

Sent April 13, 2022 - 5:25pm

Hello Mayor and Council!

This week you have a motion in front of you proposing a pilot off leash dog park in Royal Athletic Park from 6-10am, and 5-7pm everyday, with the provision that the dog park would not be open on days when the whole park is being used for a ticketed event.

Attached are all of the emails the NPNA has received about this proposal, as well as emails received in 2020 in support of an off leash dog park at RAP.

location within RAP

It seems that a lot of the questions about this idea are about the logistics. I totally understand this. Please see the image below that shows the easternmost part of RAP next to Cook Street. There is a row of trees planted on the elevated berm along the entirety of the Cook Street side, and then a pretty steep, but short little slope down to the level field. I see this area as the best spot for the fenced in pilot dog park. Because of the trees and the short but steep slope this area is not used by any of the sports groups. There is even already an entrance gate along Pembroke that could be used to access a fenced in portion along the easternmost portion of the park. See the image below that shows this section from two vantage points. The dotted line in the lower image is what I would see as a potential fence location.



football concerns

We've received some concern from RAP rental groups who use the park for football games and practice that there isn't room for both, and that dogs would tear up the football field. As you know, RAP is huge - there definitely is room for both with no overlap. A regulation football field is 100 x 50 metres. As you can see in the image below, there is plenty of space to accommodate a dog park along Cook Street AND a regulation sized football field.



lack of dog park spaces

As you already know, even WITH Royal Athletic Park, North Park is [green space deficient](#). Because RAP is only accessible by paid admission (other than the free events put on by the NPNA) there's a lot of pressure on Franklin Green and Central Park to be everything to everyone - and that doesn't work. Right now there are a lot of people using Central Park as a de facto dog park because they have no other walkable options. I highly doubt they are breaking the rules just for the fun of it, they're doing it because they have no other alternative.

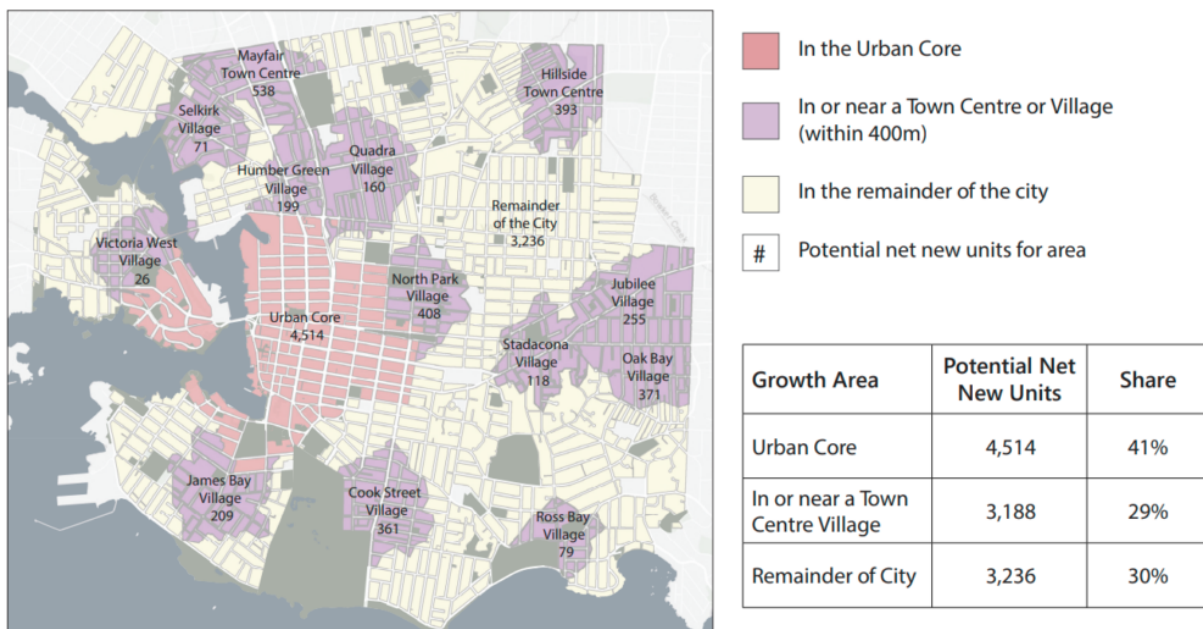
please not in Central Park

Central Park is the backyard of the neighbourhood (reminder that 79% of North Park residents rent, many in apartment buildings without access to a yard). Imagine everything you do in your backyard - eat meals, see friends, play with your kids, exercise, read a book. For lots of us, Central Park is where we do all of that in nice weather. By having a designated dog area in RAP it frees up space in Central Park for these unprogrammed, spontaneous uses of park space that contribute positively to personal and community wellbeing. putting a dog park in Central Park would decrease the space available for this purpose.

Projected Growth in Victoria

Take a look at the map above, and the map of projected growth in Victoria below. The same areas where growth is predicted are the same areas where there is a complete lack of designated dog areas.

Potential Net New Units by Growth Target Area (between 2020 and 2040)



Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Sarah Murray
Executive Director
North Park Neighbourhood Association
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The North Park Neighbourhood Association acknowledges the homelands of the Lekwungen Speaking Peoples, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, on whose lands we are living, working, and collaborating.