

Dear Greater Sudbury Municipal Candidate,

As Chairperson of the Dogs Off-Leash in Greater Sudbury (D.O.G.S.) Committee of the Minnow Lake Community Action Network (CAN), I am writing to obtain your support for our project.

Our project was recently presented to the City Council which was for the creation of Greater Sudbury's first Off-Leash Dog Park to be built on the abandoned parcel of land (i.e.: former open air gravel pit) at the corner of Donna Drive and Second Avenue-North in Ward 11. The vast majority of members of city council spoke in favour of the project. Following discussion, they directed city staff to review our proposal and return to City Council with a report of their observations on the Off-Leash Dog Park proposal.

As you may know, currently dog owners have no legal place to socialize their dogs' off-leash in a controlled and safe environment. Based on our community research there are approximately 27,011 dogs in the City of Greater Sudbury and of those, approximately 3,765 reside in Minnow Lake. According to our community survey of the more than 7000 household in Minnow Lake, there is on average 1.85 dogs per household in Ward 11. With the high density of rental properties and a high population of dog ownership, an Off-Leash Dog Park in Minnow Lake would provide a legal and safe place for responsible dog owners to exercise and socialize their dogs without infringing on the rights of others such as joggers, small children and those who may be fearful of dogs that are users of traditional community parks.

Off-Leash Dog Parks have been successfully implemented and maintained throughout North America for more than 30 years. Often people oppose these areas due to the common myths and misconceptions about off-leash areas. In reality, these areas provide great benefits not only to dogs, but also to the community at large. They promote responsible dog ownership through mandatory dog registration and regular vaccinations. Additionally, they reduce complaints as well adjusted; exercised and socialized dogs are better canine citizens. Currently, there are 125 Off-Leash Dog Parks that exist in over 35 Ontario municipalities. The most northern dog park is located in Elliot Lake.

During our community consultation session and surveys, the residents of Minnow Lake strongly agree that the City of Greater Sudbury would benefit by having a dog park and agree that the proposed location would improve the Ward. In addition, a majority reported that building and maintaining a dog park, are appropriate uses of municipal funds. Our committee has done its homework in regards to this project and in consultation with the residents of Minnow Lake. We firmly believe the time has come for Greater Sudbury to establish it's first Off-Leash Dog Park. We look forward to receiving your thoughts on our community project.

In the interim, I invite you to learn more about this issue, the project and research study which can be found at our website: www.dogsoffleash.ca.

Sincerely,

Pierre Perreault
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D.O.G.S. Committee
Minnow Lake Community Action Network
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