



RICHMOND RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS GROUP

February 15, 2007

Mr. David Weber  
Director of City Clerks Office  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

Dear Mr. Weber:

**Re: Inclusion on Agenda of Parks & Recreation Committee**

Richmond Responsible Dog Owners Group (RRDOG) requests inclusion on the Parks and Recreation Committee Agenda of February 27th. Our delegation seeks a twenty minute allocation of time for the purposes of an introductory presentation.

RRDOG is a volunteer, non-profit, registered society with the goal of making Richmond a safer, friendlier, cleaner community for everyone, not just dog owners, by proactively addressing the dog-related issues which all our cities have in common. After two years of examination and consultation, we have developed a strategy to work co-operatively with the City.

RRDOG's presentation will be done by a delegation of five, with a primary speaker, a Powerpoint presentation, and an information package which includes an outline of the presentation, RRDOG brochure and survey form, two background compilations (media clips, public dialogue, correspondence, etc.), and a grant application with our proposed budget. We will provide a complete package for the Mayor and Councillors, except councilor McNulty, who has already met with us, well in advance of the meeting. The Powerpoint presentation is attached for your review. We anticipate some of our members will join the audience.

Our proposal is comprehensive and extensive but includes features such as:

- RRDOG support for Animal Control Bylaw Enforcement through Dogwatch
- RRDOG mail out to City dog license list
- Proactive community involvement in developing a culture of compliance with canine obedience and etiquette protocols
- Community centered, affordable education programs
- Co-operation with and support for RAPS and the SPCA
- Advisory support in establishing practical, safe, clean, accessible dog facilities through CDOG, a City dog advisory committee

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- Survey data through CDOG to assist the City in consulting and prioritizing
- Cost savings from “Poop ’n’ Scoop” environmental initiatives
- Conflict resolution in multiple use off-leash privilege public parks (MOPS)
- Socialization and prevention of dangerous canine behavior with Dog Romps
- Implementation of the Good Canine Citizen (GCC) standard with off-leash privileges for certificate holders
- Exemptions for disabled dog owners with GCC
- Enhanced public image for City Council and Staff as a regional leader.

RRDOG is also seeking financial support from the City to help implement these initiatives. We have submitted a grant application for \$26,000. The last General Purposes Committee requested further information on RRDOG’s application. We have been advised to present to the Parks and Recreation Committee which does not take place until after the next General Purposes Meeting. We have been assured that this will not preclude funding if our proposal is ultimately accepted.

Thank you for considering our request.

Earnestly yours,

Ryan Lake  
Director

Cc: Shanon Hamilton  
Dave Semple  
Sean Davies  
Corry Anderson-Fennell  
Jack Buchan  
Casey lake  
Deborah Packer  
Jill Seymour  
Shelley Smith  
RRDOG Members

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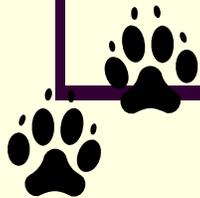
# An Introductory Presentation For City of Richmond Councillors & Richmond Parks Department



By Richmond Responsible Dog Owners' Group

**RRD·G**

RICHMOND RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS GROUP



# Agenda

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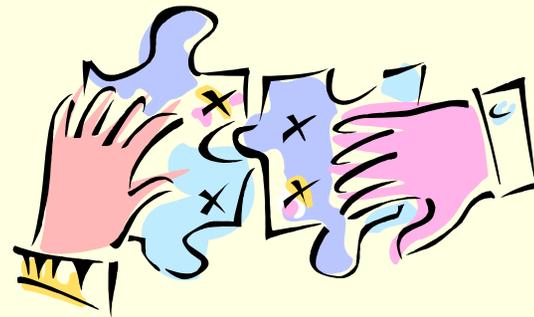
- Thanks for consulting
- Introduction of Delegation Members
- What we can do for you---A Working Partnership
- The 7 C's
- Concluding Comments



# The 7 C's

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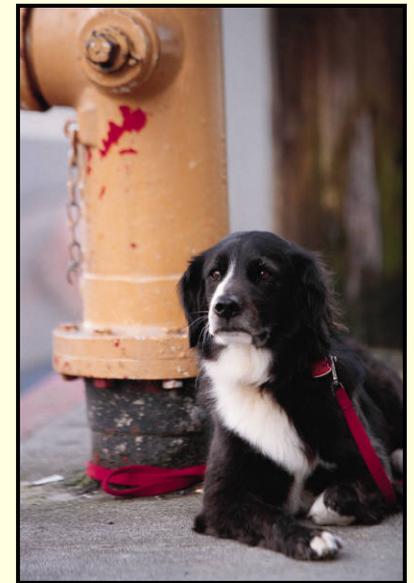
- Consultation
- Compromise
- Co-Operation
- Collaboration
- Culture of Compliance
- Cost Effectiveness



# RRDOG Membership Concerns Survey

(compiled from membership information forms)

- 90.0% Off Leash Parks
- 73.3% Off Leash Restrictions
- 66.7% Irresponsible Dog Owners
- 60.0% Animal Cruelty
- 60.0% Public Image of Dog Owners
- 56.7% Biodegradable Bags for Dog Waste
- 53.3% Obedience Training
- 53.3% Environmental Issues re Dog Waste
- 50.0% Etiquette
- 50.0% Breed Restrictions
- 43.3% Public Safety
- 43.3% Enforcement Issues
- 26.7% Disability Issues
- 23.3% Fines
- 23.3% License Costs
- 20.0% Dog Friendly Housing
- 16.7% Legal Challenges



# Consultation

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What is RRDOG, what we can offer, and what we intend to do.

**GOALS:** A Safer, Friendlier, and Cleaner Community for Everyone  
(Brochure Handout)

- RRDOG members include a wide variety of individuals from across the social spectrum, including non-dog owners. What we all share is a concern about dog issues and how they impact our lives and our communities.
- RRDOG membership survey, compiled statistics of major concerns and interests, show that RRDOG's members primary interests are in off-leash parks, off-leash restrictions, irresponsible dog owners, safety, animal cruelty, disability issues and environmental concerns.

# Consultation (Con't)

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RRDOG seeks ongoing consultation with:

- City Councillors
- Parks Department
- By-Law Enforcement (regular meetings and access to enforcement liaison officers)
- Richmond Animal Protection Services (if they are assuming enforcement responsibility)

# Compromise

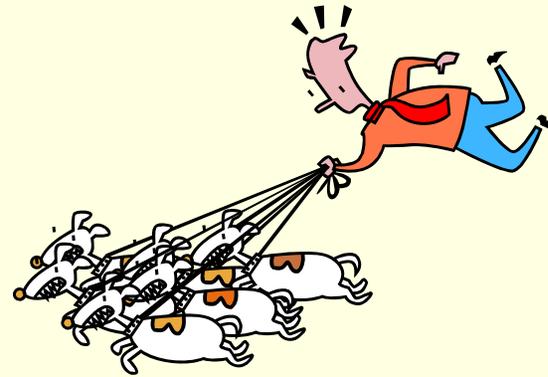
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- You can't please all of the people all of the time (i.e. The fringe at both ends of the issues)
- In the "middle ground" most reasonable, responsible people can find the means to compromise
- For all of us to get along in an increasingly crowded community, resolutions will have to be found for areas of conflict (reflected by frequent media attention)

# Major Areas of Conflict

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- Media file handout
- There are NO DEDICATED DOG PARKS IN RICHMOND
- Multiple Use Off-Leash Privilege Parks (MOPS)
  - Don't work
  - Too few
  - Too far
  - Regulations not enforced
  - De facto off-leash parks (e.g. Garry Point Park)



# Major Areas of Conflict (Con't)

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- NEED COMMUNITY BASED DEDICATED OFF-LEASH PARKS and MOPS
- There would be no need to commute
- Neighbourhood Parks would instill a sense of community pride
- Sense of Proprietorship
- Peer pressure from neighbours for dog owners to behave responsibly (trained obedient dogs, keep area clean)

# Major Areas of Conflict (Con't)

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## NEED CONTAINED "ROMPER AREAS"

- To socialize young dogs before training
- Ongoing socialization (dogs need company too)

## NEED ACCESS TO COMMUNITY CENTRES

- Dog Obedience and Etiquette training needs to be offered in local community centres
- Affordable, accessible



# Co-operation

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- In addition to neighbourhood off-leash parks and romper areas we need to ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE DOG HANDLING
- This is an area RRDOG can co-operate with and assist the City and its By-law enforcement officers
  - RRDOG members are out in the Parks and Community all the time
  - We can be politely persuasive and respectfully instructive to encourage dog owners to become Responsible Dog Owners

# Co-operation (Con't)

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- RRDOG needs to have regular interface with enforcement
- RRDOG can assist enforcement by observing, recording, reporting and witnessing on dog related issues
- RRDOG needs a model for assisting enforcement officers and ready phone access to liaison officers
- RRDOG can be your eyes and ears. We know where the problems are (e.g. vigilantes with bear spray, dangerous dogs, unlicensed pit bulls)

# Co-operation (Con't)

- Through affordable obedience & etiquette training, community contact and media publicity (e.g. The Pet Page) we can diminish the enforcement challenge
- RRDOG and the City of Richmond need to Be MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE
  - For the past 1 ½ years we have been financially self-supporting; but we have had to spend so much time in growing our membership and fund raising that we haven't been able to devote the maximum amount of time to work on our true goals
  - City Grant request for \$26,000



# Culture of Compliance

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- Dogs and people have a lot in common.
- Different strokes for different folks---not everyone responds in the desired way to threats and punishment (fines); offer REWARDS too.
- What is legal
- What is practical
- What is right
- What is done

*These are seldom the same thing.*

- By-law enforcement is concerned with what is legal. RRDOG is concerned with what is right, what is practical, what is done and bringing all of these into alignment.

# Culture of Compliance (Con't)

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- Just like training dogs, punishment by itself doesn't work.  
REWARDS WORK!!

## IDEAS FOR REWARDS:

- Discounted dog license fees for RRDOG members
- Discounted license fees and offering off-leash privileges for obedience qualified handlers and Good Canine Citizen Certificate holders.
- Recognition
- Positive reinforcement
- RRDOG can help reduce the enforcement challenge, enforcement costs, prosecution costs and help make Richmond a safer, friendlier and cleaner community for everyone.

# Cost Effectiveness



Enforcement and prosecution in isolation can be a very expensive proposition:

- Hiring, training, outfitting officials (est. cost to field a single officer \$70K per yr)
- Prosecution costs (i.e. estimated cost of \$50K to prosecute a single off-leash challenge)

Liability issues could be extremely expensive:

- The possibility, in the absence of enforcement of its By-laws, the City could be liable for personal injury and loss claims

# Cost Effectiveness (Con't)

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## Environmental Responsibility Costs:

- Estimated 700 tons of dog feces is disposed of in landfills every year in non-biodegradable plastic bags. There are more environmentally friendly cost effective ways to dispose of this waste (e.g. biodegradable bags and eventually composting).

## Lost Revenue:

- The number of unlicensed dogs is roughly equal to the number of licensed dogs.

The Dog Strategy Task Force in Vancouver is funded with \$40,000 and is doing the same work as RRDOG.

# *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.*

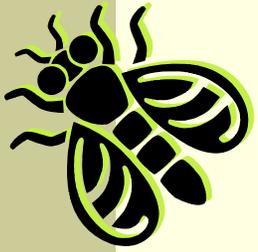
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- RRDOG can help reduce the chance of all these costs by working co-operatively with the City and its enforcement officers.

To do this we need:

- To increase our effectiveness and co-operation with the City
- Legitimization by the City Councillors
- Increased Funding



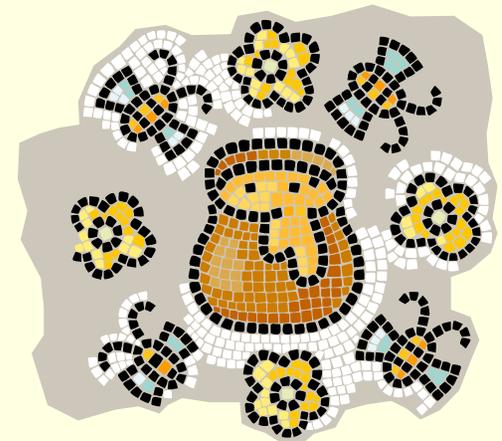


## *You can catch more flies with honey (money) than you can with vinegar.*

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We have submitted a Grant Proposal to the City for \$26,000 which is minimal in light of the costs we could save the city. Major items that would be funded by this grant:

- Printing and mailing of RRDOG brochures to City dog licence list
- Printing brochures for distribution at dog-related retailers in Richmond
- Development of a web site for RRDOG
- Funding for membership drives
- Continuation of operating expenses



# Funding



Funding by the City would be cost-effective for both the City and RRDOG. The City generates revenue of approximately \$260,000 from its dog licence fees plus dog fine revenue. What does the dog user group get for its license money? This user group has a reasonable expectation of practical neighbourhood facilities for dog training. Effective training will ultimately reduce the City's enforcement cost as well as making Richmond a safer community. RRDOG's success becomes the City's success: win/win!

# Funding (Con't)

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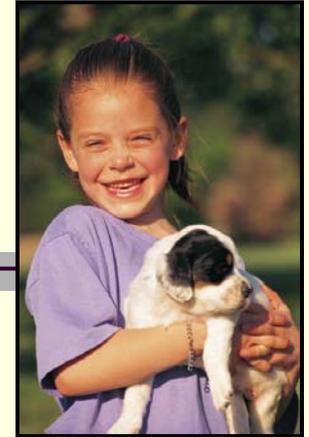
Additionally, the dog-related industry in Richmond is growing and the City derives revenue from these businesses:

- Retailers and Suppliers
- Trainers
- Veterinarians and other dog health professionals
- Dog walkers
- Kennels
- Accessory shops
- What the City gives up in enforcement revenue it will get back many times through increased business revenue.



# Concluding Comments

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Thank you again.

We hope this is a beginning, not the end.

We look forward to presenting a final report in 2007.

We look forward to your support and approval of our Grant Proposal.

By working co-operatively, City Councillors and RRDOG can make Richmond a template for safer, cleaner, and friendlier communities everywhere in Canada.

We need your support and co-operation to reach this goal!

