

# Report to Council



**Date:** December 9, 2019  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Lake Avenue Dog Beach Trial Results  
**Department:** Parks and Buildings Planning

---

## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives for information, the report from the Parks & Buildings Planning Manager dated December 2, 2019 with respect to the Lake Avenue Dog Beach Trial Results;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs staff to use the budget currently allocated for Lake Avenue Dog Beach for a permanent off-leash dog beach at Lake Avenue.

## **Purpose:**

To provide Council an opportunity to review the results of the two-year Dog Beach Trial at Lake Avenue and to make a determination about the future of the dog beach in this location.

## **Background:**

From August 2017 to September 2019, we invited residents to share their thoughts and experiences regarding the Lake Avenue Off-Leash Dog Beach Access. During the original engagement session at Lake Avenue in spring 2016, City staff received many strongly felt comments from nearby residents opposed to a dog beach in this location. However, it also received broad support from the wider community both online and at the city-wide open house. To allow for a better understanding of public opinion, a two-year trial was conducted. This also allowed both nearby residents and visitors to the beach to experience the space as an off-leash site.

In September of 2016, Council provided direction to staff to undertake a two-year trial for the use of Lake Avenue Beach Access as an off-leash dog beach. The trial considered water quality, community feedback, service requests, and considerations from Community Policing in the neighbourhood. This report summarizes these results and presents a plan with improvements, within the existing budget allocation for this project, reflecting the requests from the community. Suggestions from the community included better fencing, improved signage, and the addition of a doggie bag dispenser. A plan for these improvements is attached.

**Discussion:**

**Community Engagement.** The results from community engagement were strongly supportive of the off-leash dog beach, or supportive with conditions. Two of the 67 contributors were opposed. For those supportive with conditions, suggestions of additional fencing, signage and doggie bag dispensers were most prominent.

**Water Quality.** Water quality was tested over the summers of 2018 and 2019. The results for Vimy Avenue and Lake Avenue geomean were well within the guidelines for recreational water quality. Based on the past three years of data, continuous dog use did not seem to have notable impacts on Lake Avenue Beach Access on E. coli counts.

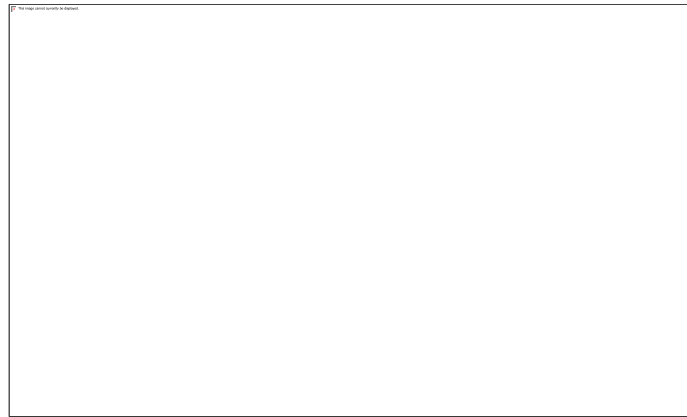


Figure 1. Water Quality Results

**Service Requests and RDCO Dog Control.** There were nine service requests specific to Lake Avenue during the two-year trial. One expressed concern over water quality and several over the need for additional fencing. Of the service requests, 4 were supportive of the dog beach with conditions. Five service requests were opposed, of which four were from the same resident. RDCO Dog Control had 2 complaints in 2017, one in 2018, and 2 in 2019.

**Community Policing.** Staff received feedback the Downtown Enforcement Unit. The Corporal who was familiar with the area spoke very favourably of the dog park. She said that since the dog park was introduced, she found that the park was not a problem, and felt there was fewer calls for service. The current Corporal for the Unit supported these comments noting there has been an increase in positive activity, for example, people with dogs appropriately using the park.

**Conclusion:**

The results of the trial indicate that the majority of contributors are in favour of making Lake Avenue Dog Beach permanent. Additionally, the results for water quality, as well as Dog Control and Community

Policing, are positive for the continued use of the beach for dogs. Many of the suggestions through the community engagement platform [getinvolved.kelowna.ca](http://getinvolved.kelowna.ca), as well as the Service Request system, cited the need for additional fencing, as well as doggie bag dispensers to be installed at Lake Avenue. Existing budget is available to improve fencing, creating greater separation between the dog beach area and the path of cyclists and pedestrians. Staff notes that it is not permitted to fence below the high-water mark, in order to allow free passage along the beach. Signage will be installed reminding dog owners to respect neighbours and keep their dogs within the designated area.

**Internal Circulation:**

Community Communications  
Infrastructure Operations  
Parks Operations  
Water Quality

**Considerations applicable to this report:**

**Existing Policy:**

Council Priorities 2019-2022 identified measures to transform this vision into action. Specifically, relevant to this report:

- Vibrant neighbourhoods, by creating animated parks and public spaces
- Vibrant neighbourhoods, through developing accessible and multi-purpose amenities.

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

Existing budget as noted.

**External Agency/Public Comments:**

As noted.

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by: M. Steppuhn, Parks Planner

Approved for inclusion: D. Edstrom, Divisional Director, Partnerships and Investments

cc: Ian Wilson, Infrastructure Operations Department Manager  
K. O'Rourke, Community Communications Manager

Attachment: Appendix A – Lake Avenue Dog Beach Summary of Engagement Results