

## Summerland Off-Leash Dog Park - Community Consultation Phase 2

Work continues to find a suitable location for a year-round fenced off-leash dog park in Summerland. The first phase of the project resulted in a recommendation from Council (March 2020) to further explore five potential sites and collect feedback from community members and stakeholder groups. Two sites were removed from consideration at the request of the property owners. Phase 2 is expected to conclude in December 2020.

### For more information:

- Backgrounder – [Proposed Off-Leash Sites](#)
- Backgrounder – [What is a Dog Park?](#)
- Website: <https://www.summerland.ca/parks-recreation/dog-park-project>
- E-mail: [recreation@summerland.ca](mailto:recreation@summerland.ca)
- Phone: 250-494-0447



## 1. Residential Neighbourhoods

Two of the three proposed options have residential neighbourhoods adjacent to the potential dog park area. An increased number of dogs, noise and traffic can be expected.

Mitigation strategies for each neighbourhood will need to consider:

- Ensuring adequate on- and off-street parking
- Scheduling appropriate hours of use
- Enforcement of park rules (e.g. dog waste management, no aggressive dogs)

Council has prioritized the use of land currently owned by the District of Summerland, and/or partnering with a landowner/organization interested in supporting the social benefits the creation of an off-leash dog park will bring to the community. At this time, purchasing land for the purpose of establishing a dog park is not being considered.

An off-leash dog park in each of the proposed sites will have an impact on current recreation users and/or neighbours. It is important to understand current use to assess and mitigate the impact.

The mitigation options proposed are based on finding ways to support multiple users to share existing recreation areas, and addressing the impact on current users who may be displaced.

## 2. Baseball and Softball

Two of the three proposed sites are currently used by volunteer-run recreational baseball and softball programs for children and youth.

The District of Summerland owns 9 ball diamonds:

- Softball = 6 (5 at Dale Meadows Park, 1 at Powell Beach Park)
- Baseball = 3 (Living Memorial Park/Snow Ave.)

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan notes that the average number of ball diamonds in other BC municipalities of approximately the same size (5,000 – 15,000) is 6.4. Currently, comparable numbers for baseball and softball are not available separately.



### Powell Beach Fastpitch Diamond (softball)

Powell Beach Park has a small diamond (similar in size to Living Memorial #3), but lacks fences, covered dugouts, and has suffered damage during recent floods. It was used for practice and games by Girls Fastpitch prior to the development of Dale Meadows, but it has only been used for the occasional practice in recent years due to the poor quality of the infield and outfield.

Currently, Minor Fastpitch schedules the **Dale Meadows Park** diamond #2 for practice, April -June, Mon. – Thu., 6:30-8:00pm, and some weekends. Powell Beach and Dale Meadows are also used for the Action Festival Slo-Pitch Tournament.

There is power and water at the Powell Beach site, and the program has built and installed a batting cage. The program has also benefited from Kinsmen and other funding. The Minor Fastpitch user group hosts three tournaments a year at Dale Meadows. They also hosted regional 'meet in the middle' games in the past when the Powell Beach field was in better condition.

Powell Beach Park is owned and maintained by the District of Summerland in partnership with the efforts of Minor Fastpitch volunteers.

Should the diamond at Powell Beach be repurposed as an all-year fenced off-leash park for dogs, the following mitigation strategies will require consideration:

- Shared use of Living Memorial Park by removing the permanent baseball mound at diamond #3 and purchasing a portable mound to facilitate use by both softball (fastpitch) and baseball (7U & 9U) programs.
- Relocation of the batting cage from Powell Beach to either Dale Meadows Park or Living Memorial Park.
- Development of a practice and game schedule for the shared diamond that is fair for both softball and baseball users.

### Living Memorial Park Diamond #3 (baseball)

Diamond #3 is the smallest of the three and is set up for Tadpole (age 7 and under) and Mosquito (age 9 and under) players. This diamond is necessary to meet Baseball BC requirements for offering minor baseball for all age groups.

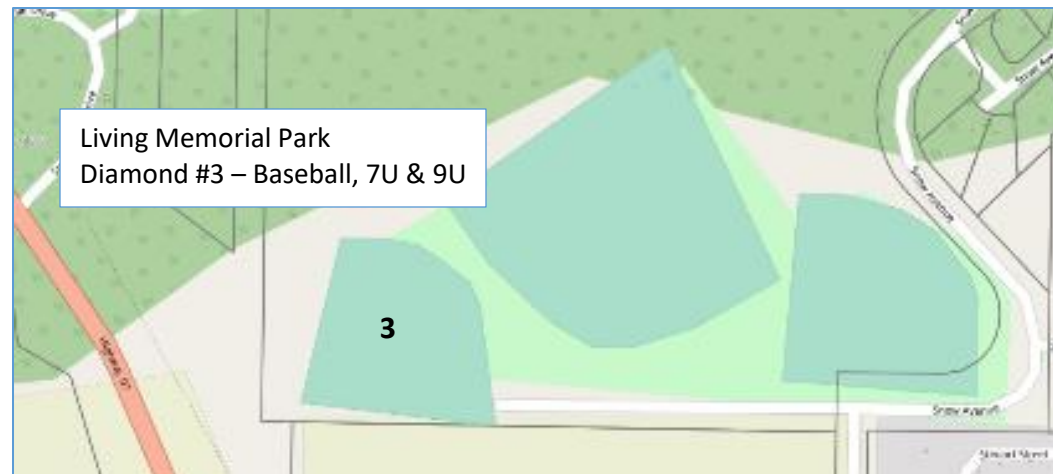
Although usage varies year to year depending on interest and availability of volunteers to coach, diamond three is scheduled by the program April – June, Monday-Thursday, 4:30-7:00 (or when it gets dark). It is also used occasionally for Friday evening games (4 days/season), and Saturday and Sunday morning games (11 weekends, 9:00-noon). It is also used for the Action Festival Slo-Pitch Tournament.

Living Memorial Park is owned and maintained by the District of Summerland in partnership with the efforts of Minor Baseball volunteers. The *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* notes that Living Memorial Park was dedicated in 1948 by the Memorial Parks Committee and is included in Summerland's "Heritage Buildings Inventory 2014" (*Master Plan*, pg. 223). The purpose was to honour the sacrifice of WWII soldiers and support the youth of the community.

The park has benefited from funding support from Rotary, Kinsmen and the Legion over the years. The bleachers were recently removed for safety reasons and users have indicated that some infrastructure improvements are necessary. The septic system is old and may not have capacity for additional use.

Should diamond #3 be repurposed as an all-year fenced off-leash park for dogs, the following mitigation strategies will require consideration:

- Renovation of Powell Beach Softball Diamond (similar size) to share between softball (slo-pitch/fastpitch) and baseball (7U & 9U) programs.
- Development of a practice and game schedule for the shared diamond that is fair for both softball and baseball users.
- Purchase, storage and maintenance of a portable mound appropriate for the 7U and 9U baseball program for use at the shared diamond.



## Mitigation Cost Estimates

The following costs are estimated to support the shared use of either the Powell Beach Park or Living Memorial Park diamonds, based on one of those diamonds being selected for a fenced off-leash dog park.

A detailed site assessment and costing should be completed after a site has been selected.

Item	Mitigation: Powell Beach Park (Dog park at Living Memorial #3)	Mitigation: Living Memorial #3 (Dog park at Powell Beach)
Fencing improvements	Outfield/baseline fence/netting	Not needed
Dugout improvements	Covered	Not needed
Infield improvements	Rehabilitation	\$500
Outfield improvements	Rehabilitation	Not needed
<b>Sub-total – field improvement</b>	<b>\$110,000*</b>	<b>\$500</b>
Portable mound (6" high)	\$2,000	\$2,000
Storage for portable mound	Sea-Can: \$5,000	Not needed
Relocate batting cage	N/A	\$500
<b>Sub-total - equipment</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$117,000</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>

### Notes:

\*The improvement costs for the Powell Beach ball diamond were estimated as part of renovation planning by Public Works earlier in 2020 to bring it up to the standard of Dale Meadows. It includes digging out and replacing the infield; digging out, leveling, grading, applying seed or sod, and removing and reinstalling irrigation in the outfield; adding fences, protective netting, new dugout roofs and new bases etc. See the summary of estimated costs provided by Public Works, below.

## Powell Beach Park – Softball Renovation Estimate

The District of Summerland Public Works Department estimated the costs of upgrading the Powell Beach softball diamond in early 2020. They based this assessment on the poor quality of the existing field, similar work done in 2018 to repair Living Memorial diamond #3, and in discussion with colleagues doing similar work in Penticton.

The estimate is conservative and has been adjusted to increase fencing and wood costs by 20% in anticipation of expected cost increases in 2021.

Item	Materials and Labour
Infield: dig out and replace material*	\$15,000
Outfield:	\$40,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dig up and remove irrigation</li> <li>level, reinstall irrigation, grade</li> <li>apply grass seed or sod</li> </ul>	
Fencing and protective netting (close to residential area)**	\$48,000
Dugouts: roofs added x 2**	\$4,000
New bases, anchors, pitching rubber etc.	\$3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>
*Not certain about the make up of current material; could impact cost of replacement	
**Fencing and wood costs increased by 20% from original estimate	

### 3. Summerland Rodeo Grounds

The Summerland Rodeo Grounds are on a 48-acre parcel of land that was donated to the District of Summerland for the purpose of supporting equestrian sports in the South Okanagan. The District of Summerland is planning to undertake a comprehensive Master Planning process in 2022 (postponed from 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). This plan will be important for addressing the issue of aging infrastructure, and equestrian users would like to see the facilities enhanced to allow for additional equestrian events. The planning process will also need to consider that the Rodeo Grounds border on the Kettle Valley Steam Train, Conkle Mountain Park and the Trans-Canada Trail. The area also includes land designated as 'environmentally sensitive'.

The current facilities are used and supported in part by the Summerland Equine Development Committee, a nonprofit organization that is free to join. The Committee uses volunteers to help maintain the site, organize events, and do fundraising. The land is also used by the Garnet Valley Gang, a nonprofit that donates funds to many local organizations and supports the Kettle Valley Steam Train tourist attraction.

The District of Summerland owns and maintains the site in partnership with volunteers from the Summerland Equine Development Committee, and engages the onsite caretaker. The District also coordinates site rentals (e.g. Summerland Blue Grass Festival, Longboard Event, weddings) which use the existing infrastructure adjacent to the proposed off-leash dog park area.

If part of the Rodeo Grounds is dedicated to providing an all-year fenced off-leash park for dogs, the following issues will require consideration:

- An environmental assessment to mitigate the impact on water resources and plants and animals in the region
- Careful planning to support shared use with equestrian and other users of the grounds

Due to the current lack of infrastructure at the proposed site, mitigation costs cannot be assessed without a detailed plan and site assessment. It is recommended that this be included in the Master Planning process scheduled for 2022.

