

**River Park | Sandy Beach | Britannia Slopes Combined Park Management and Design Development Plan:
Verbatim Public Comments on Draft One (May 10 to 20, 2011)**

1. Do you feel this draft plan will help make the park more sustainable and enjoyable for current and future generations?	2. Could the plan be improved to benefit the park (and park users) as a whole?	3. During this public consultation process, have you had the chance to share your comments and suggestions as well as hear those of others?
	MAY 14 OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS	
In general, yes, provided the accent is on maintenance/restoration of the area to a natural setting.	The River Park dog use situation is not resolved. Why? The off-leash area off Riverdale has been made useless. Why? There had been no resolution of the bike/pedestrian trail problem from the suspension bridge to Riverdale. There should be two separated trails.	Yes - and many concerns have been addressed. Other problems have been ignored or received inadequate attention.
I have used the park every day for 28 years all year round except for when out of town. Except for the the busy summer months I can often walk for an hour without running into anyone except more recently the dog walkers (professional). Was it addressed that the prof dog walkers should be licensed and have a limit as to the # of dogs? If they have a number of dogs they cannot possibly pick up after all of them. Neither do the joggers. Perhaps more off leash could be allowed in the winter months?	Yes. The off leash area by the parking lot at the end of the Riverdale Ave should be enlarged to include all of the open field area below the Britannia Bluff. Leaving this as small as it is will create more impact on the bluff areas both along Britannia Drive and along 14A Street. That open field area is not useful for other activities. It is perfect for off leash.	Yes – have read the online surveys and have been to the meetings.
Sort of.	Yes! Footbridge	Yes - Thank you - but the process is being rushed through at this point. Not sure why...

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repair decking & approaches -Install significant gates to require ALL cyclists to dismount (Use 3 or 4 offset fences - even 2 isn't enough to stop a determined cyclist) <p>Signage Learn from the failed interpretative signage experience at Nose Hill Park</p> <p>Off-Leash -Use seasonal & daytime restrictions -More area (as today) in winter & during the week -Some restriction 10-5 on weekends from May through September.</p> <p>Bathrooms Kudos on the all-season washrooms (add monitored security cameras for safety!)</p> <p>Fencing along escarpment @ Britannia is fine + useful handrails</p> <p>Access Trails -Need 3 on each side -Must be off-leash for safety (dogs are more territorial when on leash)</p>	
	<p>Please completely enclose the off-leash area at Riverdale parking lot. Don't encourage people to walk behind the residents backing onto that field - now it is a rarely used informal path. The majority of users cut at 45 degrees (right through the off-leash section), they don't currently walk so close to the residences; and for privacy and security we don't want to encourage/force people to make that a true path.</p>	

<p>Yes. One thing missing is any commerce in the area. Unless it is there (in the plan) sellers of goods & drinks will appear. Professional dog walkers use to off-leash area & this is a potential problem in off-leash areas. I do not like to be fenced in.</p>	<p>I am very tired of assaults by the City & the developers on a family area. Every couple of years we are into yet another fight to save out family area. I am a fifty-year resident of Britannia & truly want to live in peace.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>It is better than the previous plan but ultimately the problem is humans not behaving the way the designers hope/expect them to.</p>	<p>There is a beautiful off-leash area at the south tip of the park system, with dog access. Who do you think will walk all the way there?? There needs to be parking close by in order to increase use of that area & make it an effective off-leash area. As it happens, there is land with a little roadway on the south end of the old Glenmore dam (now a walking bridge). A few cars are always parked there but if it was promoted as a real parking lot more cars go there (like the commercial dog walkers) that off leash area will be better used.. not so far to walk dogs on-leash across the old dam causeway + utilize the off-leash area, where as it is too far to park on 5- Ave, walk dog on-leash all the way past the water treatment plant and to the off-leash area with river access.</p>	<p>I felt like I was talking to a brick wall. Maybe I am not a good communicator? Plus the loudest voices are the ones who get listened to. Computers are beyond me so I am restricted to the people-meeting like this.</p>	
<p>Yes</p>	<p>I saw no dog waste disposal near the Riverdale entrance</p>	<p>YES. What might winter amenities be?</p>	
<p>Generally "Yes" - Parks have done well! However, parks should say loud + clear "No commercial activities on these lands". Parks fails to deal with land degradation by packs of dogs brought to the lands - especially on Britannia side - 5 days a week - by commercial dog walkers. Indeed - plan proposes to concentrate dogs in small running + swimming areas. If parks says banning "commercial dog walkers" is a matter for licensing + bylaw city depts - that is correct. But, it is also an instance of the way the city organizes itself into</p>	<p>Yes - No provisions I can see to deal with cyclists speeding through "Riverdale side" of the lands. Only a matter of time before cyclists coming off bridge hits mother/stoller/child on pathway. Cyclists should be forced to complete stop at end of bridge + pathway split or widened. Paths should accomodate garbage trucks - not be forced to straddle path as now.</p>	<p>YES.</p>	

<p>departments in order to serve the public - being used by people in one department - (parks) as an excuse for not doing anything for fear of trespassing on another dept's responsibilities. ie using organizational structures as a bar to service. Please be bold + get with it! The city promised in 1956 "no commercial use or activities" Yet it daily breaches that by failing to bar commercial dog walkers who use the park lands for the purpose of earning profit.</p>		
<p>Yes. Having & improving the paths to be more formal will help the natural areas to recover.</p>	<p>Another garbage container at the North end of the park for dog waste. Question: Are the Linking Fences going to stop dog walkers from walking the park end-to-end? Question: If you reduce the off-leash area, where will the City be giving more dog off-leash areas?</p>	<p>Yes. Attended workshops & commented online.</p>
<p>I think it heads in the right direction and seems to properly identify key problems & solutions. I don't think it goes far enough to protect/enhance the slopes & valley floor. I still feel there is too much focus on off-leash to the detriment of all other users & the environment. I like fences along the escarpments and more focused paths.</p>	<p>I remain open minded about the proposed solution w.r.t. more limited off leash in the valley. If after one-two years people have not altered their destructive behaviours the valley should be closed to dogs. Large contiguous natural areas vs. broken up bits are more vibrant for plants/animals.</p> <p>Like - Escarpment fence on Britannia side. Recommend - hard paving or gravel path along fence to prevent excessive wear & tear in grass (multiple parallel pathways at present)</p> <p>I think that the area of the escarpments and below should be on-leash. I grudgingly support the plan as stated but if after 1 year the dog owners have not developed responsible habits re river access and on-leash areas those areas should be closed to dogs.</p>	<p>Yes - participated in workshops etc.</p>

	I suspect that the broken up nature of on/off leash area will be an enforcement nightmare.	
Yes – although I would prefer Not to have fencing put up at the top of Britannia Slopes, I understand the need for it.	I'd like to have the path at the northeast edge of Britannia Slopes (immediately beside the last house on Britannia Dr.) remain open as access to the lower field and proposed off-leash area there.	Yes – with community members informally and through community association meetings, online and at the open house.
	MAY 10-20 ONLINE COMMENTS	
Yes, the plan strikes the right balance between desired usage: glad to see a large off leash area maintained while, at the same time, addressing pathway use and other amenities. I like the idea of a main aggregate pathway at River Park, more natural fencing and screens.	I really like the suggestions for voluntary engagement in the park as well as the encouragement of ways citizens could support the park. As area residents our family would love to be able to "sponsor" a tree or a metre of pathway, for instance.	Yes, I really liked the online tools and appreciate the opportunity to have a say.
Too early to tell, but an improvement over the previous plan.	Yes. It appears that the response to the call to 'keep the park natural, do not add fences' is to add low fences and transparent fences. Chopping up the area with fences, low or transparent will have a big negative impact on the wildlife in the area, cutting off previously accessible routes. It appears that there is a belief that dogs are the sole cause of erosion on the slopes. Is there any data that supports this belief? I do not believe that greatly reducing the off leash area on Britannia Slopes is the right answer to the erosion issue. It is the single biggest change in the whole plan. Too drastic.	Yes, but the public has had no visibility into the tradeoffs considered. No one realized that 'keep the park natural' would lead to eliminate off leash dog walking on Britannia Slopes. There must be a more balanced step to still enable loop off leash dog walks on Britannia Slopes.

<p>What an odd question. Are you looking for a pat on the back at this point in the process? Hard to tell at this point, at least no concrete structures were proposed, so yes it is an improvement.</p>	<p>Yes. I believe the reduction in off leash area on the Britannia Slopes is too drastic. Many people make loop walks from the upper Britannia area to Sandy Beach or Lansdowne, using either the gradual or steep paths on the slope. I believe that an off leash corridor around these paths must be maintained to allow such loop walks. I realize this presents more of a bylaw enforcement issue, but the proposed small off leash area destroys an essential element to dog walking enjoyment on the Britannia side. It appears that the city believes that dogs are a major cause of erosion, but I do not believe that is the case.</p>	<p>Yes. I wish there was more of a window into the decision making process to know what possible alternatives were considered and not chosen.</p>
	<p>One additional question: the map of the new off leash area does not illustrate where (at approximately which cross street?) the off leash area will start. Currently, it seems many local users access the park via the 90degree corner at 14a Street at the far north end and then cut in from there. Signage and natural barriers to designate how far south of the ravine the off leash zone starts would be great.</p>	
<p>Decreasing the off leash area in the north part of the park could create more congestion in the southern area. This will make the park more enjoyable for the 6 homes that are on 15th street across from River Park, but less enjoyable for the home owners on 14A St. By putting a paved bike path through the north area and channelling bike traffic to 14A St, there will be a significant amount of overlap between the dog owners that will now park at the north end of 14A St and the bike traffic. The bikes will be sharing the street with the vehicles of the dog owners, which could become hazardous in the winter and will require additional snow removal.</p>	<p>Leave the north end of the park as off leash area, but put a paved bike path along the north edge which would channel the bike traffic to 15th St. Put a bike lane on 15th St so they have a safe route to 50th Ave, and bike routes to the south.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>In some ways you've hit the mark, in others you</p>	<p>Most definitely yes.</p>	<p>Yes. (and from the size of the comment boxes</p>

<p>are still way off base. Some of the stated principles are directly contradicted by details of the draft plan. There needs to be an actual cost-benefit analysis of each proposed "improvement" or "restoration" or "protection" initiative in the plan before anything is implemented. Most people would be happy with improved maintenance of the existing park including watering and mowing throughout River Park, no changes to the current off-leash areas, repairs to the footbridge and steps on the River Park side, making the proposed changes to parking, and a properly maintained year-round washroom in Sandy Beach. That's really all you need right now to make people happy. Next would be camouflaging the dumpsters and improving river access for people and rafters at Sandy Beach. Very limited restoration of the east-side riparian and bushy areas, and tests of turf restoration would be third on the list.</p>	<p>PEOPLE + DOGS</p> <p>With the reduced off-leash area, the upper area of River Park will be even more heavily used, and damage will increase dramatically particularly while you are trying to establish all of these proposed new plantings. The City will spend a fortune on planting & fencing, and replanting and re-fencing.</p> <p>The fenced in postage-stamp-sized area at the Riverdale entrance is sure to become congested and filthy. (Have you been to Bowmont lately with only one fenced off-leash area?)</p> <p>I like to walk briskly with walking poles while my dog does his off-leash thing. We both get lots of exercise on the pathways in River Park, Sandy Beach and Britannia Slopes, all while respecting the existing on-leash areas in Sandy Beach and on the bridge. This severe cutback in the available off-leash area will actually be more detrimental than beneficial by concentrating the same number of dogs in a smaller area.</p> <p>One of the best features of River Park is the wide open space with lots of room to toss a ball or fly a kite on the manicured areas. That will be gone and chopped up with little bits of hedges and tree and whatnot. Also, that same area will no longer be suitable for the junior and senior high schools to host their cross country running events.</p> <p>If a dog is injured by one of these "fences buried in a hedge", will the fencing be removed? Will the owner be compensated for damage done to the dog? What about a child or adult who injures himself or herself on one of these hidden fences? Will they be compensated? Hiding fences in shrubs may be aesthetically pleasing but not likely to be the safest</p>	<p>on this page, you don't really want many more comments at this point, do you?)</p>
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	<p>alternative in the long run.</p> <p>As for the “ marking / scratching post”at each entrance, you’ve got to be kidding. Dogs will not preferentially use something like that just because a human being puts a sign on it saying “mark and pee here”. Dogs will certainly not run back to it from wherever they are in the park when they feel the need to mark a tree. Go ahead and put it in, whatever it is, but it sounds like just another feel-good bit of window dressing. Besides, it already exists at each entrance – it’s a large tree or a fence post or a dumpster or a high-tension tower leg. If you haven’t noticed, dogs also mark clumps of grass so how are you planning to deal with that? (PS – most dogs don’t scratch posts or trees – that would be more of a cat behaviour. I’m not an animal behaviour specialist but I’ve never seen a dog scratch on a post.)</p> <p>The proposed off-leash area at the Riverdale Avenue entrance is far too small. There is absolutely no good reason to deny off-leash access to the entire lower slopes area (all of the brushy areas on both sides of the paved pathway) and all the way to the riverbank. The pathways in that area actually help keep dogs and people off of the paved commuter pathway so cyclists have free rein. The pathway that parallels the river from the Riverdale entrance to the footbridge is already marked “no bicycles”so why take the whole “riparian”area away from off-leash dogs and their owners? By all means, use temporary fencing and install more bushes to try and prevent use of SOME of the informal braided pathways between that parallel-to-the-river path and the river itself and from the pathway through the “Balsam Forest”area, but leave enough space where people and their off-leash dogs can meander and enjoy the walk.</p>	
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	<p>The cut off on the north end of River Park should just on the edge of the Skinny Stream which is a bit further north than shown on the diagram.</p> <p>Do you really think that people are going to keep their dogs on leash from the south parking lot at River Park as they walk some 700 metres to the isolated and unsafe “Lower Reservoir” area? How much use is there of that area now, other than illicit uses?</p> <p>There absolutely must be at least one off-leash pathway up and down each side of the valley. This is a safety consideration for people when the paths are slippery due to rain, ice, snow and accumulated leaves.</p> <p>Consider having summer and winter rules for off-leash. Starting when the leaves fall in early September through to the end of May, and certainly in the dead of winter, the majority of daily park users are people walking their dogs off-leash. So, from the end of September until the Victoria Day weekend (totally arbitrary dates, for sake of discussion), have the majority of the park open for off-leash use, including all of the pathways up and down the hills. Leave the Sandy Beach area, the footbridge, and all parking lots as on-leash areas year-round. Install appropriate signage to notify commuting cyclists and all park users of this fact so they can be forewarned of the change of circumstance through the park. This will effectively discourage off-leash use in the peak summer months by restricting it to the point of being extremely unpleasant, thereby forcing people to drive further to another regional park. You could even get more creative with off-leash times by imposing severe areal restrictions (as shown on the various diagrams in the draft plan) based on season and weekday/weekend or even time of day. This has been used successfully in cities across Canada and is a matter of education and</p>	
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	<p>information.</p> <p>Please show a picture of the proposed “restoration barriers to protect adjacent stream banks”.</p> <p>There was a request for safe access to the river for people and their dogs and that appears to have been respected. Dog owners didn’t want anything fancy, just a properly maintained slope using permeable materials (not pea gravel or road crush that rolls underfoot and creates a significant slipping hazard for people of all ages), and maybe a handrail if the slope is a bit steep.</p> <p>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Fencing edges of escarpments is OK, with same type of fences as on the River Park side. Just don’t overdo it so that wildlife -- all those lovely urban coyotes and rabbits and other native furry critters -- have trouble finding a way through the fence.</p> <p>When selecting granular material for trails, please consider that not everyone is as surefooted as a mountain goat. Seniors and others with mobility issues require a stable, non-slip surface to walk on even when wet “ or they will venture off the granular pathway and start to create adjacent tracks in the grass.</p> <p>I agree with some restrictions on off-leash dog access to riparian areas but not eliminating it entirely. Erosion is NOT primarily caused by dogs!!! Suggest you have a heart-to-heart chat with God and Mother Nature about the whole flooding thing, and snowfall and ice and rainfall and wind and beaver dams!</p> <p>About the fish “ how critical to the overall survival of the trout and whitefish species in the Elbow River are the people and dog access areas along the river? I’m not a biologist but something tells me that the trout</p>	
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	<p>and other fish will survive quite nicely if less than 1 km of the river is used for people and dogs. How much is it going to cost to enforce closures to accommodate spawning and incubating every year?</p> <p>DO NOT build some sort of extravagant gate and fence structure similar to what has been installed at Southland off-leash area. Those ones are extremely unattractive (can you say blight on the landscape, assault on the senses, and just plain hideous). They are also far too steep to be truly safe for anyone or any dog, and they are truly out of keeping with a so-called natural area. Don't " just don't do it. There has to be a more low profile way to get people and dogs safely to and from the river without pouring hundreds of cubic yards of concrete and installing metal (or wood) posts and gates everywhere.</p> <p>Did anyone notice that the off-leash area at the Riverdale entrance is smack in the middle of a designated "natural parkland" area? That area is already pretty well native grasses and weeds only and it is sure to be annihilated when so many dogs get squished into such a small area. AND " the off-leash area at the Lower Reservoir is in a Restoration Zone. How on earth are those two uses in any way compatible?</p> <p>Restoring all of the riparian area on the east side of the river is unrealistic. There is a major trail through there (parallel to the riverbank) that actually helps keep dogs and pedestrians off of the paved commuter pathway. Suggest you limit attempts at restoration to fencing off some " and definitely not all " of the pathways that provide river access.</p> <p>No mention of designated river access for rafters and waders/families in this page of the draft plan.</p>	
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	<p>Proposed north boundary of off-leash area should end at the natural barrier of the Skinny Stream, not on the top of the ridge as shown.</p> <p>PATHWAYS AND TRAILS Keep 3 river valley access trails on both sides of the park. You've closed off 2 from River Park to Sandy Beach and 1 between the upper and lower sections of Britannia Slopes (from the Riverdale parking lot to Britannia Drive). Forcing all traffic from River Park to Sandy Beach onto the dangerous hillside steps is not a wise idea – a guaranteed way to increase user conflicts of all types, including collisions with mountain bikers who also use that trail (they love to bounce down the stairs).</p> <p>Fence designated #3 along Britannia Avenue does not extend far enough north. You have missed a little “tail” of the park that local people use right along the top of the escarpment.</p> <p>Include some sort of barricade on both ends of the footbridge to FORCE cyclists to dismount. Right now, they gleefully round the corners on the approaches to the bridge and usually blast right across without missing a beat, often screeching to a halt just in the nick of time, usually with a few choice words, when they encounter pedestrians with the audacity to use the pedestrian footbridge.</p> <p>All maps fail to acknowledge the presence of the buried and overhead utilities at the south end of River Park (power lines overhead, sanitary sewer access on the edge of the escarpment under the power lines). Be absolutely sure that all of your lovely plantings and fences are not destroyed by another City department when they have to bring in machinery to do work in</p>	
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	<p>those areas! There really should not be any fences under or near the power lines for that very reason.</p> <p>Allow use of the pathway from River Park to Sandy Beach that starts under the power lines. This one helps keep people and dogs off the paved commuter pathway that runs beside the access road from 50th Avenue into Sandy Beach.</p> <p>AND “ you have fenced off access at the top of the escarpment to a great toboggan hill (near the power lines). Is that intentional? How will the residents who use that hill react? Seems to be a very popular place in the winter. Don’t you want to promote use of the park in the winter???</p> <p>DO NOT FENCE THE EDGES OF THE RIVER ACCESS POINTS “ this will just cause congestion and injury to people and animals by forcing everyone and everything through one tiny opening in the fence. Not useful, not safe, not helpful.</p> <p>PARK AMENITIES Leave all of the benches where they are. Families paid for them to be placed there and they have a reasonable expectation that the benches will stay as is, where is and be properly maintained in accordance with their contract to that effect. Restoration zones will eventually be opened for use once again, in the meantime, allow families who purchased the memorial benches the right to access them, possibly with an escort by a Parks employee.</p> <p>Agreed - upgrade the existing washroom at Sandy Beach for year-round use AND properly maintain it every single day of the year!</p> <p>Learn from the abysmal experience with interpretative</p>	
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	<p>signage at Nose Hill Park. No sooner were the metal signs mounted on the carefully placed sandstone boulders than almost every sign was vandalized to the point that they had to be removed. Of all the signs placed, only one remains that is even partially legible. On the other hand, the sandstone boulders are nice landmarks!</p> <p>Comments on this page about adding off-season and winter amenities at Riveredge is in conflict with the principles re: development being counter to the interests of local area residents.</p> <p>You have removed the northernmost of the existing dog waste dumpsters at River Park. Not a good idea unless you replace it with smaller bins with secure lids (as at the entrances to Nose Hill Park).</p> <p>PARK SUSTAINABILITY AND MAINTENANCE “Plant new or move recently planted trees in clustered locations within the Manicured Zone to form Living Fences and frame significant views.” “Framing significant views” sounds very arrogant and might well run counter to restoring areas that actually need attention. What one person thinks is a “significant view” worthy of “framing” may not be the same as someone else’s take on the “framing” of any other view. Look at how natural escarpments in the rest of the city are “framed” by God and Mother Nature and use that as a template. OR, just resist the urge to spend money on meddling and leave well enough alone!</p> <p>ROADS AND PARKING Agree with all as stated.</p> <p>WATER USE Keep the main pathway through the “riparian area” on the east side of the river and north of the footbridge</p>	
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	<p>open for off-leash use. Restore or move sections of the pathway for safety and to allow slope restoration (provided there are no more significant rainfalls or flooding events ever ever ever).</p> <p>Control access to some (not all) of the pathways through the riparian area with temporary fences to protect new native shrubs planted on the pathways. Remember, you can't fence off everything to keep people and animals out.</p> <p>Get rid of the "restoration barriers" around the dog river access. Forcing people and pets through a single small opening will increase conflicts and congestion.</p> <p>Is this the only place for brown trout, rainbow trout and whitefish to spawn in the whole City of Calgary? Seriously, how bad can it be, and how much of a hassle will it be to try and control river access to protect the fish. How much time and expense is involved? Roughly when each year does this happen? Do bylaw officers really want to be stationed at the river's edge from dawn ~til dusk, 7 days a week to enforce these restrictions? Do an actual cost-benefit analysis before imposing something that is unenforceable and actually unnecessary in the grand scheme of things.</p> <p>The draft plan mentions improved storm water management but fails to address the largest single outfall in the City that dumps directly into the Elbow River in River Park. How does that impact fish habitat and why are the dogs still seen as the only problem???</p>	
<p>I think it is a fairly good draft plan. I would like to see most attention given to the offleash dog park users as they use the park 99% of the time. I use this park evry single day rain or shine or snow. I see runners and bikers and the random park user without a dog 1% of the time and that is a fact.</p>	<p>I think the park definately needs more maintenance and a designated parks person for this park only. I feel council needs to prioritize more dollars for parks frontline people to be hired to do this work...without more money in</p>	<p>I have not attended the open houses but feel represented by my dog owner peers. I hope that this will help this park and remember that the primary user of this park is the dog owners...you can jog or bike anywhere in the City...not so for dog owners in offleash areas (the upper portion should remain the domain of off leash). I purposely moved to this area to have</p>

	<p>Parks budgets to maintain this space not sure how this will happen. I would like to see more offleash space not less..i think the offleash area should be returned to the stairs and people can leash up at the bottom of the stairs because that is the reality anyways. I think there needs to be more bylaw enforcement for all users ...bikers never dismount, some dogowners do not obey the no dogs allowed in the Sandy beach public beach...this would definately help to have enforcement.</p>	<p>access to this park and that should remain its primary use with enhanced maintenance and respect for the naturalized areas and the public beach area.</p>
<p>If we don't allow access to certain areas, it will not be more enjoyable. Putting gravel on the paths would be sufficient to sustain the are, I believe, because the erosion happening each spring and during every rainstorm is people trying to avoid the mud due to lack of a proper surface (and asphalt is not a proper surface, limestone gravel is).</p> <p>The top of Britannia slopes has an underground water system. That should be used.</p> <p>The proposed (clear) fence all along the top of Britannia slopes will not be an enjoyable experience.</p>	<p>Yes, by increasing the off leash area on the Britannia side, where the proposed plan has eliminated the bulk of the off leash area. The proposed plan cuts out off leash access through the largest part of the prime off leash area down the hill from Britannia slopes. I feel the space removed at the north end of River park is enough. I have walked my dogs along Britannia slopes and down to Sandy beach and back every day for the last 27 years, and this plan eliminates a significant portion of that off leash area. It appears you have listened to the dog haters who claim dogs destroy the riverbank.. in fact it was the beavers left unchecked for 10 years and cutting down all the trees on the riverbank, then the 100 year flood that washed it away. Now we dog owners pay for that... it isn't right.</p>	
<p>No. This plan presents an extreme reduction in the offleash areas which will restrict the enjoyment and freedom of dogs/dog owners and dog walkers. We have enjoyed these park areas daily for over 20 years and see a relatively healthy park environment which will not be markedly improved by smaller offleash areas.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not reduce the size of the offleash area at the end of Riverdale as the integrity of the Britt. slope is not affected by the size of the offleash area below. Barriers/fences would be adequate when placed only on those steepest areas where erosion is a legitimate and the only concern. 2. Do not eliminate the smaller, informal trails in River Park and Britt. Slopes. Even with improved and upgraded regional 	<p>Yes.</p>

	<p>pathways, by forcing all park users to use fewer arteries, conflicts will arise between dogs, people, cyclists and strollers.</p> <p>3. Do not reduce the size of the offleash area by the lower resevoir. Barriers/fences would again be adequate to protect sensitive shoreline and escarpment.</p> <p>4. If this plan goes ahead with extremely and unwisely reduced offleash areas, consider seasonal allowances. During the winter months, general park usage is dramatically decreased but dogs/dog owners continue to use the park daily. Allow the currently designated offleash areas to be enjoyed during the winter.</p>	
<p>The question is: does this plan meet the #1 criteria listed at all public forums I attended - to keep the park as natural as possible? And the answer is no. There are too many fences such as the one along the Britannia escarpment. While it is necessary to fence along the south end for safety issues, there is no need to put one along the north edge, where the escarpment gently slopes. A fence there will quite simply be an urban eyesore.</p> <p>The plan's suggestions for reducing the off leash area in lower Britannia Slopes will be a nightmare for enforcement and dog owners as there is no natural boundary to separate the Poplar Forest from the lower Britannia Slopes. And putting in any fence there will be a blight on what is a beautiful natural area. The Poplar Forest simply needs more forest, not fences to keep offleash dog out of there. I attended every single public consultation and not once did I hear anyone say that area should be onleash. The entire area works well as offleash and should be kept that way - if you need trees/shrubs to prevent entrance to the river, then that's fine, but putting up the kind of barriers you're suggesting to cordon off the Popular Forest is unnecessary.</p>	<p>Yes - there is nothing to take in the seasonal variations of use in this plan. As someone who has walked the lower Britannia Slopes area for the past 20 years with family dogs, I can tell you from November to April there is no "high use" issue in this area. I'm not sure why the plan doesn't reflect seasonal use.</p>	<p>I think the public consultation process was very well done. But I think taking this plan back to the same design group as prepared the first, completely "urbanized" plan was a mistake as their consultants still seem stuck on fences, fences and more fences.</p>
<p>No, this takes too much prime off-leash area away. Dogs are not the problem as far as erosion is concerned... slumping happens from the bottom up, when the river cuts into the bank on a curve. The Beavers left unchecked for 10 years destroyed the cover along the bank, then the flood did the</p>	<p>I am a minimalist. The trails proposed on the Britannia side are fine, but if done properly, with good limestone gravel, would be suitable for people to walk on even in the spring "break up" or during the rare</p>	<p>Yes. I am not sure my comments are heard, however</p>

<p>damage. The restricted off leash area at the end of Riverdale will be overrun. I hate the dog haters, for doing this to my beloved off leash area, where I have taken my dogs over 9500 times in the last 28 years. Please leave the substantial area at the bottom of Britannia slopes for the dogs to roam.</p>	<p>rainstorm, and they wouldn't create new trails in the grass 5 feet off the common path.... those supplementary trails are created in the spring because of the absolute lack of maintenance that has been the norm, and the existing main trails become mud tracks... no one wants to walk on that, even me with my gum boots go around. Make it simple, save OUR tax dollars, and simply put good gravel along the main trails. The fences along the top of Britannia slopes will serve no good purpose and will be an eyesore... I like it natural.</p>	
<p>The off leash area is still too large. While it is fine to have an off leash area, and it is popular, too much of the upper area along 14a street is designated for off leash users. This will essentially keep the park as a dog park and does not make it more sustainable, and is will only be enjoyable for dog owners.</p>		
<p>Yes</p>	<p>Can't think of anything more than you are doing.</p>	<p>Yes. Many thanks to the City for listening to us and coming up with a much better plan than previous.</p>
<p>As a regular user of this park, I am disappointed to see any reduction in the off-leash area. This draft seems to suggest that the reduction in off-leash is a move towards preserving the park, and is veiled with some flacid safety related arguments from interest groups. The reality is that this generation, and future generations in Calgary will remain dog owners and dog walkers. This is the real user group that needs to be catered to. It is by far the most prevalent user group, and efforts to compromise the utility of the park for this group, are patronizing to the most substantial tax payer group in this conversation.</p>	<p>Manicuring the off leash area is imprudent and a waste of money. Manage the space and accept that there will be bare spots, and areas of hard pack, and gravel and mud... Improve amenities to make it easier for all owners to be compliant - good waste management, and dog friendly facilities. A couple more water stations, and some additional lighting. Again, cater to the user group that is paying the taxes for this facility as it is.</p>	<p>We have had the opportunity, although it has not been obviously available. We only found out about the most recent step in this process as a result of a poster at the off-leash park. Further, again, we found it patronizing that the preliminary consult offered the false choice that implied immediately that 1/3 of the off-leash was being removed regardless. As a multiple property owner and lifetime Calgarian this is one of the few amenities we regularly use and I am seriously disappointed in our representation for the direction this is heading.</p>
<p>In general, this plan is a considerable improvement over the previous unworkable set of ideas. This will better preserve the aspects of the park that</p>	<p>The off-leash areas on the east side of the Elbow river seem to be quite small and not connected. Can these areas not be expanded (see the west side)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

are valuable to all users.		
Yes, BUT (see comments below)	<p>Yes.</p> <p>1. There've been concerns about the number of many people using the off-leash areas. So the proposal is to drastically reduce the off-leash. I agree that the Britannia escarpment, all the way around to Elbow Drive, should be "un-designated". (In fact, it should NEVER have been designated off-leash) BUT why remove 6 hectares from the NW corner? Already dogs & cyclists co-exist along the defacto cycle path connecting 38th Ave & 14A St. And if you propose to restrict off-leash use further S in order to rejuvenate parts of it, wouldn't it make sense to redirect some of those users to the N end? Otherwise, you're just putting much heavier use on the remaining area. As for the pond feature, you're duplicating what is being constructed at N.Glenmore which is all on-leash. So I suggest leaving this part of River Park off-leash. (In other words, please consider all the parks & recreation land in this corner of the City & suggest that people wanting a quiet, contemplative experience use N. Glenmore). (The ptn. of N. Glenmore on which the ponds are being constructed was rarely used -- just a few on-leash dog walkers &, in the spring, some people flying kites.)</p> <p>2. some yrs. ago, the City spent money on Sandy Beach to create flattish river access for young children (& their young parents) while designating the E shore as off-leash river access for dogs. Now the suggestion was made (tho' now largely abandoned) that dogs have done so much damage to the river bank, that they should be banned. Did anyone stop to think that many dog owners are older with some mobility issues? I enjoy taking my dog down to the river on hot summer evenings BUT I have have injured my knee on a number of occasions & find getting down that bank difficult. Maybe improve access for dogs & their owners.</p>	Yes
	Consider using one or more paths (existing or new) as off-leash dedicated to connect one off-leash area to	

	<p>another without the need for leashing the dog to get from one area to the other. The exercise and stimulation for the dogs is in the running (whether in an open area or on the path), not in walking on leash. The plan as is forces dog owners to leash their dogs to get to the smaller offleash areas - if you could connect those areas and dedicate the connectors as offleash you'll make a lot of people, and dogs, happy.</p>	
	<p>I have been unable to access alot of the first draft information on your website for some reason but have been able to read the written information beside the map.</p> <p>I have been involved in this process all along except for the May 14 Windsor Park meeting and am hugely disappointed with the reduction of the off leash areas. However it is no surprise, it was already decided before the process began. It seems that the people who use the park the most(12 months a year, dog people) have been penalized in favour of the rest of park users who only use the park 4-5 months a year. Fair?No. Democracy at work? No. Fair process? No. You will be creating many more problems than you have resolved. Good Luck with that.</p>	
<p>No, for several reasons: 1) If the off-leash user population is increasing, why is the off-leash area decreasing? 2) "Low impact fencing within bushes" are being placed throughout the park. Given the current challenge of maintaining vegetation in the park, how can this be sustainable? (why are do we need fences, anyway?) 3) River access at naturally occurring gravel bar - this gravel bar does not exist during high water (for example, during May 2011), therefore a single access point for users directly into the water, creates a 'pinch-point' which during busy times will result in users finding access at other areas of the river bank.</p>	<p>Yes, from having less development - why is there such a desire to fund development in the park anyway? Money will not change human behaviour (e.g. LED lighting on the pathways - what's wrong with current lighting?) and this money could be far better spent elsewhere.</p>	<p>yes. Feel comments and views of others have been constructively and sensitively incorporated into the plans? - not yet.</p>
no	yes, the most southern water access for dogs	I did not attend as I did not know until today about these

	<p>is a very far walk from the main parking lot not to mention that the whole walk there you are sharing a small bike path and its an on leash area. basically bikers and dog owners will hate each other because there just is not enough room to even move off the path.</p> <p>the majority of users BY FAR are dog owners, this park needs to cater more so to that. I understand and agree some areas should be reclaimed by wild life..well on the east side of the river fence off the paths that are within the trees...much like the southland dog park. I must say its great to walk my dog OFF LEASH and yet feel as tho im walking through the wilderness!! I get a nature walk and my dog gets to run free.</p> <p>in regards to the western side of the river the nothern edge that is apparently an on leash are.....very few people even take their dogs there.....its a waste of city money to even bother putting up a fence as there is a natural barrier anyway with the deep rut that runs that border where the creek flows. I think larger trees and shrubs should be put in on the western side, DONT cut the grass there...why? there is no need just the foot traffic keeps the grass growth to a minimum. if you want to cut grass ect. do it where people will care when they are playing soccer or whatever...ON THE NORTH WESTERN SECTION that you currently have as an on leash area.</p> <p>basically I believe by doing this you SAVE CITY MONEY! and spend far less while</p>	<p>plans, I can however be contacted at (<i>NUMBER AND NAME REMOVED</i>). I have been in the are since 1988, I am 27yrs old and have owned and operated a landscaping company so my comments in regards to growth are knowledgeable.</p>
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	catering to everyone. paying someone 18/hr to mow that western segment is ludicrous.....IT SHOULD NOT BE MAINTAINED, IT SHOULD BE RECLAIMED!	
I think that Parks has done a good job of incorporating the comments from the public at the open houses! I agree with the recommendations to create no additional parking lots. I also agree with the principle of maintaining the parks in their natural state and the proposed restoration plans.	<p>Would suggest also having Living Fences in the escarpment that runs along Britannia Dr. Dogs running in the park have knocked down elderly people.</p> <p>Water the Britannia escarpment to maintain the grass and trees. There is an existing irrigation system there. Expand successful turf restoration methods used in River Park to the Britannia escarpment particularly along the narrower areas of the ridge.</p> <p>If the transparent fence along the escarpments means fencing like the existing wooden fences at River Park that is fine as long as people sitting on the benches can still enjoy the view. I think that plexi glass type fencing would be a mistake because it would become dirty very quickly and would no longer be transparent!</p>	Yes, the open house were excellent for exchanging ideas.
Yes, overall this is a good plan.	There is no off-leash area around the 'dog water access' area on the east side of the Elbow. Dogs in this area will be off leash and currently they run around in the areas around that beach. The existing trail from the bridge down to the dog river access should remain off-leash, as there are currently very few others that use that area for different uses, and it will be hard to police an 'on-leash' area all around a 'dog river access' area.	
No. Where in any of the extensive public comment was there consensus that the majority of the park was to become a museum? This is an inner city green space, much of it gifted for the benefit of Calgarians. It should not be fenced off. In fact, permanent fencing should have no place in these	There has been a failure to recognise the desire and benefit of completing loop walks in the park. The current path map and massively reduced offleash areas prevents park users, the majority of which are dog walkers,	Yes, but now transparency has been lost - I cannot read other contributors comments and feedback. Of course, sharing and commenting is one thing, actually having a reasonable outcome for the park is quite another. I have read all of the park plan material with care and get an impression of the real agenda (previously quite well disguised) that the Parks department

<p>plans. They fragment the park and increase the risk for wild life human/dog conflicts. The current plan represents a massive change in current use and access with very flimsy justification. 'Low impact fencing hidden within shrubs' is exactly what we don't want - the shrubs are only in leaf 4 months of the year. Shrubs, yes - provide natural, living barriers where required, but permanent fencing no. I do not accept that dogs are causing erosion of Britannia slopes - hardly any dogs go on the slope - most erosion is caused by people and cyclists when the ground is wet. There has been repeated feedback that park users do not want any fencing on the ridge and yet it is back in the plans - why are we being ignored? At the very beginning of the last round of online discussion, the vision for the park was one of wise and sensitive maintenance and leaving the park alone as much as possible. Installing fences along the river, along the Britannia slopes ridgeline and around a small area near the Landsdowne car park does not honor this vision.</p>	<p>from completing a loop walk. Access from the north end of Britannia slops to the flat grassy area at the end of Riverdale needs to be added for example. Packing off-leash walkers into a tiny area near the Landsdowne car park will put significantly increased pressure on the grassy environment leading to it's significant decline. Allowing walkers to spread out reduces overall wear and tear in any one place. This will not benefit the park or park users. As the current plan stands, which removes offleash access to the majority of the park with thin justification, you will not gain buy-in from many park users.</p>	<p>strongly dislikes Calgarians who dare to own and want to excercise dogs in an offleash environment. This is very sad and if the current plans are to stand, will lead to significant push-back. In no discussion has any objection to the green area in between Britannia Drive and Landsdowne Av being designated offleash ever been raised. Why has it therefore suddenly appeared in the plan? Be transparent - publish all feedback for all to see.</p>
<p>No, I do not believe that this plan will affect any future enjoyment as the park is quite enjoyable and sustainable as it currently is.</p>	<p>Park users are mainly dog owners (I'm sure an approximate 80-85%). This park should be kept as a whole offleash dog park. There are no other parks like this within Calgary (especially located so close to downtown). If the field is cut from 1 whole to 3/4 we will be losing further ground. It is hard enough with apartments, downtown living areas and suburb dwellings (as houses are built too close together) to ensure any proper pet exercise where dogs can roam, and run freely. This is a great city amenity and I feel the offleash</p>	<p>Unfortunately I did not hear about the plan until today May 14 at 9:00pm. It had already passed previous consultations, but I was told to visit this website to ensure my input was considered. I have discussed with several dog owners who fear that the restricted area will make them feel like the pets won't be receiving that additional amount of exercise and therefore owners and pets may need to linger in the park longer. I look forward to the second park plan to be released after this input is considered. Thank you.</p>

	dog area should be kept as it currently is. I have been attending this park for four years and would hate to see restrictions placed.	
No; too much has been removed from the off-leash park. The division should be at the creek which is a natural division. In addition, the park is maintained and kept in great condition by dog owners, not cyclists, casual walkers, etc. Who uses the park 365 days/year? dogs and their owners.	yes, divide at the creek rather than at 42nd ave; this will ensure no confrontations.	yes and I maintained my position about the division. The park has been used for off-leash purpose since 1987 and we feel like competing groups are pushing us out. There are plenty of parks and pathways for non dog owners to go; on the other hand, dog owners are being treated like 2nd class citizens; we all pay our taxes and we dog owners pay extra taxes through licensing, so please leave us our park.
I do believe this first draft plan will be helpful and enjoyable. It is a manageable scope and leaves the integrity of this area intact. So much more reasonable than the 2009 plan. Well done.	Would it be possible to add a dog waste disposal station at the Riverdale parking area. At times the stench of the dog waste, in the trail areas where the river access is, is quite unbearable. Also with the off-leash section near the Riverdale parking lot, a waste station may make some sense.	I was seriously involved in the 2009 plan, and have followed the latest public consultations. Our community association is much more engaged this time around and I believe our needs and concerns have been addressed. So happy the trail was not extended on the Britannia Slope behind Lansdowne Avenue. I believe I did an online survey this time, but having said that I might be mixing up the bike path survey. I have talked with neighbours. I noticed that there was much better public meeting signage and Ward 11 email notification than we experienced in 2009. Public consultation may be expensive and time consuming, but it is a necessary process for all stakeholders. Thank you.
Q1. Do you feel this draft plan will help make the park more sustainable and enjoyable for current and future generations? A1. No " the current plan fails to address the City's "PRINCIPLES" document mandate and its published intentions to; "Keep everyone safe" "Strike a balance among diverse users" "Create space for both shared and solitary moments"and "Be a good neighbor" Conflicts between uncontrolled dogs, children,	Q2. Could the plan be improved to benefit the park (and park users) as a whole? A2. The plan does not address its mandate. There are no changes to the off-leash issues " the only change is to an already underutilized area of the park. I agree with many that a fence of some manner must run the length of 14A Street. This fence must be set aside from the road by 1/3 the park width to ensure that dogs are	Q3. During this public consultation process, have you had the chance to share your comments and suggestions as well as hear those of others? A3. I haven't previously provided input because my concerns were proposed by others inputs; Some others comments I concur with include; 1. River Park's degradation (feces laden, muddy mess when rainy, trampled dust bowl by August) 2. Commitment to open the park to all users " not just off-leash proponents. 3. Reasonable way to protect children, cyclists, vehicles and homeowners on 14A Street from unleashed aggressive dogs.

<p>cyclists and vehicles is not addressed in draft plan. Without clear lines of demarcation between on-leash and off-leash then both sides of 14A Street will continue to be treated as off-leash. Cars pull up on 14A Street, owners open the car doors and dogs bound out running in all directions. "Never" do owners put leashes on dogs exiting vehicles from 14A. A fence running the length of 14A Street would clearly separate unruly dogs from all other users.</p>	<p>escorted on-leash to the appropriate off-leash area. Otherwise all children, cyclists, vehicles and homeowners on 14A Street will continue to be in conflict with unleashed dogs.</p>	<p>4. Install a fence 1/3rd width of park to run the length of 14A Street.</p>
<p>No. I live on Britannia drive on the park and there is not a thing wrong with the park set up as it is. If you limit dog access to two spots in the water it will be packed and that will cause worse erosion than ever. If you want to improve water quality keep the thousands of rafters out not the dogs. There are too few off leash areas and you never make new ones in new neighborhoods. That is the biggest problem. Make more green spaces and everyone wouldn't have to come to the few that exist. That park has been used as is for decades and it should be left that way. Why are you trying to fix something that is not broken. Spend the money on potholes and make more parks in new neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Leave the park alone. Let people enjoy themselves like they have for the last 100 years.</p>	<p>I am in that park everyday of my life and I see the same people everyday and we all love it just the way it is. It seems like you just have a bee in your bonnet about changing this park and the off leash areas. Where are people supposed to take their dogs. How about making more parks. That will ease traffic and erosion at this park.</p>
<p>yes, although I think the main pathway should not be gravel. It is too hard to walk on for people and dogs as you can see by the wear on either side of the gravel pathway. It needs to be something more comfortable to walk on, like cedar chips</p>	<p>I did not see anything about the water hole at the south end of the park near the parking lot. How is this going to be addressed? It fills with water every year and it a nuisance</p>	<p>Yes I contributed and read many of the comments and suggestions of others</p>
<p>This is one of the few premium off lease dog parks and we travel frequently to come to it since it is so much better for the dogs owing to the open aspects and safety from traffic.</p>	<p>I do not feel the park must benefit everyone. There are numerous parks where dogs are not allowed to be off lease. Why must this one accomodate</p>	<p>I find the consultation process to be poorly advertised. Perhaps brochures could have been provided at the location for pick up, or an update bulletin could have been posted.</p>

<p>Other users have many other places to go so marginalizing one of the great areas for dogs owing to special interest groups is unfortunate. Hopefully this will be a final compromise and some new aspects for the remaining area can be implemented to make up for this loss.</p> <p>My wife and I have a quiet dog and we quite enjoyed the north area that will now be on-lease. We will not go there any more since the point of the visit to the park is so our dog can run free and explore nature.</p>	<p>the whole? Why are humans allowed to be in sensitive areas where dogs must be on lease. I do not understand the harm that the dogs are doing that the other users are not doing themselves. If you do not enjoy being around dogs, then these users can go elsewhere. Accomodation and compromise is not always a good solution on a park level, but must be considered for a city wide level.</p>	
<p>Actually My answer is NO: I am actually very worried about this plan. The main reasons are:</p> <p>1- The plan includes the construction of a pond at the north end of river park in proximity of all the houses on 14 A st, 38th avenue and Crestview rd. This is stagnant water and is going to create a signifidicant health risk. It will attract mosquitos that brings diseases like Nile Virus.</p> <p>2- Currently, the park is a very safe park for jogger and children and dog walkers. There are no homeless people or drug dealers that can create issue. This is due to the fact that dogs are allowed off leash and are roam with no restraint. We have seen in the past the start of a "settlement" by a homeless person but that never lasted for the previous reason.</p> <p>These 2 issues should really be considered as the unintended consequences could be very serious.</p> <p>In the addition of this 2 serious issues, I think the plan has major flaws. This park is for the enjoyment of the citizen and is mainly used by dog users. Restricting the size of Offleash actually reduces the size that will be used and it is a pity in the city that claims that citizen health is important. Citizens that walk their dogs are healthy and they naturally go where their dogs can be off leash. You are planning to</p>	<p>1- Do not change the Current Off leash area 2- NO FENCE...This is ugly and not needed 3- Add parking area (there is not enough parking for the users!!!) 4- Remove the ugly electrical poles. 5- Maintain the park...</p>	<p>This process was directed by environmentalists view. Users were asked opinions but their opinions were selectively considered and dismissed if not matching the desire outcome. The majority of users did not want changes in the park, just improvement of maintenance and parking.</p>

<p>restrict that area! In addition your plan has: 1- Not enough parking 2- Fences that are not needed and ugly</p>		
<p>No, diminishing the available off leash area will only compress users into a smaller area, therefore the consequence will be over use, and far less sustainability.</p>	<p>Yes, it needs to be realistic, 94 percent of users are dog owners! There are plenty of green spaces allocated to single and multi use non dog use, those areas need to be evaluated for usage by other users and tough decisions need to be made as to weather these areas are cost prohibitive due to low or non usage. Most green space is under used in this city. Off leash areas are over used. Do the math.</p>	<p>Yes, but to qualify that, the City has had an agenda during this whole process, that is fully apparent now that the plan has been unveiled, the public consultation has in my opinion been a farce!</p>
<p>No. The plan is a huge mistake. The off-leash area should be increased rather than decreased. Clearly the lack of additional parking and the new restrictions on off-leash areas and dog water entry will be detrimental to the large majority of park users.</p>	<p>Yes I propose: Additional parking is needed at the end of Riverdale and at the south end of 14 A ST SW is absolutely necessary. The need for more parking will become dire with the proposal to allow "permit parking" only on 14 A ST SW.</p> <p>The off-leash area should be increased back to what is was. The off-leash should be increased to include the entire park except for the picnic area and beach at Sandy Beach. This will prevent over-crowding and over-use that is already occurring at River Park by distributing users over a much broader area. (The proposal to further restrict off-leash user makes absolutely no sense as it will simply make the over-crowding situation worse)</p>	<p>No. Absolutely not. The consultation process has been controlled by environmental consultants with a specific agenda to dilute the input, comments and interests of the majority of users of this park: people walking their dogs. People who walk their dogs have been consistently the target of this consultation process which seeks to impose the views of a small minority upon this majority park user group. The whole process is a travesty.</p>

	<p>Furthermore the one cosmetic thing that could done to improve River Park is not even mentioned!! I would recommend to have the utility company simply bury the electric power lines running from North to South all the way along River Park.</p> <p>No additional fences. Adding more fences is the worst thing that could be done for park aesthetically. Please - no more ugly fences. Please keep the park wide open green space with no additional fences.</p> <p>Finally, the park merely needs better maintenance. It needs no capital intensive artificial restoration of areas to make a pretense that they are "natural". It is fantastic that the park is so heavily used. The park is fulfilling a vital role in the community already it needs no major overhaul - all it requires is a little more regular maintenance instead of outright neglect by the city.</p>	
<p>Resubmission, said run time error (may get my comments twice). Yes thanks for listening and implementing City of Calgary and O2. Great Job. Maintenance, signage and enforcement will be key for current and future generations. Thanks (NAME REMOVED)</p>	<p>Not much, with the exception of: Please designate Sandy Beach Beach as no dog area, so that there will be no question or conflicts. It will be easy to ask dog owner to go 100 to 150 yards downstream.</p> <p>Upgraded playground please do not enlarge existing too much and please do not add a water park.</p> <p>I look forward to more details on restoration on Britannia slopes and I hope our input will be asked again in the near future</p> <p>Thanks (NAME REMOVED)</p>	<p>Yes very much, going to the open houses, work shops and on line. I know that my suggestions along with others were heard. Great Job!!!</p> <p>Thanks (NAME REMOVED)</p>
<p>As residents living on 14A Street and across from River Park, we would like to express our sincere</p>		

disappointment with the draft management plan. This is mainly because it fails to fully address the concerns expressed by a large number of 14A Street residents in our letter to Adrian vanGorp and Brian Pincott dated February 12, 2011 and April 15, 2011 respectively, dealing with River Park sustainability, the size of the off-leash area and parking along 14A Street.

Sustainability

The key issue is that of sustainability. What is proposed does not go far enough given the current level of use of the park. A more aggressive program is required. Trying a demonstration project to test methods of restoration is inadequate. And to rely on an Adopt a Park program, even as a support won't be sufficient. The park is in a significant state of disrepair. Urgent action is required and the first step should be to limit the use. Restricting the off-leash area is a way to achieve this. Enhanced maintenance services, through partnerships and sponsorships, is also, in a very limited way, a supportive step. However, it is not a lead process.

It is recognized throughout North America that off-leash areas require a higher annual maintenance budget to ensure sustainability. Sustaining over 2/3 of River Park as off-leash will require a significant annual budget, and considerably more than has been spent in the past. This of course has yet to go before City Council, and whether or not they will approve a higher maintenance budget is yet to be determined. However, what we do know is that there are many demands for funding before council and that there is a limited amount of funds to cover all projects. A capital project is one thing, but on-going maintenance is quite another and parks are not immune to funding cuts as we witnessed in the late 90s. The plan as set out then is very dependent on funding and as such it could be argued that it may not be sustainable. Therefore, one suggestion would be to take a more modified approach and designate an off-leash area more in line with what can feasibly be supported. Perhaps that is 50/50, or perhaps it is 30% off-leash, adding more or less as funding allows. And perhaps the amount of off-leash should be tied to the amount of funding so if and when funding diminishes, so does the amount of the park designated as off-leash based on the principle that you can only maintain what you can afford.

Off-Leash

With respect to the division between on and off-leash, we proposed that the off-leash area be restricted to 30% of the top, i.e., at portion of River Park in line with the new City of Calgary Off-Leash Area Management Plan. And furthermore, that the off-leash area be set further back into the park and away from 14A Street to reduce its impact on residents. However, the draft plan clearly indicates that more than 2/3 of the park will be off-leash, that the on/off leash dividing line is considerably north of 42nd Avenue, that the off-leash area still comes right up to 14A Street directly opposite the homes, and that only a small portion, less than 1/3, will be on-leash. Other than the small portion of the park to be designated as "on leash", there are very few changes from what it is the draft plan that River Park is a regional multi-use park and that the plan must find the right balance and that its a regional park offering a variety of user experiences. But the draft plan in allocating less than 1/3 to on-leash barely gives a nod to the principles of multi-use or balanced. Arguably, a 50/50 designation at the very minimum would be more aligned with the principles as set out.

With the increasing densification of Altadore, Garrison Woods West and surrounding areas there is and will be more and more demand on the park and not just by dog owners. Limiting the multi-use area to only 1/3 fails

<p>to adequately take into consideration their needs. This is a park to which many people in the surrounding communities, who have no dogs, would like to walk, but avoid because of the dogs running freely. Also, there is a need for more green space and pathways for our seniors, the handicapped, and mothers with young children, often pushing strollers. And Sandy Beach as an on-leash area is out of the range for many due to distance and the difficulty in getting there with the steep hill. Clearly, a more balanced and reasonable approach is required with more space allocated for on-leash on the top portion of River Park. Again 50/50 would seem more appropriate.</p> <p>Also, if the north end is to be designated as multi-use, it needs to be designed that way in line with your principle to “create space for both shared and solitary moments” and as an “escape from the hectic pace of urban life” and as “a place to retreat and enjoy nature”. The pathways as indicated, need to be more extensive and meandering, with benches and more trees. It is interesting that the areas in the park with a view to the river and downtown Calgary fall in the off-leash area while those wanting a park experience without dogs have no access to the escarpment and no view. This could be rectified by dividing the park in half and designing the north end appropriately.</p> <p>Parking</p> <p>With respect to the issue of parking on 14A Street, the idea of permit parking on the westside of 14A Street has merit. However, why limit that to between 50th and 46th Avenues? It should extend the whole length of 14A Street to 39th Avenue. Also, why are you putting the onus on residents to organize this while only offering support? Given the pictures you’ve displayed on your website of the parking problem along 14A Street, the problem is very real and needs to be addressed in your proposal to council.</p> <p>We truly hope that you will consider these changes to the plan before you present it to Council in June. We believe that these changes are necessary to alleviate the pressures on River Park and the impact on 14A Street residents and to make the park more sustainable.</p> <p>Yours truly,</p> <p><i>(NAMES REMOVED)</i></p>		
	<p>There is nothing in this plan to slow down cyclists who use the path from River Park, down through Sandy Beach Park, through Britannia slopes, near Landsdowne. As a runner, these bikes pose an incredible hazard, as few use their bells to signal, but simply fly down that hill, keeping up speeds, through Sandy Beach and over the bridge to Britannia Slopes. How about, at the very least, a metal structure/gate at either side of the bridge, that will force cyclists to dismount (which they never do) and walk their bikes across the bridge. A simple</p>	

	structure like that might save someone from serious injury.	
<p>No, because once again we're relying on a maintenance budget to be passed by City Council on an annual basis and when times are difficult budgets are cut as they were in the late 90s when the maintenance budget for River Park was cut. We need to reduce our reliance on money from city hall. And while certainly this will never be entirely possible our need could be reduced by reducing the size of the off-leash portion to 30% or even 50%.</p>	<p>Yes. Since River Park has been designated as multi-use it would be appropriate to design space for the vast number of Calgarians and residents who do not have a dog. Clearly, less than 1/3rd of the park for on-leash is not enough is our growing inner city.</p>	<p>I have had many opportunities and have tried to make use of them all, as have many in our community. However, we do not feel our voices are being heard as clearly the design of River Park is overwhelmingly in favor of off-leash (very little change from the current situation which is responsible for the decline of the park) to the detriment of the park and to many wanting to use it.</p>
<p>Any attention given to the park would be an improvement over the total disregard given to it for the past 20 years. The city should be ashamed for the poor maintenance record afforded the park in general.</p>	<p>Creating an interpretive area at the north end of the park is a total waste of taxpayers money. Those funds should be used to improve the condition and amenities in the riparian areas along the Elbow River - is that not what the focus of this plan is about. Make no mistake, I am sure the city can grow grass anywhere, if they just turned on the existing irrigation, aerated the turf occasionally, and overseeded in the fall. The needs of dog walkers are few - a safe place for their hounds to get exercise, and bins to place refuse. On going maintenance - repair of existing fences, spreading gravel on walkways to encourage their use, and turning on a sprinkler more than once a year would have gone along way in making this area a jewel. Now, we need to spend alot of money on studying the situation, instead of getting the parks workers to get out of their trucks and actually do something. By the way, the only people using the area adjacent to the dam are dog walkers - restricting the use of the gravel beaches unless it is for fish spawning reasons is totally unnecessary. I have yet to see any city workers in that area, unless it is to visit the dam.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>no...it is poorly done, amateur at best....it offers little for the overuse aspect; it does nothing to address health issues with dog urine and feces spreading and ending up in our water supply; it does nothing for the 14 A St traffic issues, it does nothing for those who want to use the park without the presence of TONS of dogs and I even like the little creatures!!</p>	<p>absolutely....is it any different than the proposal of 2007...same use percentages...what a joke...over used, dirty, deteriorating park that stinks when it rains....come on, this off leash park doesn't need to be across the street from residences, with a huge parcel of unused city land immediately south of it....the draft seems like a waste of money...aweful</p>	<p>It seems that the voices of 14A St have not been heard at all. The issues of traffic and overuse are blatant. the issue of health are not addressed. The issues of fecal contamination of the water supply are not mentioned. The 14 A St people are most affected by the park and the solutions address their issues the LEAST of all groups...what the heck is that all about...its called failure.</p>
<p>This draft plan and the process followed was a huge improvement over the first attempt. More key stakeholders got involved and the city listened. The last attempt was a dismal failure when the residents in Riverdale finally got involved and their input to change the plan totally ignored. It is very fortunate that this second engagement was undertaken.</p>	<p>Our neighbour, whose home backs onto the off-leash area at the end of Lansdowne attended the open house session just held. An O2 Design person pointed out that there would be an 'informal' path along our neighbour's fence line and that this path would lead around into the Preservation area nearing the Britannia escarpment. This statement by the O2 Design person is very disturbing since it appears to contradict the tenet of preserving the natural areas and discouraging undesignated pathways. The map of proposed trails does not show anything being proposed along this neighbour's fence line so I'm wondering why this comment/view was put forward - essentially undocumented. How many other little gems like this are we going to be surprised with by the O2 Design people?</p>	<p>Yes. The process was thorough and very effectively documented and shared. Kudos to the City people involved.</p>
<p>In short - no. There are three major types of users in the park and they focus on different areas in the park system. The through traffic is concentrated on the pathways in the bottom. The family day users in the West side river bottom and the dog walkers throughout and especially on the top of both sides. The challenge is that the park is being heavily used. I fail to see how</p>	<p>Instead of making more areas restricted use in this park, open up more area to spread the use (traffic) and encourage users to use of other parks as well as this one.</p>	

<p>restricting the area of use is going to improve the park as it will focus the use in a smaller are and lead to higher rates of wear and tear. The only way to take the pressure off the park is to open up more areas to the type of use that the park is seeing the most of. The example of the Southland off-leash should be an example of what not to do.</p>		
<p>No. It does not address what is potentially the most significant, and dangerous problem: traffic volume and traffic speed. When the weather is nice there is a constant NASCAR race down 14A St. Someone is going to get hurt or killed! There needs to be real enforcement of the rules. There is no point in changing anything if there is no increase in enforcement</p>	<p>I am concerned about the sustainability of the park given the current level of usage. There needs to be other options available for the people of this city to help off load the usage. There needs to be adequate enforcement of the rules, which would increase everyones respect for the park, and for the other users</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Yes, subject to the comments below.</p> <p>Professional dog walkers use River Park and oftern have too many dogs to control; for example, 6 to 8 dogs. It is not possible to control and pick up after this many dogs. There should be a limit on the number of dogs one person can attend to in the park - possibly 3 or 4 at a time. If the professional dog walkers have more dogs, they can walk the dogs in more than one group and at different times.</p>	<p>Yes. Under the proposal, there is not sufficient parking to mitigate the demand for parking on the streets surrounding River Park, especially if parts of 14A become permit parking. We agree that no new parking areas should be construct with the exception of expanding the existing parking area at 50th Ave. It should be expanded modestly into the park (eastward?) and accommodate about 50 to 80 vehicles, which is the typical number of vehicles parked on 50th Ave and the south end of 14A Street on weekends and holidays. For additional comment, see note in box 1 above.</p>	<p>Yes. The public consultations were well done and notice of the availablility of reports was good.</p>
<p>No. There is a need for more off-leash area not less. The introduction of ponds in the north end of River Park by 38 Ave SW will be a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The land was drained for good reasons -</p>	<p>Yes. Expand the off-leash area back to the entire park (Britannia, Sandy Beach and River Park). Only the Beach at Sandy Beach and BBQ</p>	<p>No. This entire process seems to have been placed in the control of environmental consultants who have misrepresented the majority view. Contrary to what the consultants claim, the majority of users do NOT see water</p>

<p>to prevent West Nile Virus. Also the "nature reserve" at the north end of River Park by Crestview RD SW is an extremely dangerous fire hazard. One day the tall uncut grass will catch fire and this will threaten homes in Crestview Rd and neighbouring streets. Also by preventing off-leash in this "nature reserve" it is almost certain to turn the area into an ideal spot for homeless drug addicts (just as we already have all along the park lands by the Glencoe club and Christ Church) We have already found drug addicts camping summer days and nights in River Park but currently they do not stay long because of the prevalence of off-leash dogs. Off-leash dogs also make it safer for female joggers - they are a significant net benefit - increasing the safety of River Park dramatically!!</p>	<p>picnic area should be preserved as on-leash. This will reduce the terrible over crowding in River Park off leash side of the park. This will mean that the vast empty lower parts of the park (slopes and river valley) will be used once again (where currently you seldom see any people in winter).</p>	<p>quality and riparian protection and "nature reserves" and "nature trails" as a priority. The majority would simply like to see the park better maintained and with some additional parking space (at least double what is there currently) so that our neighbourhood streets are not always chock-a-block with cars.</p>
<p>The draft plan is a good start to make the park more sustainable.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of garbage bins along the main pathway should be increased to 5, not decreased as shown on the plan. Do not enclose or plant any- thing around the bin, people will just throw the waste bags in and around the bin. The bins should be on raised concrete pads, otherwise when it's wet and muddy around the bin, people throw the waste bags around the bin. 2. The public feed back was to have permit parking along the entire length of the west side of 14A ST SW and along 42nd and 46th Ave. to 15 ST. The draft plan only calls for permit parking along 14A ST from 50 AVE to 46 AVE which will cause even more problems for the residents of 14A ST and those along 42 and 46 AVE between 14A ST and 15 ST. 3. The park must be restricted to users for the next 3 or 4 years on a rehab-rotational basis. ie. rehab-closure of 25% or 30% of 	<p>The process was well organized and ran. I did have some time to share my comments and suggestions. The time frame was tight and some people monopolized much of the time without giving others to speak. Group coordinators should have better control over the individual's time frame. Otherwise, very good work from the organizers and thank you!</p>

	<p>the park per year. This must commence immediately otherwise the entire park must be shut down sometime in the future for total rehab.</p>	
<p>I do not understand the purpose of this question. Yes, this plan is better than the previous one, but it still appears that the Parks department and O2 have an agenda that is not being shared. One observation is that by not allowing this comments to be shared with others, this process has lost its transparency.</p>	<p>My big objection with the plan is the dramatic reduction in the off leash area on the Britannia Slopes. This destroys one of the great dog walking areas in Calgary by removing the possibility of off leash loop walks on the slope. If this plan is implemented, it is a good thing that there is no bylaw enforcement because no one will abide by the new off leash area signs. I know that I will not. If bylaw enforcement happens, please give the bylaw officers ear plugs because they will be getting an earful of complaints and probably some more colorful language.</p>	<p>I have shared comments at most stages of the process. I am disappointed that the process has lost its transparency at this point. Also, by not sharing other possible tradeoffs that were considered, it is hard to suggest alternate solutions. I do not think that destroying the off leash area on the Britannia Slopes is the correct answer to 'keep the park natural'.</p>
<p>Maybe with soem modifications.</p>	<p>I think the plan could be inproved. The off leash area in Brittani Slopes is very limited and does not have realistic boundraries. I am not sure why Britannia Hill/Slope and the path down to the river is not included in the off leash area. This has been off leash since I moved to the area in 1997. I am out htere several times a day and have never seen any problems with dogs off leash on that path.River fro dogs is access is also too limited - there will be too many crowded into that small space which I think will result in problems. It will be a diaster There probably needs to be something to slow cyclist down as they come down Sandy beach hill very quickly and also frequently do not dismount at the footbridge.</p>	<p>Somewhat.</p>

<p>I think it is a definite improvement over the preliminary proposals, but there are still some potential flaws - (see 2.)</p>	<p>There is no need for fencing all along the top of Britannia Slopes. There are certain spots that fencing may make sense for slope preservation, but certainly not all along the length of the park 2. We need a defined trail at the north east end of Brit slopes to connect to the lower off-leash area and also parallel to the N.E. slope, through the wooded area.</p>	<p>I believe so, yes</p>
<p>I think the planners listened to the comments of the majority of people and realized keeping the park natural but continuing with regular maintenance. I am very happy no new structures will be built.</p>		<p>Yes</p>
	<p>On behalf of the Calgary Pathways and Bikeways Advisory Committee (CPAC), we would like to respond to your request for input regarding this Draft Plan. Overall, this plan represents considerable improvement over the existing situation. CPAC is especially supportive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provision of a clear boundary (landscaped buffer, low impact fencing) between the regional pathway and off-leash area in Sandy Beach to reduce user conflicts. -Improved safety on the steep section of the regional pathway (sight lines, wider shoulders). -Increased Bylaw enforcement in high conflict areas (such as the regional pathway) to encourage adherence to regulations. -Aggressive measures to discourage the use of undesignated trails. -Restoration of trails and pathways to conform to design standards; however the continued use of gravel suggested for the spine pathway is unreasonable given that gravel has been ineffective, even hazardous, there in the past and has required a great deal of maintenance. -Construction of a local paved pathway to connect 14A Street with 38 Avenue; a safe road crossing on 14A Street is critical at the end of this pathway to accommodate travel both north and south. The logical crossing for 14A 	

	<p>Street would be at 42 Avenue and many will choose to cross here yet the map indicates this would be in an off-leash zone with inevitable user conflicts and safety issues.</p> <p>We strongly urge you to reconsider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Construction of a granular trail along 14A Street to replace multiple undesignated trails. If this trail were paved, it would improve opportunities in the Park for transportation and attract more users especially those who require pavement for better mobility (handicapped persons, persons pushing strollers, inline skaters). -Designation of the majority of River Park as off-leash dictates a very limited use for many other users (those enjoying nature or using the park for recreation and sports, or for transportation including pedestrians, school children). This is not consistent with principles referring to a balance among diverse users or to “What we heard: park improvements are to benefit a wide variety of user groups.” -Water access for dogs in Britannia Slopes marked by the blue triangle seems to be in an on leash area and would be difficult to enforce. <p>We would appreciate clarification as to specific amendments that are planned for the Urban Park Master Plan and the Pathways and Bikeways Plan. We have appreciated the opportunity to respond to the Draft Plan and hope you consider our comments carefully.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	
<p>I think the draft plan is ridiculous. Your placing a mass amount of dogs and owners that come to this park and placing them in small off lease areas. In turn this will create alot more problems in regards to poop, deterioration of land, there may be a greater conflict between animals in such a small space, not enough room to run, etc. Like it has been stated, there are parks for</p>	<p>yes, the plan could potentially improve but be smart and think about the mass amount of animals that run</p>	<p>Yes, I have heard both sides to this draft plan, both the good and the bad. I have spoke to many of the animal owners about this draft plan and they agree with the overcrowding and various aspects of the park that are being restricted. Like I said</p>

<p>animals and there are parks for children. If you do not want animals to approach your children or yourself then use the "on-lease" or "no dog" parks. Also, if you reduce the amount of usage by animals its going to lead into crowding. Various breeds only come to the park to associate and play in the water. If you limit the space used by animals for water that is also going to lead to crowding also. Use your heads people, maybe you should have some poeple from the City come to the park on a Saturday or even in the evenings and count every dog that comes throught the park and then you may understand the mass amount of animals that use this facility.</p>	<p>through this park on a daily basis. To get a better idea of how many animals use the park, the city should have someone count each animal that enters the park to see the mass amounts. Come out on an evening throughout the week or on a Saturday mid-day and you would be shocked!</p>	<p>before if you limit some the aspects in the park that owners animals love, then you may run into major problems.</p>
<p>The up-until-now hidden agenda of the parks department is coming out – you hate offleash dog walkers and want to make our lives miserable by forcing us into sad little fenced enclosures, There are already a significant number of Southland park refugees using River Park and Britannia Slopes. Where do you want us to go? There is a clearly stated city policy of improved access to offleash dog areas for Calgarians. This draft plan flies in the face of that aim. If you want park users to have any respect for this process, change your draft.</p>	<p>Yes – get rid of the fencing to the edge of Britannia slopes, use living vegetation only to encourage offleash separation from the multi-use path, reinstate offleash between Britannia Dr and Landsdowne Av, maintain current offleash areas as they are, keep more pathways open to allow easy access to the park.</p>	<p>This part of the process is not transparent, but it is critical that it is made so.</p>
<p>No - it looks like the aim is to significantly restrict access to large parts of the park thereby increasing use pressure on the remaining areas. Fencing fragments habitat and promotes wildlife/human+dog conflicts and should be avoided unless of a temporary nature to allow restoration of specific areas to take place.</p>	<p>Revisit the drastic reduction of offleash areas to the east of the Elbow. Dogs are being unfairly blamed for slope erosion which is caused by people seeking alternate routes to avoid slippery mud and bikes that should not be using the pathways at all. There is already a very large onleash area in the Sandy beach/playing fields part of the park. This is enough. Revisit the closure of key access pathways to allow various loop walks to be completed in the park.</p>	<p>This final stage of the park feedback is not transparent and it should be. Why can't I read other's feedback and reactions to the draft plan?</p>
<p>No. I am extremely disappointed that permanent fencing still figures large in the draft park plan. No</p>	<p>It appears that an extreme end member of restricting offleash park</p>	<p>Yes, but what really matters is that those comments are taken notice of. At all stages of online feedback, we have been able to</p>

<p>one supports fencing Britannia slopes - this is wildlife unfriendly and will lead to wildlife, people and dog conflicts. No data has been presented demonstrating that fencing would be beneficial - this is an unnecessary and unwelcome intervention. I do not agree that "low impact fencing hidden within shrubs" will be low impact. Shrubs are only in leaf for 4 months of the year. Providing a small fenced offleash area next to the Landsdowne car park will lead to over use problems and degradation of the environment. Currently, people spread out, reducing impact in any one area. This park is for people to use not to look at over fencing.</p>	<p>access has been proposed. This is a radical change to current park usage with flimsy justification. The park is an open green space in a highly populated urban environment, not a museum. When people asserted that they wanted the park protected, we meant from tarmac, concrete and fencing. This desire to protect our park from urbanization seems to have been used as an excuse to punish offleash dog walkers. What is the justification for removing offlash between Britannia Drive and Landsdowne Av? Why is no trail linking the north end of Britannia Slopes to Landsdowne shown? The current plan will prevent park users from completing any offleash loop walk. There are very few places in the city where there are substantial offleash areas so this park is very precious and special to dog owners who are not welcome in the majority of city parks. We are a large group of Calgarians that deserve the pleasure and health benefits of exercising with our dogs.</p>	<p>see other comments, but at this critical stage, we cannot see what other interested people are saying. It is unfortunate that transparency has been lost at this critical stage. I have read all of the consultation comments and discussion and while I can see that some notice has been taken of park users desires, in several critical aspects, these desires have been ignored. For example, there has been a big no to the installation of permanent fencing and yet the draft plan features a lot of permanent fencing.</p>
<p>Yes some good improvements. Please reconsider the non-maintenance of the on leash areas. It is very difficult to "poop-scoop" after a pet in long grass. The result will be a much less hygenic park for everyone</p>	<p>yes, mowing of all generally flat areas as mentioned above in #1</p>	<p>yes</p>
<p>Yes</p>	<p>On Britannia Drive (upper east side of park) install traffic calming to reduce speed of vehicles, as has been done on the road along River Park. Many unleashed dogs as well as</p>	<p>yes</p>

	<p>children use the park along Britannia Drive and a tragic accident is bound to happen.</p>	
<p>No, if you are a dog owner, this plan is drastically reducing the off leash area. By fencing in the off leash area, you are creating a kind of jail. What have the bikers given up (I am a biker and a dog owner) Nothing, all I hear is complaints because the dogs in the off leash areas ensure that the bikers go the speed limits AND that they dismount to go across the bridge.. .which many do not.</p>	<p>Yes, add a gravel path on the top of the bluff on the Britannia side (this will stop the many different paths that are created during the muddy times. Add more access to the river for the dogs. The current gravel path my the river in lower Sandy beach area is a great area for off leash. Add additional garbages for owners to deposit the dog poop bags. EDUCATE as opposed to ERADICATE</p>	<p>I have read all the minutes and feel that those without dogs that do not use the parks have had too much power, with a very narrow minded look on the park usage.</p>
<p>Pretty much. It is a heck of a lot better than the original plan with all the formal areas. Keeping the park more natural looking is, in my opinion, the best alternative. And given that Alderman Pincott said that the park was "being loved to death" it only makes sense to avoid increasing the parking spaces. Why provide more opportunity for extra people to impact the parks? Generally speaking, the park was not broken and doesn't need to be fixed. Yes, some of the facilities can use refurbishing (e.g. the washrooms) but that is a far cry from the original proposal.</p>	<p>I think this plan is doing just that.</p>	<p>I wasn't able to attend everything, but I put my 2 cents in and I was pleased to find that the big shots actually seemed to be listening to the residents.</p>
	<p>The following pertains only to the Britannia Slopes area. The plan does not deal with two main problems: A. Commercial dog walking and B. Control of bike/pedestrian path traffic. A. Prior to any delineation of off-leash areas, an immediate solution to the commercial dog walking situation in the area bordering the Rverdale Ave. parking lot is required. Over the past two years it has been overrun with commercial dog walkers - in excess of 50/60 dogs in a 2 hour period on weekdays. I realize it is not a Parks concern, per se, but any designation of off leash/on leash areas without appropriate action by the</p>	

	<p>City will be ineffective. We have written the Mayor and council on this matter and have also contacted Animal Services but at this point have received no response. This problem must be resolved. If there is going to be a reduction in off leash area the area left will be decimated. it would be better to have the whole area as an on leash area to save the enviroment.</p> <p>B. One of the most fundamental problems arising out of the use of this area is interaction of cyclists and pedestrians using the asphalt path leading from the east end of the suspension bridge over the river to the parking lot at the west of of Riverdale Ave. I strongly suggest there should be two separate paths similar to those in effect on the west side ot the river and for example, in North Glenmore Park. The path is very heavily used by commuting and casual cyclists, some of whom treat it as a segment of the Tour de France. Virtually on one respects the signs to dismount and walk over the suspension bridge. At the very least, some sort of restraining gate/turnstile should be installed at the east end of the bridge to compel cyclists to dismount and walk, I suggest a separate pedestrian path can be constructed (it need not be paved, just up-graded with a shale surface and some river bank repair) following the existing "river path" having a different outlet to the west of the Riverdale parking lot, protected by such low fencing/shrubs as may be required. The existing paved path would be reserved for cyclists. I make these suggestions on the basis of 15 years of observation, use and proximity to this area. I would be pleased to discuss any of these matters with you at any time.</p>	
<p>Yes. This is a much better plan than the last one proposed.</p>	<p>Two comments: Parking: Some more thought could go into providing a few more parking spaces at Sandy Beach, or around Emily Follensbee school. People are going to come; it would be better for neighbours to have designated parking than 14A street parking</p>	<p>yes. well done.</p>

	<p>Dogs: Once a week I hear of yet another walker/jogger/bike rider being accosted or knocked down or chased, by out of control dogs at the off leash area of River Park. As enforcement is impossible, I suggest the only way to separate the two activities is to create a fence line along the escarpment with the river side overlooking the river designated for walkers, joggers and the other large grassy side for the dogs and their owners. You would only need a 10-15 foot wide pathway along the river cliff to accomplish this. I was disappointed that this wasn't included in the plan. There are a lot of unreported injuries, and both activities must be accomodated up there.</p>	
<p>Some aspects off the draft plan will do so - improved access to waste recepticles (for the huge quantities of dog waste that are deposited every day - also these recepticles smell like an open sewer on warm summer days) and more park benches. HOWEVER - It is a PARK, not a BACKYARD. I really question some of the suggested "improvements" - they are not in keeping with the naturalness of the area, nor are they fiscally responsible.</p>	<p>Yes - I am opposed to the clear panel fences along the edges of the escarpments in River Park and Britannia as these will significantly alter the "natural" beauty of the area with negative impact. Due to the steepness of the escarpment, people and animals do not wander down off of the trails. On the Britannia escarpment there are 2 main access trails to the river and one lesser travelled one at the north end. The addition of gravel/natural material would make the walking surface easier to navigate and reduce erosion while maintaining the "natural" appearance and experience. I would say the same thing about the River Park escarpment. I am also very opposed to the construction of wooden steps on the main trail from Britannia into the river valley. They look so unnatural - people would no longer have the same experience of "hiking in the city" on natural paths. They are extremely dangerous in the winter (people expect natural paths to be altered by winter conditions but they expect stairs to be safe and cleared and this is not realistic to maintain in our winter conditions). Stairs also require regular maintenance which I believe adds another annual cost that we could do without. I do not believe stairs would make the river valley any more accessible than the natural path. There are two parking</p>	<p>Yes, I attended a consultation meeting.</p>

	lots for easy access to the river park.	
NO! I disagree with the Principles. Some is enviro-babble, the rest just fastasy. The remainder of the plan follows as a waste of time and money.	This plan does not reflect the needs of those who are currently enjoying it. There is probably a good reason why this document does not include any statistics about actual usage. Best solution is to table the whole thing. Since Parks Planning is unable to actually respond to citizen input, I guess it will have to be fought out at Council.	Yes, but the plan does not reflect the views of those who commented. While there was a diversity of opinion, virtually everyone agreed on 2 points: 1. The City has been extremely negligent about maintenance in the past, and there is no evidence put forward that this will change in the future. 2. The public does not want fencing. No where in the entire city has Parks disguised fencing with natural shrubs, etc. That is fantasy. Just look at the existing fencing at Sandy Beach (near bridge) or along the River Park escarpment.
Yes - it appears to balance users needs with the fact that the City will always have a limited budget for capital and operating of the park.	The City needs to conduct a traffic study as part of the plan. They continue to avoid this request. How users interact with the park when they pull up and experience the park is required and the City has done a good job with this, however the questions on how users get to and leave the park continues to be neglected. Let's finish this process up completely so that we can say that this controversial aspect has been addressed.	Yes - The City did a good job of 'herding cats". While i did not agree with some (perhaps many) points of view the process allowed everyone to get their two bits in.
Regarding the off leash plan for the Britannia Escarpment - NO - this is not more enjoyable for Britannia residents especially those on Britannia Drive as the number of cars parked there by dog walkers is increasing and will continue to do so if it becomes the "designated" off-leash area.		
Yes. This plan, although not perfect, is a giant step	Of course, but each improvement	Yes, to such an extent that it is hard to focus on the

<p>forward to preserving and sustaining River Park. The status quo is untenable and the proposed plans have taken steps to consider the views of the various interest groups using the park.</p>	<p>proposed will be considered a backward step by some other interest holder. I would increase the on leash area south to 42nd Ave to allow access to views of the river/observation benches by more people with no dogs, seniors etc, and keep the toboggan hill free of dogs for children to play.</p>	<p>sustainability problem through all the noise. In addition, although I went to open houses and such, I did not ever hear any mention of the on leash area at the north end of River Park being considered "natural parkland", yet there it is on the map. I don't think there was any interest in the community (dog owners, walkers, recreational users) for having natural parkland there. That part of the park must be manicured and maintained as such going forward.</p>
<p>First, I would like to thank you for the hard work that has gone into the preparation of this plan. I know how hard it is to try and satisfy all users, and I know that not all users will be 100% satisfied.</p> <p>I am a resident of 14A ST. I'm not sure we have reached the goal of the park being more sustainable but perhaps we are moving in the right direction! My main concern with the current draft plan is the fact that the on leash areas are designated as "natural" status rather than "manicured" status. Please understand that this would not be the right thing to do. We want to have a spot in the park that we can throw a frisbee, have a picnic, enjoy a walk, all without having an encounter with a dog. To leave these areas as natural and not manicured will not allow this on-leash area to be enjoyed to the extend that it could be. A few years ago the city left the park to be natural and it was a disaster. The grasses prevent the children from playing and when,(and it will happen), a dog does defecates in the long grasses it is near impossible for even the most conscientious owner to find and pick up the feces. Multi-use was a common theme in our many discussions that took place over our many meetings. Please let us truly make the park multi</p>	<p>ENFORCEMENT, ENFORCEMENT, ENFORCEMENT. There was no mention of this in any of the plans. This is key in maintaining the park. We need to ensure that all people are welcome in the park and that each user group is respectful of the other user groups.</p>	<p>I beleive the consultation process was helpful. I was not looking forward to this process but by the end I felt I had been heard and I did hear others.</p>

<p>use by manicuring the entire park and allowing a place for the non dog community to enjoy the greatness of this park.</p>		
<p>Yes I support the plan in principal - a big improvement over the 2010 Draft! Keep development to a minimum, don't load up with amenities to attract more users, focus on preservation, maintenance and management and always consider that these parks function as local green space in addition to a wonderful natural river valley park for all Calgarians to enjoy as was envisioned by Eric Harvie. Now just ensure that the implementation of the plan gets funded in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Pathway & Trails Plan Item 3 - Not necessary to fence the whole of Britannia Slopes - just fence badly eroded/slumping areas (restoration barriers) and monitor effectiveness -expand only if necessary. Only use natural looking fence - no plexiglass! Clearly delineate that the slopes are NOT off leash. Post "you are here" schematics on each garbage bin lid to remind people of delineation. Item 5 - paved path on east side needs to be widened - and there needs to be staggered barriers at either end of the bridge to force dismount. Item 6 - need to keep another pathway open down the slope at the far north end of Britannia Slopes. This trail is needed to connect to Riverdale off-leash area. But path should be on-leash on slope portion. Also keep one of the trails running through the wooded area parallel to the river and Britannia Slopes open that connects this north path to #6 network. This trail has the potential to be an interpretative nature trail - allows for public access and enjoyment of a variety of habitats and vegetative types, allows Parks and public access for native seed collection and invasive species removal and may have a benefit for police patrolling. On additional dedicated off leash trail on the slope below River Park could be kept open on the west side of the river. This will help to reduce pathway user conflicts.</p> <p>Dogs and People</p>	<p>Yes I felt I was heard and had an opportunity to share. I participated in all but one activity This round of consultation was exemplary and should serve as a model for City planning and citizen engagement. Events were well advertised, project plan kept to the deliverables and time lines and the process was flexible enough to allow both individuals and stakeholder groups to participate in whatever suited them. Results and background information sharing was transparent. Thank you for undertaking Round 2 consultation - it will make for a better park in the long term.</p>

	<p>Provide a parking solution for off-leash area at Lower reservoir See comment above re posting off leash schematics on garbage bins Provide information about the % of the park dedicated for off leash as per the Off Leash Management Plan</p> <p>Roads and Parking Confirm intention that 4 stall parking at 49th Av and Britannia Dr will not be changed</p> <p>Park Sustainability and Maintenance I understand the challenges with maintaining turf in off leash areas and like the fencing and temporary closures and pilot projects. I am strongly opposed to the use of phosphate fertilizers. The Elbow and Bow are part of the Lake Winnipeg Watershed - this massive lake is dying - largely due to nutrient runoff. Calgary can play a small part by not contributing to this. Nutrients should be applied based on soil test results and injected rather than surface applied.</p> <p>Natural Environment Start annual seed collection and invasive species removal days – don't give up - this will build over time. Follow the River Clean Up/Doggie Poop Scoop day models. Engage the schools and Community Environmental Directors through the FCC</p> <p>Park Amenities What is the arrangement with RiverEdge - could this be revisited? Could Riveredge area be used for overflow weekend picnic areas when they are not running programming?</p>	
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	Would improve access and enjoyment of the park while taking pressure off natural areas.	
I think so. I support the focus to keep it as natural as possible and also as safe as possible.	I have lived in Britannia and enjoyed our Bluff for 37 years. It is difficult to be sure exactly which of the plans refer to our park along the bluff and the hill below. Now we and many of our friends are seniors our needs have changed. We love to walk our dogs along the edge of the hill but the rutted paths require constant attention to the terrain to prevent turned ankles and tripping. Where one path DESIGNATED FOR WALKERS would suffice we now have 4 or more braided trails eroding the surface. We need a prepared surface that will drain well and remain flat not become concave. The excellent exposure to the sun on the west facing park and slope melts the snow and ice but the rolling footing is treacherous particularly on the hill. There is no safe way down to the valley floor in the winter. I would like to see wooden stairs similar to those at Center street NW north of the Bow river. Stairs are excellent for getting exercise and a functional hand rail is crucial for safety in all seasons. I was with a good friend a few years ago who fell trying to go down the 'halfpipe" with the treetrunk sized hand rail, just over the top edge. She slipped on the ice and broke her femur. We had chosen this route as the more gentle macadam topped path was treacherous coming up and there was no better way down in the offleash area. You are also discussing removing the offleash designation of the "black path" to Lansdowne at the lowest point on Britannia drive. That is often icy too but it's possible to walk down beside the path in the soft snow and the slope is gentler. I would hate to lose that choice but negotiating a hill with a dog on the leash isn't necessarily a wise idea. In the winter we have started driving with our dog	Yes, though I am getting tired of stating my feelings over and over and hope we will soon make a decision and move on.

	<p>over to Riverpark just to find a flat walkway, or driving to the paved path along the Elbow river east of Elbow Drive. From young parents with toddlers in strollers to elderly seniors with canes and walkers, with of without dogs, we all gravitate to our Bluff in all seasons and weather conditions. People are often afraid of any changes proposed but happily praise the improvements. Lets try to get this right for everyone.</p>	
<p>This plan would certainly NOT help make River Park more sustainable. Even designating the north end of River Park as on-leash is not helpful, since it is already recognized that the area is not currently widely used by off-leash dogs. The suggestions in this draft plan largely contradict the very principles stated therein; i.e. to strike a balance between uses and users, to reduce conflicts, and to reduce community impacts through better design.</p>	<p>The draft plan could be improved by further restricting the off-leash area to one-third of River Park. It would be practical and helpful to install structured wooden fencing that runs north-south along the length of the park, situated about 200 feet away from 14A Street. The area east of the fence would be designated as off-leash, thus limiting and reducing conflicts between residents and aggressive dogs, and help to prevent dogs from running onto private property and defecating on lawns. Such a fence would also help to ensure that people without dogs could come to the park and enjoy walking in the area west of the fence without being pounced on by dogs, or stepping in their feces left behind by careless owners. Designating one-third of the park as on-leash or completely off-limits to dogs would also help to ensure that a larger area of the park becomes more sustainable.</p>	<p>Yes, although it seems as though the people comprising the draft plan do not seem very interested in reflecting the concerns of residents along 14A Street.</p>
<p>Much of it is positive. However if it is deemed necessary to fence-in the off-leash area at the end of Riverdale Avenue then please fence it in completely. Having an open edge at the east side of the off-leash</p>	<p>Yes. If you must fence in the off-leash area please do it on all sides. Please do not leave a corridor which people will assume is a path to go north-south, and which dogs</p>	<p>I have attended all but one meeting and participated in both forums. At no time did I feel satisfied that I got my points across, probably because I am not a confident speaker and because other, louder voices drowned me out. I felt that the proceedings were dominated by a few, both online and in person. I think the</p>

<p>area will not help contain dogs! In addition the openings will allow/promote north-south traffic <i>(SECTION REMOVED TO PROTECT PRIVACY)</i>. Thus the design proposal contradicts its own goal to "...aggressively discourage use or creation of undesignated trails..." <i>(SECTION REMOVED TO PROTECT PRIVACY)</i></p>	<p>will use to access the on-leash areas for their off-leash activities.</p>	<p>process being used for the 50 Avenue development is far fairer. However I do appreciate being given the opportunity to have input. And I do hope that today's input will be considered!!!!</p>
<p>It is wonderful that the City is finally addressing the horrendous problem they created by allowing off-leash areas in virtually every natural area in the city without any public consultation. Although the plan does seem to address the massive destruction of the natural landscape that resulted, because it still does not provide any through routes for wildlife (not crossed by dog runs), I doubt that it will do much for the complete loss of small native mammals and deer the parks have experienced over recent years. I commend you for recognizing the disaster, and for the thoughtful response that the draft plan already is.</p>	<p>There should be a significant separation between the "spine" in River Park and the top-of-bluff footpath rather than continuing to have them meet. At the moment, this seems to be the major area of conflict between walkers, bikers, and runners on the one hand, and dog-walkers on the other. The spine could be bowed to the west here (since you plan to resurface it anyway), and the dog waste bins moved at the same time to remove the terrible smell other users currently have to bear when passing through this area. It would also be helpful to make it clear that dog walkers are not to use the smaller trash bins along the trails to dispose of their "packages". The horrible smell of dog feces when one raises one of the bin lids is a real disincentive to those of us who pick up litter as we walk and would like to be able to dispose of it in non-smelling bins. I realize that the plan is a compromise to recognize the use of many disparate people. But I mourn the loss of relatively clean and swimmable water at Sandy Beach and Stanley Park that has come as a result of dogs in the river upstream from human use. And the loss of animal life that was present in these parks only ten or fifteen years ago. I only hope that the compromise is not somewhere mid-way between those who, unchecked, would simply trash the parks (and are doing that now), and those who would see the parks continue as a resource for all citizens and a place where our native environment of plants and animals and unique geographical features will not only survive, but thrive and continue into our joint futures. The compromise must be seated somewhere where the</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

	continuation of these features is guaranteed.	
Yes.		I read the forum and most people said things I was thinking, and so I did not chime in. I am very pleased to see that dog-lovers, who are out there 365 days/year, were considered more than the people who like to sit and complain (note the word sit). I have never witnessed dog-aggression in this park, except when I had an dog-aggressive foster dog and tried to take him to the park.
More sustainable? Maybe, although the park condition did not deteriorate over quite a few years and, contrarily to what one is trying to make us believe, it is very enjoyable "such as". Users are reasonable and a few more signs asking to stay on the existing paths and trails would probably achieve as much or more than all these new rezoning, regulations, restrictions, etc... More enjoyable? What a stupid question: the Proposed Management Zones map, the Pathways and Trails map point to one obvious conclusion: a large part of this park will be "off limits". The public is only left with a much reduced set of areas and trails, which will be more crowded. It is not a public park anymore! I have been living on top of the Britannia slope for the last 34 years, enjoying this park without any complaint. I now have a feeling of being excluded from the recreational amenities which made us buy our house in this area.	Yes: cancel many of the proposed changes. Limit it to improvement of some trails, parking areas, and sanitary facilities. Remove the transparent fence along the Britannia escarpment top. Be more budget conscious.	Yes: I followed some of the consultation phases via internet, and submitted some comments at the beginning of this "project". I did not attend any meeting since I was away from Calgary. I appreciate the fact that the size of the initial project was reduced after public consultation. But I still believe that the justification of the Plan had more to do with preservation of occupations and jobs than real environmental management.
No, this plan is another project developed by bureaucrats needing to justify their salaries. Why can't the City of Calgary think about the hard earned dollars people work for. I live in the neighbourhood (7 years) and have never heard anyone complain about the park. Can't you leave well enough alone?	No. You have missed the boat entirely. Quit wasting money!!	No. I am curious as to who from the neighbourhood brought this forward or was this a City of Calgary driven project. I'm not basing this on any hard evidence, but this has never been talked about by me neighbors until the City started heavy handing it.

<p>No I do not. The size of the off leash area will perpetuate its heavy use as a regional draw. I believe that the only way to reduce the negative impacts of the off leash useage is to reduce the size of the off leash area further, so that it will serve the smaller needs of immediate neighborhoods. This would reduce vehicular traffic coming from afar to access the area, which creates traffic and parking issues.</p>	<p>Absolutely. The size of off leash area on the top portion of River Park should be reduced further, to encourage more non off leash activities. There should also be more physical separation of off leash from other activities.</p>	<p>Yes, however I do not beleive that the effects of the heavy off leash use have been mitigated for the homes/neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the Park. Traffic, parking, non-controlled access to the off leash areas, hours of operation. Allof these are serious concerns for the homes along 14a Street in particular, and have not been adequately addressed in the Plan Proposals.</p>
	<p>I already sent in my comments but thought of one more thing - The park is underutilized in the winter. Dogs reportedly are tearing up the slope with their claws. How about taking the on-leash restrictions off during winter - ground is frozen and often snow covered - damage will be minimal and user conflicts with cyclists non existent or minimal. I really doubt if the City can justify off-leash bylaw enforcement in year round anyway - I say increase enforcement in late spring/summer/early fall when really needed. Let's not kid ourselves - it will probably be abused anyway if there is no enforcement presence. This will provide enhanced access during winter - will really be appreciated by local and out of area dog</p>	

	owners alike.	
<p>As someone who has used River Park since 1957 I was truly saddened to read the first draft of the plan for River Park, Sandy Beach and Britannia Slopes. I feel this first draft plan will not help make River Park vegetation more sustainable over the long term but it will test methods to restore River Park vegetation after it has been degraded by off leash over usage. After 4 years of consultation, the City is now seeking to determine if River Park vegetation is constantly restorable. Constant restoration seems counter to the concept of vegetation sustainability of a park. Restoration alone is not addressing the current problems of off leash overuse, multi-user displacement and increased community traffic and parking. As the population density increases in Altadore and CFB West with the construction of each new infill or dwelling this plan will only increase the intensity of off leash use and problems at River Park and Altadore. This plan appears politically motivated rather than a good long term management solution.</p> <p>This entire process began years ago due to the degradation of River Park vegetation by the off leash user group. Since then testimonials and pictorials in the city media have identified River Park as an off leash park, which has further increased off leash usage and off leash political influence. River Park is now the most intensely used, of the 149 off leash parks in Calgary and although it is classified as part of a regional park it is directly across the street from the established residential communities of Altadore/ South Calgary. River Park is also a neighbourhood park.</p> <p>By classifying River Park as part of the River Park, Sandy Beach and Britannia Slopes regional park this facilitates making most of River Park area (75%+) as off leash within the whole park area. The proposed off leash area is about the same as the currently used off leash area which is the source of all current overuse problems. The off leash area of River Park should be reduced to at least 50% to address the problems. The remainder of my discussion</p>	<p>River Park is currently overused by off leash. The draft plan could be improved by reducing the proposed off leash area of River Park to 50% or 12 hectares or 29.6 acres. This is still a very reasonable off leash area compared to other off leash parks.</p> <p>Dogs don't recognize the amount of off leash areas as long as they</p>	<p>Yes, however it seems like the City decisions are based on politics rather information about long term management or equality with other residential areas.</p>

<p>will focus on just River Park.</p> <p>The draft plan allocates 18+ hectares (44.5+ acres) (75%+) to off leash and 6-hectares (14.8- acres)(25%-) to on leash in River Park. The off leash portion is the center and south end of River Park. The on leash area is set at the seldom used north end of River Park. As you walk to the north park area the traffic noise increases and there is a 3 way stop sign located on the north boundary at 14 St. and 38th Ave. S.W. The sound of braking and acceleration is constantly heard. For the most part the north area feels surrounded by housing from 14 A St, 15 St., 38 Ave. and Crestview Rd. and there are no wonderful city or river valley views. Automobile exhaust occasionally washes over you and last evening a group of noisy partiers made their way down the sidewalk on 38th Ave. All in all the north area is a lesser park experience compared to the rest of River Park and it seems the City has allocated the least pleasant park area to the on leash user groups and the best of River Park to the off leash user group. I fully agree that a reasonable portion of River Park should be off leash but the size and location of area allocations seem particularly bias in favour of off leash. This bias is more evident considering that on May 1, 1989 City Council voted in favour to adopt Clause CS89-09 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services, dated April 18, 1989 Re: The Animal Control By-law Designation of Parks. River Park is listed as Leash.</p> <p>To allocate 44.5 acres to off leash is also a very large area compared to all the other 148 off leash parks in Calgary. It is notable that the City has removed the website which lists the size of other off leash parks so a comparison cannot be made.</p> <p>Because River Park is already the most intensely used off leash park in Calgary it appears City management techniques at River Park are different than those exercised at other neighbourhood off leash parks. Most other off leash parks and adjoining residential communities in Calgary do not have the long term problem issues of (1) vegetation sustainability, (2) multi-user displacement and (3) excess community traffic and parking. Or the intensity of these issues at other parks and communities is far less. Allocating 44.5 acres or 75% of River Park area to off leash does not address these problem issues. The off leash area should be further reduced to at least 50%. Also, allocating 75%+ of this neighbourhood park to off leash is contrary to the spirit of the recently approved city wide Off Leash Area Management Plan where only 30% of an area is made off leash. Even the establishment of new off leash areas or availability of other existing off leash areas is not expected to reduce or slow the increasing use of off leash at River Park due to its size, parking, view and inner city location.</p>	<p>can socialize and exercise. Owners can still socialize in 29.6 acres.</p> <p>After a time in the off leash area, dogs do not mind being on leash and holding a leash is not that difficult for owners (pack leaders). Most dogs do not mind being on leash as long as their owners walk them. Just getting out and using their sense of smell is enjoyed by dogs.</p> <p>Less off leash area reduces the amount of degraded turf and cost of restoration.</p> <p>29.6 acres will service a more equitable number of off</p>	
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<p>Because the sizable off leash lobby for River Park has shown to have considerable influence over this first draft it appears City policy will favour off leash designation for 44.5+ acres of River Park rather than addressing the long term problem issues created by off leash over use. Yes, River Park is for all citizens of Calgary but realistically this plan makes River Park for all off leash citizens of Calgary. River Park will continue its recent identity as a “dog park” rather than its actual multi-use identity.</p> <p>The 1989 posting of off leash signs without required stakeholder consultation served to change the user patterns and identity of River Park. This is the basis which made 100% of River Park off leash. In 1989 complaints were filed at the City by other user groups such as students who trained for running and cross country skiers and families with young children because River Park was no longer amenable to their activities. The majority of these users stopped using River Park. It is not that other user groups dislike dogs; it is that some off leash dogs frustrate other users by approaching in front of them or jumping against them or nipping at the back of their ankles. Some dogs are friendly and some growl. Some dogs capture balls and Frisbees. Unfortunately some owners do not pick up after their off leash dogs defecate, so other user groups avoid off leash areas.</p> <p>The alternate park areas of Sandy Beach and Britannia Slopes are not really amenable to other user groups such as young families with children, joggers, cross country skiers, elderly walkers, city view seekers and catch players who would also like to enjoy the qualities of the River Park upper flat area. New residents in Altadore are mostly young families with children. Some mothers with children feel safer on the upper area rather than on slopes or down in the valley and next to the river.</p> <p>After reviewing the first draft of the plan, 18+ hectares (44.5+ acres) (75% +) of River Park is allocated to off leash use. These are the same 18 hectares which are currently overused by off leash. Nothing has really changed. However the City now wants to carry out vegetation restoration and basically leave the long term problems unresolved.</p> <p>Therefore after 4 years of consultation the River Park and Altadore problem issues still remain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overuse by the off leash user group will eventually degrade the vegetation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -But now the City will test methods to restore the turf from soil compaction, claw action, urine and residual defecation. - If ongoing soil amendments, aeration, reseeding, fertilization, irrigation, rest and rotation are required to grow vegetation then is this really a sustainable park? 	<p>leash dogs and consequently the City management of River Park will be more equitable compared to the other 148 off leash parks in Calgary.</p> <p>On leash areas can actually be used by other user groups and on leash dogs at the same time while off leash areas are realistically used by only off leash dogs and their owners.</p> <p>Altadore/South Calgary currently receives the most off leash vehicle traffic of any residential community in Calgary. By reducing the</p>	
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<p>- What is the annual cost of this restoration and who is going to pay for this year after year? - What happens to River Park vegetation if budgeting or restoration is inadequate?</p> <p>2. Realistically, off leash users will dominate over all other user groups in the River Park off leash area. This 75% area has the most value for all user groups.</p> <p>3. Altadore/ South Calgary will continue to receive more off leash vehicle traffic and parking compared to any other residential / regional off leash area in Calgary. Only Southland Off Leash Park may receive more traffic on a given day.</p> <p>4. Altadore currently has 92 new infill residences under construction or just completed. These new infills double the past population density of these lots. Hundreds of older homes are still available for redevelopment.</p> <p>Currently there are 57 residences under construction at Currie Barracks. Thousands of new residences are still expected at CFB West. Dog owners are planning to use River Park.</p> <p>- How is River Park vegetation going to survive further increases in off leash over usage?</p> <p>Other aspects of River Park off leash will also have impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - River Park is lit and attracts off leash users until 11 P.M. - Reseeding with coarse turf species will replace finer grass species. - Considerable volumes of urine and residual feces will be deposited daily on River Park which may increase the risk of a public health issue. - The spring melt runoff down to the Elbow River probably contains substantial amounts of urine and residual feces. - Overuse often leads to soil erosion and weeds. - Areas of heavy off leash use, traffic and parking will negatively impact adjacent residents, residential areas and property values in numerous ways. <p>In conclusion this draft plan will not help make River Park more sustainable for current and future generations. The strength of the off leash lobby is influencing City decisions. Rather than make appropriate long term management decisions for current problems the City is going to engage in costly ongoing restoration. In order to deal with all current and future problems at River Park and Altadore , the off leash area should be reduced to 50%.</p>	<p>off leash area to 29.6 acres this will help to reduce the off leash vehicle numbers to more equitable levels in comparison to all other residential communities with off leash parks in Calgary.</p>	
<p>No. The park will not be sustainable unless the restoration project has remarkable results. Even then</p>	<p>Please create an Appeal Process to convert River Park from off leash to on leash . This will be necessary once</p>	<p>Yea</p>

<p>the results will fade under the paws of 600 dogs per day.</p>	<p>the restoration project fails....unless you just want a permanent dirtbowl.</p>	
<p>There are so many people bringing off-leash dogs to the park how can the park survive?</p>	<p>Many of the 40 and 50 year trees are at risk of dying from urine on the trunk. Can the City immediately place fences around the bases of the trees to prevent their death. It seems like a shame to let so many trees die.</p>	
<p>yes</p>		<p>Yes. However, I would like to say that the online forums should have been accessible a little longer (ie carry them on through weekends instead of ending them on a Friday night)</p>
<p>I believe the draft plan is essentially flawed and biased: flawed in that it addresses the park as a Regional Park, which paves the way for justification of the portion being designated as off-leash as meeting the percentage target for this use; and biased in that the planners take the position that 'majority rules' when it comes to public input of off-leash dog walkers from all over the city. I believe the 'majority rules' remark implied by a representative of Parks at the open house is sad and revealing. Users should not guide the Park planners in making decisions that are in the interests of creating a sustainable park, or resurrecting a dying park as in the case of River Park, et al. The health of the park and the river valley should be of utmost importance... certainly above the interests of people and their pets.</p> <p>I am pleased to see Parks has addressed the protection of and health of the riparian zone. Riverbank restoration and controlled access to the</p>	<p>Absolutely, the plan could be improved. The off-leash area should be further reduced to, at most, a third of the surface area of upper River Park. This would mean giving the park improved odds in the 'rest and restoration' efforts proposed. Reducing the off-leash area would mean improved access to and enjoyment of the park by Calgarians of all ilks, not just dog owners. I have been amazed and surprised by the premise that if the park is not off-leash it is somehow anti-dog. Nothing could be further from the truth. Dog owners and their pets, on leads, can still enjoy the park, even though the dog is not free to run around the entire park.</p> <p>As a resident of 14A Street, I feel that I am part of a group whose everyday lives and real property values are most seriously affected by the present and proposed use of the park... negatively so by the large amount of space</p>	<p>Yes, I have had the opportunity to share my comments and hear others' concerns. I have also had the opportunity to be called un-Christian-like, a dog-hater, selfish, etc. I have been told that I should have known better moving in next to a dog park (It is a PARK... with off-leash use, NOT A DOG PARK!). The public consultation process brought out many stakeholders, some with diametrically opposed views. While this was as well managed as one could hope for, it was intense and sometimes difficult to participate in. I am aware that people have very strong and often emotional ties to the park. I do. That is why we have parks management folks to make the difficult decisions around planning for a future where we can still enjoy this park.</p>

<p>river are good parks management. This same intensity of purpose should have been applied to the entire park, including the upper surface of River Park.</p>	<p>and use provided for off-leash dogs. The dogs are being afforded way too much liberty. There is wide open access to the park for 12 blocks, for people, cars and dogs. With no controls over ingress and egress along 14A Street, dogs run in and out of the park. Granted most are behaved, and most respond to their owners. But given the sheer volume of animals, there are large numbers of incidents of dogs running in the street, into yards, jumping on people, even running inside of homes (mine included on several occasions). This is not how an off-leash area should function in an urban environment. And I do not believe this is a problem solved by enforcement nor education. These dogs' owners know their dogs should not run into the street and into peoples' homes! This is a symptom of overuse and poor design. The Parks department needs to make a more serious effort at creating and controlling access points to any off-leash area. This will address safety, sustainability, and a more democratic use of the park by the City's citizens... rather than its pets.</p>	
	<p>Please ensure that the onleash area is manicured. The idea of Natural state sounds nice but we have already lived through this nightmare. The tall grasses and unkept look breeds garbage and dog owners cannot possibly find the dog poop in these grasses.</p> <p>The on leash areas should be considered multi use and allow families to play, picnics to occur and general non-dog fun to happen. Natural will not encourage any of this. Have you ever tried to find a softball in the tall grass. What</p>	

	<p>about kicking a soccer ball, it doesn't go far in that mess! I would prefer more on-leash area. Perhaps 50% is asking too much but, what about limiting it to 42nd and North to 38th. This would give people the opportunity to view the river in a non off leash zone. Please consider this.</p>	
<p>Packing more dog use into a smaller amount of space will cause more stress on the turf. The south end of the park is watered and looks so much better than the north end. Try mowing and watering all of River Park and it will withstand the current level of use. And if the Off-leash Area Management Plan addresses more spaces for people in their own communities, it will take some pressure off River Park, Sandy Beach and the Britannia Slope.</p> <p>Eliminating off-leash in 25% of River Park and over 50% of Sandy Beach/Britannia still doesn't seem fair. This is what was originally mentioned in the 2009 plan so it comes as no surprise that it remains in the final plan. If a reduction of off-leash space is planned, why not allow off-leash up to the bridges at the north end of River Park? The bridges are a natural divider. As for below in Sandy Beach, I would rather see the use remain much the same with more bylaw presence.</p> <p>The plan is more sustainable but many people will be disappointed with off-leash restrictions.</p>	<p>The park is well used by people of all ages and the majority of them do so with a dog throughout the year. The plan was flawed from the beginning. It ignored the fact that the primary users are people with dog-related interests. The objective of the slanted surveys was to explore other uses for the park. Wear and tear will occur whether use is by people or dogs. There was no consideration of ample recreation opportunities for every other user group within a mile or two of River Park. Considering such a small amount of competing interest groups only use the park during fair weather, it's odd that the minority have such heavy influence on the plan.</p> <p>I am happy that the plan shows a significant interest in more maintenance and no longer includes building structures that would attract other users.</p>	<p>Here I am rushing to get my comments submitted. The process was too fast and too much information to digest. Some people couldn't participate because links didn't work or they couldn't create a profile. I think we did not hear the opinions of many people.</p> <p>Many people gave up hope for a fair process and stopped participating. This is obvious from the level of participation in online discussions and meetings. There was a fair amount of comments, but from a small amount of participants. The majority of people still participating are the residents and environmental advocates.</p>

Looks like it will benefit other users, not so much dog owners.	Leave the park alone as much as possible. More maintenance and less change is better.	I didnt' have enough time to review all of the plans and comment.