



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** June 24, 2025
From: Suzanne Bycraft
Director, Public Works Operations **File:** 10-6370-01/2025-Vol 01
Re: Dog Waste Collection Pilot Summary and Proposed Expansion

Staff Recommendation

That an ongoing additional level estimated at \$71,000 be considered in the 2026 Utility budget process to expand the Dog Waste Collection Program as described in Option 2 in the staff report titled "Dog Waste Collection Pilot Summary and Proposed Expansion" dated June 24, 2025 from the Director, Public Works Operations.

Suzanne Bycraft
Director, Public Works Operations
(604-233-3338)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Bylaws	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

This report presents the outcome of the Dog Waste Collection Pilot Program (Pilot), which was an action item identified in the “Recycling and Solid Waste Management: Report 2022 – Taking Action to Reduce Waste”. In March 2024, a one-year pilot was established at Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park, McLean Neighbourhood Park, and Steveston Community Park.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #5 A Leader in Environmental Sustainability:

Leadership in environmental sustainability through innovative, sustainable and proactive solutions that mitigate climate change and other environmental impacts.

5.1 Continue to demonstrate leadership in proactive climate action and environmental sustainability.

5.3 Encourage waste reduction and sustainable choices in the City and community.

This report provides an update on the Pilot, a jurisdictional scan of existing dog waste collection programs in other municipalities and proposes a two-pronged approach including expanding and formalizing the dog waste collection program, and establishing a communications campaign to encourage proper disposal methods.

Analysis

Background

Under the Metro Vancouver Disposal Ban Program, pet excrement (waste) – in excess of 5% of the total weight or the total volume of the load – is prohibited from disposal at the Metro Vancouver landfill. Loads found in contravention will be fined \$76, plus any remediation or clean-up costs, under the *Metro Vancouver Tipping Fee Bylaw*. There are approximately 7,500 dogs registered with the City, which would equate to an estimated 930 tonnes of dog waste being disposed each year, excluding dogs visiting the city. Pet owners are encouraged to flush dog waste down the toilet whenever possible, but there may be situations when out in the community where disposal in public spaces litter bins is appropriate. The City conducted a sample waste composition study of public spaces bins in early 2025 and found that dog waste accounts for approximately 30% of the disposed material, with staff indicating this percentage increases during the warmer months.

To help mitigate the issue of dog waste in public spaces bins, Metro Vancouver conducted a pilot to collect dog waste by installing specialized red collection bins in select regional parks. The pilot tested an alternative disposal method to separate the dog waste from the plastic bags and dispose of at a Metro Vancouver wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). After 3 years, the pilot was made permanent and expanded to other Metro Vancouver regional parks, with approximately 150 collection bins installed.

Eight municipalities in the region also implemented their own dog waste collection programs, installing specialized collection bins in parks, green and public spaces. The table below provides details on these municipalities' programs.

Table 1: Other Municipal Dog Waste Collection Programs

Municipality	Locations of Collection Receptacle	Receptacle Type
City of Burnaby	Parks	Red, plastic, 120L cart
City of Delta	Parks	Metal, multi-stream bin with garbage and recycling
City of North Vancouver	Parks, green spaces, public spaces	Red, plastic, 120L cart
City of Port Coquitlam	Parks	Red, plastic, 120L cart
City of Port Moody	Parks and green spaces	Red, plastic, 120L cart
District of North Vancouver	Parks	Red, plastic, 120L cart
District of West Vancouver	Parks	Red, plastic, 120L cart
Township of Langley	Parks, public spaces	Metal, multi-stream bin with a combination of garbage, organics, and recycling

Richmond Dog Waste Collection Pilot Program

In 2023, staff noticed an increase in requests for dog waste bins from the community and saw an opportunity to test program feasibility and up-take within Richmond. In March 2024, the Pilot was launched at the following three City owned dog off-leash areas to test the new dedicated dog waste bins – Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park, McLean Neighbourhood Park, and Steveston Community Park.

Staff installed a total of five specialized red dog waste collection bins at the entrances of each of the three dog off-leash areas with accompanying signage that is consistent with the regional approach. A contractor who specializes in the collection, debagging and disposal of dog waste at WWTPs was engaged to manage the collection. From March 2024 to March 2025, a total of 13,500 kg of dog waste was collected, debagged and sent to the Iona WWTP, helping to reduce the amount of organic material decomposing in landfills which emits methane gas.



Figure 1: Dog Waste Collection Bin

Total costs associated with the Pilot was \$12,550 – this includes weekly collection fees, overage fees, and the initial purchase of the red collection bins. Overage fees are levied by the contractor if the collection bin is more than half full due to weight and handling issues.

Engagement

As a part of the Pilot, information was included on a dedicated “Dog Waste Collection Pilot” webpage, as well as highlighted on the various Parks webpages, including the interactive “Dogs Off-Leash Areas” webpage.

An engagement campaign was also launched to gather feedback from dog off-leash area users and residents walking by the dedicated dog waste bins. Surveys were conducted both in-person and online through the City's Let's Talk Richmond platform from July to November 2024. In total, there were 50 respondents to the survey, providing positive feedback, with residents appreciating the idea that their dog waste was being diverted from landfill, reducing negative impacts on the environment. Additional comments indicated interest in expanding the dedicated dog waste bins to other off-leash areas, parks and/or pathways where residents frequently walk their dogs.

Recommendations

As the Pilot has been successful in diverting dog waste from the landfill and is in alignment with the City's waste diversion goals, there is an opportunity to transition the Pilot to a permanent program. Staff have identified three options below for Council consideration:

Option 1 – Conclude the Pilot

This option would conclude the Pilot and discontinue the collection of dog waste at the three identified City owned dog off-leash areas. Dog waste would revert to disposal in the public spaces litter bins installed within parks and along pathways. This option is not recommended as it is not in alignment with Metro Vancouver disposal bans and best practices.

Option 2 – Expand the Pilot to all City Owned Dog Off-Leash Areas (Recommended)

This option would formalize the Dog Waste Collection Program in all 13 remaining City dog off-leash areas within Richmond, ensuring all dog off-leash area users have an appropriate place to effectively handle their dog waste. Staff would engage a contractor to manage the dog waste collection through a competitive bid process in alignment with the City's Procurement Policy.

As a part of this option, staff would implement a multi-pronged communications campaign to help educate the public on proper dog waste disposal and the issue of littering dog waste in public spaces. In conjunction with Bylaws and the SPCA, this campaign would include letters to dog owners, patrols by the SPCA of known areas of concern for dog waste littering and additional signage alongside litter bins.

This expanded program is estimated to cost \$71,000 annually and could be funded through the annual Solid Waste and Recycling Utility budget. This option is estimated to increase the total amount of dog waste diverted to 72,000 kg.

Option 3 – Expand the Pilot to all City Owned Dog Off-Leash Areas and other identified City Parks and Trails (Alternate Recommendation)

This option would include everything within Option 2 and expand to include 14 additional high traffic City Parks and Trails frequented by dog owners. This option would result in the highest amount of dog waste diversion throughout the City but increase overall program costs substantially to approximately \$165,000 annually. This option may also result in increased requests from residents to install dedicated dog waste collection bins in smaller, less frequented parks, which would not be included in this funding. This option is presented as an alternative recommendation for Council's consideration as it would increase dog waste diversion to a total

of 135,000 kg. This option can be reviewed in the future as a potential opportunity for expansion as the program evolves.

Attachment 1 provides a summary list of the locations proposed for each option detailed above, and Attachment 2 presents the information visually on a map.

Financial Implications

For Options 2 and 3 as detailed above, staff explored an alternative funding option which would implement a “user pay” model by increasing dog licensing fees to help cover the program’s costs. However, with approximately 7,500 dogs registered with the City, the additional expenses would increase the dog licensing fees by approximately \$9.50 per dog license for Option 2 and \$22 per dog license for Option 3. Table 2 below details the proposed cost increases for each dog license class.

While the user pay approach aligns with other aspects of the City’s solid waste and recycling services, public opposition to any increase in dog license fees is expected based on input received. Therefore, the user pay is not recommended at this time. Rather, consideration could be given to gradually transfer the program costs to the dog license fee by reallocating 25% from the utility budget to the dog license fee year-over-year, which would equate to an increase of approximately \$2.40 per dog license fee for Option 2 and \$5.50 for Option 3 each year over the next 4 years.

Current annual dog license fees are \$27.75 for spayed or neutered dogs if paid before March 1st (\$14.50 for seniors) or \$41.00 if paid after March 1st. Fees for non-spayed or non-neutered dogs are \$67.25 before March 1st or \$93.50 if after March 1st.

Increasing the dog licensing fee would put the City out of alignment with other municipalities’ fee structures, as well as risk an increase in unlicensed dogs within the City. Unlicensed dogs require more administrative investigation for Bylaws/SPCA staff, which may impact City response time to dog complaints or dog bite inquiries and overall costs.

Table 2: User Pay Model Cost increase for Option 2 and Option 3

Dog License	Current Fee	Option 2	Option 3
Spayed and Neutered – <i>Before March 1 (Regular Rate)</i>	\$27.75	\$37.25 <i>34% increase</i>	\$49.75 <i>79% increase</i>
Spayed and Neutered – <i>Before March 1 (Senior Rate)</i>	\$14.50	\$24.00 <i>66% increase</i>	\$36.50 <i>152% increase</i>
Spayed and Neutered – <i>After March 1</i>	\$41.00	\$50.50 <i>23% increase</i>	\$63.00 <i>54% increase</i>
Non-Spayed and Non-Neutered – <i>Before March 1</i>	\$67.25	\$76.75 <i>14% increase</i>	\$89.25 <i>33% increase</i>
Non-Spayed and Non-Neutered – <i>After March 1</i>	\$93.50	\$103.00 <i>10% increase</i>	\$115.50 <i>24% increase</i>

Financial Impact

The cost of the Pilot was \$12,550 which was funded by the Solid Waste and Recycling Provision. Should Council endorse the Dog Waste Collection Program as recommended in Option 2, an ongoing additional level request estimated at \$71,000 will be submitted for consideration in the 2026 budget process. Should Council endorse Option 3, estimated at \$165,000, a similar process will be followed.

Conclusion

In an effort to reduce environmental impact and promote responsible waste practices, the Pilot demonstrated that separate collection of dog waste is feasible and successfully diverted waste from the landfill. Expanding the Pilot to a formalized program at all dog off-leash areas as outlined in Option 2 would increase dog waste diversion from 13,500 kg of dog waste in the Pilot, to an estimated 72,000 kg annually as a formalized program.

This increased diversion from landfill would support the City's overall waste diversion goals, align with Metro Vancouver waste disposal bans and provide residents with a more sustainable option for disposing their dog waste. If endorsed, this program and the associated cost will be included for consideration in the 2026 budget process.



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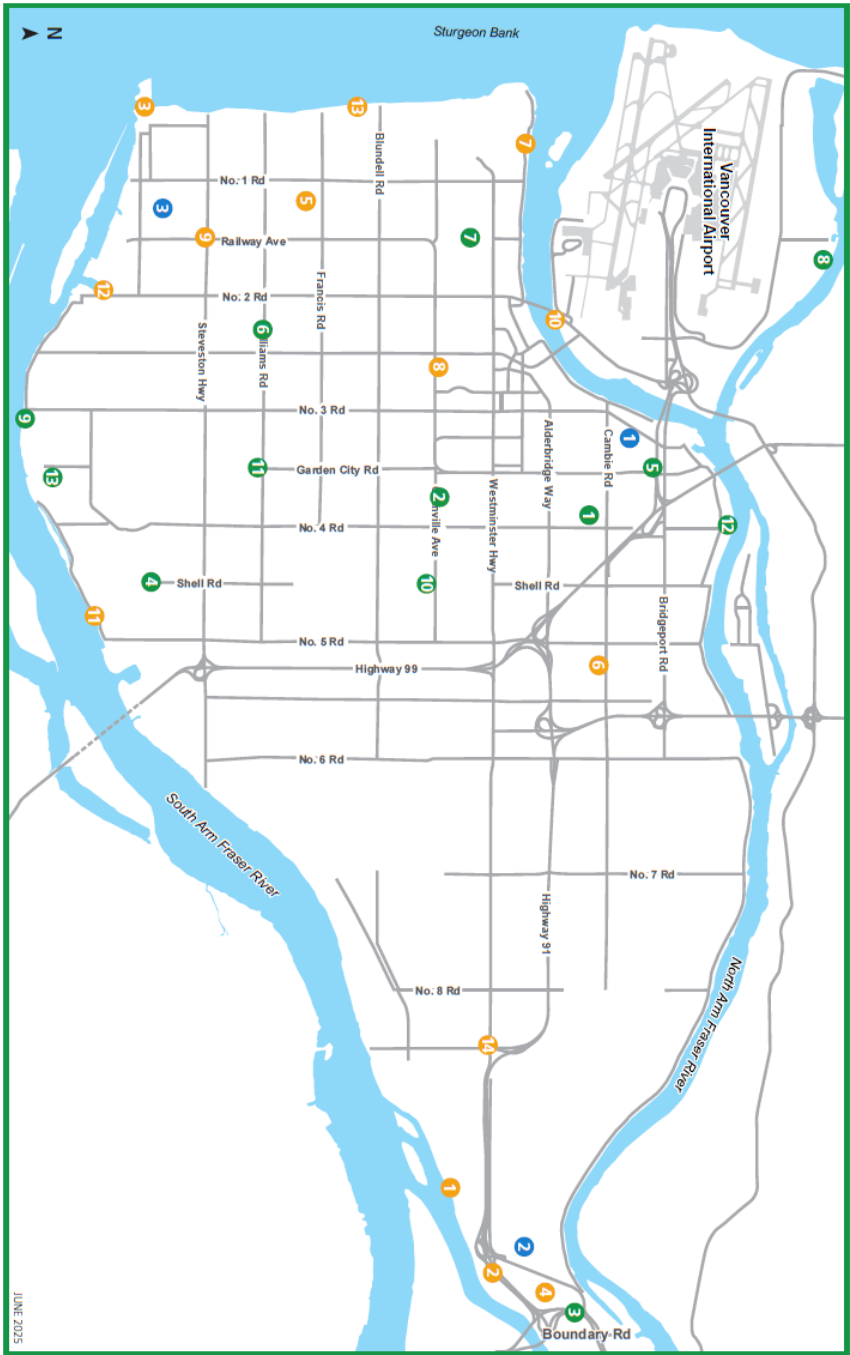
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Att. 1: Location Details for Dog Waste Collection Program Options
2: Map of Dog Waste Collection Bins

Location Details for Dog Waste Collection Program Options

Option	Collection Locations
1. End pilot and discontinue dog waste collection	None (existing dog waste bins to be removed)
2. Expand to all dog off-leash areas (fenced and unfenced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park • Alexandra Neighbourhood Park • Garden City Community Park • Hamilton Highway Park • Horseshoe Slough Trail • Ketcheson Neighbourhood Park • London/Steveston Neighbourhood Park • McCallan Neighbourhood Park • McDonald Beach Park • McLean Neighbourhood Park • No 3 Road Bark Park • Shell Road Recreational Trail • South Arm Community Park • Steveston Community Park • Tait Waterfront Trail • Woodward's Slough
3. Expand to all dog off-leash areas and additional parks/pathways	<p>Locations in Option 2 plus additional parks/pathways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Richmond Trail • Fraserwood Trail • Garry Point Park • Hamilton Community Park • Hugh Boyd Community Park • King George Park • Middle Arm Trail • Minoru Park • Railway Greenway • Sea Island Trail • South Dyke Trail • Steveston Greenways • West Dyke Trail • Westminster Highway Trail

City of Richmond Dog Waste Collection Bins



JUNE 2025

Pilot Locations

- 1 Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park
- 2 McLean Neighbourhood Park
- 3 Steveston Community Park

Option 2

- 1 Alexandra Neighbourhood Park
- 2 Garden City Community Park
- 3 Hamilton Highway Park
- 4 Horseshoe Slough Trail
- 5 Ketchikan Neighbourhood Park
- 6 London/Steveston Neighbourhood Park
- 7 McCallan Neighbourhood Park
- 8 McDonald Beach Park
- 9 No. 3 Road Bark Park
- 10 Shell Road Recreational Trail
- 11 South Arm Community Park
- 12 Tait Waterfront Trail
- 13 Woodwards Slough

Option 3

- 1 East Richmond Trail
- 2 Fraserwood Trail
- 3 Garry Point Park
- 4 Hamilton Community Park
- 5 Hugh Boyd Community Park
- 6 King George Park
- 7 Middle Arm Trail
- 8 Minoru Park
- 9 Railway Greenway
- 10 Sea Island Trail
- 11 South Dyke Trail
- 12 Steveston Greenways
- 13 West Dyke Trail
- 14 Westminster Highway Trail

