



District of Saanich

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# People, Pets and Parks Strategy

COMMUNITY  
CONVERSATIONS

June 2022



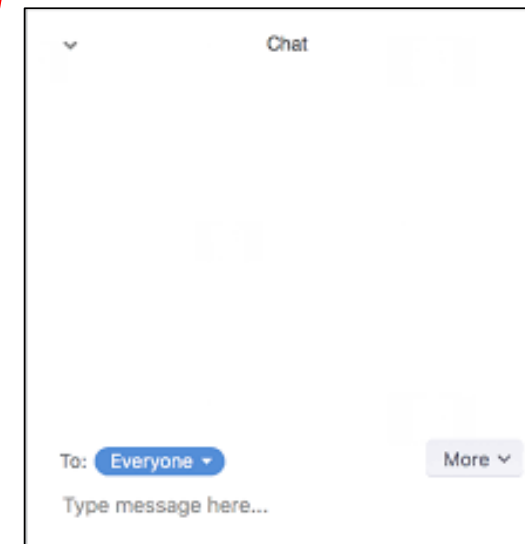
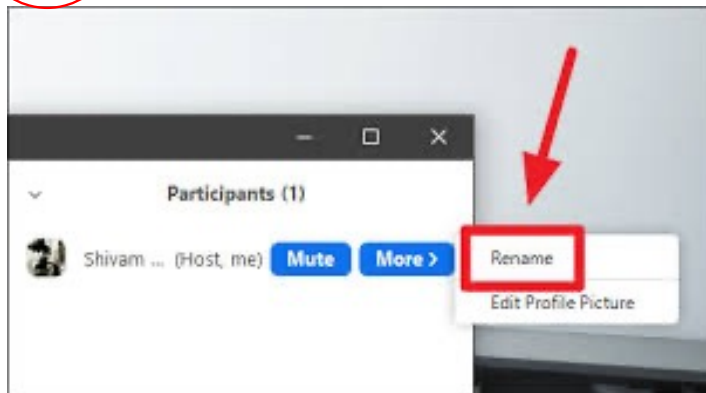
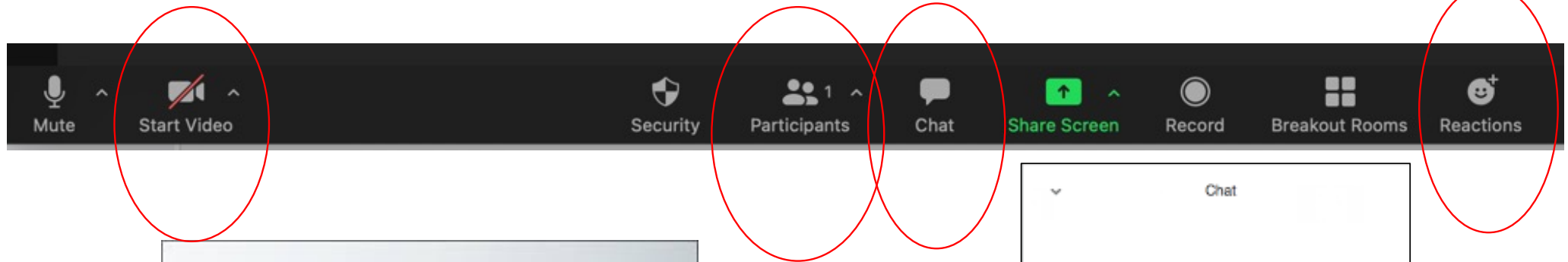
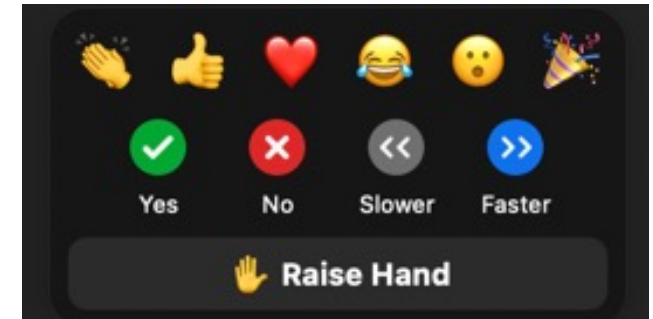
# Spirit of Engagement

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- Honour the time we have together
- We share the responsibility for an effective meeting
- Respect the diversity of experience and wisdom of all here
- Everyone has a voice
- Challenge ideas, not people
- Speak to be understood, listen to understand

*This session is a sharing of ideas, but  
not the making of a decision.*

# Zoom Tools



# Agenda

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- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <i>10 min</i> | <b>1.</b> Project Background & Process Timeline                                     |
| <i>10 min</i> | <b>2.</b> Park Perspectives: Understanding the Different Interests in Saanich Parks |
| <i>20 min</i> | <b>3.</b> Breakout Rooms #1: Walk in Their Shoes                                    |
| <i>10 min</i> | <b>4.</b> Building the Strategy: Key Topics   |
| <i>20 min</i> | <b>5.</b> Breakout Rooms #2: Pets in Parks  |
| <i>5 min</i>  | <b>6.</b> Report Back & Closing   |

# **PROJECT BACKGROUND & PROCESS TIMELINE**

# Strategy Purpose

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*“...allow Saanich and its park users to achieve positive desired relationships between all people (pet owners and non-pet owners), pets and the environment (parks and beaches)”*

# Strategy Goals

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**Develop a framework** that balances community needs and environmental protection.



**Define policy elements** that will be required to improve the compliance and enforcement of pet related bylaws in parks.



**Provide opportunities for residents and stakeholders to understand, engage with, and provide feedback** on the project.



**Develop an implementation guide.**



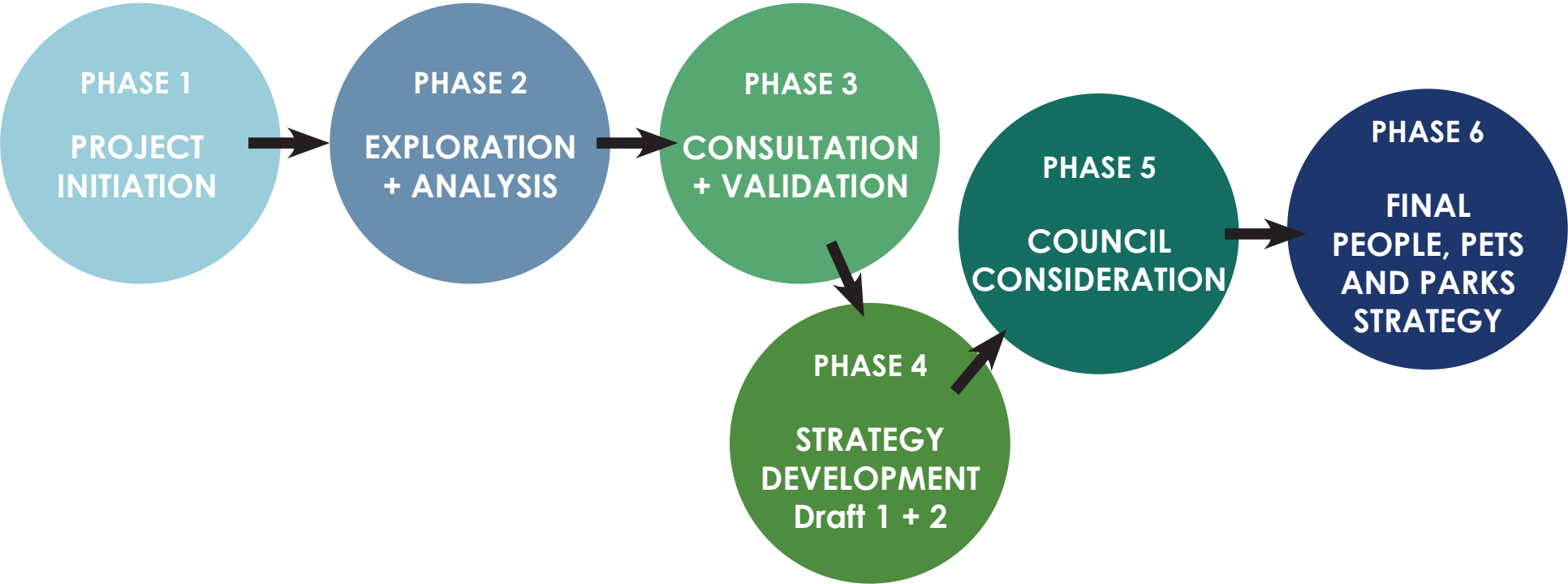
**Establish a monitoring and reporting guide** to evaluate the success of the shared use framework.

# Project Overview

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WE ARE HERE

..... FEB-MAR 2022 ..... FEB-APR 2022 ..... MAY 2022 - MAY 2023 ..... ➤ MAY 2023





# Engagement Overview



# **PARK PERSPECTIVES:**

Understanding the  
Different Interests  
in Saanich Parks

# Engagement Objectives

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**Identify specific tactics and messaging** to engage residents and various stakeholders.



**Provide a range of inclusive and equitable engagement opportunities** that enable strong participation.



**Cultivate empathy and understanding** for the needs of different groups and the natural environment.



**Provide a clear link between engagement results and recommendations/outcomes.**

# What We've Heard (so far)

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## Growth in Saanich

is putting pressure on the parks system and future demand should be considered in the planning process.

## Different scales

of interventions are needed to accommodate the variety of pet users and different types of park/outdoor spaces.

## Conflict of Park Use

between the preservation of natural areas/sensitive species and recreation as an activity for both people & pets.





## August

### Dog Owner, 29

#### Motivations:

Walks his dog, Gus, every day in Rutledge Park. Gus is very well behaved and likes to play with other dogs.

#### Frustrations:

August wants all Saanich parks to remain off leash for dogs.



## Mercer

### Child, 8

#### Motivations:

Lives nearby Cadboro-Gyro Park and likes to play on the playground there.

#### Frustrations:

Mercer is afraid of dogs and does not like it when they run nearby her while she is playing.



## Miya & Lin

### Seniors, 74

#### Motivations:

Need accessible pathways and benches to sit in Saanich parks comfortably.

#### Frustrations:

Miya and Lin want to maintain the cleanliness of parks through waste management.



# Toni

## WSÁNEĆ Nation Member, 37

### Motivations:

Wants the District to protect culturally significant sites and recognize history of the lands.

### Frustrations:

Toni would like to see people respecting the park lands and the biodiversity and animal life that exist in each.



# Migratory Bird

### Motivations:

Relies on significant and sensitive habitat throughout Saanich parks and beaches.

### Frustrations:

Bird species are declining due to increased park use and their disturbed habitat.



# Nick

## Teen, 15

### Motivations:

Lives nearby Tolmie Park and likes to play basketball there with his friends.

### Frustrations:

Nick sometimes has to travel farther away to other parks when Tolmie Park is overcrowded.

## Breakout Rooms #1: Walk in Their Shoes

Are there any other park user groups or perspectives that are important to acknowledge?

Where do you see opportunities to accommodate various/multiple users?

Are there any parks that you know of that do a good job of this?





DISCUSSION



**BUILDING THE  
STRATEGY:  
KEY TOPICS**

# Current State

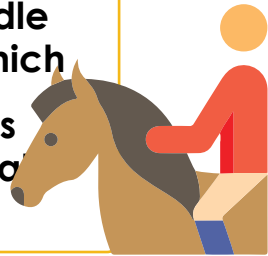
## Dogs

- No designated dog off-leash trails or areas in Saanich
- Bylaw includes on-leash restricted areas and trails, restricted areas and trails where no dogs are allowed, and seasonal restrictions

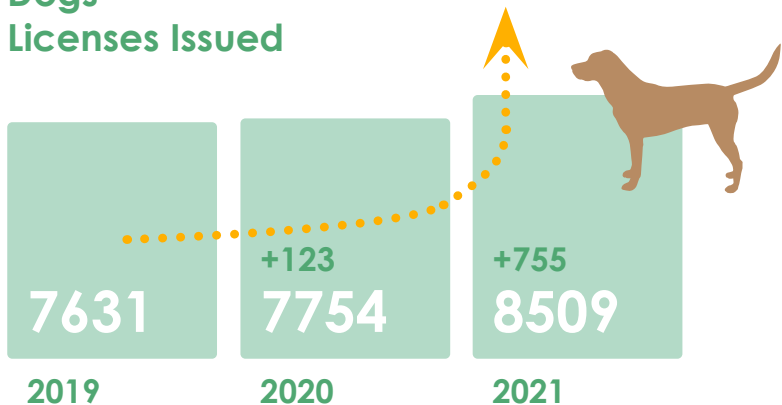


## Horses

- No designated bridle trails for horses in Saanich Parks but there are bridle trails in CRD Parks located in Saanich
- Horse riders occasionally use trails around Blenkinsop Valley and rural Saanich



## Dogs Licenses Issued



## Pop-Up Dog Parks 2021

- Fowler Park
- Hyacinth Park
- Gorge Park
- Rudd Park
- Cadboro Gyro Park

## 2022

- Beckwith
- Vantreight
- Gorge Park



## 2021 Pop-Up Survey Highlights

- About 80% of respondents would utilize one of the dog parks if it became permanent
- About 40% walk their dogs off-leash in a Saanich park daily
- Top concerns were owners not controlling their dogs, aggressive dogs, and cleanliness

# Policy and Bylaws

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## FEDERAL ACTS

**Migratory Bird Convention Act,**  
*Environment and Climate Change Canada*

Prohibits harm to migratory birds

Prohibits domestic animals, including dogs, from running at-large

## CRD BYLAWS

***Bylaw 1465 - Animal Regulation & Impounding***  
***Bylaw No.1, 1986***  
**(consolidated 2002)**

Outlines restrictions related to dogs on beaches, dogs in heat, and dangerous dogs.

CRD is now responsible for animal control in Saanich.

## SAANICH BYLAWS

***Bylaw No. 8556, 2004***

Outlines restrictions related to pets including leashing at locations such as schools and recreation areas.

Restrictions vary from park to park and limits dogs and dogs off-leash at several environmentally sensitive locations.

# Best Practices

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## Licensing:

- Most require owners to obtain a license for their dog



## Pet waste:

- Many bylaws state that pet waste must be picked up immediately



## Restrictions:

- Many communities do not allow dogs on sports fields, beaches, or ecologically sensitive areas



## Off-leash areas:

- Many communities have designated on and off-leash areas including beaches, trails & parks



## Insurance:

- Some bylaws stipulate that owners need to be insured in the event of a dog related incident



## Dangerous dogs:

- Some bylaws specify the length of leash needed for dangerous dogs, or that they must be muzzled



# Approaches from Other Jurisdictions

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## Vancouver

Uses data to prioritize new Off Leash Dog Areas:

- dog licensing
- population statistics
- neighbourhood greenspace

## Seattle

- Partners with volunteer groups to do day-to-day maintenance of OLAs and supply dog bags
- City provides seating, garbage bins and agility equipment

## Edmonton

- **Provides separate areas for small/shy dogs**
- Recommends that dog off-leash areas have trees and vegetation to keep dogs busy
- **Benches provided, but no picnic tables**

# Signage and Communications Examples

Sensitive bird habitat  
educational signage,  
United Kingdom



Poo Fairy education  
campaign and red bin  
program,  
City of North Vancouver



Dog behaviour signage,  
International Association  
of Animal Behavior  
Consultants (IAABC)



## Breakout Rooms #2: Pets in Parks

What are some important considerations for pets in Saanich parks?





DISCUSSION