



## REPORT: BURLINGTON OFF-LEASH OPPORTUNITIES

Date: June 7, 2013

To: City Council

From: The Off-Leash Work Group (OLWG)

Community Representatives: Ed Pais, Chair, Betsy Allen-Pennebaker, Lynne Lieb, Becky Poitras, and Louise Stoll; Staff: Deryk Roach, Dan Cahill and Jen Francis

Re: Off-Leash Work Group Findings

### I. Introduction & Background

#### MEETING BURLINGTON'S OFF-LEASH NEEDS

- Burlington's population is growing; continued increase projected
  - The CCRPC's ECOS Project predicts a population growth spurt in Chittenden County: 50,000 people over the next 25 years
- Off-Leash pilot program initiated in 1998
  - Five locations identified by the pilot program
    - Starr Farm Park
    - Waterfront Dog Park at the Urban Reserve
    - Intervale
    - Schmanska Park
    - Oakledge Park
  - Two of these locations remain operational today as fenced dog runs
    - Starr Farm Park
    - Waterfront Dog Park at the Urban Reserve
  - Need to revise and formalize this pilot program
- Build on past successes and lessons learned

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#### TODAY'S OFF-LEASH ISSUES

- Expressed community desire for more off-leash opportunities within the City of Burlington
- Need for improved compliance in licensing
  - ***1255 dogs were licensed in the City of Burlington in 2012; the Humane Society of Chittenden County estimates Burlington's dog population to be closer to 7,000***
- Need for dog owners to assume greater responsibility in stewardship practices
- Need for improved access
- Need for improved enforcement
- Need for additional funding to support maintenance, enforcement & expansion opportunities

- Protection of natural resources

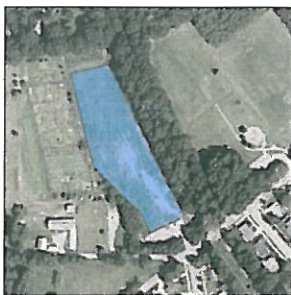
*Off-Leash Areas Identified by the 1998 Pilot Program*



*Five pilot off-leash areas as proposed in 1998*



*Two off-leash areas currently in operation*



*Starr Farm Park*



*Waterfront/Urban Reserve*



*Intervale*



*Schmanska Park*



*Oakledge Park*



## REGISTERED DOGS IN BURLINGTON - 2012



Date: 1/22/2012

Author: dcahill

### **COMMON PERCEPTIONS**

Many emails were received and conversations held with residents and dog-park users during this process. These are among the common themes that emerged:

- If people think the ***rules are unfair***, they are more likely to ignore them. This is the current state of dog areas in Burlington.
- Large open spaces that have ***mixed opportunities are appealing***. These places offer an opportunity to be alone with your dog in a more private setting, which contrasts the more typical dog run.
- Current park users feel as though they have to break the rules in order to access park resources with their dogs because there are ***not enough off-leash options available***. This is an uncomfortable position for dog owners.
- ***Accessibility is important***... equal distribution of off-leash areas throughout city and seasons, for all ages and abilities, particularly for elderly community members.
- People are ***more likely to follow fewer rules*** than many.
- ***Potential revenue opportunities*** exist to hold special events in off-leash areas.
- ***Inconsistent enforcement***... confusion with the "Parks Patrol" in yellow shirts; dogs must be vaccinated & registered, but there is a lack enforcement to ensure this is happening.

## **II. Development of the Off-Leash Work Group**

### **FORMATION**

- Formed per directive of the City Council in the fall of 2011
- Comprised of representation from each ward and park staff
- Ward representatives served as liaisons to neighbors and communities

### **TASKS**

- Establish of off-leash goals & objectives
- Research successful off-leash programs
- Evaluate current off-leash areas & identify potential expansion opportunities
- Consider a strategic approach to improve and expand Burlington off-leash opportunities
  - Consider long-term funding sources, maintenance practices, partnerships
- Review and revise existing City dog/off-leash ordinance
- Review and revise Parks policy regarding off-leash areas
  - Consider hours of use, terms of etiquette, safety standards, stewardship
- Report findings to City Council & Ordinance Committee

### **CREATION OF GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

- Goals
  - Foster healthy relationships between dog owners, non-dog owners, and all park users
  - Improve off-leash opportunities to support all users in a healthy, sustainable environment



- Objectives
  - Identify off-leash opportunities & policy considerations
  - Evaluate current off-leash areas & consider future expansion locations
  - Consider opportunities & recommendations (site specific)
  - Identify performance metrics & enforcement opportunities
  - Identify opportunities for communication, community involvement & partnerships

### III. Off-Leash Work Group Findings

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: IDENTIFY OFF-LEASH OPPORTUNITIES & POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Several types of off-leash opportunities were identified by the work group:

##### *Potential Types of Off-Leash Opportunity*

TYPE	TERRAIN	EXAMPLES	CONSIDERATIONS
Fenced Dog Runs	Outdoor or indoor open area	Starr Farm	Typically fenced; could include: training areas, obstacle course equipment, small dog hours, puppy hours, senior hours, reservations & programmed training opportunities
Open Fields (non-fenced)	Varies		Typically unfenced
Mixed-use Areas	Combination of open fields, trails, woods and swim access	Niquette Bay State Park, Centennial Woods	Typically unfenced; some dogs and owners are intimidated by fenced in areas
Off-Leash Hours	Varies/specific locations	Central Park, NYC	Early morning, late evening, etc.
Seasonal Usage	Varies		Potential summer & winter hours
Recreation/Hiking Trails	Varies	Stowe, VT	Areas should be designated by clear signage
Designated Dog Beaches	Water	Chicago, San Diego	Fenced and unfenced areas can be successful
Unique Opportunities	Training areas, special hours for puppies/senior dogs, athletic court & field winter access, partnership with cemeteries, landfill reclamation, regional facilities, indoor dog runs	Albany, CA, Washington D.C. Congress. Cemetery	Seasonal dog parks, potential seasonal locations, potential conflict with historic preservation/significance, may requires coordination & participation between multiple entities

Considerations also included operations, program, and education policy:

### ***Policy Type Considerations***

<b>OPERATIONS POLICY</b>	
<b>Time</b>	<i>Clear identification of hours of operation for various venues</i>
	<i>Provide hourly and seasonal off-leash times in specific areas</i>
	<i>Set hours to meet multiple user's needs</i>
	<i>Recommended hours: early AM 5-9:00 a.m./early PM 6-9:00 p.m.</i>
<b>Safety</b>	<i>Minimize intimidation scenarios</i>
	<i>Lighting in specific off-leash areas to provide additional security</i>
	<i>Agreement that shelter is desirable, but not a necessity</i>
	<i>Agreement that access to emergency phones in parks is not a necessity</i>
	<i>Management of conflicting use</i>
<b>PROGRAM POLICY</b>	
<b>Short List of Rules &amp; Regs</b>	Be a good neighbor
	Attend to dogs at all times
	License all dogs
	Limit of four (4) dogs per owner
	Bicycles, skateboards and skates are prohibited
	Food/treats prohibited unless otherwise indicated
	Control & limit barking
	Clean up after your dog
	Dogs must be under voice control
	Report all dog bites to animal control (provide phone number)
<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICY</b>	
<b>Off-Leash Vocabulary</b>	Community development & education
<b>Etiquette</b>	For dog owners & non-dog owners everywhere (on- & off-leash areas)
	Build awareness within shared use areas: interaction with runner, bikers, etc.
	Improve activity identification signage
<b>Environmental Protection</b>	Owners responsible for picking up after their dogs at all times
	Shift from current City-supported plastic bags to community driven bag collection points



In addition, the work group felt that there was a need for clarity regarding the management and enforcement of off-leash areas:

- If users have a grounds or operations complaint, the Department of Parks & Recreation should be contacted
- If users need to report a bite or other incident, calls should be directed to the Police Department's Community Resource Officer
- Phone numbers for both Departments should be available and clear

Specific policy recommendations are included in the "Off-Leash Dog Policy" statement in the Appendix that detail Designation of Areas and Times of Operation, Rules for Commercial Use of Off-Leash Dog Areas, Signage, Operations, and Public Outreach & Enforcement.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2: EVALUTATE CURRENT OFF-LEASH AREAS & CONSIDER FUTURE EXPANSION LOCATIONS**

The Off-Leash Areas of Consideration Matrix & Map were developed as a tool to evaluate and rank existing & potential off-leash areas. While these documents are quantitative, staff recommendations as detailed in the Director's Memo are based on both the work group findings and Department qualitative data.

The Off-Leash Areas of Consideration Matrix includes:

- Consideration of forty potential sites
- Consideration of several other smaller-scale sites disqualified because of existing constraints
- All other park areas not addressed in this plan are recognized as on-leash areas only

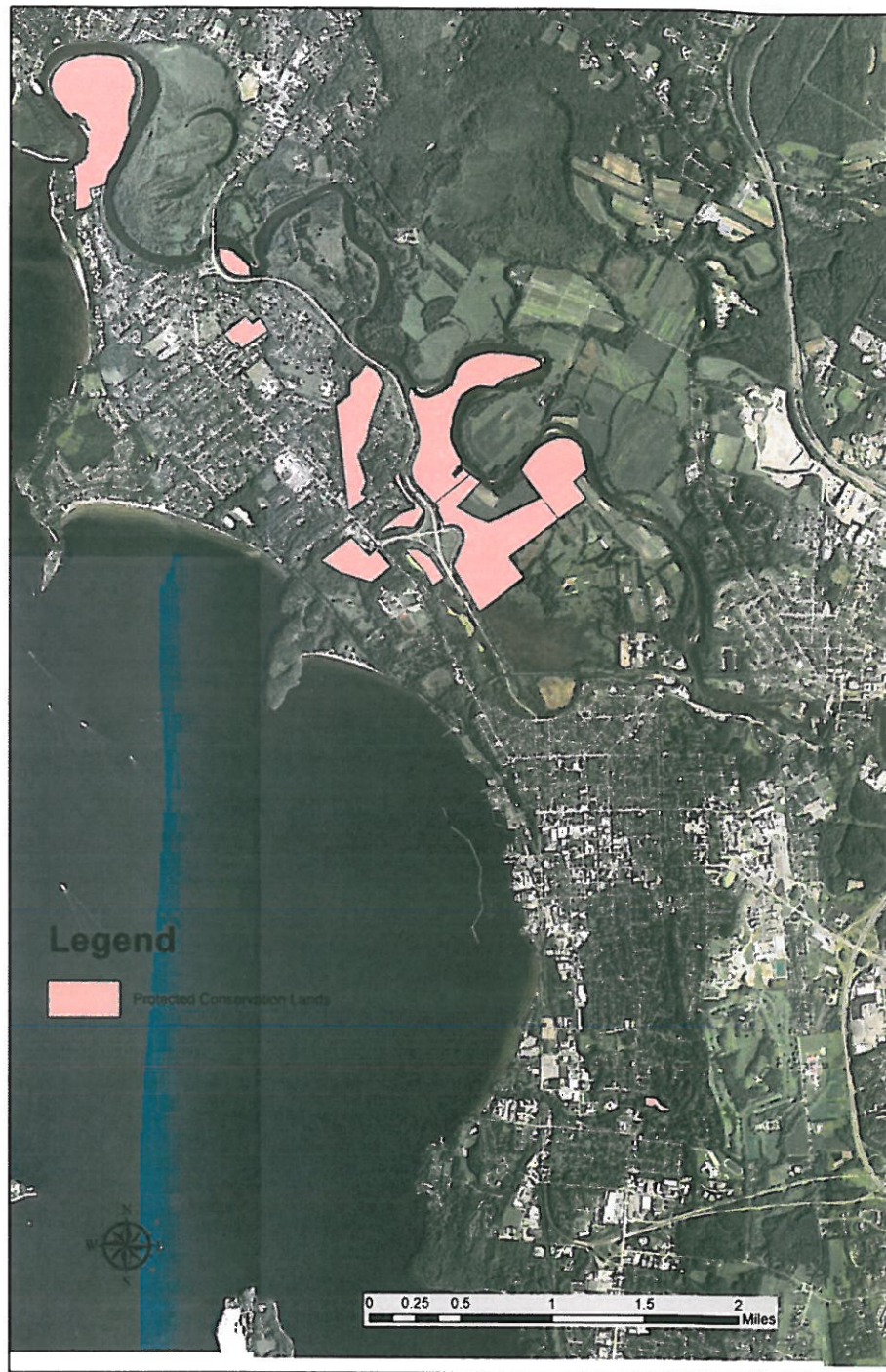
*Refer to matrix and map.*

#### **Protected Conservation Lands**

Note that conservation lands may not be considered as potential off-leash areas because of existing management plans and policies that protect the significant natural features present at each respective property.

- Conservation lands have significant natural features (sensitive plant & animal species) and high values of contribution towards ecological processes.
- All of Burlington's conservation areas adhere to best management principles - the most relevant being the consideration of human & dog impact on the function of the land
- Parks & Open Spaces that have been set aside specifically for conservation are not conducive to off-leash programming because of existing management plans geared towards the preservation and protection of the natural environment.
- In Burlington these lands include: The Winooski Valley Park District, Urban Wilds, Mt. Calvary Wetland, Ethan Allen Park, Arms Grant Park, McKenzie Park, Rock Point, and Crescent Woods.

## PROTECTED CONSERVATION LANDS



Date: 1/22/2012

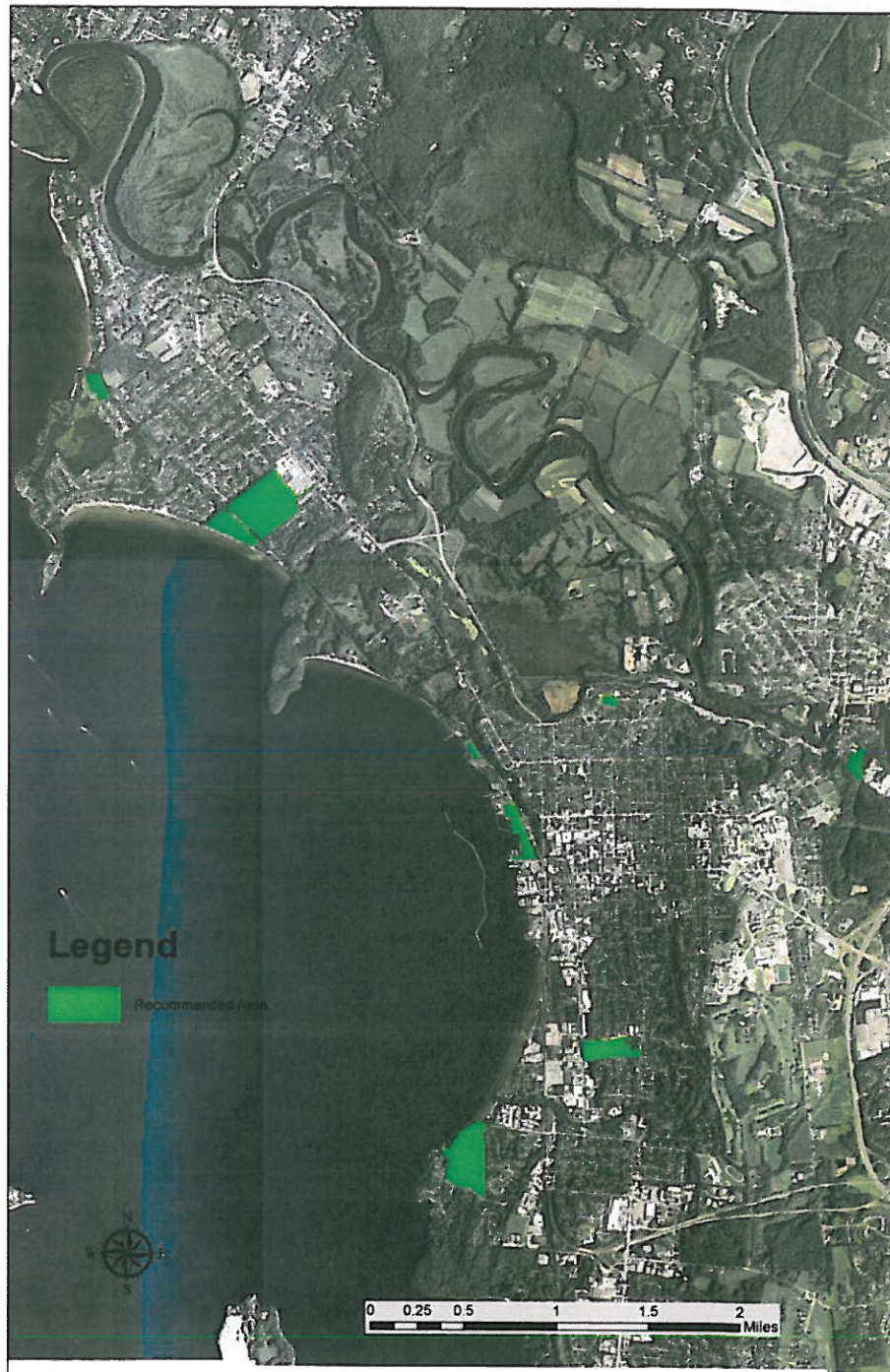
Author: dcakil



**OBJECTIVE 3: CONSIDER OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS (SITE SPECIFIC)**

Section A of Appendix B (Proposed Off-Leash Policy) details the proposed site-specific work group recommendations for off-leash opportunities within the City of Burlington. These areas are highlighted in green on the map below and include opportunities at Starr Farm Park, the Urban Reserve, Leddy Park, Oakledge Park, Calahan Park, Schmanska Park, Waterfront Park, and Roosevelt Park.

**OFF-LEASH WORK GROUP PROPOSED OPPORTUNITIES**



**OBJECTIVE 4: IDENTIFY PERFORMANCE METRICS & ENFORCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Members of the work group conducted nation-wide research by interviewing staff from the following communities known to have successful off-leash programs: Central Park, New York, NY; Berkeley, CA; Albany, CA; Richmond, CA; Portland, ME; Chicago, IL; San Diego, CA; Missoula, MT; Eugene, OR; Santa Barbara, CA; and Shelburne, VT. Questions were proposed and the findings informed the development of the recommended performance metrics.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

What are the MANAGEMENT RESOURCES needed to operate your model?

Do you have a DOG OFFICER, person or group to oversee the management of the program?

How do you enforce your RULES & REGULATIONS?

What is the annual cost of OFF-LEASH OPERATIONS?

What TYPES OF FACILITIES do you operate (dog runs, trails, seasonal use, fenced/unfenced)?

How many off-leash facilities does your park system offer?

Are dog FEES charged? How much of those fees are used to support dog amenities?

Are your off-leash areas open to NON-RESIDENTS?

Do off-leash opportunities promote tourism?

What is your city's human POPULATION? What is your city's dog population?

How many dog LICENSES are registered?

How do you GENERATE REVENUE for off-leash areas (programming, etc.?)

What are your PERFORMANCE METRICS?

**Recommended Performance Metrics**

- Preparation of a year-to -date budget review each fiscal quarter to determine and project fiscal stability and ability to meet the operational needs of off-leash opportunities
- Track weekly attendance record to build data for dog parks
  - Use sign-in sheets/on-site data collection including an annual survey through social media and NPA's to determine number of program participants
  - If possible, link this data collection to the registration process
  - Report on these numbers regularly
- Maintain volunteer capacity of greater than four (4) volunteers per fenced in dog run and two (2) for other off leash locations
  - Report on these numbers regularly and have detailed strategy to retain and recruit volunteers in the Off Leash Operational Plan
- Track number of complaints/requests for service
- Track number of complaints not serviceable
- Track number of days to complete service request



**Recommended Enforcement Opportunities**

- Detailed by Appendix B: Proposed Off-Leash Policy

**OBJECTIVE 5: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION, INVOLVEMENT & PARTNERSHIP**

- Neighborhood Planning Associations (NPA's)
- Social media
- Front Porch Forum
- Improved signage/kiosks
- Public education
- Websites (Parks & Recreation, City, Partners)

In addition, the work group identified local, dog-friendly hotels. These include: the Hilton Burlington, Sheraton Burlington, Made Inn Vermont, and North Beach Campground. Potential partnership opportunities may serve to support and improve Burlington tourism.

## **IV. Work Group Recommendations**

**ORDINANCE REVISION**

- See Appendix A: Proposed Off-Leash Ordinance Revisions

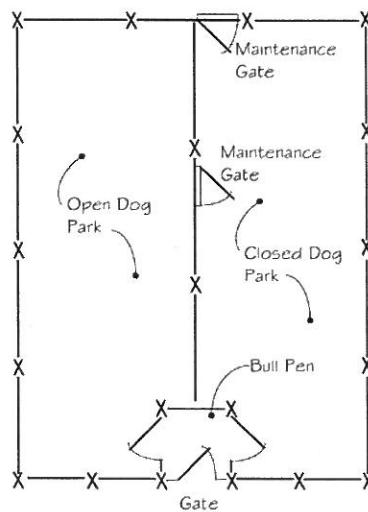
**POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

- See Appendix B: Proposed Off-Leash Policy
  - Formalize proposed off-leash opportunities per Appendix B
  - Staff development of an operation plan to further define rules & regulations, hours of operation, location of amenities, seasonal enforcement, etc.

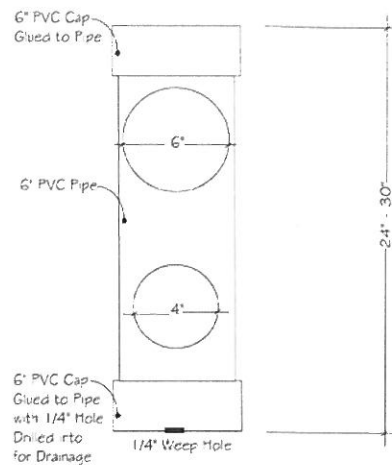
**UPGRADES TO EXISTING FACILITIES**

- Implementation of best management practices
  - Improved fencing, gates, and bull pens (entries)
  - Implementation of grounds "rest" areas within dog runs (benches, pavilions, shelters, picnic tables)
  - Improved signage/kiosks/public education materials
  - Implementation of community collection points for waste bags
- Amenities for consideration: improved access, shelter, seating, access to drinking water where possible, availability of waste bags/trash cans, notification/rules board, swim access, lighting, and emergency phones

### Best Management Practices



Sample grounds "rest" plan



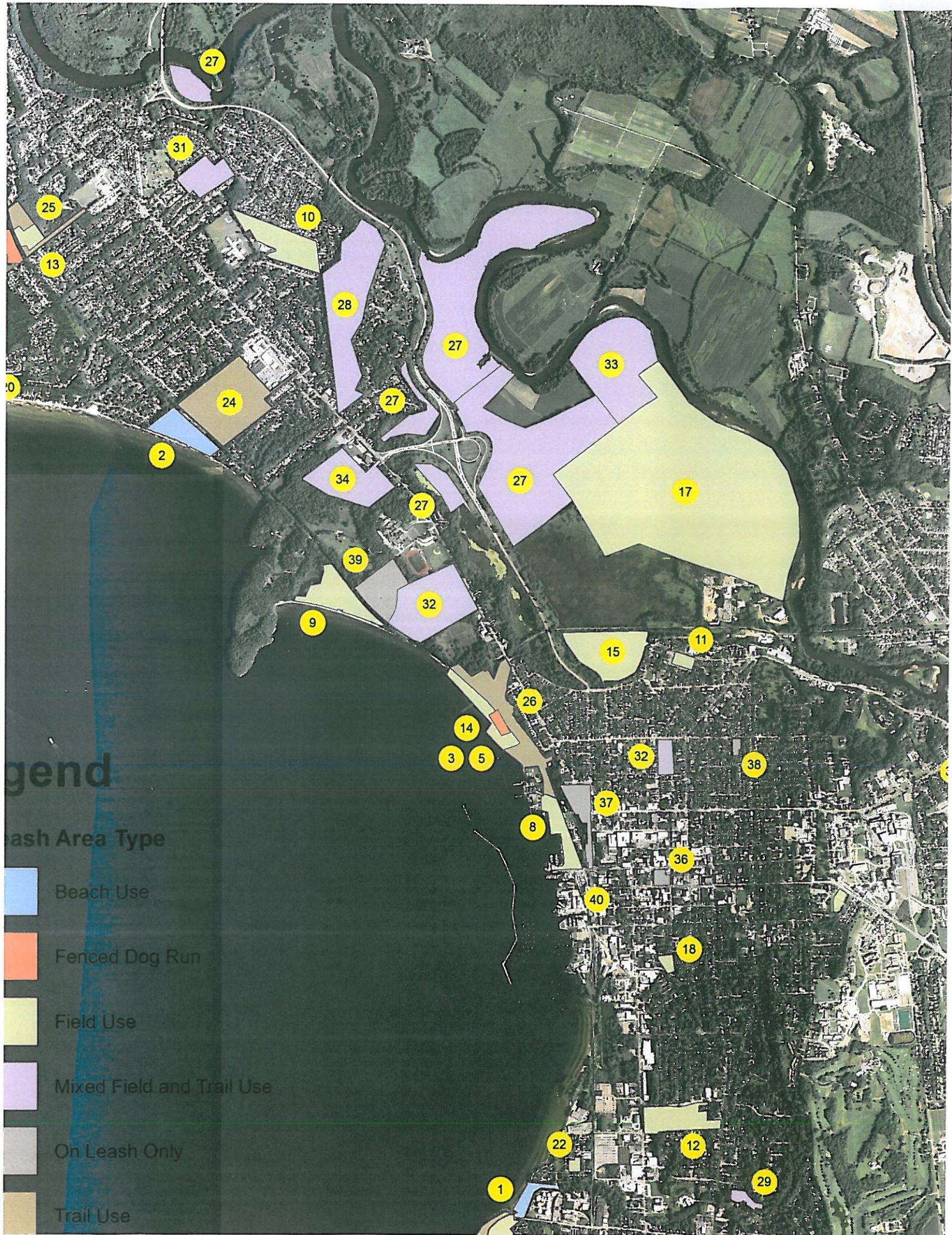
Community-supported waste bag collection system

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- See Appendix C: Additional Off-Leash Recommendations
  - Creation of an Animal Welfare Board
  - Review the structure of dog license fees
  - Review dog licensing
  - Promote the dog-friendliness of Burlington to visitors
  - Develop programs to improve etiquette
  - Provide public vehicular access to the Urban Reserve dog run
  - Pursue public-private development partnership opportunities
  - Establish Friends of Burlington Dog Parks Group

--END--





# Legend

## Wash Area Type

- Beach Use
- Fenced Dog Run
- Field Use
- Mixed Field and Trail Use
- On Leash Only
- Trail Use



Open space	22.41 acres	Seasonal	Center	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Potential	0
Regional park	46 acres	Year-round	South	1	Medium	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	Yes	1	Potential	0
Regional park	11.3 acres	Year-round	Center	1	Low	-1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	0	Yes	1	Potential	0
Neighborhood park	21.2 acres	Year-round	North	0	Medium	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Potential	0
Regional park	46 acres	Year-round, hourly & seas.	South	1	Medium	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	Yes	1	Potential	0
Event Grounds	3 acres	Seasonal	Center	1	High	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	2	Yes	1	No	-1
Regional park	38.7 acres	Seasonal	North	0	Low	-1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	No	0	Potential	0
Playfield	9.1 acres	Seasonal & hourly	North	0	High	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	No	0	No	-1
Playfield	3.3 acres	Year-round, hourly	Center	1	High	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	0	No	0	No	-1
Playfield	17.2 acres	Year-round, hourly & seas.	South	1	High	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Neighborhood park	21.2 acres	Year-round, seas., & hr.	North	0	Medium	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	0	Yes	2	Yes	1	Potential	0
Open space	22.41 acres	Year-round & seasonal	Center	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	0	Yes	1	Yes	1
Open space	35 acres	Seasonal	Center	1	Medium	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Neighborhood park	1.78 acres	Hourly	South	1	High	1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Agricultural area	338 acres	Undetermined	Center	1	Low	-1	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	Potential	0
Neighborhood park	2.14 acres	Year-round, hourly	South	1	High	1	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	-1
Neighborhood park	6.39 acres	Discretionary, hourly	Center	1	Low	-1	Yes	1	No	0	No	0	No	1	No	0	No	-1
Neighborhood park	3.5 acres	Year-round, hourly	North	0	Medium	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Open space	12.6 acres	Year-round	South	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Neighborhood park	1.65 acres	Year-round, hourly	South	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	-1
Regional park	46 acres	Year-round	South	1	Medium	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	Yes	1	Potential	0
Regional park	70.9 acres	Year-round	North	0	Medium	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	2	No	0	Potential	0
Neighborhood park	21.2 acres	Year-round, seasonal, hr.	North	0	Medium	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Potential	0
Open space	22.41 acres	Year-round & seasonal	Center	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	0	Yes	1	Yes	1
Partnership	146 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	Center	1	Low	-1	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	Potential	0
Urban Wild	80.3 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	North	0	Medium	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	2	Yes	1	No	-1
Partnership	5 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	South	1	Medium	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	1
Partnership	140 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	North	0	Low	-1	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	2	No	0	Potential	0
Urban Wild	11.7 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	North	0	High	1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Partnership	11.3 acres	Undetermined	Variable	1	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	2	No	0	No	-1
Urban Wild	66 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	North	0	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	Potential	0
Urban Wild	30.9 acres	Ineligible: dogs prohibited	North	0	Low	-1	No	0	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	No	0	No	-1
Pathway	20 acres	Year-round & seasonal	Variable	1	Variable	1	Yes	1	Variable	1	Variable	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Potential	0
Urban Park	4 acres	Year-round	Center	1	High	1	Yes	1	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	-1
Neighborhood park	9 acres	Year-round	Center	1	Medium	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	-1
Neighborhood park	1.47 acres	Year-round	Center	1	High	1	Yes	1	No	0	No	0	Yes	1	Yes	1	No	-1
Regional park	38.7 acres	Seasonal/Ref. App. D (fallow)	North	0	Low	-1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	1	Yes	2	No	0	Potential	0
Pocket park	.12 acres	Year-round	South	1	High	1	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	0	No	-1

e.

o available open space.





## APPENDIX A: PROPOSED OFF-LEASH ORDINANCE REVISIONS

Date: June 6, 2013

To: City Council

From: The Off-Leash Work Group (OLWG)

Community Representatives: Ed Pais, Chair, Betsy Allen-Pennebaker, Lynne Lieb, Becky Poitras, and Louise Stoll; Staff: Deryk Roach, Dan Cahill and Jen Francis

Re: Off-Leash Work Group Findings

Proposed Revisions to the Municipal Ordinance...

### Sec. 22-13. - Animals prohibited; exception

No domestic animals, except dogs, shall be permitted in any park. Dogs shall be held in leash by their owners unless in designated off-leash dog areas.

### Sec. 7. - Off-leash dog opportunities

(A) *Off-Leash Dog Policy.* The Department of Parks and Recreation shall maintain an off-leash dog policy. The policy may be modified by the Director of Parks and Recreation with the approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Off-Leash Dog Policy (OLDP) shall govern, the establishment, operations, and enforcement of off-leash dog opportunities as enumerated in this ordinance.

(B) *Designation of Areas.* Areas shall be designated for the purpose of allowing dogs to be under control of the owner or another individual by means other than physical restraint. The Parks and Recreation department shall maintain year-round off-leash opportunities in the South End, Center, and North End of the city, defined below. A variety of opportunities shall be provided including: fenced dog runs, water access, field use, and trail use on an hourly, seasonal, or year-round basis within reasonable walking distance of neighborhoods. Opportunities, where possible, shall be dispersed across the city. Permanent fenced dog runs shall be established in the ordinance, whereas the other area types shall be established in the OLDP.

(1) *Sections of the City.* Defined as:

- (a) *South End.* All portions of the city south of Maple Street and a line extending from Maple Street extending to the eastern and western limits of the city.
- (b) *Center.* All portions of the city north of Maple Street and a line extending from Maple Street extending to the eastern and western limits of the city and south of Washington Street and a line extending from Washington Street to the eastern and western limits of the city.
- (c) *North End.* All portions of the city north of Washington Street and a line extending from Washington Street to the eastern and western limits of the city.

- (2) *Permanent Off-Leash Fenced Dog Runs shall be located at:*
  - (a) *Starr Farm Park.* That portion of Starr Farm Park that is bounded on the east by the Burlington Bikeway and bounded on the west by that part of Starr Farm Park which is set aside for community gardens.
- (3) *Temporary Off-Leash Fenced Dog Runs shall be located at:*
  - (a) *Urban Reserve.* That portion of the area designated as the Waterfront Urban Reserve that is bounded on the east by the Burlington Bikeway, bounded on the south by the land known as the Texaco Jetty – including so much land to the south of the Jetty as to allow for access to the beach directly adjacent to the Jetty, and bounded on the north by the northern boundary of the Urban Reserve.
- (4) *Off-leash dog areas prohibited.* At the following parks dogs shall be permitted on-leash only:
  - (a) *Bike path*
  - (b) *Battery Park*
  - (c) *City Hall Park*
  - (d) *Champlain Street Park*
- (5) *Public Information.* Department of Parks and Recreation shall be responsible for maintaining clear reference to off-leash opportunities, maps, hours, and rules & regulations.

(C) *Times of Operation.* The times of operations shall be as determined in the OLDP.

(D) *General Rules for All Areas Designated as Off-Leash Dog Areas:*

- (1) A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall have control of the dog by means of physical restraint (leash, cord, chain, etc.) when entering and leaving the off-leash area.
- (2) A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall maintain voice, hand or other appropriate control over the dog at all times while the dog is in the off-leash area. Such person shall also have in their possession at all times a means of physical restraint.
- (3) A person taking a dog into an off-leash area may only do so during the times set forth by these rules.
- (4) All dogs present in an off-leash area shall be licensed and vaccinated and shall display valid license and vaccination tags attached to a dog collar.
- (5) A dog present in an off-leash area shall be the responsibility of a person who is present in the area with that dog. A person responsible for a dog in an off-leash area shall not leave the dog unattended in the off-leash area. A person responsible for a dog in an off-leash area shall be legally responsible for its actions.
- (6) A person shall not take a female dog in heat into an off-leash area.
- (7) A person taking a dog into an off-leash area is responsible for removing that dog's feces from the off-leash area. A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall carry equipment for removing such feces and shall place feces deposited by such animal in an appropriate receptacle.
- (8) A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall stop that dog from digging holes or destroying any parks property.



- (9) A person may not take more than three (3) dogs at a time into an off-leash dog area without a special permit given by the parks and recreation department. Professional dog trainers and organizations shall not use off-leash dog areas for their commercial activities except as allowed by this ordinance.
- (10) Vicious dogs as defined by Burlington Code of Ordinances section 5-13 are not allowed in an off-leash area.
- (11) There shall be no eating or smoking in the off-leash area.
- (12) Glass containers shall not be allowed in an off-leash area.
- (13) Any gate to an area shall be closed upon entry and exiting.
- (14) Person in control of a dog in an off-leash area shall not permit the dog to engage in excessive barking, howling, or other noise.
- (15) Persons under the age of twelve (12) years shall not be allowed in an off-leash area without the accompaniment of someone at least eighteen (18) years of age.

(E) *Enforcement:*

- (1) In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, a person or dog that violates off-leash rules and regulations is subject to ejection from the off-leash area.
- (2) In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, a duly authorized enforcement official may impound a dog for a violation of off-leash rules and regulations or for activities determined to be a nuisance.
- (3) In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, a person who violates the rules of this section on two (2) occasions within a twelve-month period may be barred from using the off-leash areas during the six (6) months after the second violation.

(F) *Administration:*

- (1) Signage. Signage depicting locations of off-leash dog areas, lists of essential rules, and other signage as necessary shall be installed in accordance with Parks and Recreation Department signage policy and the OLDLP.
- (2) Operations. Standard operating procedures and amenities provided in the off-leash dog areas shall be defined in the OLDLP.
- (3) Commercial Usage of Parks. The Department of Parks and Recreation may charge a fee to allow for commercial usage of the off-leash dog areas by professional trainers, and for-profit and not-for-profit animal organizations. Portions of the off-leash dog areas should allow for unencumbered usage by the public during these events. The fees charged for these events shall be used for the establishment, operations, or improvements of designated off-leash dog areas. Commercial use of off-leash dog areas without a permit shall result in a fine. Commercial Usage of off-leash dog areas may be further modified by the OLDLP.

--END--



## APPENDIX B: PROPOSED OFF-LEASH POLICY

Date: June 6, 2013

To: City Council

From: The Off-Leash Work Group (OLWG)

Community Representatives: Ed Pais, Chair, Betsy Allen-Pennebaker, Lynne Lieb, Becky Poitras, and Louise Stoll; Staff: Deryk Roach, Dan Cahill and Jen Francis

Re: Off-Leash Work Group Findings

Off-Leash Work Group proposed policy regarding:

- A. *Designation of Areas and Times of Operations*
- B. *Rules for Commercial Use of Off-Leash Dog Areas*
- C. *Signage*
- D. *Operations*
- E. *Public Outreach & Enforcement*

### **(A) *Designation of Areas and Times of Operations.***

The following areas, including those identified in the ordinance, are opportunities for off-leash areas:

#### **(1) Dog Runs**

- (a) *Starr Farm Park (year-round)*. That portion of Starr Farm Park that is bounded on the east by the Burlington Bikeway and bounded on the west by that part of Starr Farm Park which is set aside for community gardens.

- (i) *Times*. The designated area may be used year round during the operating hours of the park.

- (b) *Urban Reserve (year-round)*. That portion of the area designated as the Waterfront Urban Reserve Dog Run - bounded on the east by the Burlington Bikeway, the north by the land known as the Texaco Jetty – including so much land to the south of the Jetty as to allow for access to the beach directly adjacent to the dog run, and 280 yards north of the southern boundary of the Urban Reserve.

- (i) *Times*. The designated area may be used for off-leash use during operating hours.

#### **(2) Mixed Opportunities (water, open field, trails)**

- (a) *Leddy Park (year-round)*. Leddy Park in its entirety excluding programmed areas including parking lots, athletic fields, public beaches, buildings, roads and walks, courts, playgrounds, etc.

- (i) *Times*. The designated area may be used park operating hours.

- (b) *Oakledge Park 1 (seasonal)*. Oakledge Park in its entirety excluding programmed areas including athletic fields, playgrounds, courts, parking lots, roads and walks, buildings, public beaches, parking lots, etc.



- (i) *Times.* The designated area may be used November 16 to May 14.

(3) Water & Trail Opportunity

- (a) Oakledge Park 2 (year-round). That portion of Oakledge Park that is bounded on the west by the lake, bounded on the east by the bike path, on the south by the path to the cove, and bounded on the north by the field to the north of the tennis courts. Access to Lake Champlain shall be available for dogs and people in this area.

- (i) *Times.* The designated area may be used during park operating hours.

(4) Field

- (a) Calahan Park (seasonal). That portion of Calahan Park that is bounded on the east by Shelburne Road, north by Locust Street, west by Pine Street, and south by the park/neighborhood boundary excluding programmed areas such as courts, buildings, baseball fields, roads/walks, playgrounds, etc.

- (i) *Times.* Summer: the designated area may be used at any time of the year from dawn to 10:00 a.m.

- (ii) *Times.* Winter: the designated area may be used at from October 1 to April 1 from dawn to 10 am and 3:00 p.m. to dusk.

- (b) Schmanska Park (seasonal). The multipurpose field portion of Schmanska Park extending from the basketball court to the tennis court.

- (i) *Times.* Summer: the designated area may be used from April 16 to October 14 from 8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.

- (ii) *Times:* Fall: the designated area may be used from October 15 to April 15 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. for off-leash activities permitted by these rules.

- (c) Waterfront Park (seasonal). That portion of the park bounded on the north by Lake Street, bounded on the west by the bike path, bounded on the south by the path that crosses the railroad tracks and connects to Lake Street, and bounded on the east by the railroad tracks.

- (i) *Times.* Winter: the designated area may be used at any time of the day from November 15 to March 31 for off-leash activities permitted by these rules.

- (ii) Access to this area may be limited from November 15 to March 31, if any events permitted by the Parks and Recreation department need this designated area.

- (d) Roosevelt Park (seasonal). That portion of the park bounded on the north by Oak Street, bounded on the west by Walnut Street, bounded on the south by Willow Street, and on the east by the walking path bisecting the park. Dogs are not allowed on the baseball infield.

- (i) *Times.* The designated area may be used at any time of the year from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from October 1 to April 1 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**(B) Rules for Commercial Use of Off-Leash Dog Areas.**

- (1) Commercial users will be responsible for creating any boundaries or temporary fencing that is required for their needs.
- (2) Commercial users may use the off-leash dog areas a maximum of twelve days per year.

- (3) No more than one commercial user may use a single dog park concurrently.
- (4) Off-leash dogs will be able to utilize any areas of the off-leash area that are not separated by temporary or permanent fencing.
- (5) With the exception of extraordinary circumstances, no more than 33% of an off-leash dog area shall be permitted to be bounded off for commercial usage.
- (6) Commercial usage shall not interfere with standard entrances and exits from the off-leash dog area.
- (7) If any parks and recreation staff time is required for the event, the commercial users of the park will be responsible for covering all costs related to the staff time. Further, staff will only be made available with approval of the Director of Parks and Recreation approval.
- (8) Commercial users will be responsible for all costs related to set-up, operations, security, and cleanup for all events.
- (9) Standard Parks and Recreation Department requirements for reserving parks will apply.

**(C) Signage.**

- (1) Signs may be placed at the perimeter of non-fenced off-leash dog areas to indicate the limits of off-leash dog activity.
- (2) Signage shall be placed at entrances to off-leash dog areas indicating the essential rules.
  - (a) Essential rules will be defined for each opportunity by Park Department staff.

**(D) Operations.**

- (1) Parks & Recreation shall develop and keep current an operations plan that defines services and responsibilities to be delivered to areas identified in the policy.

**(E) Public Outreach & Enforcement.**

- (1) The Parks Department and the Police Department shall collaborate to educate and enforce the rules and regulations as outlined by the policy in off-leash areas.

--END--





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## APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL OFF-LEASH RECOMMENDATIONS

**Date:** June 7, 2013

**To:** City Council

**From:** The Off-Leash Work Group (OLWG)

Community Representatives: Ed Pais, Chair, Betsy Allen-Pennebaker, Lynne Lieb, Becky Poitras, and Louise Stoll

**Re:** Off-Leash Work Group Findings

In addition to the off-leash ordinance revision and the implementation of off-leash policies, the community representatives of the Off-Leash Work Group recommend consideration of the following issues that fall outside of the scope of the work group's charge.

- Create an Animal Welfare board, commission, or committee to help coordinate efforts and address issues relating to animals that also involve a variety of City Departments. We believe that there should be a minimum of 5 members with the following makeup:
  - One member from the Parks & Recreation Commission
  - One member from the Police Commission
  - One member who is a professional working with animals (for example, a veterinarian or employee at the Humane Society)
  - Two at-large members
- Review the structure of dog license fees.
  - In the past dog license fees have been raised multiple times with the promise that the additional revenue would go to support dog parks. This has not happened.
  - The allocation of collected license fees should be disclosed in the annual report.
  - We recommend that the dog license fees in excess of the state statutory fees be used generally for the development of off-leash infrastructure, training and enforcement and included in the City's annual report.
    - 75% to development and support of off-leash opportunities
    - 25% for animal control purposes
- Review dog licensing. We believe that there are many dogs in the city that are not being registered, and that there are ways to increase the compliance of licensing.
  - Consider allowing 1 to 3 year licenses. The rabies vaccinations are valid for three years so allowing the licenses to expire when the rabies vaccination expires could potentially increase compliance and reduce staff work in issuing licenses. It may be necessary to have the licenses renew automatically each year to comply with state statute.

- Consider allowing veterinarians to license animals. We are **not** sure if veterinarians will be interested in this as they care for dogs in multiple communities. However, if people can get their dogs licensed at the vet it will likely increase the numbers of people getting their dog licensed.
- Provide handouts on dog rules & regulations, as well as off-leash opportunities, to individuals getting their dog licenses. This could help with people knowing and following the regulations.
- Promote the dog-friendliness of Burlington to visitors. This can be used to increase tourism here as more people are travelling with their pets.
  - As part of our work, we gathered information on hotels that allow dogs. This was put on a Facebook group that we established. This was subsequently used by the information desk at the airport to give suggestions for hotels for travelers with dogs.
  - Develop & promote off-leash opportunities, and Burlington as a dog-friendly city, to partners in the tourism industry.
- Develop programs to improve etiquette between cyclists, pedestrians, and dog walkers.
- Provide public vehicular access to the Urban Reserve Dog Run.
- Pursue public-private development partnership opportunities.
- Establish a Friends of Burlington Dog Parks Group to:
  - Help raise funds for the dog parks
  - Help recruit volunteers for maintenance of dog parks
  - Assist in communications between dog owners, residents, businesses, and the Parks Department
  - Promote the dog-friendliness of Burlington
  - Consider development of a foundation in raising funds

--END--