

**From:** ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)  
**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
**Date:** 11/7/2023 4:49:54 PM  
**Subject:** Memo - Concluding the Dog Waste Collection Pilot  
**Attachments:** ENG - Memo - Concluding the Dog Waste Collection Pilot.pdf  
Appendix - Dealing with Doggie Doo Doo in Parks and Streets - RTS 13237.pdf

---

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- The City has been piloting dog waste collection in select parks since 2016
- Processing of dog waste remains a limiting factor to expanding the program citywide. Staff issued an RFEOI and received no feasible responses capable of dealing with this volume of waste.
- There is no dedicated funding set aside for this pilot and the initially approved operating funds were permanently reassigned to support other initiatives as part of the Council approved 2022 budget.
- Staff recommend concluding the current pilot project until a larger scale processing option becomes available.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver  
[paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

---

## MEMORANDUM

November 7, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office  
Trevor Ford, Interim Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire  
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Concluding the Dog Waste Collection Pilot

RTS #: N/A

---

The purpose of this memo is to update Mayor and Council on the City's Dog Waste Collection Pilot Project that has been underway in several City of Vancouver Parks since 2016.

### **Background**

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, staff provided a Memo to Mayor and Council entitled "Dealing with Doggie Doo Doo in Parks and Streets (RTS# 13237)", which is appended for reference. The memo outlined the Pilot and outcomes to-date, and spoke to processing limitations and associated costs as a barrier to city-wide expansion at that time.

As part of the 2020 budget, Council approved an ongoing investment of \$250,000 to the annual operating budget to support an expansion of the pilot and further investigations into processing options. In March 2020, in advance of any expansion, a number of access points to dog parks were closed due to the pandemic. Shortly after, the \$250,000 dog waste budget was identified as a cost saving measure and the program was deferred for 2021 and again in 2022.

The annual cost of the pilot is approximately \$75,000 and to-date has been covered using capital funds allocated for street cleaning improvements including the deployment of high-capacity litter receptacles.

## **Summary of Lessons Learned**

Many important lessons were learned over the course of this pilot project. One critical finding shows that while red bins divert a large amount of dog waste from landfill, much remains in adjacent litter bins. A 2021 waste composition study conducted in Vancouver dog parks showed that the presence of a dedicated dog waste collection bin only reduced the amount of dog waste in litter bins from 35% to 25% by weight, suggesting that the program will need a broader education strategy to increase participation and overall volumes.

Other key learnings from the pilot are summarized as follows, and would have implications for a larger scale program:

- Dedicated collection vehicles will be required to reduce ergonomic challenges
- Contamination of the dog waste stream with other garbage is low
- Separation of dog waste from plastic bags is the limiting component of dog waste processing, and manual processing will not scale well for a larger program.

Since the start of this pilot, staff have pursued many avenues with respect to dog waste collection including:

- Expanding our pilot program to determine the most suitable locations and required processing capacity;
- Completing an RFEOI for expanded dog waste collection/processing;
- Completing sampling studies to determine the effectiveness of the project; and
- Discussing solutions with regional partners.

## **Next Steps**

The limiting factor for a citywide dog waste diversion program is processing. The City received no feasible responses to our RFEOI from anybody willing or capable of dealing with this volume of waste. It is possible to collect all of this waste, but without a high volume processing option, it will be very difficult and expensive to deal with.

In addition, although there are no immediate concerns with our current contracted dog waste collector, there are significant risks associated with sole dependence on a single contractor for a citywide permanent program. Many other regional municipalities have their own pilot collection programs in place and all have the same challenges with respect to processing as we are limited to the same service provider.

Metro Vancouver has recognized that they play a pivotal role in any dog waste solution, including exploring processing options to serve the region. Although options are not actively being pursued, the expectation is that a regional processing solution could be in place in the future.

At this time, there is no funding set aside for this pilot and the initially approved operating funds were permanently reassigned to support other initiatives as part of the Council approved 2022 budget. As such, staff believe our best course forward is to conclude our current pilot project until a larger scale processing option becomes available. Staff from Engineering and Park

Board have already discussed this and will work collaboratively to develop key messages in the event there is media or public interest once bins are removed.

Please contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.



Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.  
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca)

---

## MEMORANDUM

November 5, 2019

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Cheryl Nelms  
Acting General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Dealing with Doggie Doo Doo in Parks and Streets (RTS# 13237)

---

Dear Mayor and Council,

The purpose of this memo is to address Council's May 14<sup>th</sup> 2019 Motion entitled "Dealing with Doggie Doo Doo in Parks and Streets" (RTS 013237) requesting staff report back on costs and barriers to expanding dog waste collection services throughout the City.

### **Background**

The dog population in Vancouver is estimated between 32,000 and 55,000 (2017 City Dog Strategy) and it is estimated that up to 6,900 tonnes of dog waste every year is managed through various City waste programs. Dog waste is primarily collected mixed in with garbage from single and multi-family homes, sidewalk and park litter receptacles.

In 2016, the City of Vancouver began a pilot project to collect and process dog waste in four City off-leash parks through the addition of dedicated red bins and bag dispensers. The pilot has since expanded to 23 red bins in eight off-leash dog parks, resulting in approximately 25 tonnes of dog waste collected annually.

The dog waste is collected directly from the red bins by a contractor, who then deals with the processing of the collected waste. Plastic bags are manually cut open and emptied, the plastic bags are thrown in the garbage and the contents of the bags are eventually disposed as liquid waste at a Metro Vancouver operated wastewater treatment plant.

To date there has been only one contractor in the lower mainland that collects and processes dog waste, who provides services to the City, to Metro Vancouver and a number of other municipalities. In order to assess additional processing opportunities, the City issued a request for proposal (RFP) in early summer to continue the existing pilot project (collection and processing) from 8 City parks and requested responders to indicate their ability to expand to additional parks. There was only 1 respondent to the RFP and that was the existing contractor.

While our long term goal remains to cover all parks, the current contractor has indicated they can expand collection and processing services in Vancouver up to the range of 100 tonnes per year. Since there is approximately 25 tonnes per year collected now, this allows us to grow the program by up to 75 tonnes of collected material.

The fact that there is currently only one contractor, and that contractor has limited capacity to absorb additional material, means that we are not in a position to expand the dog waste program to all City parks right away.

### **Volume Estimates**

There are 240 parks in the City including 37 off-leash dog parks. Each red container in off-leash dog parks collects between 0.5 and 2.5 tonnes/year, depending on park location. Off-leash dog parks located in high density neighbourhoods would generate an average of 2.5 tonnes/year/red bin, whereas smaller neighbourhood parks may only generate 0.5 tonnes/year/red bin. On average there are 3 red containers deployed per Dog Park, some larger parks may have more while other smaller parks may have less.

Given the limited capacity of the current contractor to process material, our focus is on serving first the off-leash dog parks. Staff estimate that adding an additional 10 off-leash parks will generate in the range of 75 tonnes of dog waste per year, using up the available capacity of the contractor and more than doubling the existing program. It may be possible to add a few more parks depending on volumes generated.

### **Future Requirements**

Staff estimate that expanding the program to include all parks and the seawall would add an additional 600 tonnes of material to the program and, in order to accommodate a full deployment to all City parks, a suitably sized processing system will be needed.

Since additional capacity is quite limited for the current supplier, a request for information (RFI) was undertaken to seek out potential suppliers of higher volume processing systems. There were numerous responses proposing mechanical separation, in vessel composting and anaerobic digestion. Capital costs for the various systems ranged between several hundred thousand to \$2.5M, with the higher cost proponents proposing more complete systems that included odour management. None of the respondents have systems in place at this time nor are the systems proposed proven for managing the volumes of dog waste anticipated through a City wide program.

### **Summary and Next Steps**

Options for expanding the dog waste pilot into all citywide parks do not readily exist and will take some time to develop. There are a wide variety of potential systems, a wide range of potential costs associated with each option and uncertainty with how each will perform.

In order to continue with program, development staff have proposed an additional investment in the 2020 budget directed to expanding the program gradually, adding an additional 10 off leash parks and providing funding to further investigate processing alternatives. We will continue to investigate opportunities to address the processing capacity needs in order to expand our programs in the future, as well as to discuss partnership opportunities with our parks department, other municipalities and Metro Vancouver. This includes working with our current contractor to identify any additional opportunities to grow our programs in future years.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me directly at 604-873-7348 or [cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca](mailto:cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca).



Cheryl Nelms, P.Eng., PhD  
Acting General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7348 | [cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca](mailto:cheryl.nelms@vancouver.ca)