

# PEOPLE PARKS & DOGS

A STRATEGY FOR SHARING  
VANCOUVER'S PARKS

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## WELCOME!

*People, Parks & Dogs: A strategy for sharing Vancouver's parks*  
Round 2 – Public and Stakeholder Consultation: January 30 – March 10, 2017

The Vancouver Park Board is developing a comprehensive strategy to guide the planning and design of safe, engaging and appealing parks for people with and without dogs.

In Round 1 of public consultation, you told us about what's important to you and what opportunities and challenges you see for the city's off-leash and leashed areas.

Now in Round 2, we're asking for your feedback about key draft recommendations.

### **This consultation includes:**

- Discussion guide
- Survey in hard copy and online at [vancouver.ca/people-parks-dogs](http://vancouver.ca/people-parks-dogs)
- Drop-in Open Houses, with small group discussions

### How feedback will be considered

The planning team will consider feedback from this round of consultation as it refines the draft recommendations for the planning, design and management of Vancouver's parks, beaches and dog off-leash areas. The planning team will provide these refined recommendations to the Vancouver Park Board in spring 2017, for review and approval.

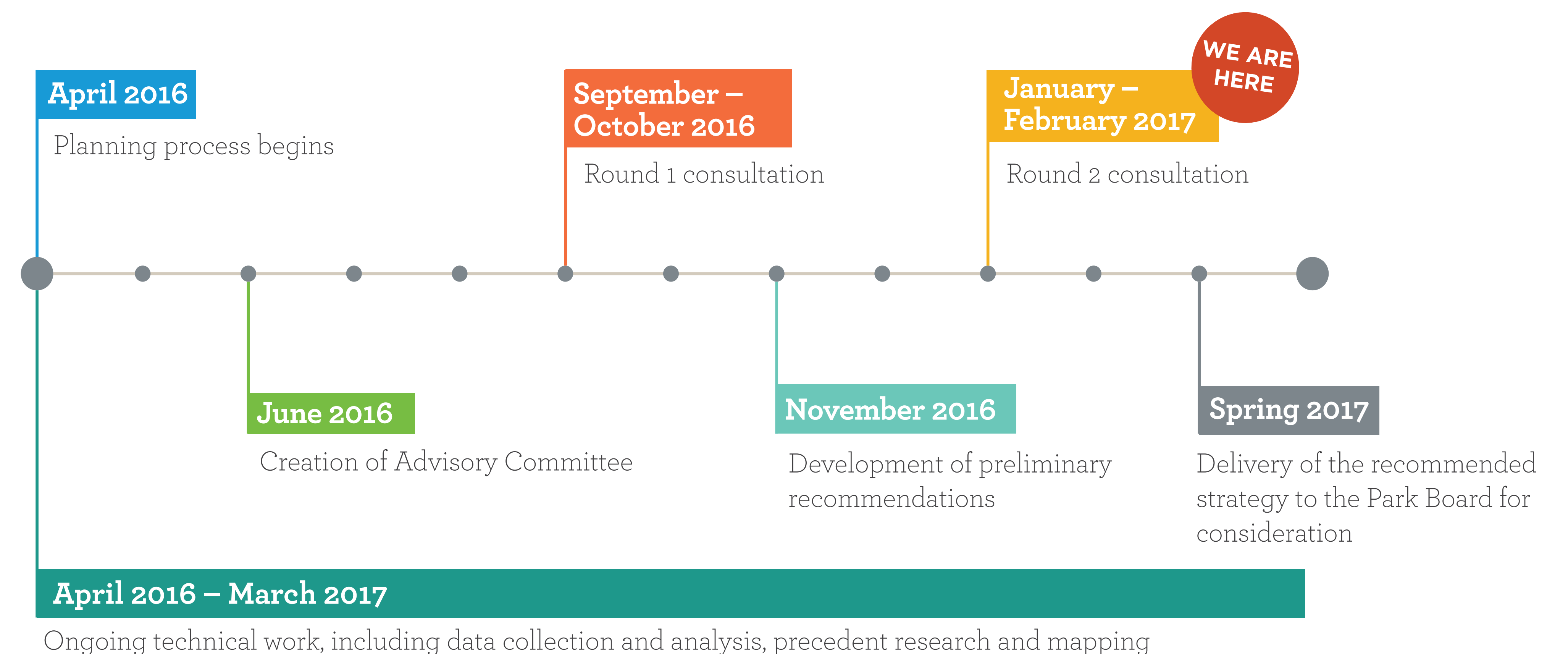
## ABOUT *PEOPLE, PARKS & DOGS*: *A STRATEGY FOR SHARING VANCOUVER'S PARKS*

As in many other major North American cities, Vancouver's people population and dog population are growing. With a growing population and people living in smaller spaces, it's now more important than ever to improve how people with and without dogs share parks.

### The comprehensive strategy will:

- Draw on the expertise and experience of park staff, park planners and designers, park user groups and the general public;
- Provide evidence-based policy recommendations for the development and management of Vancouver's dog facilities;
- Lay the foundation for well-designed off-leash areas that are successfully integrated within city parks and the neighbourhoods they serve; and
- Assist the Park Board in ensuring Vancouver's parks meet the needs of a broad range of users.

### Planning Process Timeline



## WHAT WORK HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

Over the last eight months, we've been researching and gathering information on dog activity in Vancouver parks to understand what's working and where there are challenges. We have held public and stakeholder consultation events, read through records of previous work, learned from what other cities are doing, and analyzed Vancouver's existing off-leash areas.

### Work to date:



Workshops with Park Board staff and City of Vancouver staff, and online staff survey



Advisory Committee meetings



Surveys in dog off-leash areas



Learning from other cities



Mapping and analysis



Reviewing records of previous work



Round 1 consultation



Phone survey

### Round 1 consultation:

Round 1 consultation was held from September 8 to October 14, 2016 and included a total of 4,373 public and stakeholder interactions. We asked people to tell us about the successes and challenges related to people with and without dogs sharing park space. The planning team considered feedback from Round 1 in developing the key draft recommendations.

For more information about what we heard in Round 1, you can read the consultation summary report at: [vancouver.ca/people-parks-dogs](http://vancouver.ca/people-parks-dogs)

## WHAT'S WORKING WELL

From the work we've done and feedback we've collected and reviewed, here is what we've heard about what is working well:



### DESIGN AND AMENITIES:

Support the needs of people with and without dogs in parks with off-leash areas

- Vancouver's dog off-leash areas are intensively used by both people with and without dogs.
- Off-leash areas can play an important role in fostering a sense of community in neighbourhoods.
- Dog owners and non-dog owners are supportive of the separated dog waste collection pilot project.



### BOUNDARIES:

Provide clear and effective off-leash area boundaries

- People with and without dogs share parks more effectively when off-leash area boundaries are clearly marked.
- Many dog owners, such as those with dogs in training, like having the option to use fenced off-leash areas.



### VARIETY OF PARKS:

Offer a variety of off-leash experiences

- People with dogs value large areas for their dogs to run and play fetch off leash.
- People with dogs appreciate having access to off-leash areas that include water access so their dogs can swim.
- Grass surfacing works well in larger or less intensively used off-leash areas. Gravel surfacing provides good drainage and is more durable in highly-used sites, but improvements can be made to the type of gravel so that it is more appealing for dog owners and dogs.

## WHERE THERE ARE CHALLENGES

From the work we've done and feedback we've collected and reviewed, we've heard we have opportunities to improve:

### **DESIGN AND AMENITIES:** Support the needs of people with and without dogs in parks with off-leash areas

- Dog waste management
- Dog off-leash activity in on-leash areas
- Enforcement of dog off-leash activity and waste pickup
- Dog access to sensitive wildlife habitat
- Conflicting park uses within or adjacent to dog off-leash areas (for example, playgrounds and multi-use trails)
- Need for an off-leash area Code of Conduct for people with and without dogs

### **BOUNDARIES:** Provide clear and effective off-leash area boundaries

- Lack of clear on-the-ground boundaries
- Confusing and inconsistent signage

### **ACCESS:** Improve access to dog off-leash areas throughout the city

- Unequal distribution of off-leash areas across Vancouver
- Some neighbourhoods lack off-leash areas to meet local demand

### **VARIETY OF PARKS:** Offer a variety of off-leash experiences

- Some off-leash areas lack basic amenities
- Grass surfacing is in poor condition in smaller and/or intensively used off-leash areas
- Lack of separated areas for small and large dogs in fenced off-leash areas

## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?

Based on feedback from Round 1, public and other work, the planning team developed these key draft recommendations that consider what is working and what isn't working well in Vancouver's parks:

### The recommendations fall under five themes:

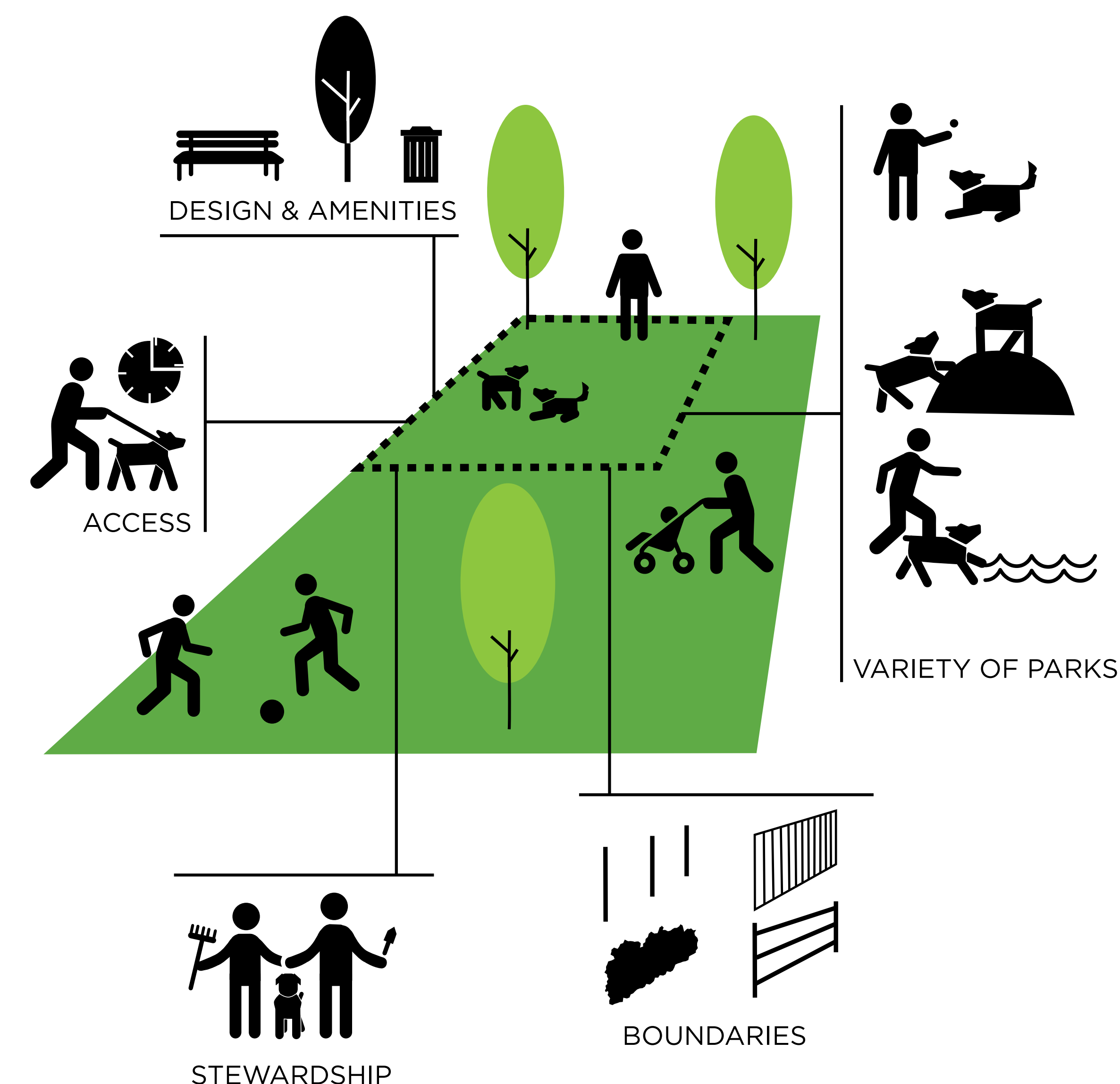
**DESIGN AND AMENITIES:** Support the needs of people with and without dogs in parks with off-leash areas

**BOUNDARIES:** Provide clear and effective off-leash area boundaries

**ACCESS:** Improve access to dog off-leash areas throughout the city

**VARIETY OF PARKS:** Offer a variety of off-leash experiences

**STEWARDSHIP:** Formalize residents' role in off-leash area stewardship



## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?



**DESIGN AND AMENITIES:** Support the needs of people with and without dogs in parks with off-leash areas



Provide amenities to meet the needs of people with and without dogs.



Locate and design off-leash areas to reduce potential conflict between off-leash dogs and adjacent neighbourhood and park uses.



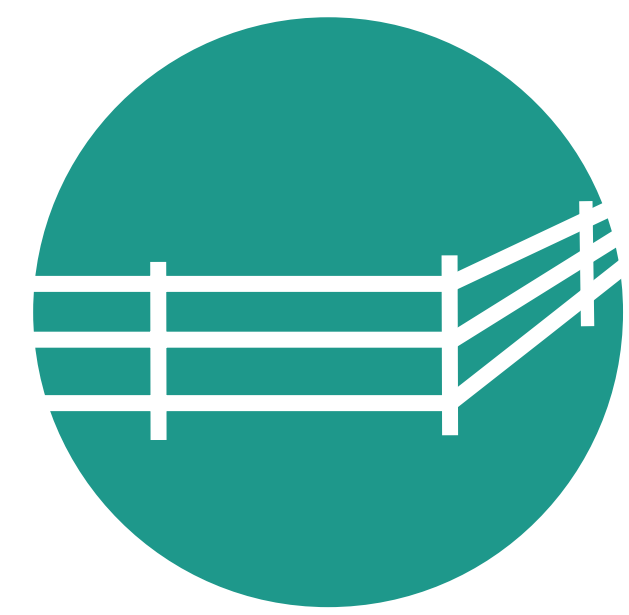
Develop off-leash area code of conduct for people with and without dogs.



Restrict dog activity in areas where this activity may be in conflict with other park uses.



## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?



### **BOUNDARIES:** Provide clear and effective off-leash area boundaries



Clearly mark off-leash area boundaries using a combination of tools, including signage, fencing, bollards and vegetation. Determine the appropriate boundary tool(s) based on adjacent park uses, land uses and existing site features.



Ensure off-leash area signage is concise, clear and consistent.



Locate and orient off-leash area boundary signage so that the boundaries between on-leash and off-leash areas are clear.

#### Secure boundaries



Secure fencing: decorative steel (left), chain link (center), or post and rail with mesh panels (right) to securely contain dogs.

#### Non-secure boundaries



Non-secure boundaries: bollards, in wood or steel (left), post and rail fencing (center), or vegetation (right) where secure containment is not required.



## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?



**ACCESS:** Improve access to dog off-leash areas throughout the city



Ensure Vancouver residents can access neighbourhood off-leash areas within a 15-minute walk (1 km).



Ensure Vancouver residents can access destination off-leash areas within a 35-minute walk or a short drive.



Make additional investments in urban off-leash areas.



Prioritize adding new off-leash areas to underserved and densely populated neighbourhoods.



Encourage neighbourhood access to off-leash areas.

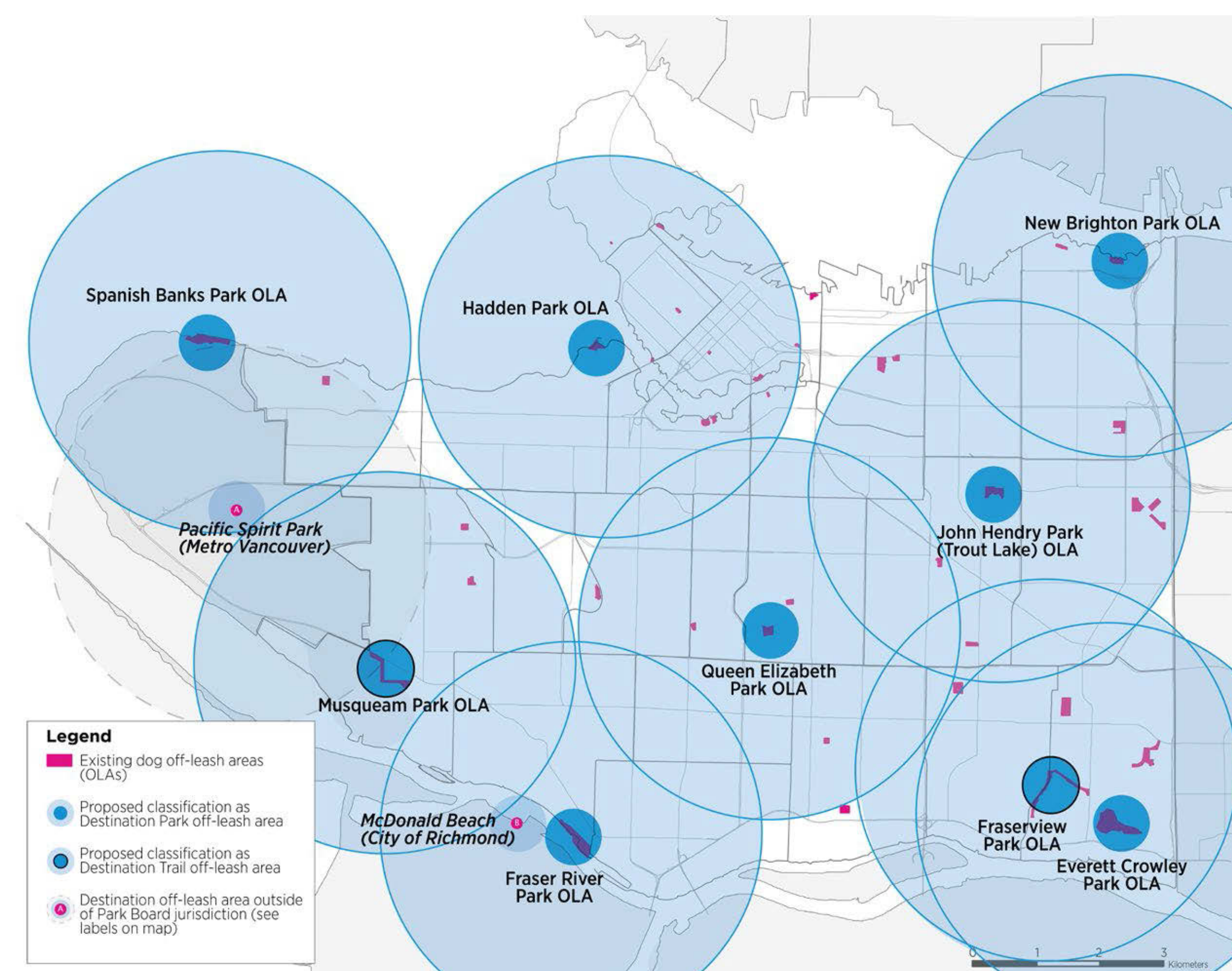


Improve the hours for off-leash areas.

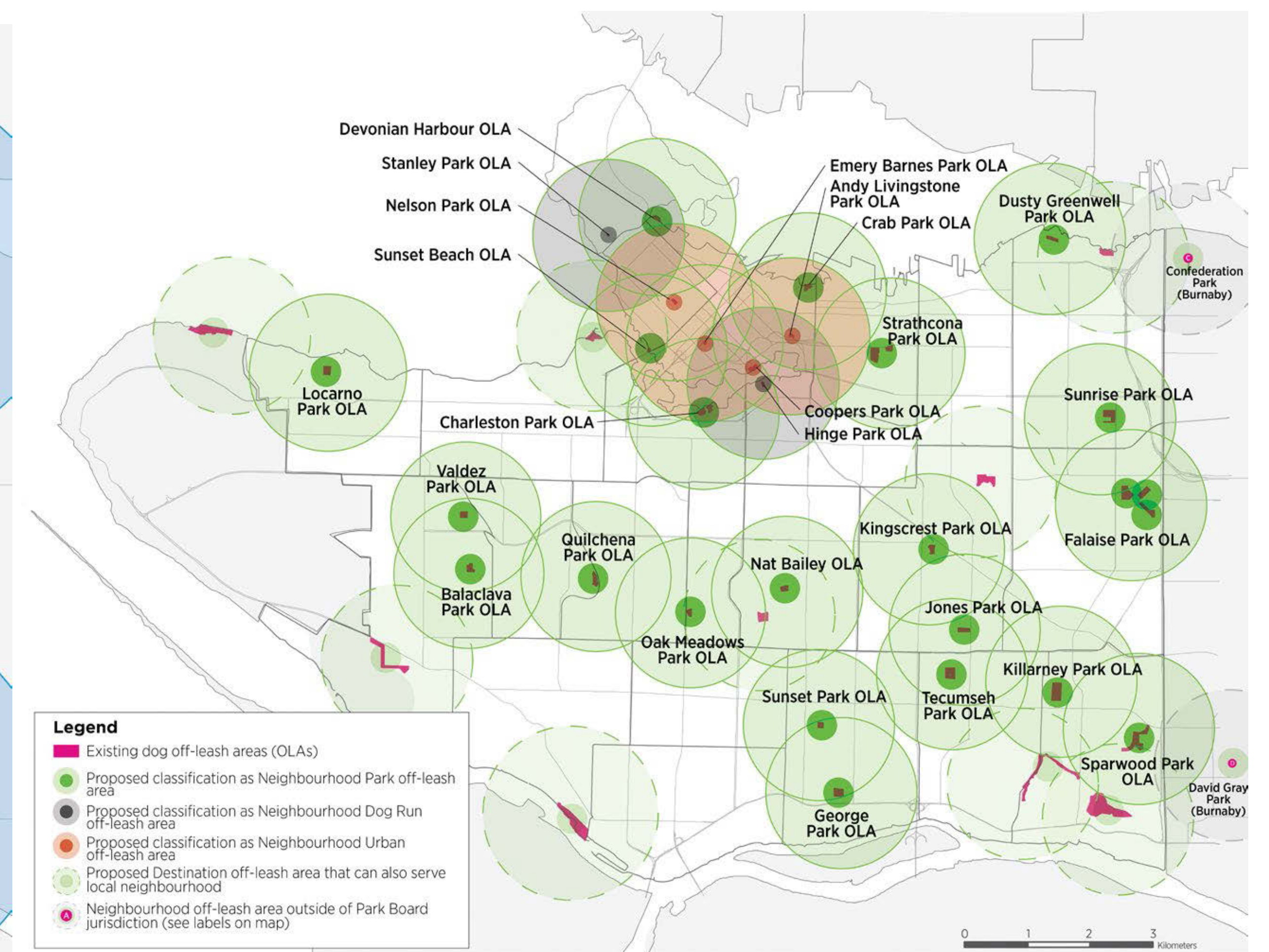


Introduce a morning-only off-leash hours pilot project in selected downtown parks.

MAP OF EXISTING DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS: DESTINATION OFF-LEASH AREAS



MAP OF EXISTING DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS: NEIGHBOURHOOD OFF-LEASH AREAS



## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?



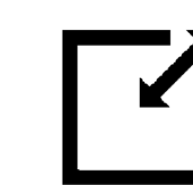
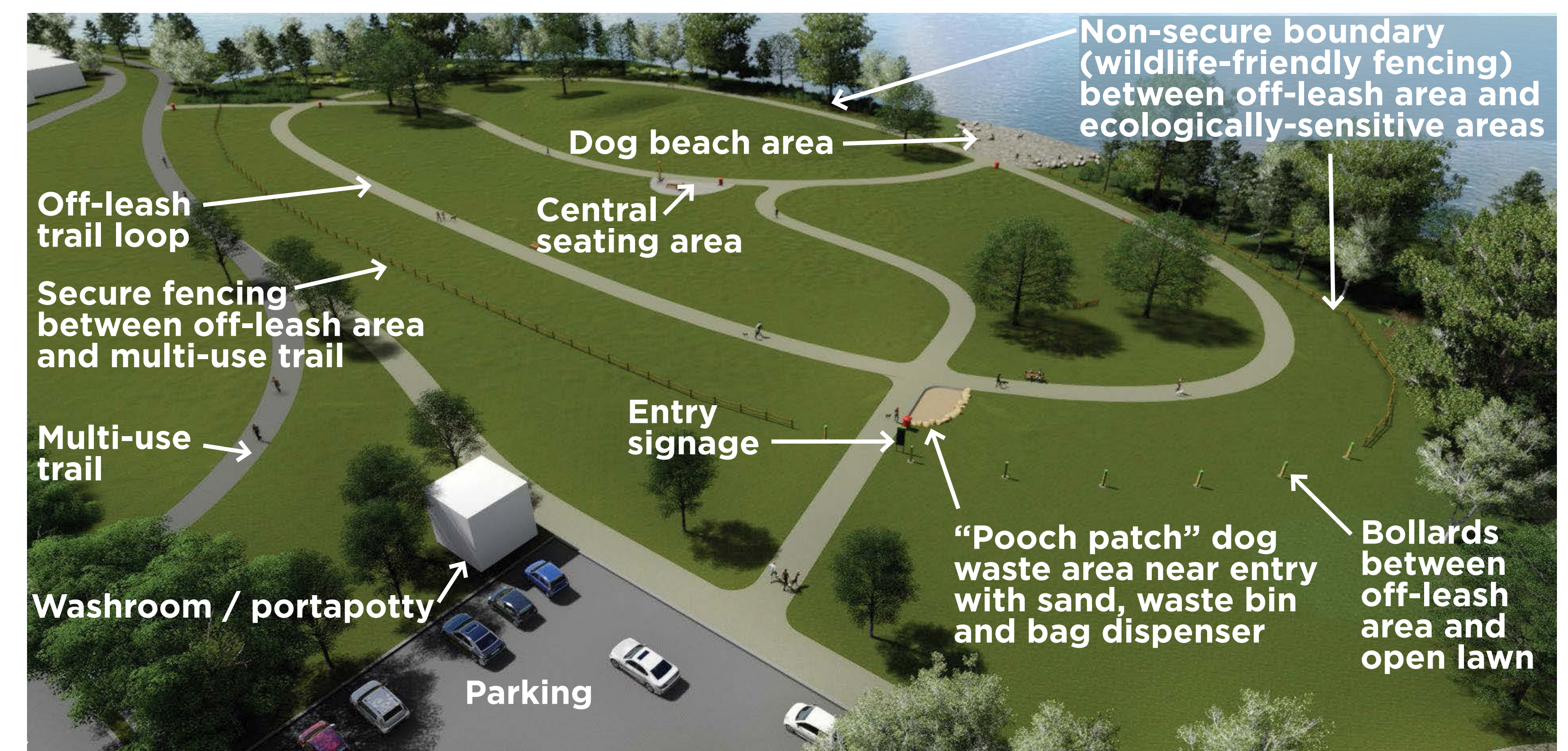
### VARIETY OF PARKS: Offer a variety of off-leash experiences



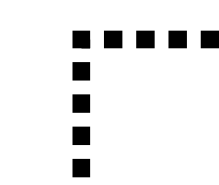
Develop different types of off-leash areas that provide a variety of experiences for park users, from smaller urban sites to larger more natural areas:

- Destination Park Off-Leash Area
- Destination Trail Off-Leash Area
- Neighbourhood Park Off-Leash Area
- Neighbourhood Urban Off-Leash Area
- Neighbourhood Dog Run Off-Leash Area

### DESTINATION Park Off-Leash Area



Size: larger than 1.2 ha (>3 acres)



Boundaries: fencing (secure / non-secure), bollards, vegetation



Circulation: Separated off-leash looping paths



Surfacing: Grass and fine crushed gravel



Adjacencies: Flexible

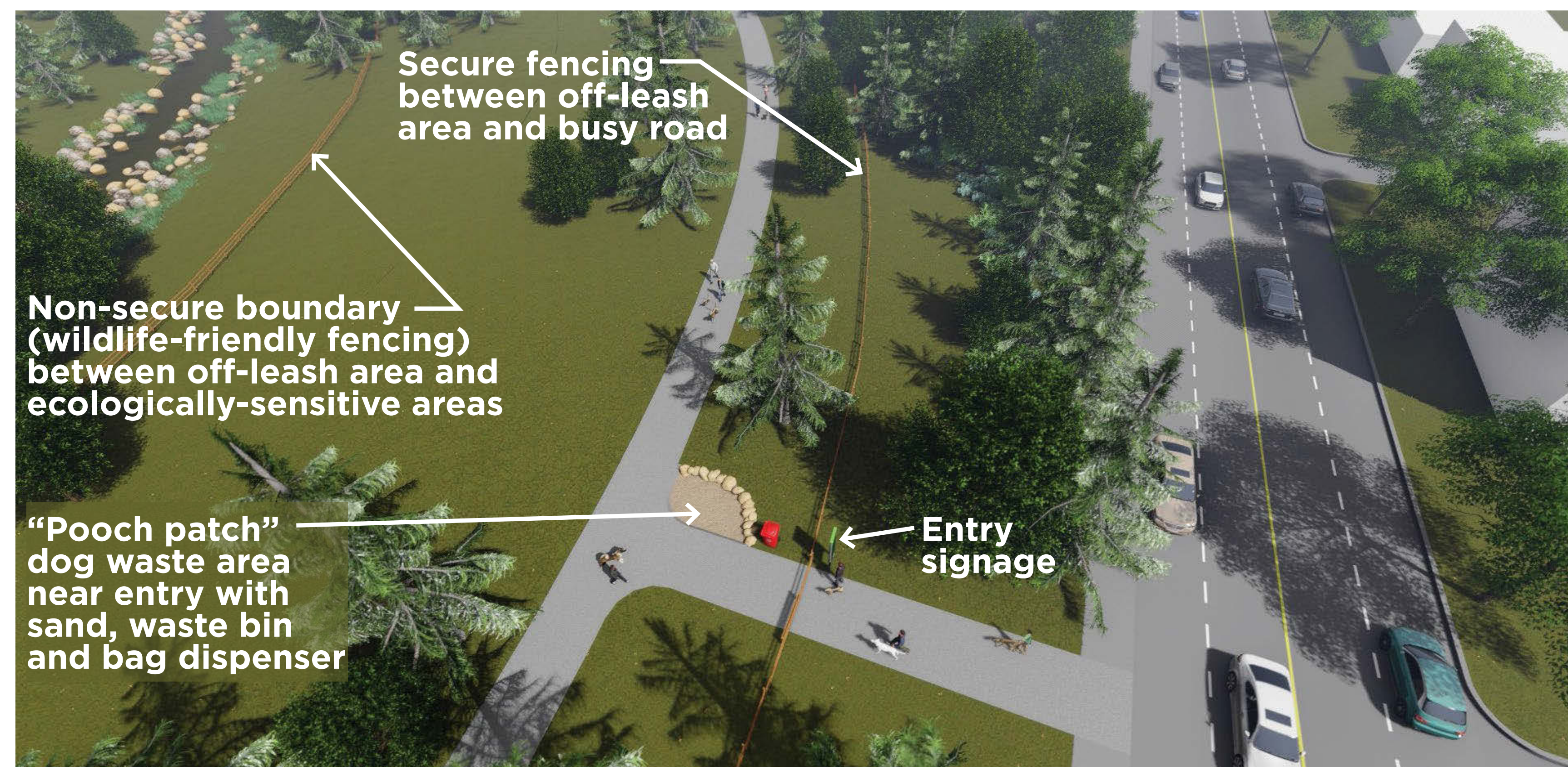



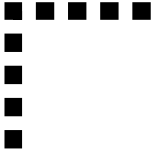




Standard amenities and special amenities such as washrooms, water access, drinking water, and parking

## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?

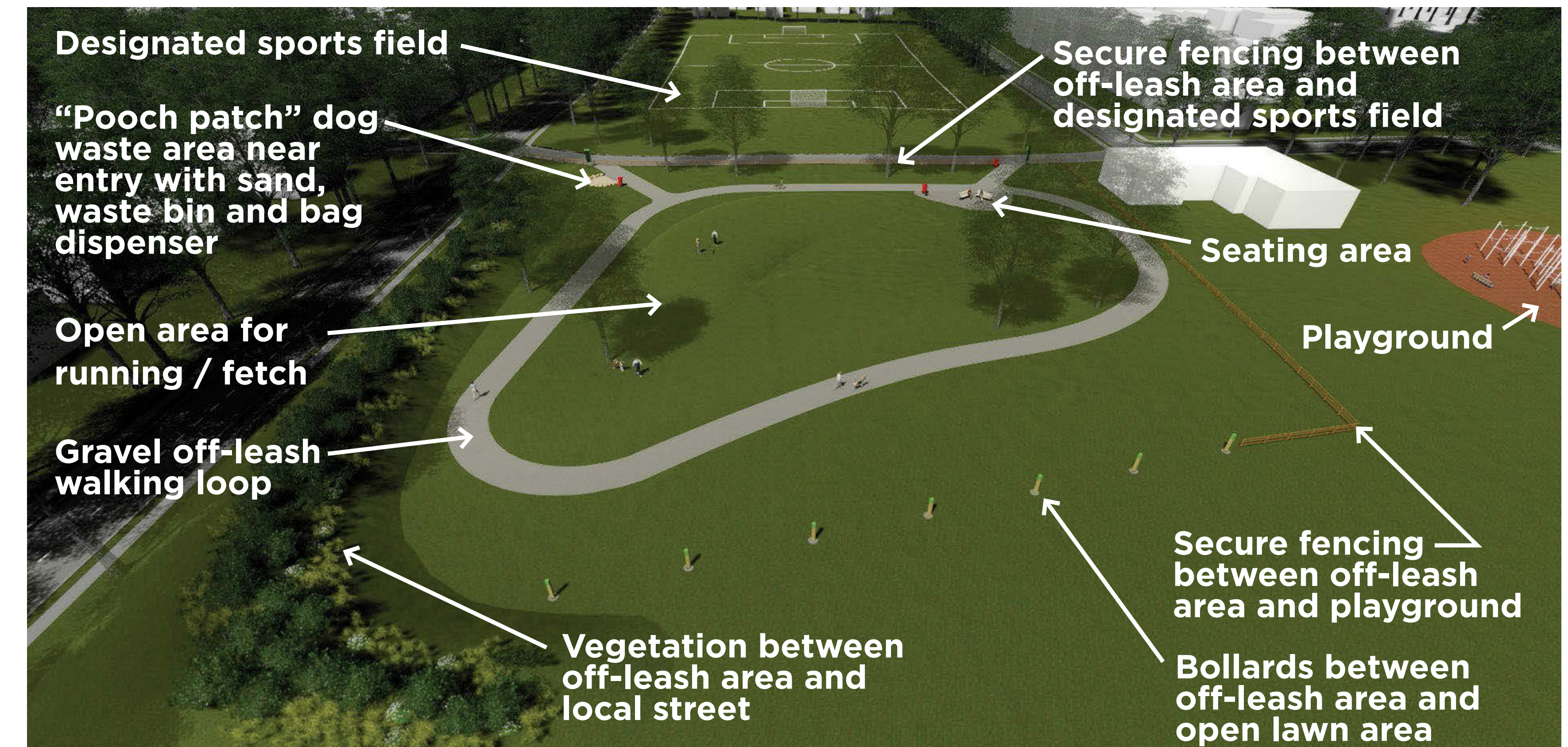
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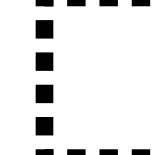




### DESTINATION Trail Off-Leash Area



-  Size: No size target
-  Boundaries: fencing (secure / non-secure), bollards, vegetation
-  Circulation: Off-leash path
-  Surfacing: Gravel or wood chip path, planting
-  Adjacencies: Flexible
-  Standard amenities: waste bins, open space, shade, bag dispensers, seating.

### NEIGHBOURHOOD Park Off-Leash Area



-  Size: From 0.4 to 1.2 ha (1-3 acres)
-  Boundaries: fencing (secure / non-secure), bollards, vegetation
-  Circulation: Separated off-leash looping path
-  Surfacing: Grass and fine crushed gravel
-  Adjacencies: More compatible adjacencies
-  Standard amenities: waste bins, open space, shade, bag dispensers, seating. Special amenities on case-by-case basis.

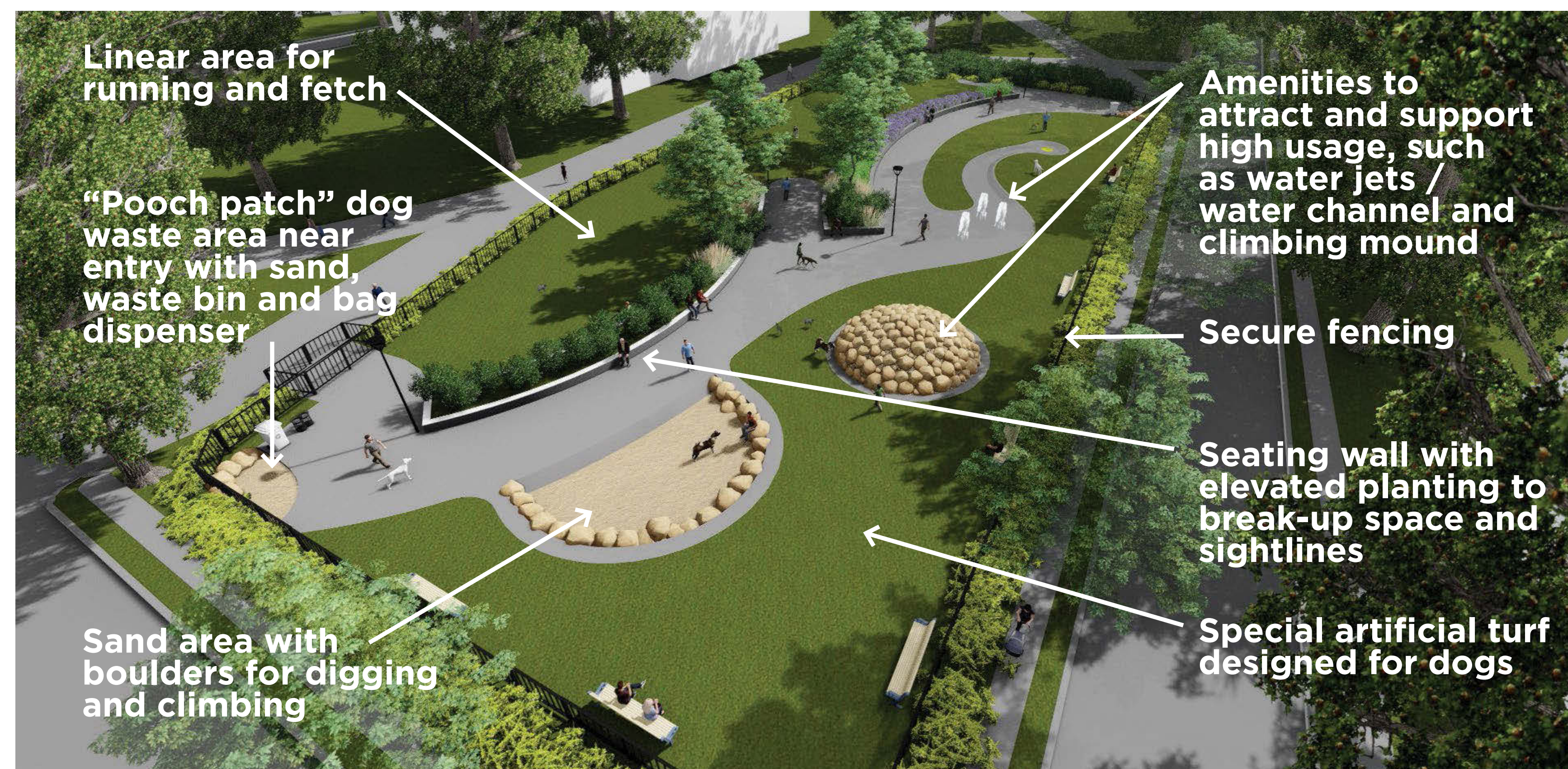
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**VARIETY OF PARKS:** Offer a variety of off-leash experiences

### NEIGHBOURHOOD Urban Off-Leash Area



- Size: From 0.04 to 0.4 ha (0.1 to 1 acre)
- Boundaries: secure, high quality fencing
- Circulation: Designed to reduce congestion
- Surfacing: Durable, specialty surfacing
- Adjacencies: More compatible adjacencies
- Standard and special amenities to attract and support high use, such as water play and agility

### NEIGHBOURHOOD Dog Run Off-Leash Area



- Size: From 0.04 to 0.4 ha (0.1 to 1 acre)
- Boundaries: secure, standard fencing (e.g. chain link)
- Circulation: Designed to reduce congestion
- Surfacing: Durable standard surfacing, such as fine crushed gravel
- Adjacencies: More compatible
- Standard amenities: waste bins, open space, shade, bag dispensers, seating. Special amenities on case-by-case basis.

## WHAT ARE WE RECOMMENDING?



**STEWARDSHIP:** Formalize residents' role in off-leash area stewardship



Establish off-leash area Ambassador Groups in formal partnership with the Park Board.



Provide opportunities to engage volunteers in education, monitoring, reporting, fundraising, and light maintenance for off-leash areas.



Explore funding mechanisms for off-leash area Ambassador Groups.



Engage local residents in establishing, changing or eliminating off-leash areas.

