

Save the Sorauren Park Off-Leash Area!



“Thinking that you can disregard the off-leash rules and it doesn’t affect everyone else in the park is like believing you can pee in the shallow end and it doesn’t affect the rest of the people in the pool.” Sorauren Park dogwalker

Background

The off-leash use in Sorauren Park was originally introduced on a temporary trial basis. Due to the high volume of complaints about dogs off-leash outside of the designated hours and location, all off-leash use of the park was suspended 2+ years ago, leaving our community without an off-leash destination in the entire Roncesvalles-MacDonell neighbourhood. It took 1+ years of hard work to establish an agreement to restore off-leash use, with thanks to the support of fellow park users, the City Councillor and Parks & Rec. The current off-leash agreement is a pilot project that will be extended or suspended depending on the success of the shared-use model established by the off-leash agreement.

Off-Leash Hours and Location At-Risk Once Again!

The statistics on the volume of registered complaints and off-leash by-law violations will determine the continued status of the off-leash agreement currently in effect. The Sorauren Park Dog Committee has been advised that these statistics for our park are high and steadily increasing, jeopardizing the off-leash hours and location. There is growing concern as the spring/summer season approaches, when the off-leash hours will switch from 4pm-10am to 8pm-10am and the shared park use greatly increases with the arrival of sports leagues, the Festival, and increased daily use by neighbours of all ages.

Compliance Promotion Blitz

The Sorauren Park Dog Committee is the representative volunteer body that is required, by the terms of the off-leash agreement, to be active in promoting compliance with the location, hours and litter maintenance. (New members are always welcome)

Our stated mission is to have the dogwalkers who use Sorauren Park contribute positively to the shared park use and to the maintenance and development of the park for diverse use by all area residents.

Please be advised that in order to improve the statistics for the off-leash compliance in Sorauren Park and thereby secure the continued off-leash use of the park according to the terms of the existing agreement:

1. The Dog Committee has met with the by-law enforcement officers from Parks, Forestry & Recreation and from Animal Services and they have offered us advice, ideas and assistance in order to maximize by-law compliance and retain the off-leash use. They remain supportive of the off-leash use and want to help avert

another suspension, or more likely this time around, termination of off-leash park use.

The initiatives that dog walkers can expect in the upcoming weeks include:

- a. Annual Sorauren Park Spring Clean Up Day, a requirement stipulated by the off-leash agreement . Everyone is welcome to volunteer! Upcoming in April!
- b. On-site pet license registration at Spring Clean Up Day
- c. Continued committee efforts to encourage Parks, Forestry & Rec to post proper signs clearly identifying Off-Leash Location and Hours
- d. Increased enforcement activities from by-law officers
- e. Information outreach campaign by Dog Committee

2. “**Lake Wabash Project**”

The Dog Committee is determined to solve the problem of the off-leash area being located in the middle of the huge drainage pool (affectionately known as *Lake Wabash*) that makes the off-leash area unusable for many days of the year and a public health hazard in summer due to the standing water issues. Discussions are underway with Peter Leiss (Parks Manager), to determine the best remedy to the situation. Possibilities include rehabilitating the drainage and landscaping in the present location or moving the location to the fenced field area on Wabash Avenue, between the Wabash Community Centre site and the Field House.

Stay tuned for further developments at www.soraurenpark.com
Contact the Dog Committee Chairperson lauriebell@sympatico.ca