

COUNCIL ENDORSES PROPOSAL FOR 3RD OFF-LEASH DOG PARK IN HALTON HILLS

VERONICA APPIA
vappia@metroland.com

For canines entering Halton Hills' existing dog parks for the first time, it can be overwhelming, especially during peak hours.

Andrea Clement, of Leash-Free Halton Hills, says it's not uncommon to have a number of dogs excitedly greeting a furry newcomer at the gate.

In the late afternoon during weekdays, the leash-free areas of Cedarvale and Prospect parks experience an influx of foot (and paw) traffic. So much so, Clement says, that it can make the experience less than relaxing for owners, leading some to keep their dogs off-leash in less crowded parks, which infringes on current bylaws.

"During peak times we are busting at the seams," she said. "The parks are

very well used right now and by having another space designated for off-leash dogs, that will help reduce the amount of off-leash that we see in zones where dogs shouldn't be off-leash."

At the Halton Hills community and corporate affairs committee meeting on Dec. 11, Mayor Rick Bonnette and councillors endorsed the proposal for a third off-leash area in Halton Hills, at Trafalgar Sports Park.

The proposed project is a result of two surveys conducted by Leash-Free Halton Hills, in conjunction with the town, which found that 68 per cent of families surveyed (a total of 148 respondents) agreed there was a need for additional off-leash space in Halton Hills.

The project is estimated to cost just over \$303,500, which will be funded through an agreement

that would see costs shared between the town and Leash-Free Halton Hills, along with the group's community partners and donors.

Leash-Free Halton Hills has held two fundraising events for project this fall, and Clement says they plan to host several more over the next few years.

The group raised just over \$2,300 at an event at Ares Family Restaurant in late September and raised \$160 on Dec. 9 after canine photos with Santa were taken in Prospect Park.

"It was a conservative fundraiser," Clement said of the Santa Claus photos. "But it's an effort toward the goal of fundraising."

At the committee meeting, Coun. Ann Lawlor expressed her contentment with the dog park proposal, specifically the fact that dogs will have their own designated zone to be off-



Ray Lavender

Nadia Figliola with her dog Zuri joins Lydia Parlak while Santa holds her dog Nelly. Little Rupert and poodle Ginger also join in during the afternoon with Santa in Prospect Park. The event was one of two held recently by Leash-Free Halton Hills to help fund a third leash-free area in town.

leash at Trafalgar Sports Park.

"I feel relatively strongly that leash-free parks are important facilities that should be in our community and I'm also pleased that there has been an offer and an expectation, too, on the part of some fundraising by this group," Lawlor said.

In a report compiled by Leash-Free Halton Hills, the group estimates that Cedarvale Park's off-leash area is visited by 100 to 120 dogs daily, and Prospect Park averages 75 to 80.

The proposed designated leash-free area, would take the place of the Trafalgar Sports Park's current Youth Zone, but War-

ren Harris, Commissioner of Recreation and Parks, says that doesn't mean the Youth Zone will be eliminated.

"I don't anticipate that the loss of the space would mean the loss of the Youth Zone," he said at the meeting. "We would have to manipulate these other uses to accommodate."

Coun. Bryan Lewis then inquired about ways in which dog waste odours can be reduced in the dog parks.

Jeff Leach, president of Leash-Free Halton Hills, presented councillors with a potential solution, based on a project currently being piloted in Mississauga, which converts dog waste into energy through a bio-recycling program.

He says the group is continuing to explore their options in this regard.

For further information about Leash-Free Halton Hills, visit <https://leashfreehalton-hills.com/>.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Halton Region 2019 Budget and Business Plan

The proposed 2019 Budget and Business Plan for Halton Region, including the Regional property tax levy, water and wastewater rates, user fees and charges, will be considered at the following meetings:

- Regional Council Budget Workshop—Wednesday, January 9, 9:30 a.m.
- Regional Council—Wednesday, January 16, 9:30 a.m.

The above meetings will be held at the Halton Regional Centre, located at 1151 Bronte Road in Oakville. The proposed 2019 Budget and Business Plan is available on Halton's website at halton.ca. Alternatively, the document can be obtained free of charge from or viewed at the Office of the Regional Clerk located at the Halton Regional Centre, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Halton residents are invited to provide input on the proposed 2019 Budget and Business Plan. If you wish to register as a delegate to address Regional Council, please contact the Office of the Regional Clerk at 905-825-6000, ext. 7405. You may also provide input or comments on Halton's website at halton.ca.

The 2019 Budget and Business Plan will be approved by Regional Council on January 16, 2019.

Meetings at Halton Region, 1151 Bronte Rd., Oakville, L6M 3L1
Visit halton.ca for full schedule.

January 16 9:30 a.m. Regional Council

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