

**Dog Park Project – Community Correspondence emailed between October 28 – November 2, 2020**

A friend gave me your email and suggested I forward some ideas that our adult children passed along re: a dog park in S'land. Our children grew up in S'land, but no longer live in town. However, when they come to visit in the summer with their children, Powell Beach is where they go with their little ones. For our family, Powell Beach is NOT an option for a dog park.

I have filled in the survey and added these ideas;

"The three options have accessibility challenges and locations that are not central to anyone. It seems obvious to use part of the downtown Memorial park for the dog park. There is a wide open field next to the horseshoe pits that is largely unused. It could easily be fenced in. This would increase the foot traffic near the downtown core which is in desperate need of business. Parking is easily accessed."

The people living in the new apartments on Brown frequently walk their dogs in Memorial Park, sometimes near the kids' play area. I know this from meeting with friends in the park this summer for coffee, and talking with people walking their dogs. When the sign was put up saying, "No dogs in the park," people asked where they could walk their dogs. We had no answer at the time. Having a dog park in Memorial Park near the horseshoe pits would accommodate many people in the downtown core and elsewhere who are probably not going to drive out to any of the other three places.

Just a suggestion, as the other three options in the survey just don't seem practical.

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We wish to record our strong objection to Powell Beach Park being considered as a location for a dog park.

There already is an extensive dog area in Trout Creek along the south side of the creek extending from the highway to the mouth of the canyon. If there is a need for another dog area, wouldn't it make sense to locate it closer to the population center of Summerland?

The thought of a fenced off area in middle of the park green space is offensive. This applies to the Living Memorial Park option as well.

Of the three sites being considered, the Rodeo Grounds would be the best option.  
We trust that some consideration will be given to these comments.

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I am coming across a lot of people who are not aware of the Dog Park survey and how to access it. Would you please send the information to the attention of the Trout Creek Elementary School principal. Perhaps she can help distribute the information regarding the survey to her parent population and teachers. Trout Creek School teachers have used the green space at Powell Beach for many years for field trips outings and gatherings. Since Trout Creek School is a neighbour to Powell Beach, I would appreciate your assistance in inviting their input to the survey which closes November 8th. Having Powell Beach turned into a large area Dog park will directly impact the School. I believe that Trout Creek School is a Stake holder (just as the other groups you targeted through your earlier information meeting). I believe the Trout Creek School Community needs to have a voice through the Survey, with the understanding that Powell Beach is at Risk of being turned into a Dog Park.

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Upon reviewing your data fairly quickly, allow me the following comments. I am very fond of dogs, but feel that .85 acres should be enough. If the area is not a square (let's say 80 x 50m), it seems like a pretty big distance to throw a ball or Frisbee for a dog from one end to the other.

**Powell Beach Dog Park, Trout Creek:** In my opinion, a dog park in Powell Beach is not a good idea for the following reasons. The area is too detached from Summerland; the park targeted for the dog park is one of the few (or only?) parks left in Trout Creek residential area; Sunoka Beach Provincial Park, which is literally around the corner, has a separate pet beach. Furthermore, Trout Creek is becoming such a dense residential area with every space used to build, that this park should be protected.

**Living Memorial Ballpark:** As a relatively new Summerlander, I have not been to the Living Memorial Ball Park. Although that seems like a good location, the idea that at least part of a Ball Park used for sports and physical activity would be transformed into a dog park does not seem to send the right message, in particular not for young children. One of the Factors in Favor you mention is "Central to Biking", which I would dispute, because it is across the highway from the center of Summerland.

**Rodeo Grounds:** Although the most expensive according to the numbers, this seems like the best location to me for the following reasons. People use the KVR and the Conkle Park on foot and bicycles a lot already, walk their dogs, etc. This therefore would seem like a good extension of this activity. Also, it is just a little farther from the center. I personally use the area a lot to hike and bike in all seasons and I have yet to have a problem with parking and snow. Your Factors Against says "not ideal for walking and biking from downtown", I would dispute. The bike ride from downtown is beautiful and on quiet roads.

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I am strongly opposed to this plan for a dog park. I don't see the value in it as there should be higher priorities for our community. In reference to Powell Beach you would be taking the largest open green area and fencing it off. This would restrict that area from being used for any other purpose. Powell Beach is a no pets beach now but it's all ready a problem where people bring their dogs to the beach off leash and they don't follow the posted bylaw. Do you not think people are going to walk across the road and let their dog have a swim in the lake after playing hard? Who is going to enforce the rules that are already in place? At this present time it is no one. I see there is going to be a greater need for enforcement if we have a dog park right there. I'm not sure this is inline with the original plan for a community park. The community of Trout Creek. Have you asked the residents of the Trout Creek community what they think? It is their neighborhood you are wanting to change.

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I would like to register my strong opposition to using my tax dollars to create a dog park in my neighbourhood of Trout Creek. We have already lost much of our green space with all the recent and current development in this area.

I object to replacing the slow pitch area with a dog park. I would much rather hear the laughter of kids than barking dogs.

Also there are nesting owls near that area of the park so an environmental study needs to be completed before disturbing their habitat.

As well, there is already a dog beach within walking distance at Sun-Oka. It would be more advisable to have a dog park in town which would serve more people.

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Perhaps now is not the right time to invest in the idea of the fenced off-leash dog park options. As we are all subject to the COVID-19 pandemic, our economic situation is tentative at best. Tax payments are being deferred and the national GDP is not expected to start to rebound until at least 2023. In all communities, including Summerland, this pandemic is revealing and exacerbating the disparities that exist within our population.

Now is a time to prioritize spending on food, shelter, safe spaces, and emotional supports for lower income households and 'at risk' youth. Preserving our natural green spaces also bodes well for everyone's mental wellbeing. During the ongoing social limitations imposed on us due to COVID-19, the hope of getting back to softball/baseball is an important positive for our youth to hold onto.

The fenced off-leash dog park on-line survey limits the choices to 3 options, yet only provides costing for 2 of these locations. If we are waiting until 2022 for those costing numbers, why not wait until those figures are in and can be applied to the equation? This would allow for proper evaluation of all options. Other choices may also become apparent by that time.

What does this community really need right now? I suggest putting our energy and financial resources toward supporting community members who are struggling most in these challenging times.

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Memorial Park does have enough room to locate a central dog park without displacing the activities of the horseshoe club. I did a site visit today.

Memorial Park offers the following positive attributes:

- (1) Centrally located - this can be accessed by car, bike, and is within walking distance of the core of residents in upper town.
- (2) Wheelchair accessible - some modifications may be needed for the entrance/ path, etc. but this would be minimal as it is flat.
- (3) Existing washroom access.
- (4) Immediately adjacent existing amenities, including a coffee shop and bakery - less than 1 block away. This would be another activity to strengthen our downtown and would improve the stability of businesses in the downtown core.
- (5) Adequate sight line buffer and noise buffer from adjacent residential properties - less noise complaints and would not ruin residential views.
- (6) Access to downtown parking.

(7) Existing picnic benches could be integrated within the dog park (may require adding additional picnic benches elsewhere in the park to compensate for the loss of these).

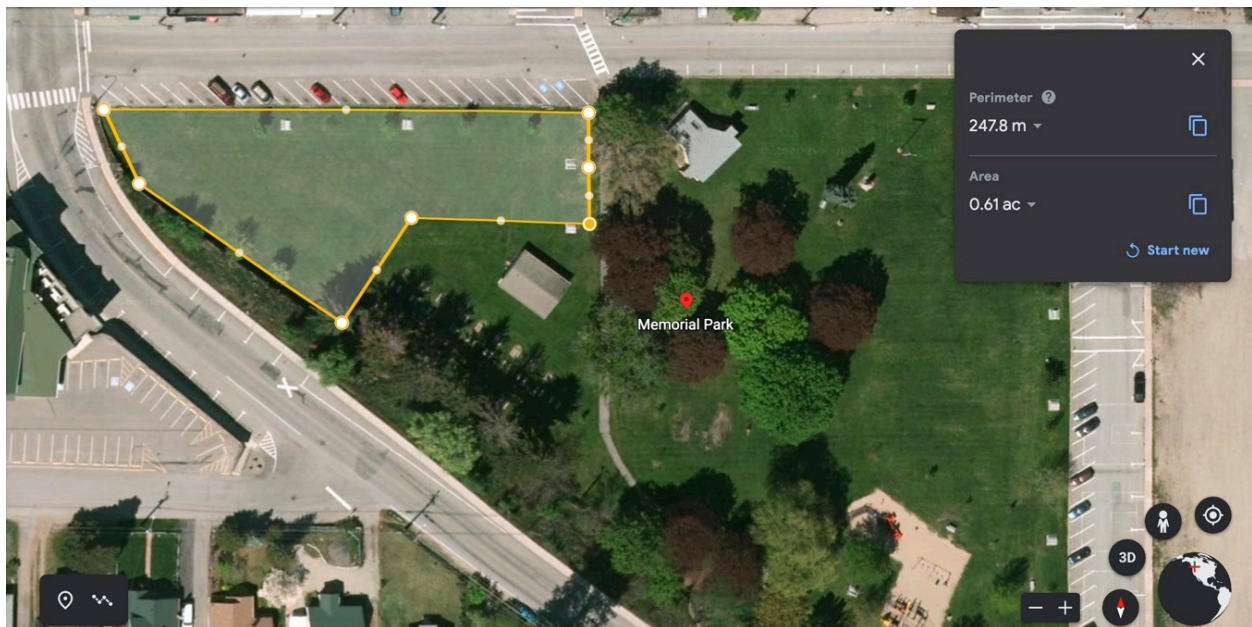
(8) Existing ample shade within the park.

(9) Room for a smaller dog area (see below) and larger dog run (see below) - the diagram below as an example.

The use of black coloured fencing would further reduce the visual impact of the dog park in this location.

I extended the one border and was able to get 0.61 acres. There was a large German Shepherd on the far end when I visited the park and there would be ample room for even larger dogs to be in a park that size.

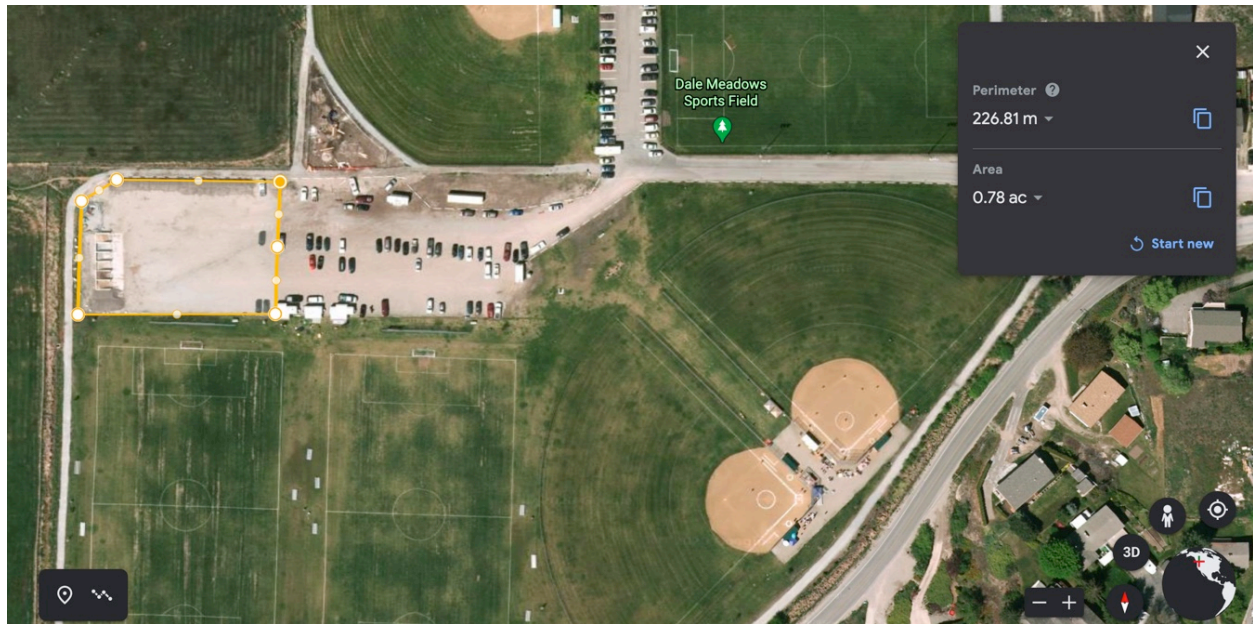
I'm assuming there are guidelines for the sizes of dogs recommended for the space available, but certainly this amount of space would support small and medium/ medium-large dogs.



Here is another option for locating the dog park at Dale Meadows. It is another ideal location as it is away from neighbours and doesn't ruin sight lines, is close to the downtown (access to coffee, food, etc.), has parking and washrooms, and trail as well as road access. It would be easily wheelchair adaptable.

By reclaiming excess gravel parking, there is quite a bit of space to add a dog park at the end (0.8 acres with the picture below):





The loss of parking could be made up three ways:

(1) Adding the unused section below to the parking plan (partial reclaim of lost parking):



(2) Reclaim the area currently housing the storage bin adjacent the parking lot and add it to the parking area (relocate the storage bins), and;

(3) Pave the parking lot, redesign the flow as needed to make it work, and paint parking lines to improve efficiency of the area (currently there are no parking lines in the gravel and as a result the parking is quite spaced out).

This is definitely a viable option as well and is in the spirit of a gathering place for recreation. Many families there for soccer or ball have dogs and would likely use the dog park for part of the time spent there. There is more room available here than Memorial Park, but both would potentially work.