require more enforcement presence
  - CRD Parks have implemented regulation that all dog walkers must be permitted and carry their permit when in a park (with max 8 dogs) – have seen fewer complaints since implementing
  - CRD Park Rangers can offer additional support for CRD Bylaw – they inform CRD park users on ESAs and regulations already
- **Coordination** – partnership across groups and organizations to share resources and communications across region

*What enforcement approaches would work better than others? How can enforcement be improved?*

- **Education First** – focus on education/awareness before enforcement
  - Proactive not reactive
- **"Carrot vs. Stick" approach** – incentives vs. fines
- **Compliance** – isn't the only way to make this change, let's not "punish" but invest in better education culture
  - rate is quite high in most cases; tickets are often given to people for not having a dog license
- **Programs** – e.g., Canadian Kennel Club- Canine Good Neighbour Program
  - Promoted with incentives and perks to be a part of the program
- **Communication** – need to be clear about how rules are changing, including clear rationale for decisions
- **Ambassadors** – ambassador programs and development of community expectations of behaviour will create more balanced, shared, and positive park use
- **Alignment of Regulation** – need to consider the enforcement and alignment of District Bylaw with federal regulation on migratory birds
  - Some parks and areas (e.g., Victoria Harbour Sanctuary) are shared by multiple jurisdictions so will have to work together on enforcement

**APPENDIX B**  
Round 2  
Questionnaire Results

# SAANICH PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS STRATEGY

## ROUND 2 - PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

### OVERVIEW

The public questionnaire was available on the People, Pets and Parks Strategy [project website](#) from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. The questionnaire received 2,241 total responses.

### HOW TO READ THIS SECTION

The following section is a summary of what we heard from respondents through the online questionnaire. It is organized by the questions we asked for each topic, then by the themes that emerged from our analysis of responses.

We conducted analysis on two types of questions. Quantitative questions that asked respondents to select one or more items from a list or on a scale, are summarized by a graph and a brief description. For open-ended questions, comments were sorted and counted by a parent theme and by sub-themes where relevant. For each theme, we have included the total number of times it was referenced and a description that summarizes what we heard.

#### Analysis Example:

2. Is anything missing from the Draft Vision? ----- Question

<b>Needs of Park Users (150)</b>
<i>Balancing Needs (52)</i> Concerns with the plans' ability to balance needs of people and pets. This included suggestions to differentiate parks and their intended uses, to remove the word "needs", specify the "needs of pet owners", or to focus on the coexistence of park users.
<i>More Emphasis on Pet Needs (51)</i> Some specified specific pet and owner needs, including space to run, swim, and socialize.
<i>Less Emphasis on Pet Needs (47)</i> Others noted the vision places too much emphasis on pets and requested restrictions to dogs in parks.

----- Parent theme, number of comments related to theme

----- Sub-theme, number of comments related to sub-theme, and description of sub-theme

# DRAFT VISION, PRINCIPLES, GOALS

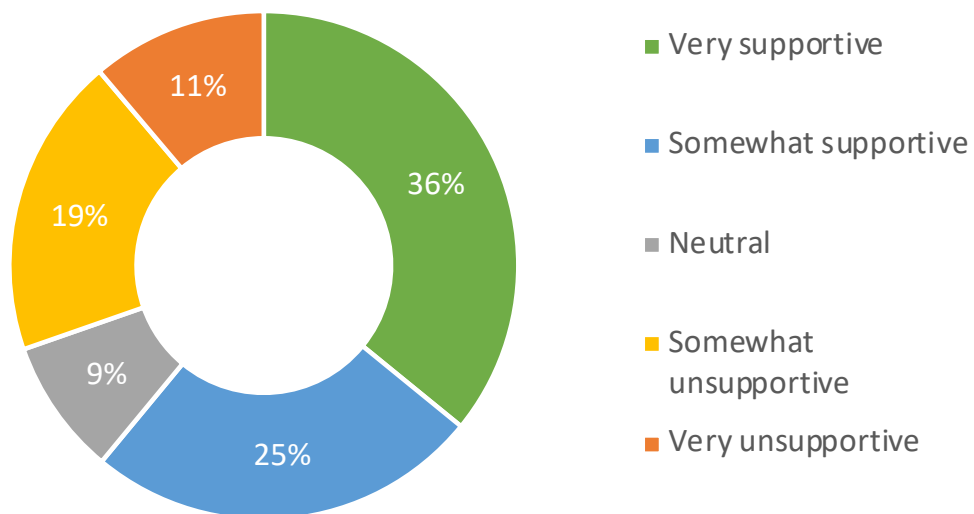
## VISION

1. What is your level of support for the Draft Vision, as written below, for pets in Saanich parks?

*Saanich parks are safe, accessible, and enjoyable for all park users and provide a variety of experiences that balance the different needs of people and pets while protecting environmental integrity.*

Most questionnaire respondents (61%) are very or somewhat supportive of the Draft Vision. A few (11%) are very unsupportive.

Figure 1. Level of support for the draft vision



2182 responses

## 2. Is anything missing from the Draft Vision?

<b>Needs of Park Users (150)</b>
<i>Balancing Needs (52)</i> Concerns with the plans' ability to balance needs of people and pets. This included suggestions to differentiate parks and their intended uses, to remove the word "needs", specify the "needs of pet owners", or to focus on the coexistence of park users.
<i>More Emphasis on Pet Needs (51)</i> Some specified specific pet and owner needs, including space to run, swim, and socialize.
<i>Less Emphasis on Pet Needs (47)</i> Others noted the vision places too much emphasis on pets and requested restrictions to dogs in parks.

<b>Clarity and Language (129)</b>
Comments that the draft vision is unclear and open-ended. Comments that call for further defining phrases within the vision, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "effective control"</li><li>• "environmental integrity"</li><li>• "enjoyable for all"</li><li>• "balancing needs"</li><li>• "variety of experiences"</li></ul> Suggestions for language edits, including alternatives to the words "pets" and "park users".

### **Environmental Integrity (119)**

Suggestions to focus on environmental integrity through the vision and to develop pet restrictions to support environmental protection. There were comments to expand on environmental integrity, including adding the protection of sensitive areas, wildlife, and biodiversity, and promoting stewardship. Some shared concerns that a focus on environmental integrity will restrict park use.

### **Safe and Accessibility (90)**

Comments on the importance of clean and enjoyable parks. Suggestions to emphasize safety and accessibility for all community members, particularly vulnerable populations. There were also concerns about the safety of off-leash dogs and other users such as cyclists.

### **Implementation and Enforcement (71)**

Concerns that the vision is not achievable or how the vision will be implemented, potentially restricting park use. There were also comments on the need for enforcement of any proposed regulation.

### **General Support (59)**

General comments that expressed nothing is missing from the draft vision.



### Strategy Process (29)

Support for the status quo and concerns that a Strategy is unnecessary. Concerns about public engagement materials and project background information.

### First Nations Recognition (6)

Comments emphasizing that respect for and recognition of traditional unceded lands is missing from the draft vision.

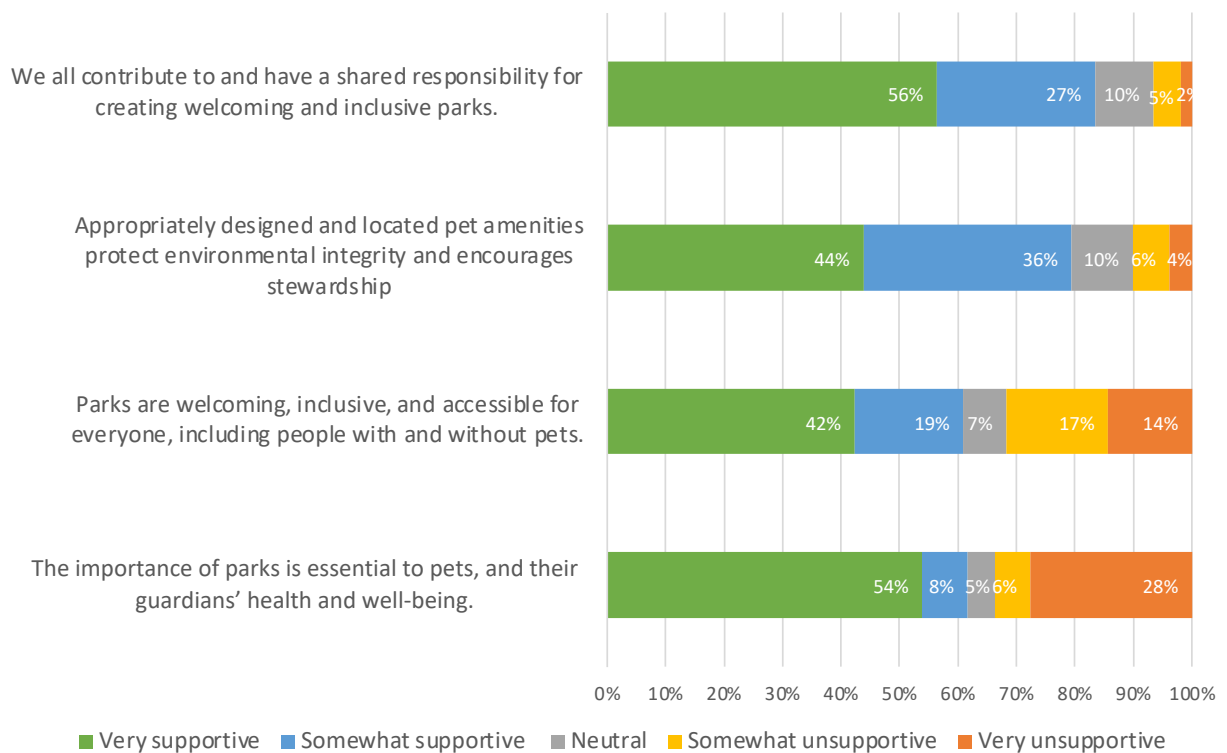
## PRINCIPLES

### 3. What is your level of support for each of the Draft Guiding Principles for pets in parks in Saanich?

The graph below shows the range in level of support for each draft principle. Principles are ordered based on the average level of support.<sup>1</sup>

*Figure 2. Level of support for draft guiding principles*

#### Draft Goals



8749 responses

<sup>1</sup> An average level of support takes into account the full range of results that were supportive and unsupportive.

#### 4. Is anything missing from the Draft Guiding Principles?

##### **Welcoming, Inclusive and Accessible (101)**

Comments that emphasize the importance of building community and shared responsibility for parks. There was some concern that not all parks can be inclusive and accessible to everyone.

##### **Environmental Integrity (100)**

Importance of considering both human and pet impacts on the environment.

Suggestions to further emphasize environmental integrity through the draft principles and to include protection of sensitive areas, natural habitat, and wildlife.

There were some concerns that a focus on environmental integrity will restrict park use.

##### **Clean and Enjoyable (100)**

###### *General (75)*

Importance of parks for health and wellbeing of all park users, including space to socialize and exercise. Concerns about park cleanliness and need for proper waste disposal.

###### *Pet Impact on Park Experience (25)*

Comments on the over-emphasis of pets and need for leash restrictions to support peoples' enjoyment of Saanich parks.

### **Appropriately Designed Pet Amenities (82)**

Comments on the lack of clarity for 'appropriately designed' amenities and concerns that this refers to dog parks. There were suggestions to incorporate an equity-lens in park design. Expressed need for park amenities for both pets and people (e.g., waste, playground, water fountains, fences) and a variety of park environments, including natural and fenced areas off-leash areas that are appropriately sized.

### **Planning Process (60)**

#### *General Concerns (41)*

Comments that the Strategy is unnecessary and concerns with the public engagement, project background information, and lack of clarity in process.

#### *Clarity and Language (19)*

Comments that the Draft Guiding Principles are vague, and suggestions for improved sentence structure and grammar.

### **Implementation and Enforcement (69)**

#### *General (60)*

Concern about how the guiding principles will be implemented.  
Need for accountability and enforcement of park rules, including pet restrictions and substance use.

#### *Public Education & Communication (9)*

Suggestions for improved public education and communication.

**Safety (64)**

Comments that a recognition of safety (both physical and mental) is missing from the draft principles.

Concerns that off-leash areas are not safe for humans, and that enclosed areas are not safe for dogs.

Suggestions to improve programming (rather than restrictions) that encourages communal safety and stewardship.

**General Support (48)**

Comments that nothing is missing from the draft principles.

**Other (7)**

Other comments expressed that Reconciliation and decolonization are missing from the guiding principles.

Concerns that pet restrictions will be difficult and will separate families while at Saanich parks.

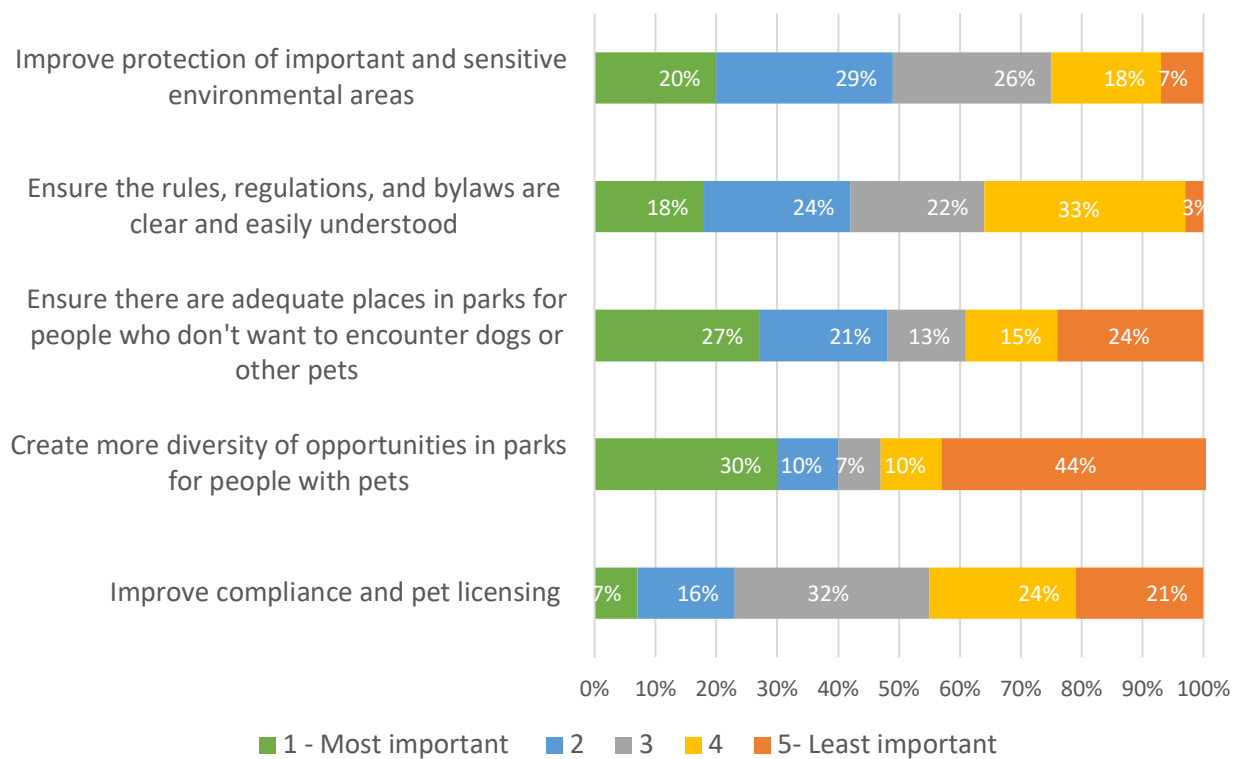
Comment on the need for a new Parks Strategy.

## GOALS

5. The following five Draft Goals have been identified. Please rank the following goals from most important (1) to least important (5) based on what you feel the Strategy needs to address.

The following graph shows the range of importance for each draft goal. Goals are ordered based on the average level of importance. "Improve protection of important and sensitive environmental areas" was seen on average as the most important goal for the Strategy to address.

Figure 3. Order of importance of draft goals



10,624 responses

## 6. Is anything missing from the Draft Goals?

<b>Balancing Park Uses (54)</b>
<p><i>Diverse user needs (21)</i></p> <p>Need for a better balance between parks for dogs and parks for people. Comments that parks should meet the needs of multiple types of users and some parks are more suitable than others for pets. Some respondents felt that the goals overemphasized the needs of pet owners, while others felt that they overemphasized the needs of those without pets.</p>
<p><i>Environmental Protection (14)</i></p> <p>Importance of recognizing sensitive area protection. Comments that dogs should not be allowed in environmentally sensitive areas (particularly migrating bird habitat) and that dogs should be banned from beaches. Some respondents felt that dogs have less of an environmental impact than other human activities (e.g., housing development).</p>
<p><i>Spaces and Opportunities for Pets (9)</i></p> <p>Diversity of opportunities for people with pets should include open spaces and walking trails where people can exercise with their dogs off-leash, not just enclosed dog parks. Some respondents felt that there should be designated fenced areas for dogs off-leash. The term “pets” should be expanded in the Strategy to include more than dogs or be more explicit about what it encompasses.</p>
<p><i>Safety (7)</i></p> <p>Importance of making it safe for people to visit our parks and beaches who do not want to encounter pets. Some respondents felt that it was important to regulate the length of dog leashes while others felt that leashed dogs were safe.</p>
<p><i>Accessibility (2)</i></p> <p>Ensure that there is access to pet friendly areas for people without access to a vehicle.</p>

*Indigenous Perspective (1)*

Goals are missing First Nations and Métis perspectives.

**Regulations (27)**

*Enforcement (12)*

Importance of adequate enforcement and the need for more bylaw enforcement and accountability.

*Compliance (11)*

Need to improve compliance of on-leash regulation. Enforcement and compliance are focused on a minority of dog-owners who are not complying, but also affects many dog-owners who are complying. Enforcement and compliance should be expanded to include smoking, cycling (on shared paths and speed limits), and other infractions by people.

*Pet Licensing (4)*

Some participants felt that there was a need to improve pet licensing and differentiate pet licensing from compliance in the goals. There were suggestions for discounted pet licensing fees for pets who have been through a pet socialization training course.

**Strategy Process and Engagement Process (12)**

Need to have an ongoing understanding of evolving community needs by collecting usage data and community feedback. Increased engagement with all park users will be important through ongoing refinement and implementation of goals.

The goals are vague about how they will be accomplished. Changes to existing regulations should be evidence based.

Need for more alignment between draft vision principles and goals.



### **Education and Communication (8)**

Suggestions to develop dog etiquette rules and provide education for pet-owners, specifically on environmentally sensitive areas and responsibilities of pet owners.

Need for more communication between different types of users, improve signage on environmentally sensitive areas and communications strategy for bylaw awareness

### **General Disapproval (5)**

Comments that generally did not approve of the draft goals.

### **General Support (2)**

Comments that generally supported the draft goals.

### **Other (6)**

Comments on the lack of clarity specifically of Goal #5 (Ensure there are adequate places in parks for people who don't want to encounter dogs or other pets.) There is a need to ensure that there is adequate distribution of parks across neighborhoods that meet the needs of pet owners and people.

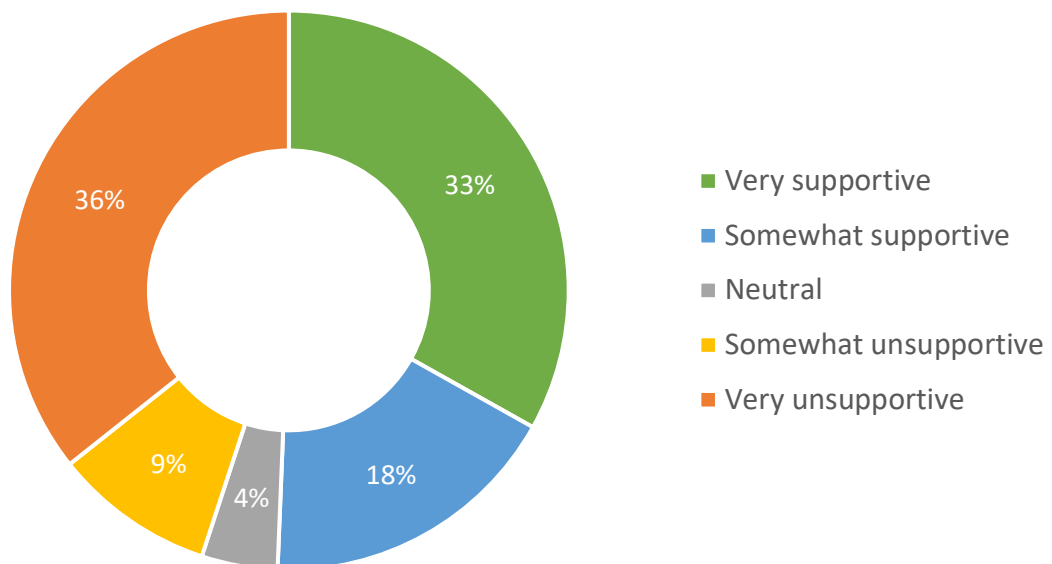
## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

### CURRENT MODEL

#### 7. What is your level of support for the Current Model?

Levels of support for the Current Model are divided. About half of questionnaire respondents (51%) are supportive of the Current Model, while just less than half (45%) are unsupportive.

*Figure 4. Level of support for the current model*



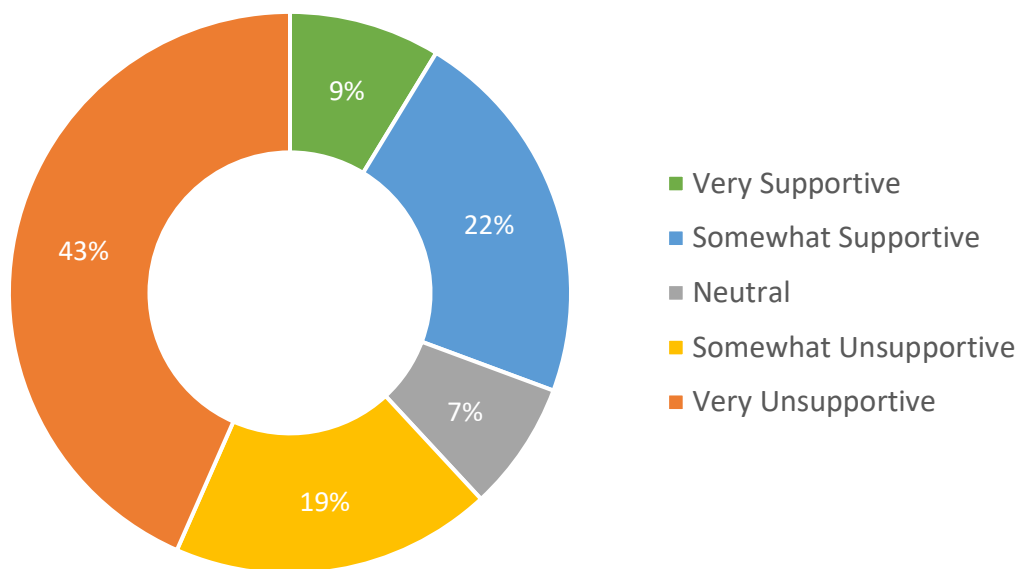
2164 responses

## MODIFIED MODEL

### 8. What is your level of support for the Modified Model?

Most questionnaire respondents (61%) are unsupportive of the Modified Model, while 31% are supportive.

*Figure 5. Level of support for the modified model*



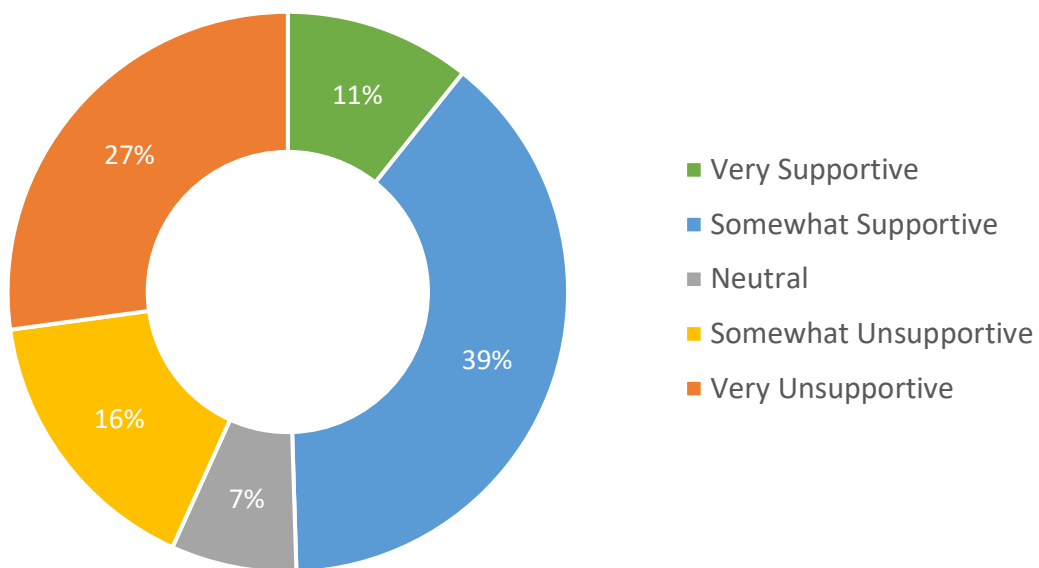
2147 responses

## URBAN CONTEXT MODEL

### 9. What is your level of support for the Urban Context Model?

Although mixed support for the Urban Context Model, it is one of the more supported models. 50% of questionnaire respondents are supportive, while 43% are unsupportive.

*Figure 6. Level of support for urban context model*



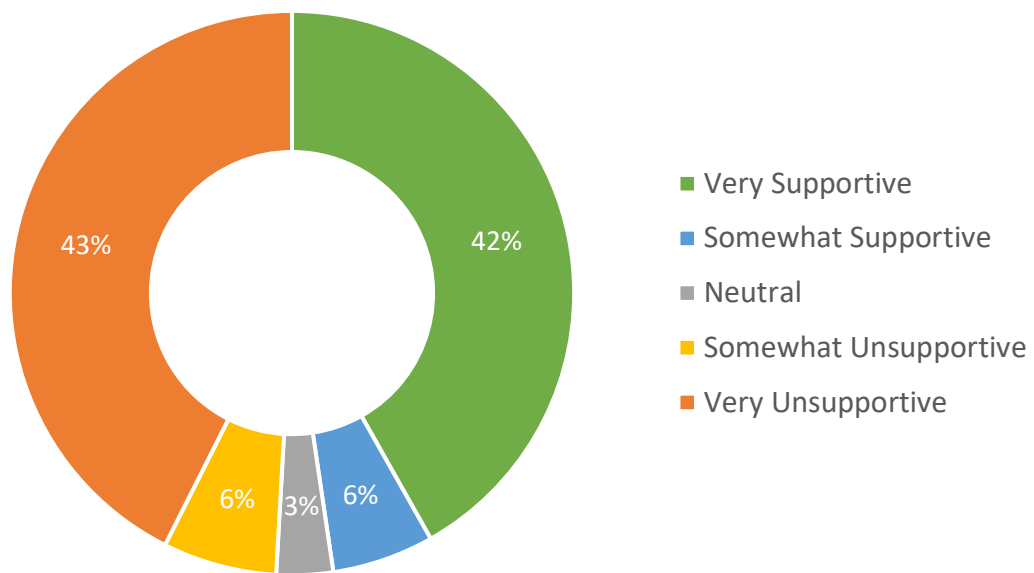
2129 responses

## RESTRICTIVE MODEL

### 10. What is your level of support for the Restrictive Model?

Levels of support for the Restrictive Model are divided. 48% of the respondents were supportive, while 50% are unsupportive.

*Figure 7. Level of support for the restrictive model*

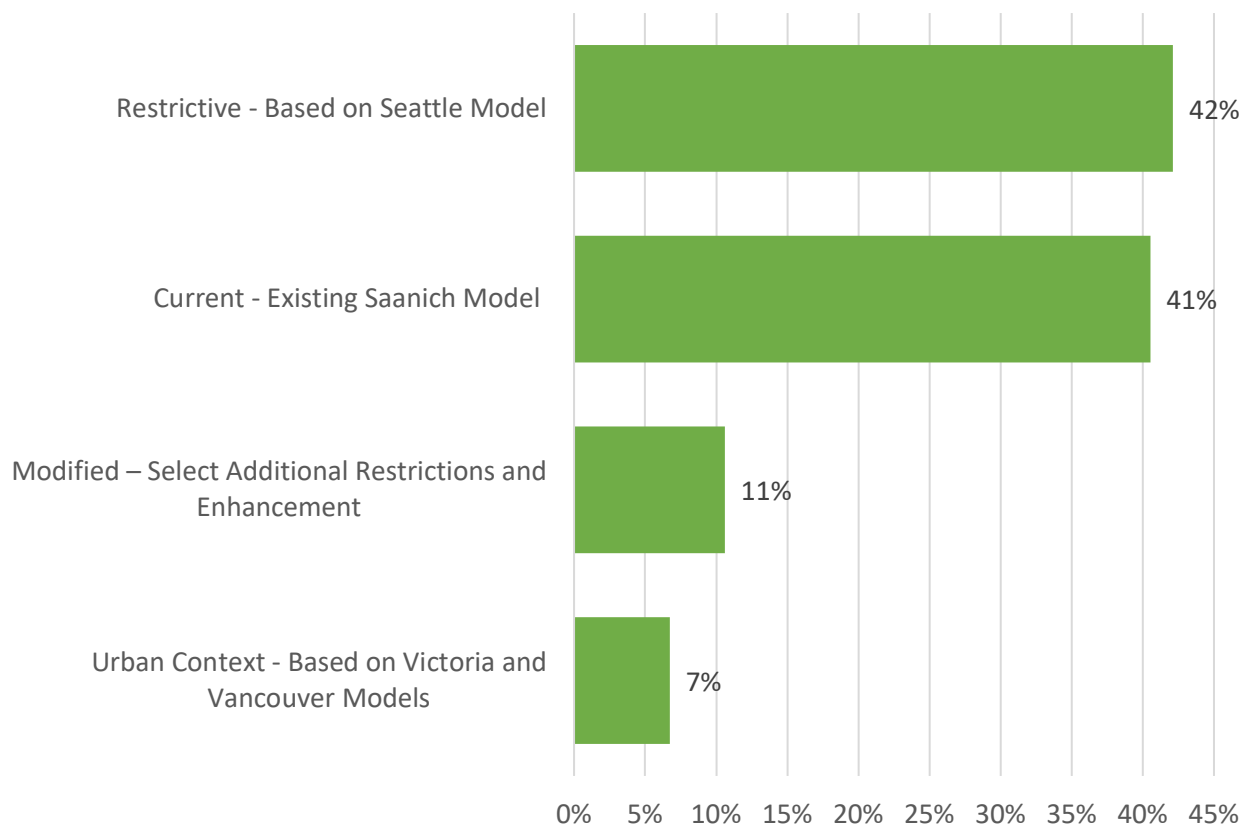


2126 responses

11. Please select which option best reflects your vision for Saanich parks (select only one).

Overall, most respondents selected either the Restrictive Model (42%) or the Current model (41%) as the option which best reflects their vision for Saanich parks. The least chosen option was the Urban Context model (7%).

*Figure 8. Preferred Model for Saanich*



2069 responses

## 12. Are there specific elements of any Option that you think should be prioritized?

<b>Pet Regulations (37)</b>
<p><i>Leashed Pets (15)</i></p> <p>Some participants felt that dogs should be on-leash everywhere unless it is a designated dog park. Others felt that the default should be on-leash for dogs, even at designated dog parks. Regulating leash length was an important topic for some.</p>
<p><i>Pet Restricted Areas (12)</i></p> <p>Some participants wanted to see no dogs on any beaches frequently used by wildlife or children. Others felt that dogs should not be allowed on narrow trails, even on-leash. Some felt that no pets should be in a multi-use public park or beach unless it's in a separate fenced area, apart from service dogs.</p>
<p><i>Spaces and Opportunities for Pets (10)</i></p> <p>Some respondents felt that dogs should have their own parks away from other people and children. This could include leash-optional opportunities, dog exercise areas, trails, and amenities throughout the city. Fenced off-leash areas are not seen as a replacement for the current options in Saanich. Some participants wanted dogs to be allowed off-leash when under effective control in most parks. Others wanted diverse pet friendly areas in different environments, specifically in large open spaces such as PKOLS and Cadboro Beach.</p>
<b>Balancing Needs (18)</b>
<p><i>Environment (8)</i></p> <p>Comments that dogs should not be allowed in environmentally sensitive areas and suggestions to restrict dogs from beaches like Cadboro Bay Migratory Bird Sanctuary and parks zoned for conservation use. Pet owners are more likely to practice good recall if their dogs are off-leash in sensitive areas, and they will be more likely to steward those areas.</p>

*Safety (6)*

Comments noted that some park users, including children, fear dogs and are affected by dog owners who don't follow the rules. Respondents felt that dogs should not be allowed where children play, like sandy beaches and playgrounds.

*Prioritizing Needs (4)*

Some respondents felt that parks should be about people first and foremost, not pets. Others felt that the current model works well, as there are very few negative incidents with dogs and most owners are responsible. There is a need for healthier coexistence between dog owners and those who use the park without pets.

**Enforcement and Compliance (8)**

Comments that enforcement and pet owner accountability will be a challenge and should be prioritized. If enforcement is increased for pets, it should be increased for other infractions as well. Enforcement through both park rangers and volunteer park stewards.

**Education and Communication (5)**

Increased communication, signage (specifically for off-leash areas), Suggestions for more education and communication through social media, TV, print and emails.

**Other (4)**

Comments that current park use is unbalanced — half of the parks should be dog-free, half requiring leashes with fenced off-leash sections in a minority of dog parks. There is a need for more waste bins and unique strategies for individual parks depending on size. "Under effective control" (referenced in model descriptions) needs more clarity.

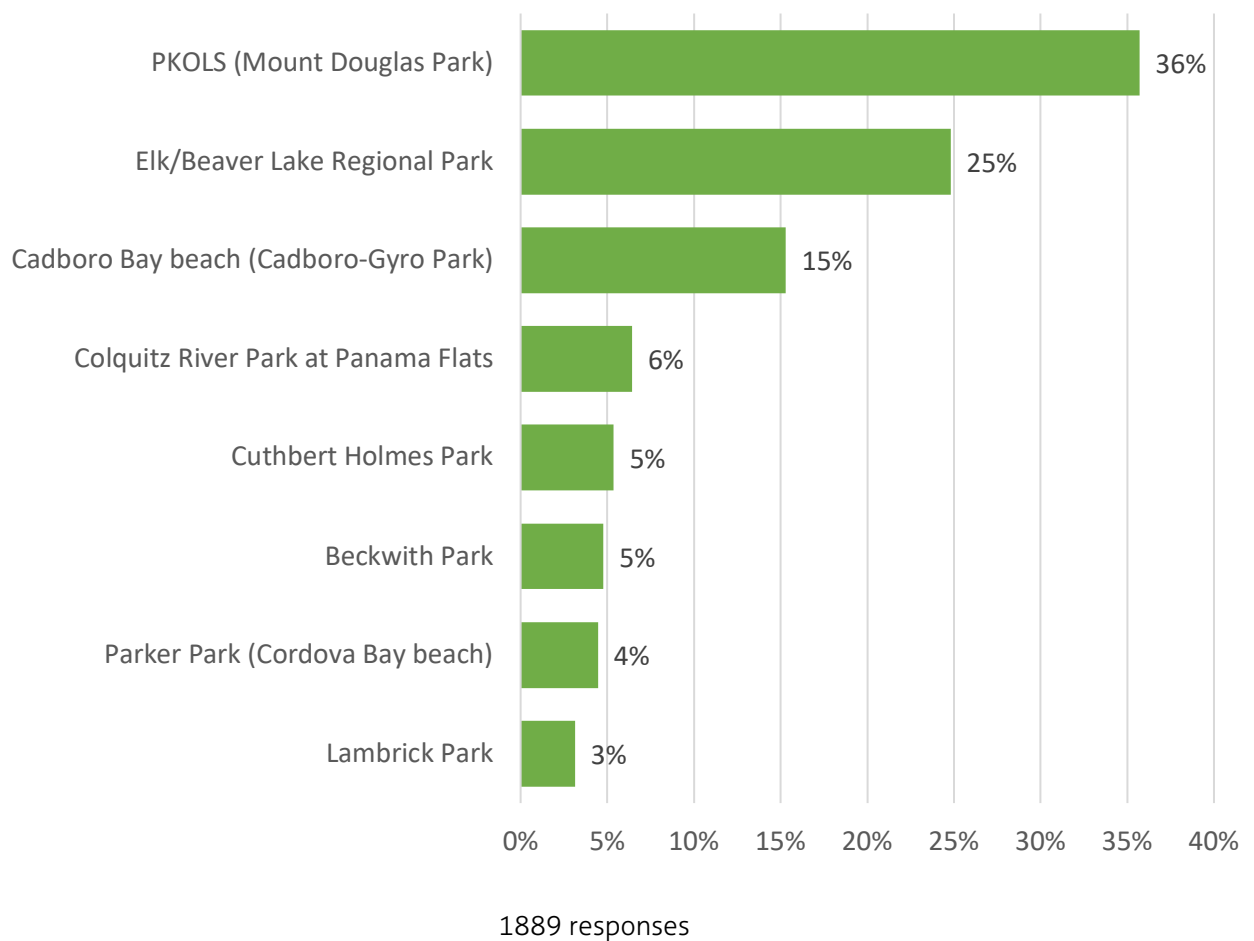


## DOGS IN SAANICH PARKS

### 13. Which park or beach located in Saanich do you visit most often?

Most questionnaire respondents most often visit PKOLS (36%), followed by Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (25%). Lambrick Park (3%) and Parker Park (4%) are less visited by respondents.

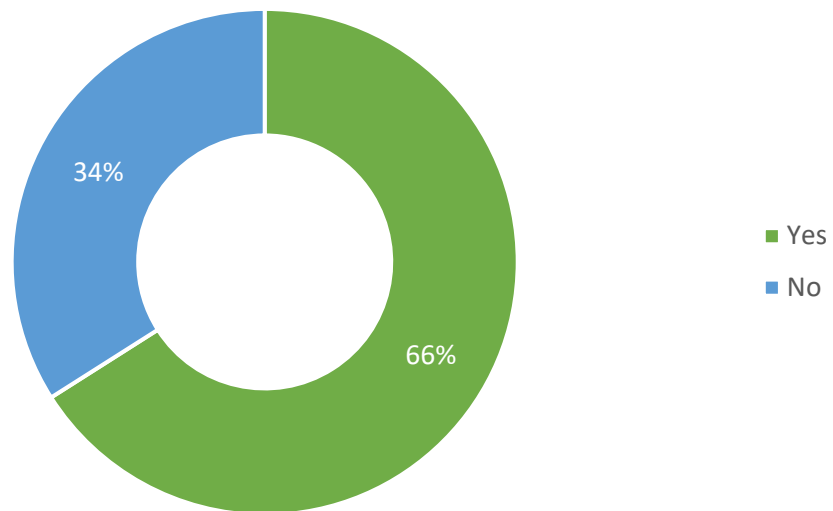
*Figure 9. Most visited parks and beaches*



**14. Do you currently own a dog or does your household have a dog?**

Most respondents (66%) own a dog. 34% of respondents do not.

*Figure 10. Dog Ownership (in Household)*

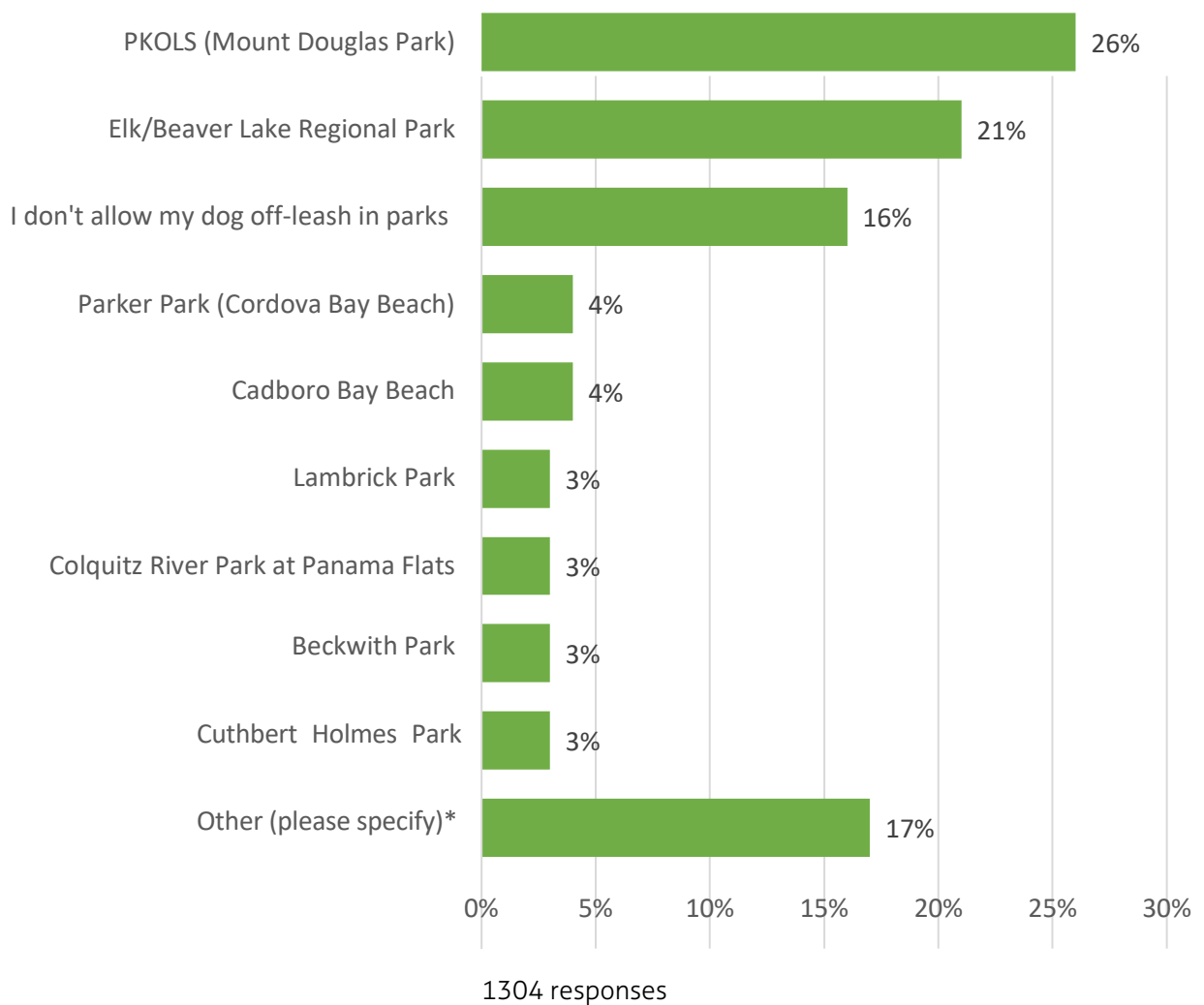


2101 responses

## 15. Which park or beach in Saanich do you bring an off-leash dog to most often?

Of the respondents who have a dog in their household, questionnaire respondents most often bring an off-leash dog to PKOLS (26%) and Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (21%).

*Figure 11. Most frequented areas for off-leash dogs*

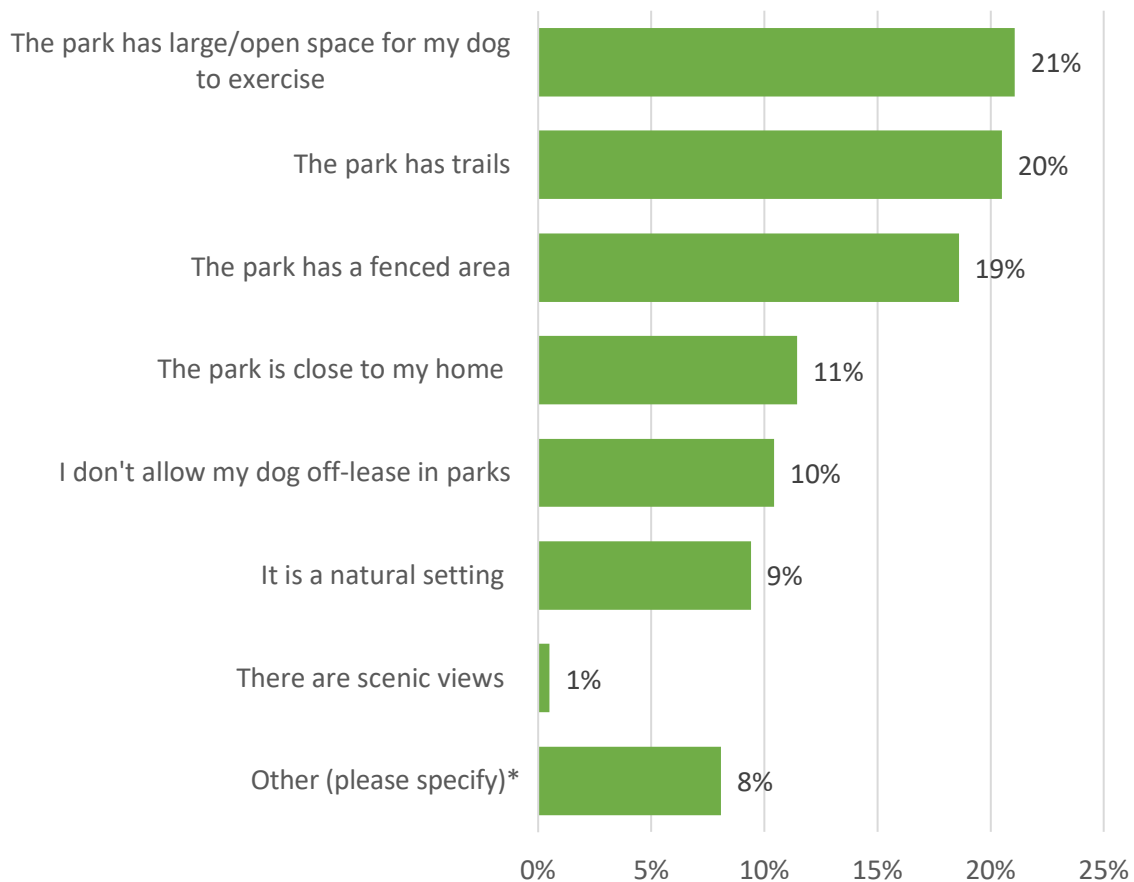


\*Other frequented parks/beaches in Saanich included: Maynard Park, Swan Creek Park, Fowler Park, Lochside Park, Houlihan Park, McMin Park, Playfair Park, Mount Tolmie, Horner Park, Rudd Park, and Horner Park

## 16. What do you value most when walking your dog off leash?

Of the respondents who have a dog in their household, we heard that questionnaire respondents most value large open spaces (21%), trails (20%), and a fenced area (19%) when walking their dog off leash.

*Figure 12. Most valued off-leash features*



1372 responses

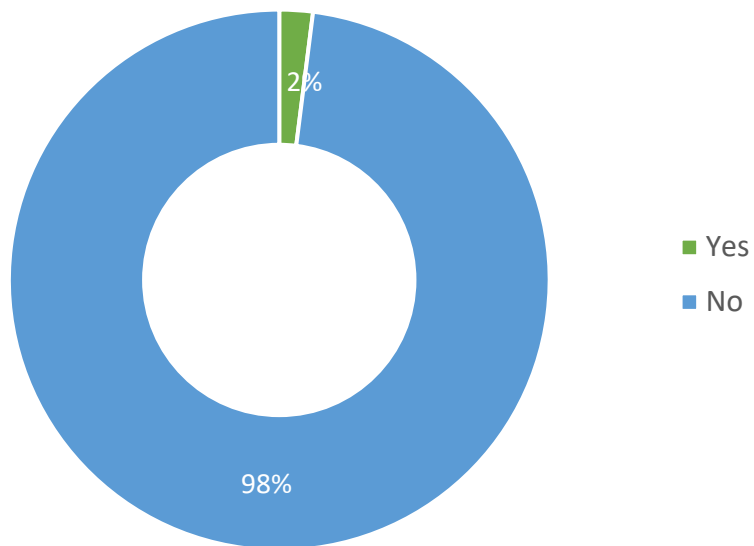
\*Other most valued off-leash features included: variety or combination of trails and natural areas, fields, access to washrooms, seating, safety from vehicle traffic, options to swim

## COMMERCIAL DOG WALKING

### 17.Are you a commercial dog trainer or dog walker?

Only 2% of respondents are a commercial dog trainer or dog walker.

*Figure 13. Percentage of questionnaire respondents who are commercial dog trainer/walkers*

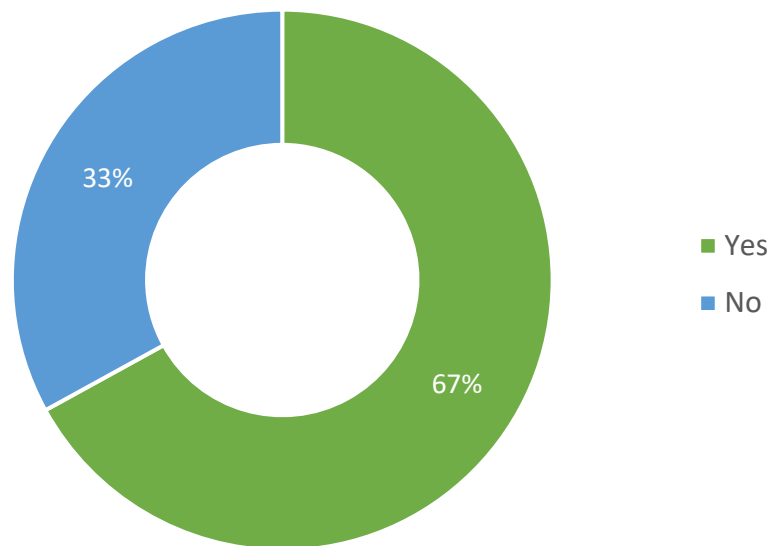


2097 responses

**18. The Capital Regional District (CRD) has a Commercial Dog Walker Permit. Do you think it would be beneficial for Saanich to have a similar program?**

Of respondents who are commercial dog walkers or trainers (2% of respondents), most (67%) think it would be beneficial for Saanich to have a Permit program similar to the CRD.

*Figure 14. Interest in a commercial dog walker permit program*



46 responses

**19. Please tell us why or why not?** (This question was only asked to those who identified as a commercial dog trainer or dog walker (2% of survey respondents).

<b>Value of Program (17)</b>
Respondents find that the program will be beneficial to control park usage, as well as enforce park regulations.

<b>Cost Considerations (7)</b>
Respondents express that it is not reasonable to incur additional costs to those who may not walk dogs a significant amount of time. There are also other permits that are of similar essence.

<b>Alternative Options (3)</b>
Respondents do not find that this program would provide a long-term solution; there is suggestion to add infrastructure such as fences, more strongly enforce rules, or increase education and communications.

<b>Engagement Process (3)</b>
Respondents found that this question should have been offered to non-commercial dog owners and to have a more science-based approach to proposed strategies.

## SHARING OUR PARKS

20. Some of Saanich's parks contain environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) like Garry Oak Ecosystems, wetlands, and areas with known species at risk. What do you think are the most important considerations for sharing these parks with pets in Saanich?

### **Restricted Access (452)**

#### *For Pets (358)*

Respondents find that pets, notably dogs, cause destruction in environmentally sensitive areas through wandering off marked paths, digging, and defecating; and as such, should have restricted access to ESAs.

#### *For All Users (94)*

Respondents find that it is not necessarily pets that pose the largest threat or are most destructive in ESAs, but humans and other wildlife. Suggestions to prohibit access to ESAs for all users and to only stay on clearly marked paths/areas.

### **Leashing Regulation (360)**

#### *On-Leash Everywhere (302)*

Respondents would be most comfortable with having pets on-leash everywhere, including ESAs.

#### *On-Leash in Designated Areas (50)*

Respondents would be comfortable with having pets on-leash in designated areas, such as trails.

#### *Off-Leash Everywhere (4)*

Respondents do not find that having pets around ESAs are an issue and should be able to be off-leash.

#### *Off-Leash in Designated Areas (4)*

Respondents would be comfortable with having pets off-leash in designated areas, such as trails.



### **Environmental Protection (282)**

#### *Additional Fencing/Barriers (180)*

Respondents express that having barriers or fencing in ESAs to prevent access from pets and/or humans. Examples include natural fencing or split rails.

#### *General Importance (102)*

General support for protecting the environment and sensitive areas. Some suggestions include beaches as part of ESAs.

### **Increased Education and Responsibility (211)**

Respondents expressed that it would be beneficial to have more education about the environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife, and flora/fauna through boards/signage. This includes increased responsibility of park users to keep and respect spaces as they are found (e.g., leave no trash behind, picking up after pets, staying on marked paths). There are some suggestions to enforce park regulations more strictly.

### **Increased Signage and Communications (200)**

Respondents express that it will be beneficial to have an increased amount of signage throughout parks to clearly specify environmentally sensitive areas and which spaces are not welcome to the public. Other signage suggestions include pet owner and park user etiquette on marked paths.

### **Balanced Approach - Addressing All Impacts (99)**

There are suggestions to look for more balanced approaches that allow humans and pets to enjoy park spaces safely while protecting sensitive areas. This includes methods such as land use planning, development considerations, climate change interventions and limiting human access.

### **No Changes Necessary (46)**

Respondents do not currently have an issue with the current approach and park regulations.

21. Some of Saanich's parks support active recreation and have bicycle trails, sports fields, sports courts, and playgrounds. What do you think are the most important considerations for sharing these parks with pets in Saanich?

<b>Pet Presence (786)</b>
<i>In Designated Areas/Away from Programmed Spaces (472)</i> Respondents express that pets should only be in designated areas of parks and/or away from programmed spaces such as playgrounds and sports fields. Some think that they should be leashed in designated areas or programmed spaces if they cannot be controlled (110) and some think that they should be able to have a designated and fenced off-leash area (79).
<i>In All Park Areas (209)</i> Respondents express that they are okay with having pets in all park areas, either leashed (193) or unleashed (8). Those who express that pets should be leashed have safety concerns and see it as general courtesy; those who express that pets should be unleashed think pets should have spaces to run freely.
<i>In No Park Areas (105)</i> Respondents express that they do not think that pets should be allowed in park areas.

<b>Respectful Shared Use (418)</b>
Respondents generally think that park areas should be respectfully shared. This includes pet owners picking up after their pets, pets having good recall, cyclists abiding to speed limits, and general mindfulness about using park spaces. There are suggestions to share sports fields with pets during off-season times or non-peak hours of the day Another suggestion is to have the Park Board supply more waste bins and waste disposal bags.

### Enhanced Safety (173)

#### *From Cyclists (59)*

Respondents find that cyclists pose a threat to safety in park areas, particularly around the speed they ride and along shared paths. There are suggestions to enforce speed limits, increase signage along paths, and to have designated bike paths.

#### *General Safety (59)*

There is general concern about safety in parks, and need to ensure that parks are safe to use for all.

#### *From Pets (55)*

Respondents are concerned that some pets, notably dogs, can be aggressive and/or not controlled well by owners. There are also health concerns around not having animal excrement properly disposed of and being left in areas where small children play and sport activities take place.

### Increased Signage and Communications (107)

Respondents suggest having increased signage in park areas to clearly specify the “dos and don’ts” in sharing park space (e.g., speed limits for cyclists, picking up after dogs/pets, protected environmental areas).

### Maintained Recreational Spaces (66)

Comments that the existing recreational spaces should be prioritized and maintained over spaces for pets, including sports fields, playgrounds, and paths.

### No Changes Necessary (32)

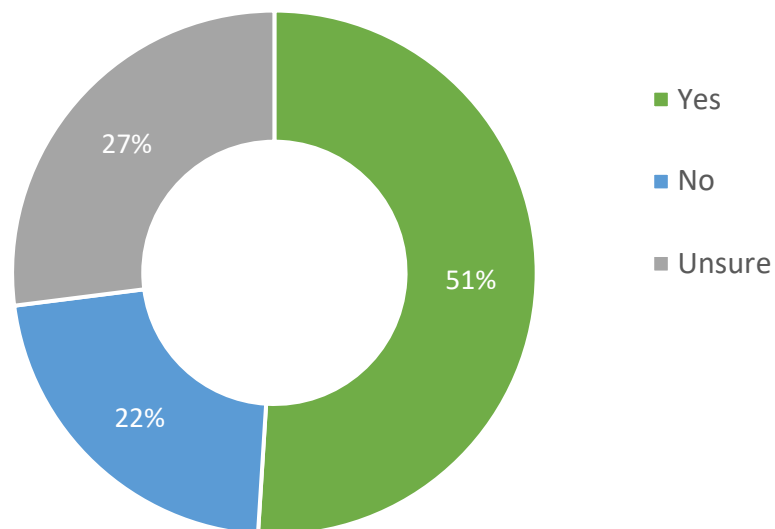
The current use of parks is fine as is, having not witnessed or encountered any problems.

## POP-UP DOG PARK PILOT PROJECT

22. In 2022, the Summer Pop-Up Dog Park Pilot Project provided fenced-in, off-leash areas in nine different Saanich parks. Did you consider the summer pilot pop-up dog parks in Saanich to be beneficial?

Most (51%) found the summer pilot project to be beneficial, while over a quarter of respondents (27%) were unsure.

*Figure 15. Benefit of the summer pop-up dog park pilot project*



2060 responses

## 23. Please tell us why or why not?

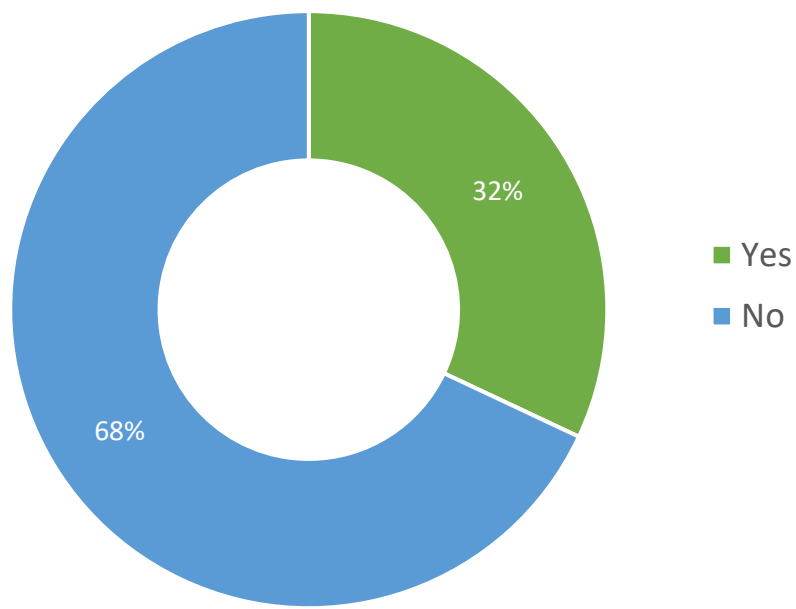
What Didn't Work Well/Improvements (757)
<p><i>Generally Not Beneficial (275)</i></p> <p>Respondents found that the pop-up dog parks were generally not beneficial for their needs or passersby did not see them being used or being used by uncontrolled dogs. Many preferred walking their dog(s) along trails, the beach, or an open field (both leashed and unleashed). Some also expressed that they enjoy being able to exercise (e.g., walking) while their dog exercises, which the dog park does not provide. Additionally, there is concern about park budget being put towards an initiative that does not benefit all dog owners/non-dog owners.</p>
<p><i>Size of Pop-Up Dog Parks (232)</i></p> <p>Respondents shared that the size of the pop-up dog parks were too small, particularly for larger dogs, in turn not providing the necessary space for exercise and play. Some found that an enclosed space bodes conflict between dogs more easily.</p>
<p><i>Location/Permanency of Pop-Up Dog Parks (122)</i></p> <p>Respondents found it confusing to have an inconsistent space to bring their dog(s) and hope that there will be permanent dog parks in some parks, especially those more centrally located. Suggested permanent locations include James Houlihan, PKOLS, and Fowler Parks in Saanich, and in the CRD to have them at Elk and Beaver Lakes.</p>
<p><i>Communications (67)</i></p> <p>Respondents noted that the communications and outreach of the program was lacking as they did not hear about it or found difficulty in knowing where the pop-up locations were.</p>
<p><i>Amenities and Maintenance (61)</i></p> <p>Respondents found that there could be additional amenities to enhance the space, such as shade, waste bags, water stations, and stimulating play structures. There was also a lack of maintenance in the dog parks to keep the spaces clean.</p>

<b>What Worked Well (514)</b>
<p><i>Generally Beneficial (391)</i></p> <p>Overall, respondents found the program to be a good initiative that could be permanent, so users know the places to go. Users and passersby enjoyed dogs in an enclosed off-leash area to have their own space to run, play, and socialize without disturbing other park users and the natural environment. There is acknowledgement that dog parks are part of the solution but not the only one, noting that designated trails and paths are important spaces for dogs and owners as well.</p>
<p><i>Safety (85)</i></p> <p>Respondents felt that having an enclosed space provided peace of mind for the safety of dogs and other park users.</p>
<p><i>Location of Pop-Up Dog Parks (47)</i></p> <p>Respondents found the pop-up dog parks to be well located and easy to access. Some that were particularly well-liked were at Fowler, Cadboro-Gyro, and Rudd Parks. Some commented on enjoying the fenced area at the University of Victoria to walk their dogs. (which was closed in 2020).</p>
<b>Not Applicable (117)</b>
<p>Respondents did not use the pop-up dog park as they do not own a dog or did not hear about the program.</p>

#### 24. Did you use a summer pilot pop-up dog park?

About one third of respondents (32%) used a summer pilot pop-up dog park, while most (68%) did not.

*Figure 16. Questionnaire respondents who used a pilot pop-up park*

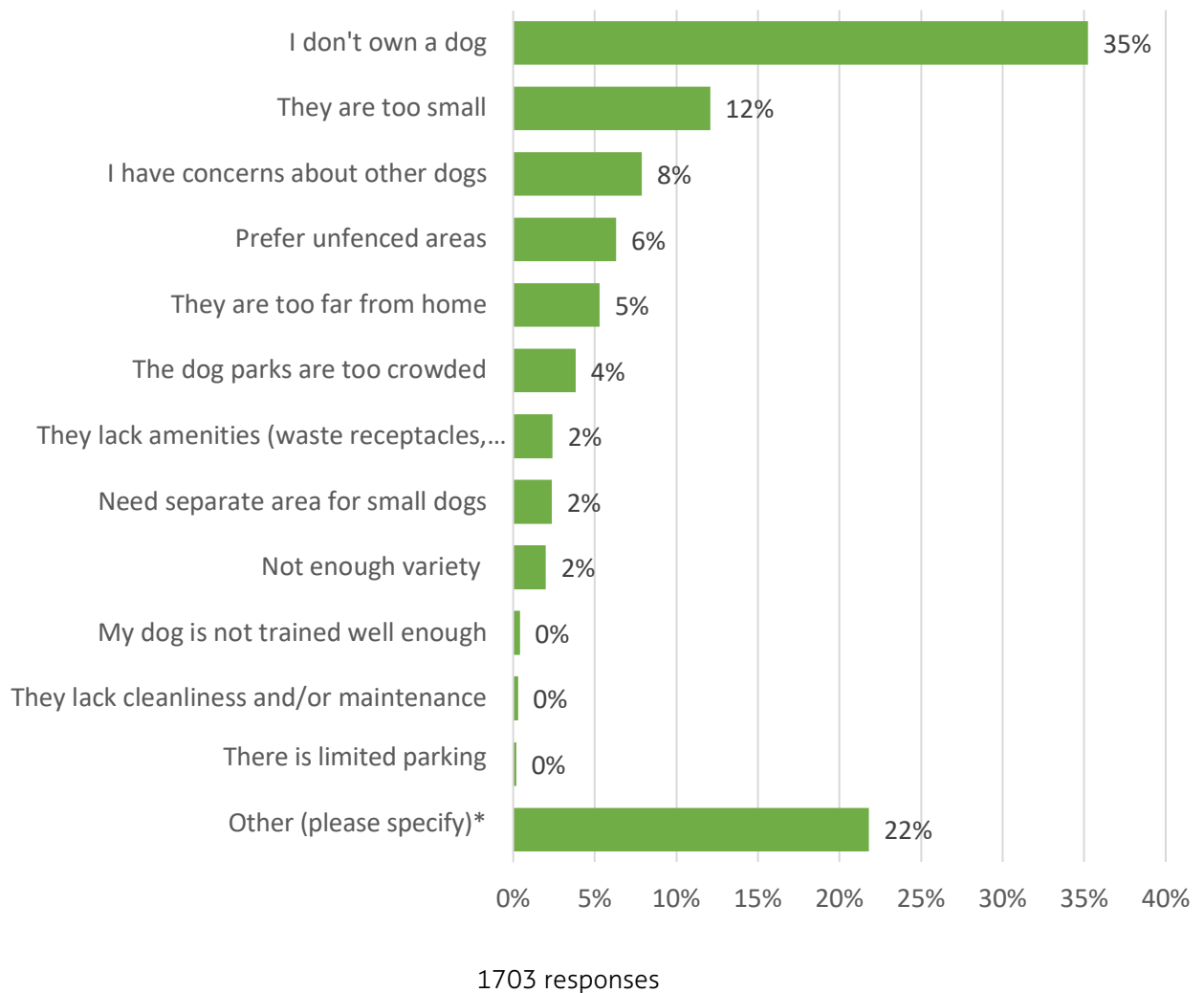


2059 responses

## 25. Was there anything preventing you from using the summer pilot pop-up dog park?

Many respondents did not use the summer pilot pop-up dog parks because they don't own a dog (35%). Other reasons included the small size of the pilot dog parks (12%) and concerns about other dogs (8%).

Figure 17. Barriers to using a pilot pop-up park



\* Those who selected 'other' were most often not aware of the initiative or pop-up dog park locations.

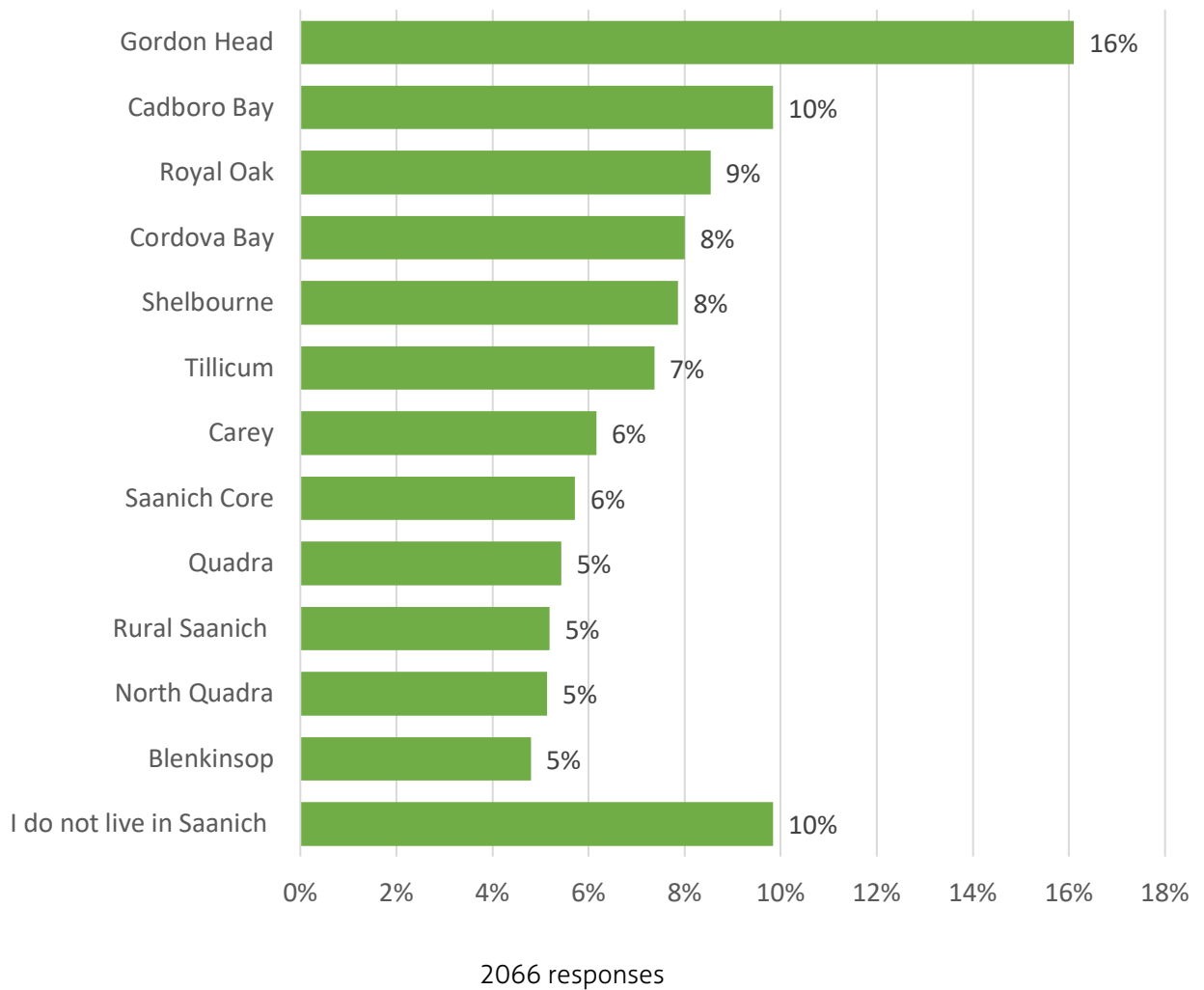


## WHO WE HEARD FROM

### 26. What Saanich neighbourhood do you live in?

We heard most often from residents in Gordon Head (16%), followed by Cadboro Bay (10%) and those who do not live in the District (10%).

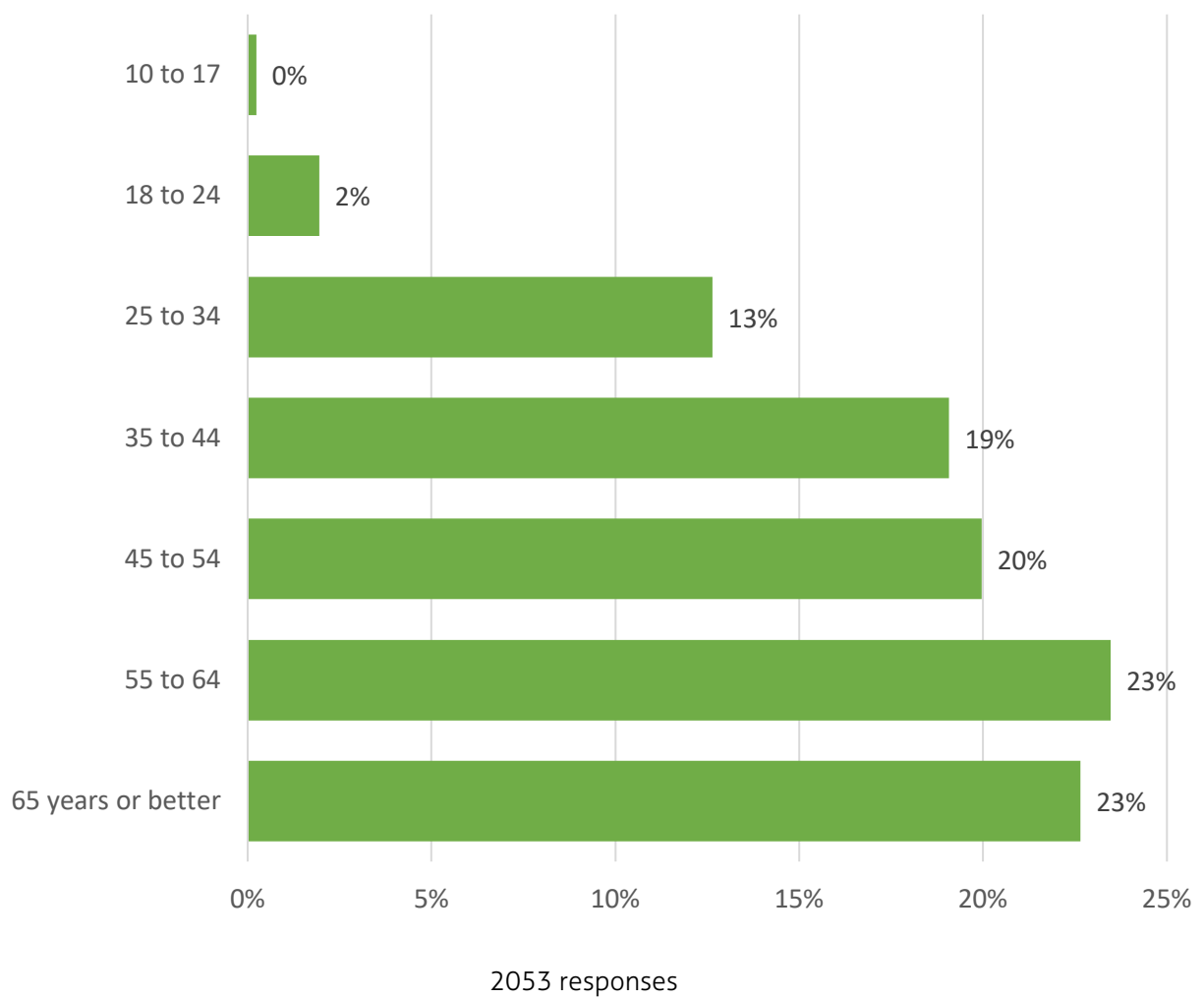
*Figure 18. Respondents' neighbourhood*



## 27. Into which of the following age categories may I place you?

66% of respondents are over the age of 44, with most (46%) above 55 years. We heard from some community members under the age of 24 (2%).

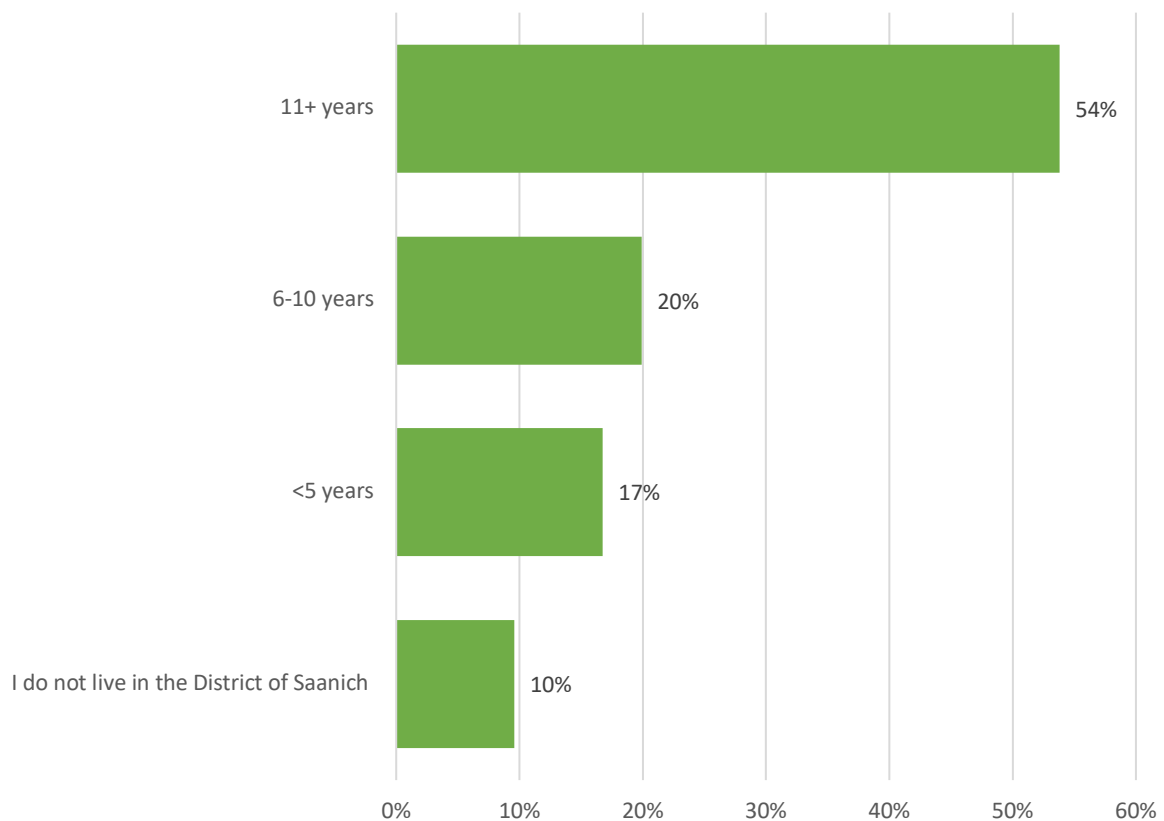
*Figure 19. Respondents' age*



## 28. How long have you lived in the District of Saanich?

We heard most often from long-term residents, those who have lived in Saanich for over 11 years (54%) and 6-10 years (20%).

*Figure 20. Respondents' length of residency*



2065 responses

**APPENDIX C**  
Open House Workbook  
Key Themes

# SAANICH PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS STRATEGY

## ROUND 2 - OPEN HOUSE WORKBOOK RESULTS

The People, Pets, and Parks Strategy Open House took place on February 1st, 2023. There were **293 people who attended** the event and **116 who completed a workbook**. Below is a summary of all comments received from the workbooks.

### STATION 1

#### WELCOME TABLE

There was no feedback collected at this Station.

### STATION 2

#### LEARNING AND BACKGROUND

##### *Spaces and Opportunities for Pets (35)*

Many participants in the open house expressed that it is important to have large areas and ample opportunities for the pets to enjoy nature freely. Community members also noted PKOLS as a key park of interest, as it provides the dogs with open space to play and run around.

##### *Responsible Dog Ownership (27)*

Many participants expressed a need for accountable dog ownership and attention to dog activity. Participants commented that dog owners should be responsible for picking up dog waste, obtaining a dog license, and ensuring their dogs behave in a decent manner when in public.

##### *Pet Licensing (27)*

Respondents felt that there needs to be a significant increase in the number of licensed dogs. Currently, the number of dog licenses does not give an accurate representation of the number of dogs in Saanich.

##### *Perceived Bias (23)*

Many participants thought that issues around pets in parks have been raised by a vocal minority. Participants expressed that the process has been biased against dog owners and aims at restricting dog access in all parks. There were also comments that the statistics

provided are misleading or inaccurate and that the public and representative questionnaire did not ask all the same questions, making it difficult to trust the process and results.

### *Environment (19)*

Participants expressed their concern for environmental degradation and the need to create regulation that protects environmentally sensitive areas and is climate conscious. Participants also felt that dog waste that is not picked up harms the environment.

### *Balancing Needs (13)*

Comments reflected that parks are a place for all, and everyone deserves to have an equal authority and rights when it comes to its use.

### *Clarity and Language (8)*

Participants voiced a need for more clear language in the engagement materials. There were comments that the draft-vision is unclear and open-ended. The participants emphasized on simplifying the language further.

## STATION 3

### VISION PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

### *Unleashed Pets (29)*

Many community members expressed that it is important for dogs to be unleashed and enjoy nature as much as it is important for residents. Many participants suggested that even if there is not a strong possibility to leave all or most of the open spaces unleashed, there should be designated areas for dogs to roam freely unleashed as it is key to pets' health and well-being.

### *Environment (28)*

Participants expressed their concern that dogs are causing harm to environmentally sensitive areas. Participants suggested more information on the harms caused by dogs to sport fields and how damage can be mitigated. People concerned about the environmental impact from pets made suggestions to add some access restrictions to the sensitive areas for the dogs.

### *Health and Well-Being (24)*

Participants felt that dogs are like families and being able to walk with their dogs on trails, exercise and experience nature helps them clear their minds.

### *Signage and Waste Management (24)*

Comments reflected that existing signage in parks is too small and needs to be more prominent. Participants also stated a need for additional garbage bins, especially for dog waste, to maintain park cleanliness.

### *Enforcement (23)*

Participants commented on the need for restrictions and support for their implementation. Enforcement is needed to minimize safety concerns and prevent further conflict.

### *Balancing Needs (21)*

Participants expressed that Saanich parks should continue to accommodate diverse users. Parks are seen as a place for people to enjoy and feel relaxed. The District should take a balanced approach when planning public and natural spaces. Parks should accommodate both the needs of dogs and their owners as well as park users who do not feel comfortable around pets.

### *Education (19)*

Participants emphasized the importance of education for the community as well as their dogs. Some suggested increased education for both dog owners and non-dog owners through partnerships with professional dog trainers and community organizations.

### *Safety (18)*

Community members expressed that they do not feel safe when the dogs are unleashed as they have experienced several incidents or negative dog encounters. This is particularly a concern for people with mobility impairments who may worry about being knocked down by an unleashed dog.

## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

### OPTION 1: CURRENT MODEL

#### *General Support (39)*

Many participants were very satisfied with the status quo and preferred no changes to existing park regulation.

#### *Unleashed Pets (16)*

Many participants believed that it is important for the dogs to be unleashed and enjoy the open spaces. There were comments on the current restrictions at Cadboro Bay Beach and how they limit dogs' opportunity to play in the water and swim. There were suggestions to allow dogs off-leash for a particular season or in a designated area, so they have more opportunities to play and run around freely.

#### *Responsible Dog Ownership (12)*

Participants emphasized the responsibility of dog owners to ensure their dogs are well behaved in parks. More focus on dog owner expectations would reduce the need for leash restrictions.

#### *Signage (12)*

Participants felt that there was a need to improve the existing signage and to add additional and clear signage for the designated off-leash areas.

#### *Education and Training (10)*

Participants suggested increasing the amount of education on pet licensing for pet owners. Suggestions included increasing the importance of dog training certifications and potentially requiring certification before being granted a license.



## OPTION 2: MODIFIED MODEL

### *Designated Off-Leash Areas (49)*

Participants expressed a need for designated off-leash areas. It is important to balance the needs of park users to allow everyone the opportunity to enjoy parks safely and comfortably. Many people also expressed concern with the pilot pop-up dog parks and mentioned that the dog parks had a very confined space for dogs and created several conflicts. Community members emphasized the need for a larger designation of off-leash areas with both supervision and ample space.

### *General Opposition (26)*

Participants like to walk their dogs in their neighborhood and want to access off-leash areas within a walkable radius without needing to drive. Participants did not feel that this option would provide enough access to off-leash areas in parks and would restrict their right to walk with their pets unleashed.

### *General Support (12)*

Some participants preferred this model with slight changes.

### *Environment (12)*

Participants opposed this model because it is not favorable for the environment. Participants expressed that this model as unsuitable because driving their dogs to access off-leash areas will result in causing more harm to the environment and creation of greenhouse gas emissions.

### *Balancing Needs (11)*

Participants expressed that this model would divide the community. This option does not encompass or balance the needs of all residents and is unfavorable.

## OPTION 3: URBAN CONTEXT MODEL

### *General Opposition (46)*

Many participants expressed concern with this option because Saanich is not as urban as Vancouver or Victoria. Respondents mentioned that they moved to Saanich for its rural context and enjoy spending their time in a laid back, countryside setting.

### *Too Restrictive (18)*

Many participants believed this option is too restrictive. With the rising population of dog owners and dogs, this option may create more conflict and potential divide in the community if most parks have restrictions.

### *Park Specific Strategies (18)*

Participants commented that Saanich parks will need individual strategies based on the context of each park and the Strategy cannot be created from urban precedents.

### *Leash Restrictions (17)*

Some participants preferred this model because it creates a default leash option for residents to feel safe and comfortable in parks.

## OPTION 4 : RESTRICTIVE MODEL

### *General Opposition (81)*

Many participants expressed concern with this model. Respondents believed that this option is unrealistic for Saanich and should not be used.

### *Too Restrictive (31)*

Several participants considered this option as too restrictive for both dogs and dog owners. They believed that this option, if implemented, will force owners to choose between walking their dogs and exercising on their own. Many dog owners commented that the only reason that they go to parks is because of their dogs and this option would discourage that.

### *Enforcement & Compliance (24)*

Some participants preferred this model as it created restrictions and enforces compliance. Community members were in favor of creating policies for dog walkers.

### *Environment (7)*

Participants expressed that the environment should be prioritized and preferred this model because it includes the most protection of wildlife and natural areas.

## STATION 4

### PILOT DOG PARKS

#### *Enclosures and Fencing (44)*

Providing an enclosed space where owners can safely train their dog is seen as the primary benefit provided by fenced pop up parks. However, on multiple occasions, participants commented that the existing fencing in some parks is inadequate. A particular example (referenced by 4 participants) is Beckwith Park where dogs can get through the fence or gate.

While a few participants noted enjoying the social interaction between owners at the pilot pop-up dog parks, several participants felt that dog parks can lead to more conflict between dogs. This was attributed to forced proximity and interaction between dogs of all ages and behaviors which can cause reactivity.

### *Inadequate Size (41)*

Participants were not satisfied with the pilot pop up dog parks because they were g too small.

### *Mental and Physical Health (24)*

Participants remarked on how important exercise is for their overall wellbeing and their dog's. Many felt that the quality of exercise was inadequate at the pop-up parks, with regards to stimulus, natural features, and size.

### *Designated Off-leash Areas (18)*

Participants would like to see the more popular pop-up dog parks made permanent. Others would like to see Houlihan Park better utilized as a designated off leash area.

### *Infrastructure and Amenities (15)*

Participants felt that the pop-up dog parks had inadequate amenities such as access to water, shade, trees, and places to sit. Additionally, there was mention of the need for more garbage cans and more regular cleaning/waste disposal.

### *Pop-up Park Awareness (12)*

A few participants were unaware of when or where the pop up parks were occurring and wished there had been more notice.

## STATION 5

### REFLECTION WALL

#### *Designated off leash areas (68)*

Pet owners added that in small, fenced spaces, they are unable to exercise alongside their dog and that their dogs do not receive the same quality or amount of exercise. Many participants noted that, while they understood the need for pop-up dog parks, they should not be considered an equivalent replacement for off-leash trails and beaches. A few seniors, along with others who have mobility issues, added that walking with their dogs off-leash is easier because they can walk without being pulled.

#### *Equitable and Balanced Approach (54)*

Numerous community members felt that the best way forward is with an equitable and balanced approach. They shared that the Strategy should create spaces for all by understanding and providing for the diversity of Saanich community member's needs. This includes holding space for those who want to enjoy nature without the presence of dogs, while providing sufficient space for pet owners to exercise alongside their pets.

#### *Mental and Physical Health (45)*

Many participants noted the importance of outdoor exercise for their own physical and mental health pets being a strong component of that.

#### *Perceived Bias (30)*

Participants shared that they feel the process and general discourse is biased against dogs and dog-owners. They felt that the questionnaire had an anti-dog tone and others noted a lack of trust as they sensed decisions had already been made before the public was engaged.

#### *Responsible Dog Ownership (22)*

Respondents commented that there should be an explicit level of dog obedience expected and monitored by the District. There were suggestions that licensing fees should be used to fund dog training classes that encourage responsible dog ownership and fines for those who do not license their pet. Many felt that most dog owners are responsible and that irresponsible owners should be better educated rather than the District imposing greater restrictions city-wide.

### *Bylaw Enforcement and Licensing (17)*

Some participants felt that bylaws should be better enforced and that the presence of bylaw officers in parks should be greater. It was also suggested that licensing should be better regulated and that the cost should be higher.

### *Sense of Community (17)*

Some residents feel discouraged by this process as they feel it has led to tension and a divide in the community.

### *Signage (8)*

A few participants would like to see better signage where dogs are permitted, around off leash areas, and with environmental considerations and pet etiquette.

## COMMENTS RELATING TO THE OPEN HOUSE

Generally, participants were satisfied with the event. Some recurring comments were:

- It was hosted at a good time for people to attend
- Given that the event format required participants to fill out a lengthy exercise/feedback form, some wished they had been told ahead of time that it would take longer than the average Open House
- Staff were friendly
- The information presented was very comprehensive
- It would have been easier to read if there had been less information per board and bigger font used
- For the most part, people felt there was good awareness/advertising of the event
- Many felt that the process was biased towards no dogs/on-leash restrictions
- Posting the raw data would be helpful for further discussion - particularly to support the environmental concerns that were raised (i.e., how many people felt a certain way)
- There was a bottleneck in the flow of people at the open house

# APPENDIX D

## Correspondence Overview (by email)

# SAANICH PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS STRATEGY

## ROUND 2 – CORRESPONDENCE BY EMAIL

The following provides a high-level overview of the **59 correspondences** received by email throughout Round 2 (December 2022 - March 2023).

Correspondence is organized into four categories:

- Comments on the Process
- Information Sharing
  - Environmental Concerns & Damage to ESAs
  - Precent Research
  - Information to Inform Strategy Elements
- Pet Interactions in Parks
- News and Media

The number of comments within each category are stated in parenthesis. Note some correspondence may be included in more than one category.

### *Comments on Process (16)*

- Perceived bias against dogs and off leash regulations
- Concerns around reliability of sources used in arguments against dogs
- Feelings of discomfort and lack of safety attending in-person engagement events
- Dissatisfaction with questionnaire format and questionnaire logic (i.e., those who are not commercial dog walkers should still be allowed to respond to questions on the subject)
- Concerns around statistical reliability of questionnaire data
- Appreciation shared for staff at the Open House
- Appreciation for process to date and format of the open house
- Concern that the naming of Option 4 as “Restrictive” gives the wrong impression, alternate suggestions included “Environmental Context”
- Concerns raised on aspects of the project not being shown or engaged on



## Information Sharing (33)

### Environmental Concerns & Damage to ESAs (22)

- Report by Environment and Climate Change Canada (highlighting dog impact on bird sanctuaries)
- A Brief History of Mount Douglas Park Report
- Friends of Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary shared images, signage, and maps
- Photos of dog damage to Mount Douglas Park ecosystems at risk (which had previously been fully restored)
- Photos of holes and other damage done by off-leash dogs in Garry Oak Meadows
- Article by Tyee on BC's loss of Garry Oak woodland
- PKOLS-Mount Douglas Conservancy Park Plan
- Information on bird migration & dog conflicts
- Resources concerning the impacts of dog waste on the environment
- PKOLS-Mount Douglas Conservancy - A Priceless Saanich Asset Report
- Mapping of Human and Canine Damage in the Southern End of PKOLS – Mount Douglas Park
- Study assessing the impact of domestic dogs on the natural environment
- Perspective on the impact of humans and dogs in natural areas
- Pulling Together Volunteers Issues and Recommendations Report

### Precedent Research (8)

- CRD animal control activity reports (as an example for the need for extensive official presence and enforcement)
- CRD programs around dog obedience
- Suggestion to model this Strategy on Lethbridge example
- Precedents shared on key elements of the Strategy
- Commercial dog walker permit application from CRD as precedent
- Information left at open house with a range of photos and precedents from the Lower Mainland of dog parks, signage, and restrictions
- Delta and Vancouver commercial dog walking regulations
- 2020 petition to ban dogs from tennis courts

## Information to Inform Strategy Elements (11)

- Consider adding a Furever Clean Dog Wash in one of the parks as an amenity for dogs who get muddy
- Dog trainers cap classes at 6-8 people, therefore video lessons should be considered for the broad public
- Long-time Saanich resident shared they have never had a negative interaction with an off-leash dog and do not support pop up parks as replacement/alternative to off-leash trails
- Information regarding effective areas available vs. number of parks
- Information on recurring topics of conversation/complaint (i.e., dog waste, enclosed (fenced) parks, holes dug, responsible ownership etc.).
- Feedback on importance of safety and environmental elements of parks system
- Suggestion to consider phasing and flexibility within Strategy implementation
- Recommendations on Strategy elements including the environment and safety
- Concerns with the potential to impose too many restrictions on pets in parks
- Comments to consider a balanced approach so there are appropriate spaces for all interests and needs (e.g., safety, accessibility, pet/owner exercise, nature conservation, fear of dogs, etc.)
- Suggestion to create and share a map of Saanich waste receptacles

## *Pet Interactions in Parks (10)*

- Video shared of unruly and unobserved dogs causing damage to the ecosystem in PKOLS – Mount Douglas Park
- Photos of dogs in Cadboro Beach
- Two dog attack incident reports
- Comments that dog owners are and should not be considered the scapegoat for conflicts in Saanich parks
- Personal account (as a senior and someone with mobility challenges) of past injuries and feeling unsafe at Curtis Point from off-leash dogs
- Photos and information on positive interactions with dogs
- Leash compliance spreadsheet for the eastern side of Cadboro Bay Beach
- Perspective that irresponsible owners make up a minor percentage of all Saanich dog owners.

## *News and Media (10)*

- Videos of a dog walker allowing their dogs to dig
- Video and presentation of dogs off trail in Environmentally Significant Areas
- News article shared on off-leash dogs being a key for Saanich
- CTV news article on Saanich PPP questionnaire