



# People, Dogs & Parks Strategic Plan

Engagement 1  
Summary Report  
February 2024



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the first engagement for the People, Dogs & Parks Strategic Plan is to learn more about key community values, ideas, and opportunities from a broad range of audiences to inform the development of the plan.

### Participation

There were 2,933 interactions with people in at least one of the engagement opportunities. Engagement opportunities included an online engagement survey (completed by 2,511 respondents), three pop-up engagement events in the plazas outside of Parkgate Library, Lynn Valley Library, and Delbrook Community Centre (attended by 270 participants), and an intercept survey with park users (completed by 152 respondents).

### Notification

The District promoted the engagement opportunities using the following methods: District of North Vancouver website, District of North Vancouver online engagement survey site, signs in parks throughout the District, print and digital advertisements in the North Shore News newspaper, and emails to current and recent parks permit holders and groups (such as sports field users, commercial dog walkers).

### Key findings and themes<sup>1</sup>

Percentages are shown in the Executive Summary. Both numbers and percentages are provided in the Appendices, starting on page 7.

#### Online survey key findings

- A total of **2,511 respondents completed the online survey**
- 93% of respondents were from North Vancouver
  - An estimated 77% of respondents were from the District of North Vancouver

Dog owner and non-dog owner respondents shared common opinion on several topics:

- **Opportunities to connect with nature** was the most important aspect of District parks for both dog owners and non-dog owners alike, followed by **amenities and facilities, cleanliness, and environmental protection and wildlife habitat**. [Q1]
- Statements strongly supported (70%+) by dog owners and non-dog owners alike include:
  - **We all share responsibility for welcoming and inclusive parks** (over 90%)
  - **Provide dog-appropriate spaces** (over 80%)
  - **Improve dog waste management practices** (over 80%)
  - **Protect sensitive environmental areas** (over 80%)
  - **Communicate guidelines and rules** (over 70%)
  - **Parks provide important spaces for dogs** (70%+) [Q3]
- **Dog waste** was the top concern for dog owners and non-dog owners alike, followed by **impacts to the environment besides dog waste**. [Q2]

Dog owner and non-dog owner respondents differed in opinion on some topics:

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<sup>1</sup> Note that when dog owners and non-dog owners are referred to in this report, this means those respondents that chose to participate and share their thoughts and opinions on this topic.

- The statement about **whether dogs may be off leash if under control** had the largest difference in opinion, with 92% of dog owners who agreed compared to 52% of non-dog owners who agreed. [Q3]
- **Not following regulations, not enough enforcement, and conflicts with dogs or their owners** was of greater concern to non-dog owners (over 75%), than to dog owners (around 40-50%). [Q2]
- **Supporting rules and regulations through education and enforcement** was supported by 85% of non-dog owners and 65% of dog owners. [Q3]

Dog owner respondents shared:

- Many visit District parks with their dog on most days (65%)
- Top 2 reasons to visit District parks with a dog were to:
  - Exercise together (77%)
  - Exercise the dog (73%)
- Most walk their dog both on leash (82%) and off-leash (86%)
- Many would like more enclosed off-leash areas (55%), with Lynn Valley and Upper Lonsdale / Delbrook indicated as the top two areas
- Commonly suggested features for off-leash areas include: large & open space, off-leash trails, and dog waste bins.
- Most have one dog (67%)

When asked if there was anything else we should consider, respondents commonly mentioned a need for more off-leash areas and trails, more and improved enforcement, and concerns and issues with dogs not under control.

#### Intercept survey key findings:

- A total of **152 respondents participated in the intercept survey**
- 82% of respondents identified as residents of the District
- Top reason both dog owners and non-dog owners were visiting the park was for exercise
- 87% of respondents see other dogs in District parks every time they visit
- While most respondents report they never or rarely experience conflicts with dogs in District parks (75-79%), some respondents experience conflicts sometimes (15%-21%)
  - Of those who said they experience conflicts, the top two conflicts were dog waste and dogs off-leash where not permitted
- Many dog owner respondents visit a few times a week or more frequently (70%)
- When asked for suggestions to improve the experience for people and dogs in parks, respondents commonly mentioned a need for more off-leash areas and trails, more dog waste bins and bags

#### Pop-up events

The top three comment themes from the pop-up events include:

- Support for off-leash trails and areas
- Concern about dog waste not picked up and need more dog waste bins
- Concern about losing access to dog off-leash trails

## Who we heard from

North Vancouver residents represented 93% of online survey respondents (by postal code). For the intercept survey, 85% of respondents identified as North Vancouver residents with 82% identifying as District residents. Refer to the demographic sections of Appendix A and B for further information.

## Next steps

Key themes emerging from this engagement will be considered along with background research and analysis as the draft plan is developed. Further engagement opportunities will be available when the draft plan is prepared.

# OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

The District is developing a People, Dogs and Parks Strategic Plan to provide a framework for how people and dogs can share District parks in a fun, responsible and respectful way.

To learn more about key community values, ideas, and opportunities, the District conducted public and stakeholder engagement in fall 2023. This report summarizes feedback received through the **Phase 1** engagement.

The process to develop the plan is outlined below.



There were a total of 2,933 interactions with people at one or more of the engagement opportunities, which included an online survey, pop-up events, and intercept survey.

- Online survey: 2,511 respondents completed the survey
- Pop-up events: 270 participants
- Intercept survey: 152 participants

## ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The engagement program to inform the community and collect feedback on the People, Dogs and Parks Strategic Plan took place in November-December 2023.

There were a total of 2,933 interactions with people at one or more of the engagement opportunities, which included an online survey, pop-up events, and intercept survey.

The District promoted the engagement opportunities using the following methods:

Notification Method	Description	Dates
District of North Vancouver website	New page with project information and link to the online survey.	Webpage launched on November 14, 2023
Online engagement survey	Site including background information about the project and survey questions. There were 2,511 online survey respondents.	Engagement open from November 14 to December 5, 2023
Intercept survey	Intercept surveys were conducted by Park Rangers and District staff in November 2023 at 19 different parks. There were 152 respondents to the survey.	November 2023
Pop-up events	Pop-up, drop-by events were held at three locations across the District in the plazas outside of Parkgate Library, Lynn Valley Library, and Delbrook Community Centre. There were 270 participants.	November 15, 21, 22, 2023
Social media	Facebook, Instagram and X (formally known as Twitter) posts to promote the online survey. Combined total: 863 engagements; 12,075 impressions/reach. 8,809 Facebook post reach, 2,662 Twitter link views, 604 Instagram post reach.	November 14, 17, 20, 22, 30 and December 5
Information signs	Fifty 2' x 2' information signs posted throughout District parks.	Signs installed on November 15, 2023
Newspaper advertisements	Digital and print advertisements in the <i>North Shore News</i> .  Digital ads targeted to District residents resulted in 32,964 total impressions and 38 clicks.	One ¼ page print ad ran Nov. 22, 2023  Digital ad ran on <i>North Shore News</i> website on Nov. 15 – Dec. 1, 2023

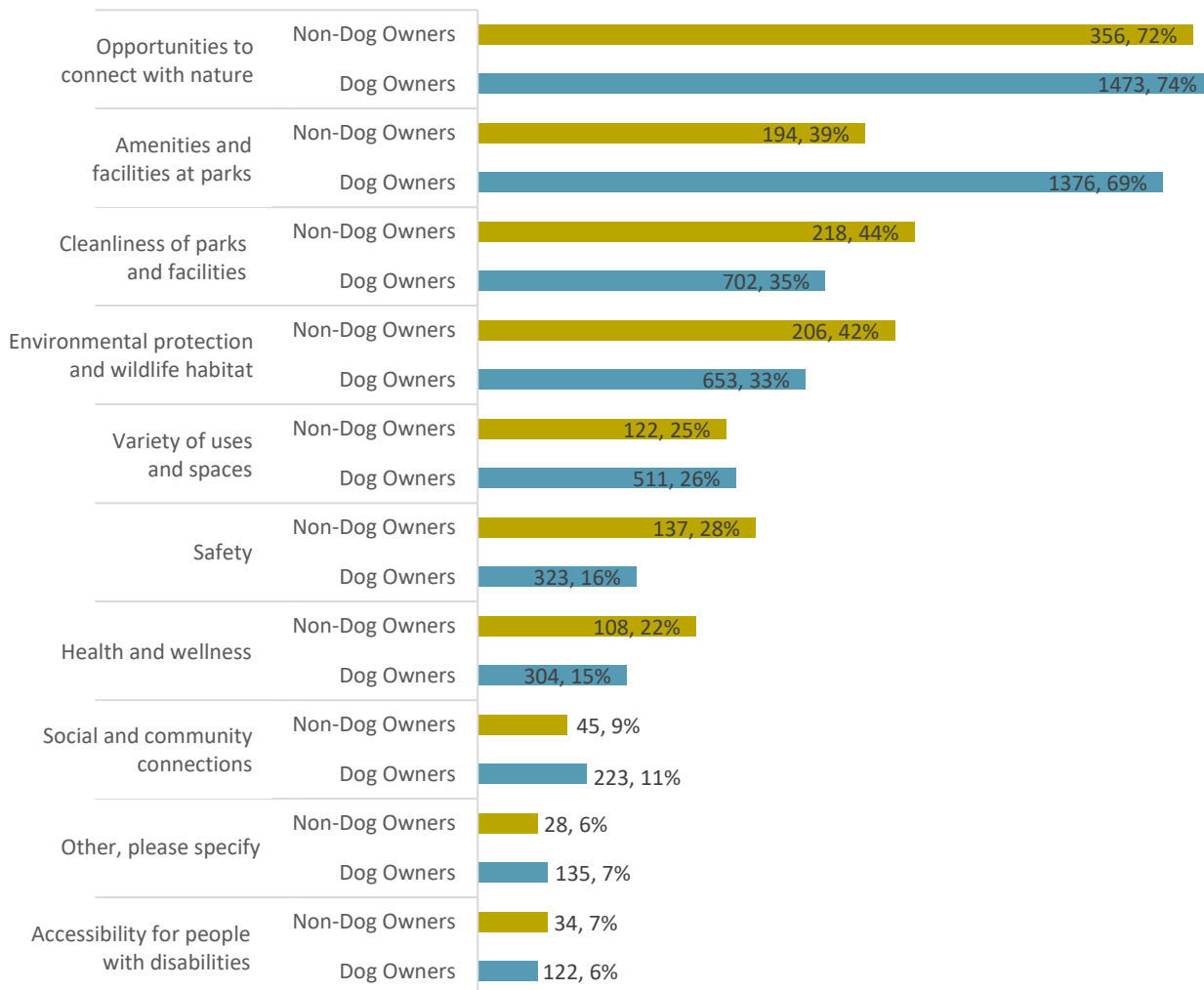
## APPENDIX A: ONLINE SURVEY

A total of 2,511 respondents completed the online survey, which was available online through the ZenCity Engage platform. Paper copies of the survey were available upon request (there were 0 requests).

Q1. When thinking about District parks generally, what are the top three most important considerations for you?

Total respondents: 2,491

Respondents could select up to three options. Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q6. Percentages show the number of respondents (dog owners or non-dog owners) who selected that option.



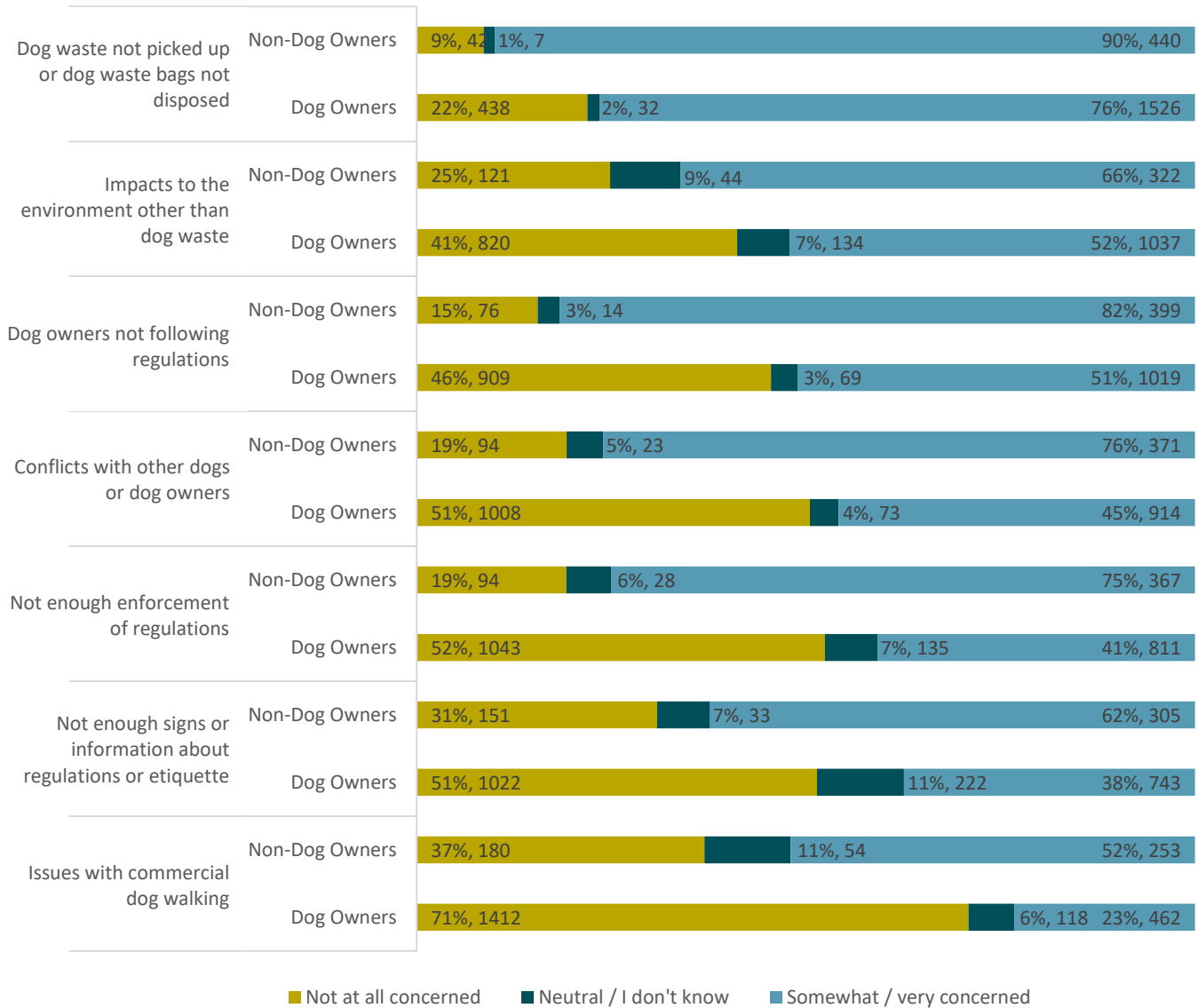
“Other” response themes with 10 or more responses reported below:

- Access to off-leash areas / trails – 38
- More off-leash areas / trails – 27
- Park and trail maintenance – 11

Q2. Please tell us how concerned you are about the following topics.

Total respondents: 2,495

Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q6.





Did we miss any concerns in the list above? If so, please tell us what they are.

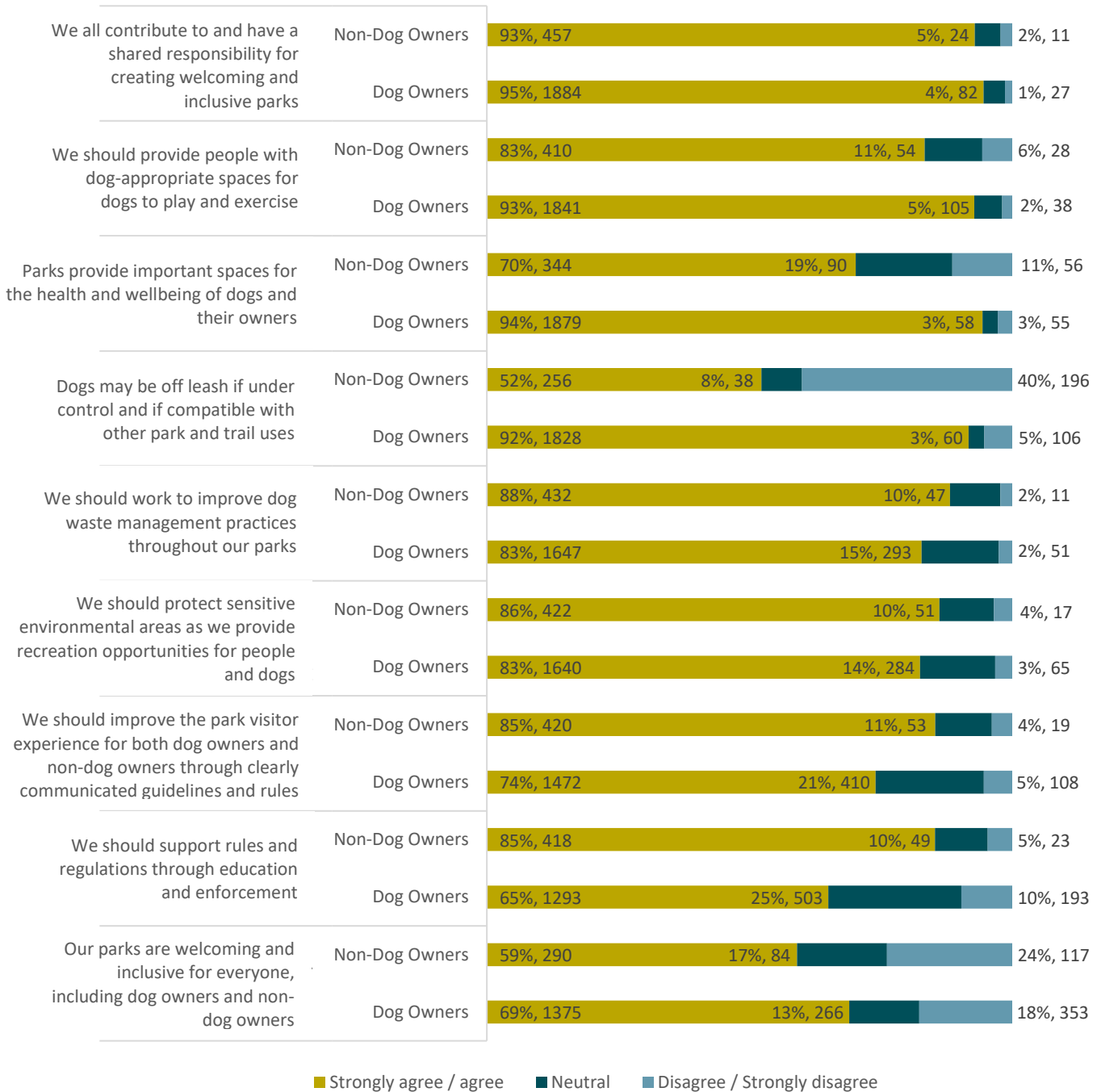
Response themes with 20 or more responses reported below:

- Need more off-leash areas / trails – 120
- Concerns / issues with mountain bikes / cyclists – 89
- Dog waste not picked up – 73
- Need more / improved enforcement – 69
- Off-leash dogs in on-leash / prohibited areas – 56
- Dog waste bins are good, need more – 45
- Concerns / issues with dogs not under control – 42
- Do not want to lose access to existing off leash areas – 39
- Commercial dog walkers provide a necessary service / are respectful – 31
- Concerns / issues with dogs injuring people (biting, scratching etc.) – 31
- People should accept / understand that they will encounter dogs in parks – 23
- Conflicts with dog owners / non-dog owners (interpersonal) – 21
- Dogs should be allowed more places / too many restrictions – 21

Q3. Please read the following statements and tell us if you agree.

Total respondents: 2,492

Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q6.



#### Q4. Is there anything else we should consider for the People, Dogs and Parks Strategic Plan?

Response themes with 20 or more responses reported below:

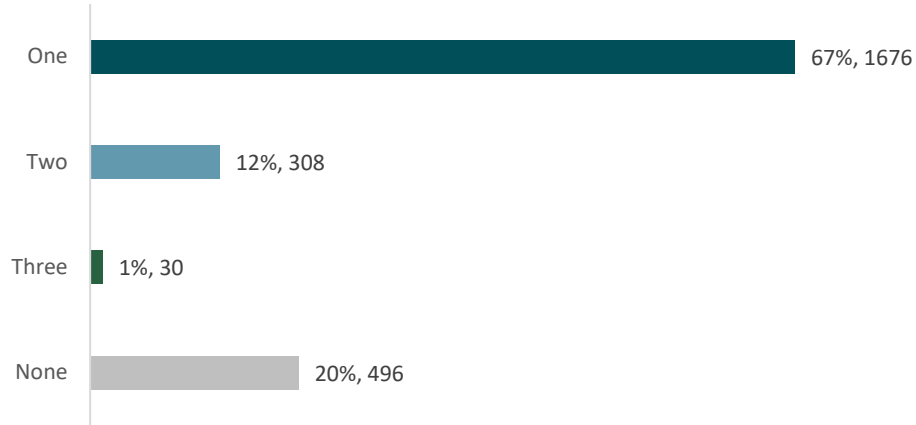
- Need more off-leash areas / trails – 119
- Need more / improved enforcement – 103
- Concerns / issues with dogs not under control – 79
- Fenced-in off-leash areas are not the solution – 75
- Educate people on trail etiquette / dog ownership etiquette / bylaws – 66
- Concerns / issues with mountain bikes / cyclists – 58
- Dog waste not picked up – 48
- Off-leash trails / areas are good – 47
- Off-leash dogs in on-leash / prohibited areas – 46
- Dog waste bins are good, need more – 40
- Most dog owners are respectful / a few “bad apples” – 40
- Dogs should be allowed more places (patios, playgrounds, etc.) / fewer restrictions – 40
- Need more fenced off-leash areas – 38
- Need more signage for etiquette and bylaws – 38
- Do not want to lose access to existing off leash areas – 34
- All dogs should be on-leash unless in designated areas – 30
- Concerns / issues sharing trails with multiple user groups – 28
- Commercial dog walkers provide a necessary service / are respectful – 27
- Concerns / issues with dogs injuring people (biting, scratching, etc.) – 24
- Off-leash dogs are okay if under control and well behaved – 24
- People should accept / understand that they will encounter dogs in parks – 22
- Concerns with dogs in areas with kids (playgrounds) – 21
- Consider seasonal and time-based bylaws / restrictions on dogs – 21
- Need both fenced and non-fenced off-leash areas – 20

#### Q5 Are you a commercial dog walker?

Of 2,491 respondents, 2% (57 people) shared that they are commercial dog walkers.

**Q6. How many dogs do you currently have in your household?**

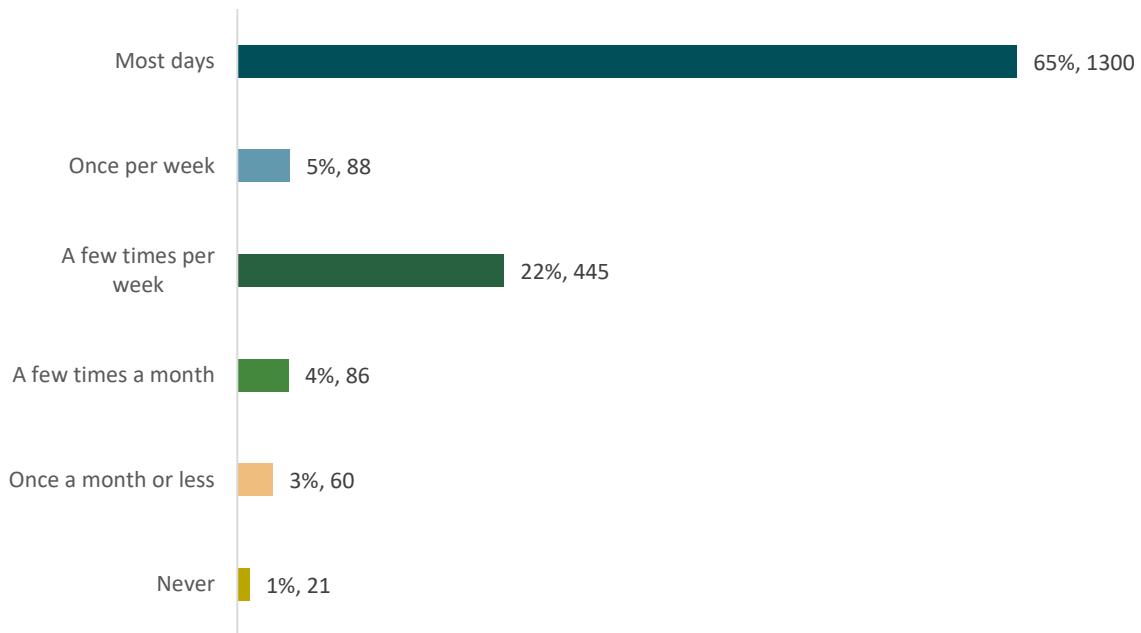
Total respondents: 2,510



If a respondent indicated they currently have one or more dogs in their household, they were asked to respond to Q7-14.

**Q7. How often do you visit District parks with a dog?**

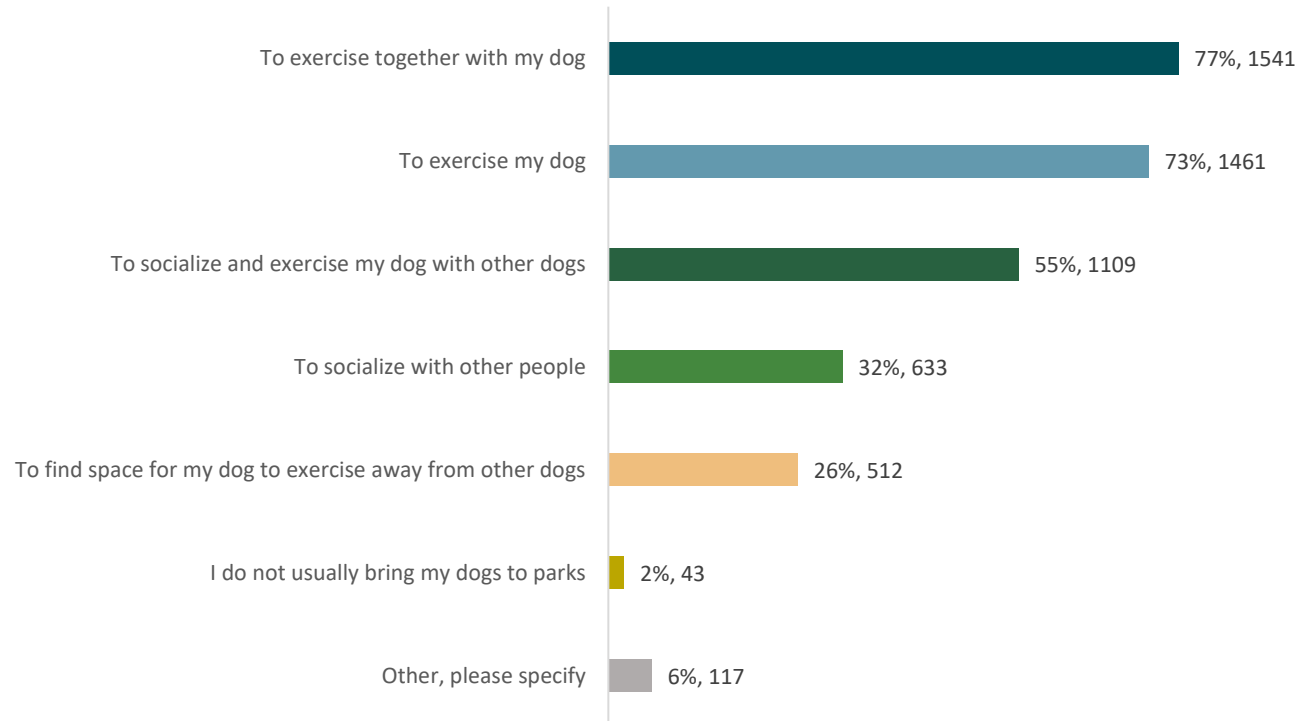
Total respondents: 2,000



Q8. If you bring your dog to District parks, what are the specific reasons? Select all that apply.

Total respondents: 2,002

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that activity.



**Other, please specify:**

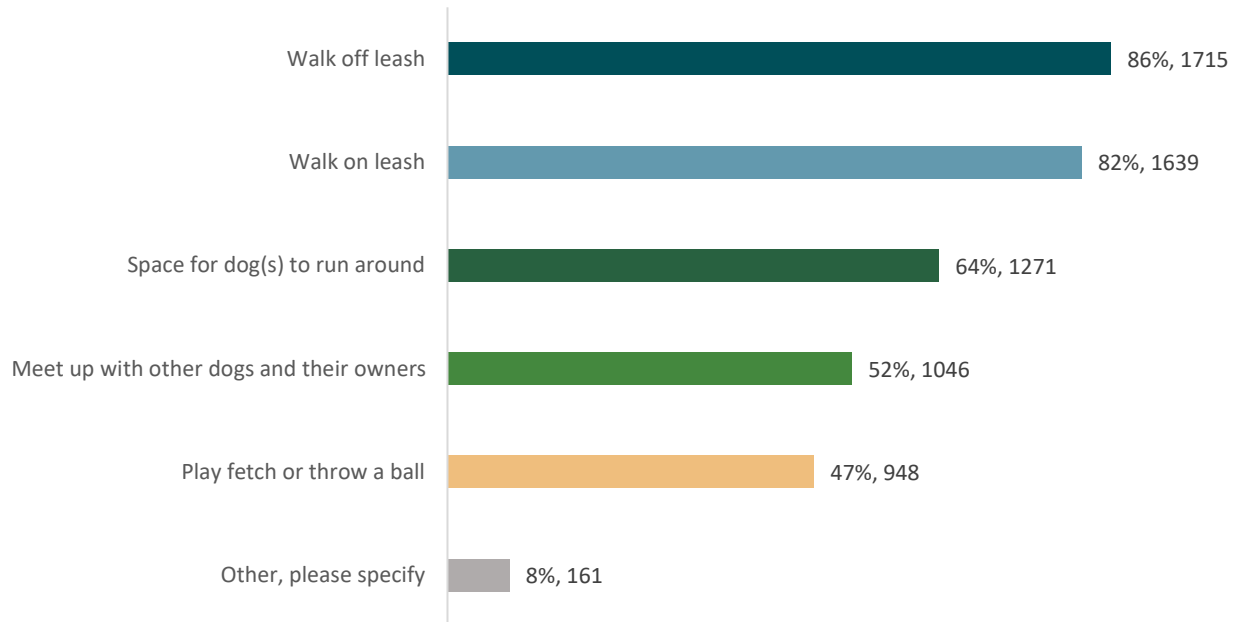
Response themes with 10 or more responses reported below:

- Enjoy nature / outdoors with my dog – 23
- Enjoy nature / outdoors – 22
- Socialize with others with my dog – 13
- Exercise my dog – 11

**Q9. What activities do you do with your dog?** Select all that apply.

Total respondents: 2,001

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that activity.



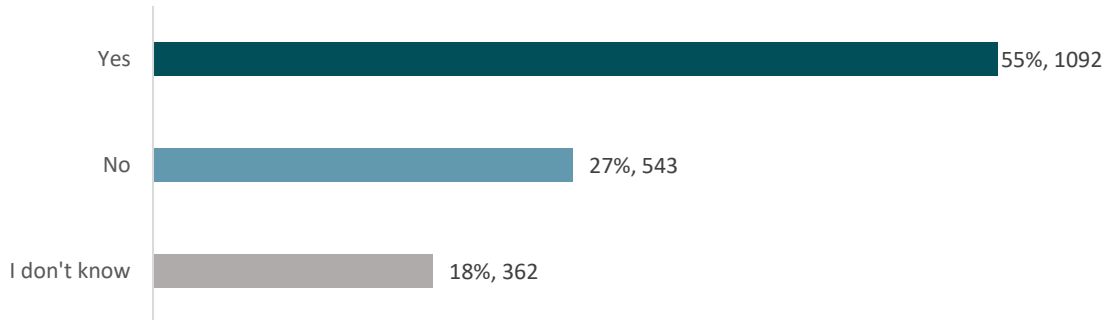
**Other, please specify:**

Response themes with 10 or more responses reported below:

- Swimming – 32
- Mountain biking / cycling – 26
- Running / jogging – 23
- Training dog – 22
- Walking / hiking – 15
- Hiking / exploring – 13

Q10. Would you like to see more enclosed off leash areas in the District?

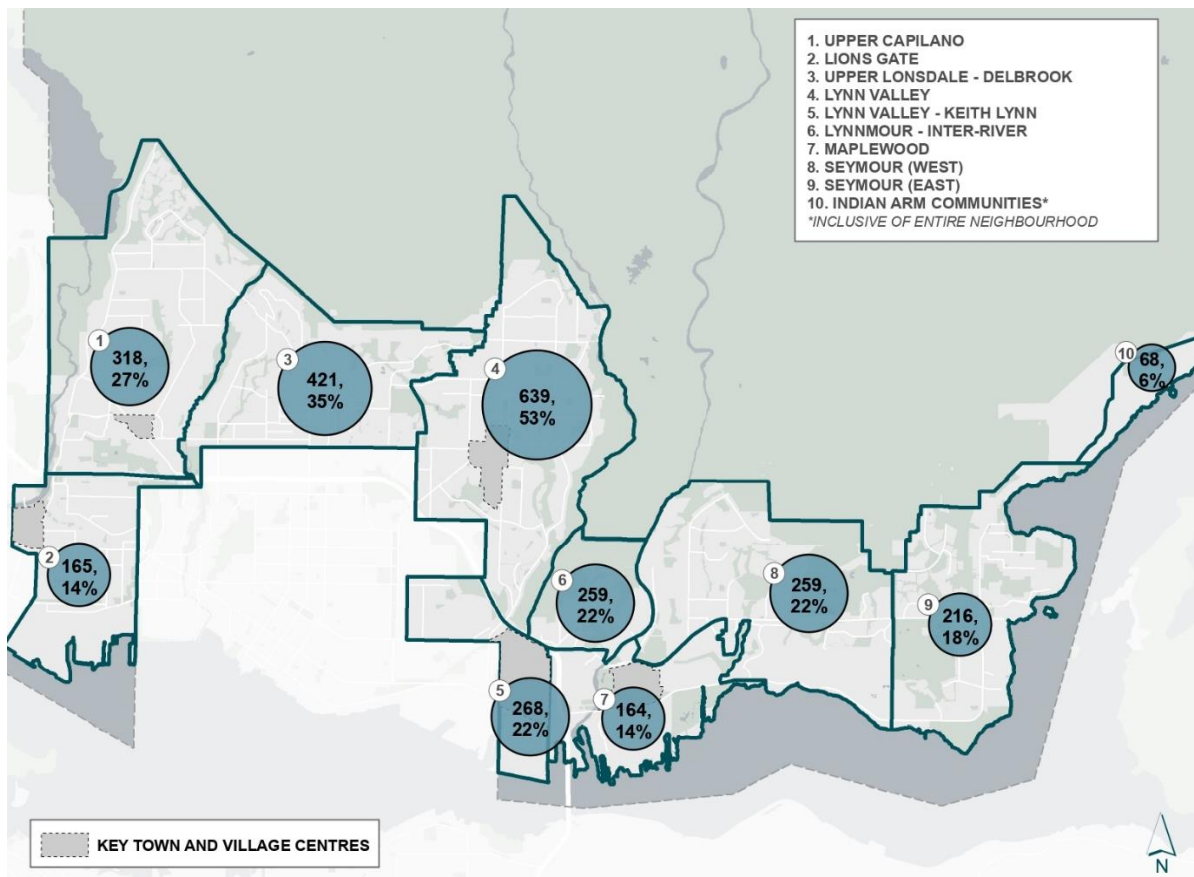
Total respondents: 1,997



Q11. If you answered "yes" to the above question, where would you like to see more off leash areas?

Total respondents: 1,195

Respondents could select up to three options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that option.



Map of neighbourhoods survey respondents would like to see more off leash areas

**Q12. Thinking about off leash areas, what features or design elements do you suggest we consider?**

Total respondents: 1,172

Response themes with 20 or more responses reported below:

- Don't want / like / use fenced-in off-leash areas – 209
- Large, open space – 193
- Off-leash trails are good, need more – 164
- Dog waste bins are good, need more – 140
- Water / beaches for swimming – 138
- Enclosed area – 113
- Separate areas for large and small dogs – 108
- Natural features (trees, logs, vegetation) – 106
- Water fountain with drinking water – 100
- Trails – 92
- Surfacing that doesn't get muddy or dusty – 65
- Shade / shelter – 63
- Dog waste bags – 58
- Grass fields – 56
- Agility equipment and obstacles – 52
- Double-gates – 39
- Need signage for etiquette / bylaws / education – 38
- Seating / benches – 37
- Lighting – 30
- Need both fenced and non-fenced off-leash areas – 24
- Separated / buffered from roadways – 21
- Need more / improved enforcement – 21

**Q13. Do you have outdoor space on the property where you live for your dog (for example, a backyard, dog run, or a washroom area)?**

Of 1,992 respondents, 65% (1,295 people) answered "yes".

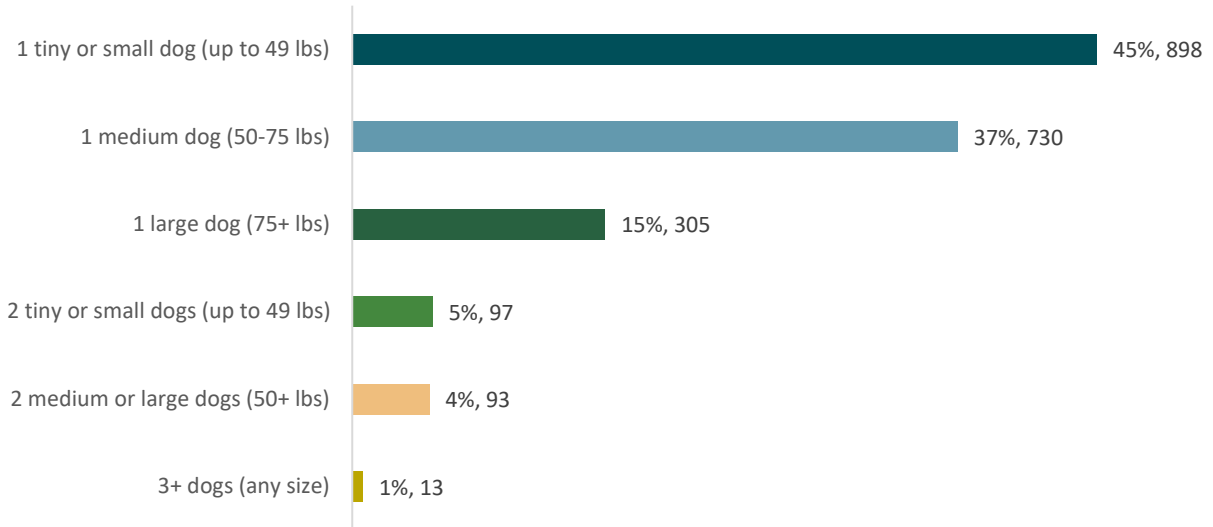
**Q14. If you have a dog, please tell us how many in your household?**

Total respondents: 1,976

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that option. Responses with 1% and above shown.

Of respondents, 45% had at least 1 tiny or small sized dog, and 37% had at least 1 medium sized dog.

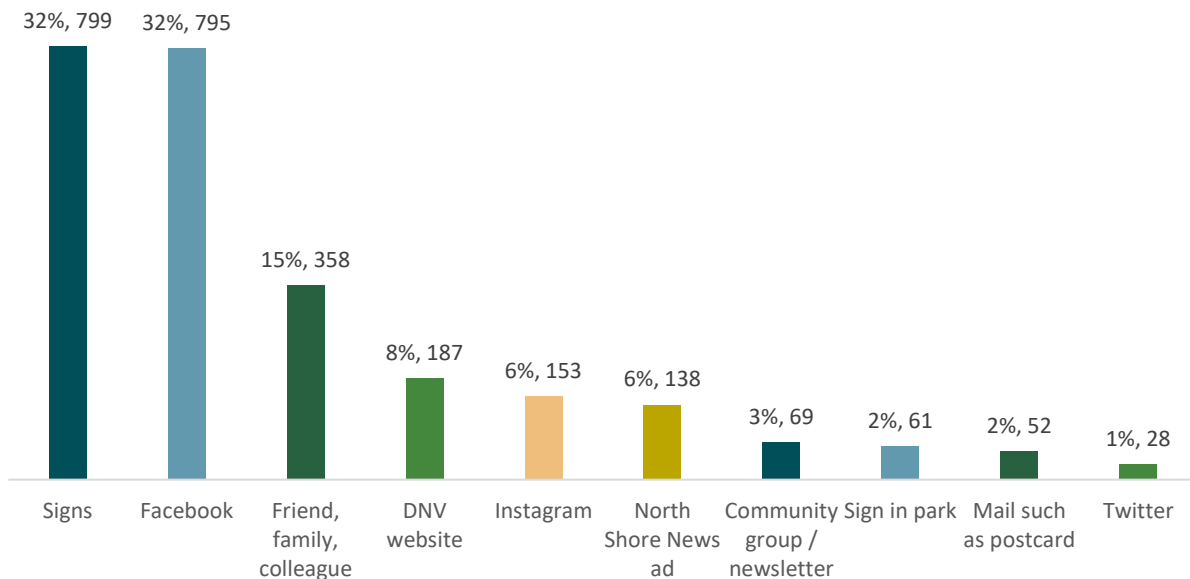




Q15. How did you hear about this engagement? Please select all that apply.

Total respondents: 2,460

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that option.



“Other” response themes reported below:

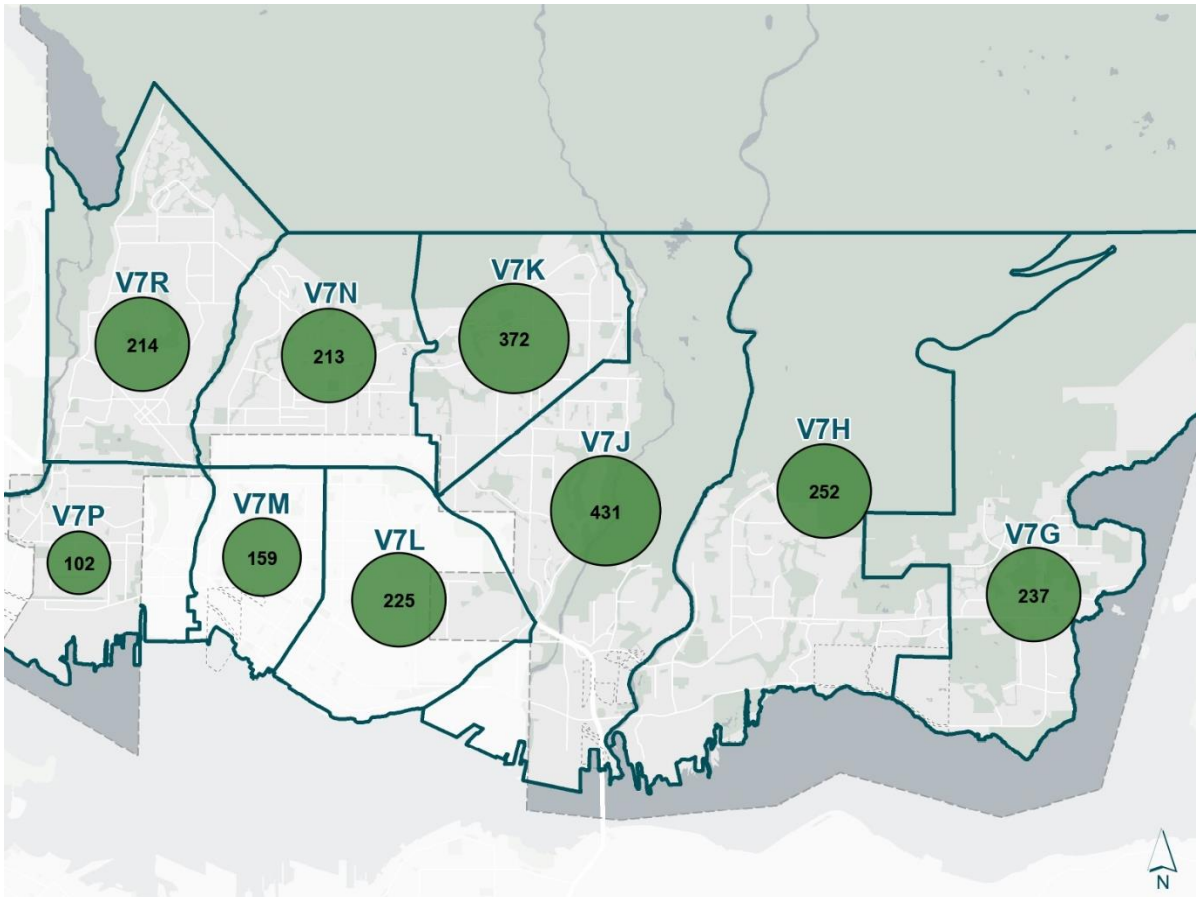
- District of North Vancouver staff – 31
- Social media (LinkedIn, Nextdoor) – 19
- Pop-up event – 16

**Q16. What are the first 3 digits of your postal code?**

Total respondents: 2,376

Total respondents from North Vancouver: 2,205 (93%)

Total estimated respondents from the District of North Vancouver: approximately 1,821 (77%) – note this is a general estimate only.



*Map of respondent postal codes*

Respondents from outside of North Vancouver: 171

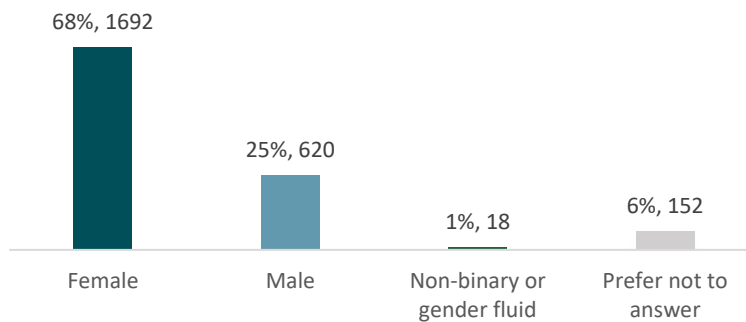
- Vancouver – 82
- West Vancouver – 40
- Burnaby – 21
- New Westminster – 4
- Port Moody – 3
- South of the Fraser River - 7
- Outside Lower Mainland - 9
- Outside BC – 5

Who we heard from: demographic questions

The District asks respondents to share demographic information to help determine if the District’s outreach efforts are reaching a balanced and diverse range of populations in the District.

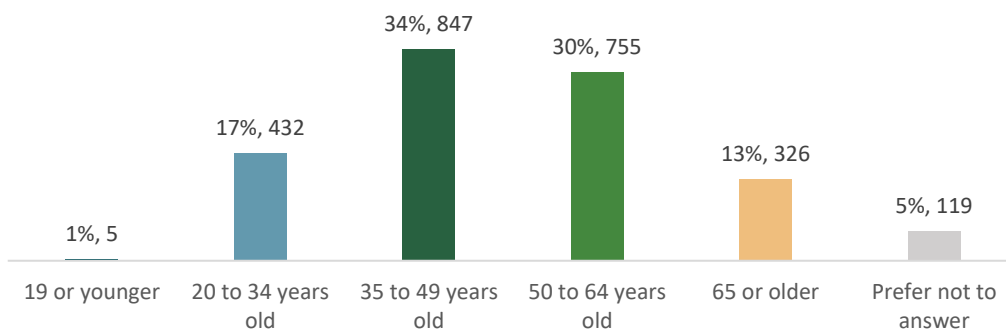
**Q17. What is your gender?**

Total respondents: 2,482



**Q18. What is your age range?**

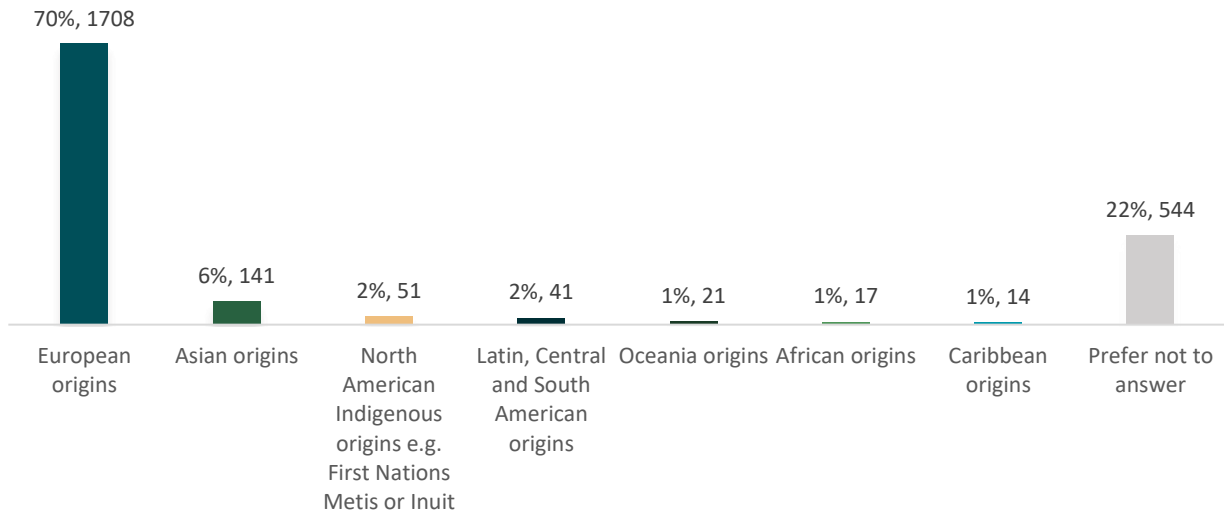
Total respondents: 2,484



**Q19. What is your ethnic origin?** Please select all that apply.

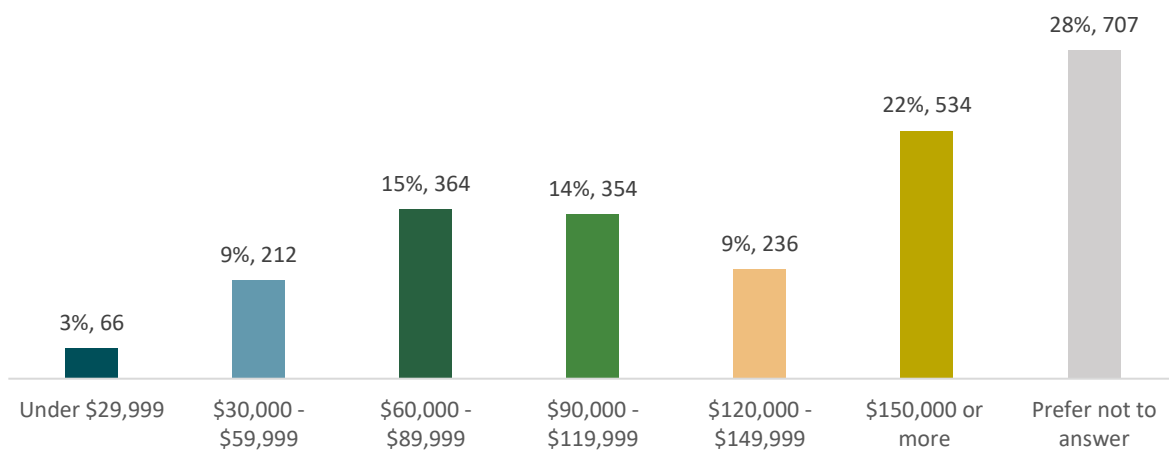
Total respondents: 2,447

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that activity.



**Q20. Which best describes your individual annual income?**

Total respondents: 2,473



## APPENDIX B: INTERCEPT SURVEY

### Format & methodology

The purpose of the intercept survey was to collect input from park users to get an understanding of the existing challenges and potential opportunities related to people and dogs sharing District parks.

Intercept surveys are intended to reach passerby audiences, with the goal of hearing from different user types and demographics than other engagement methods. It is intended to complement the results of the online survey.

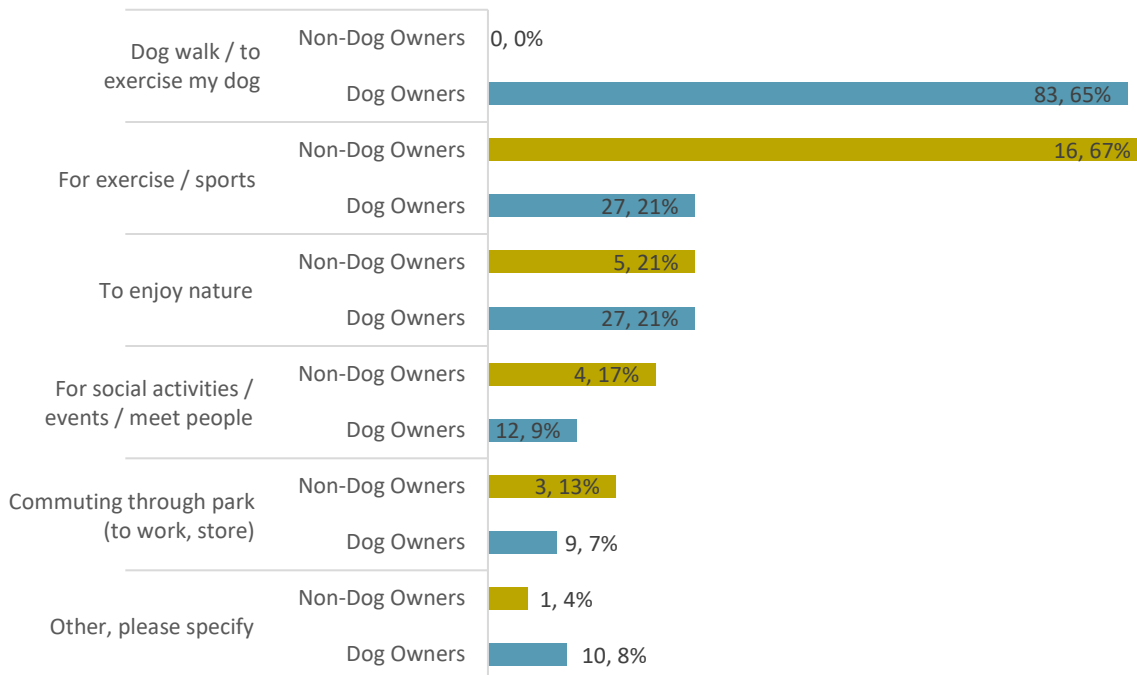
Intercept surveys were conducted by Park Rangers and District staff throughout the month of November 2023 at 19 parks across the District. Each location was surveyed for approximately 1 hour during both weekdays and weekend days and at different times of the day. Participation in the survey was voluntary. Respondents were asked survey questions verbally and staff recorded the responses.

In total, there were **152 respondents**.

### Q1: What brings you to the park today?

Total respondents: 151

Respondents could mention one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that activity. Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q2.



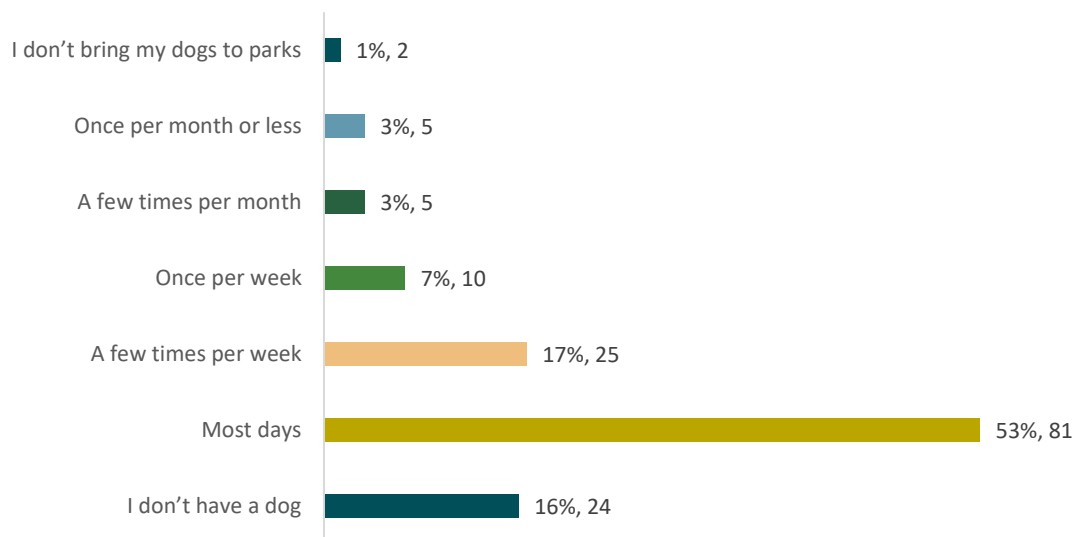
Other, please specify:

Response themes with 2 or more responses reported below:

- Playground – 2
- Volunteering – 2
- Flying club – 2

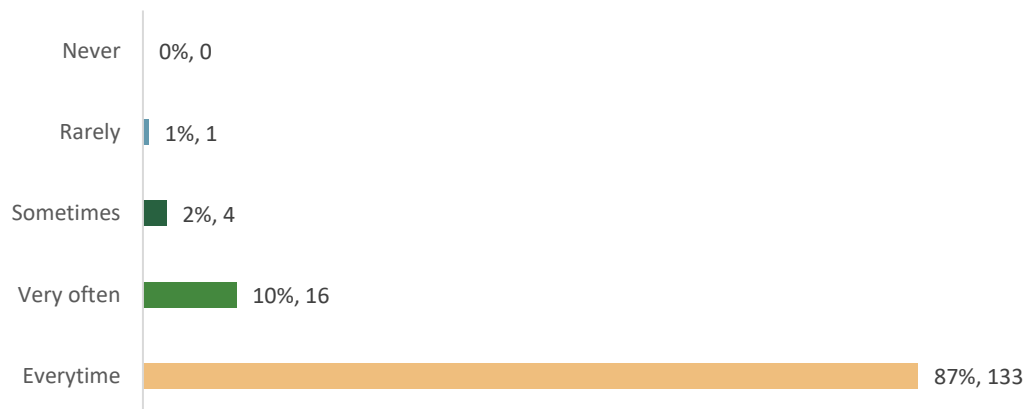
**Q2: How often do you visit parks in the District of North Vancouver with a dog?**

Total respondents: 152



**Q3: When you visit parks in the District of North Vancouver, how often do you see dogs (besides your own)?**

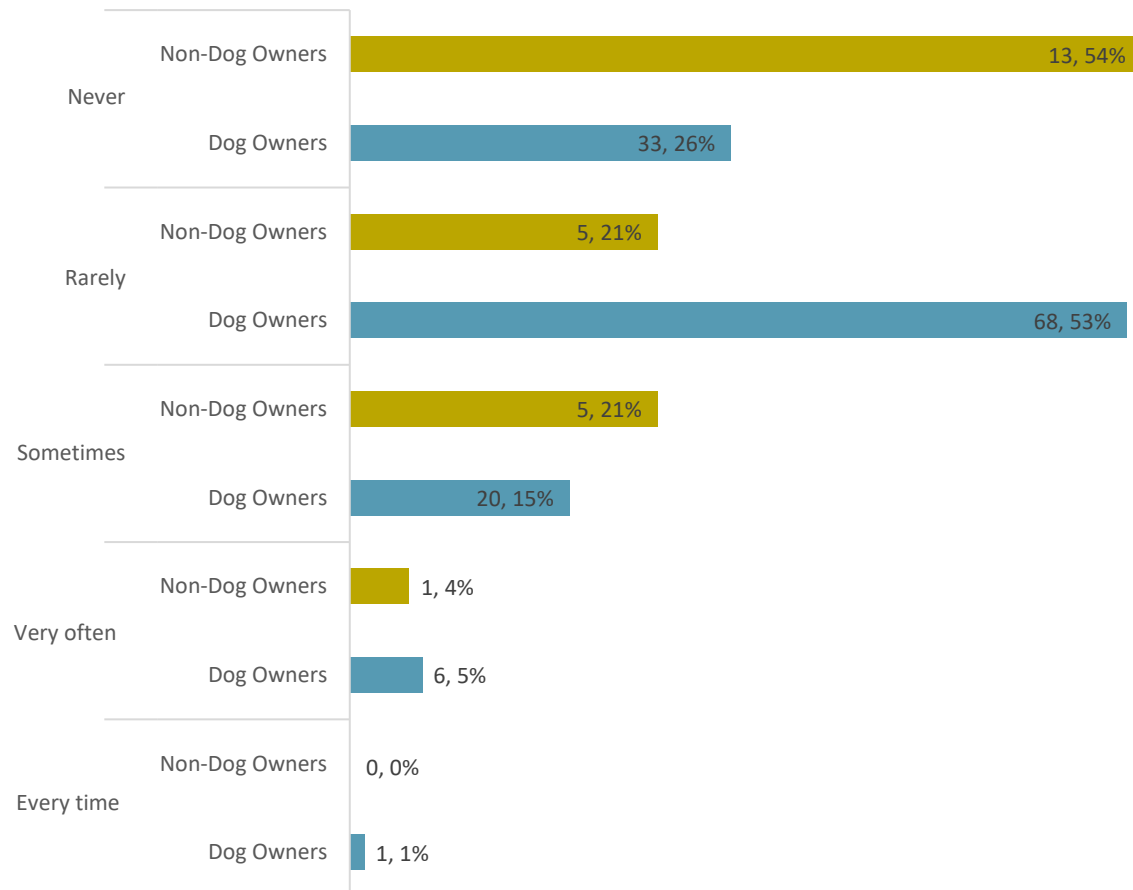
Total respondents: 152



**Q4: When you visit parks in the District of North Vancouver, how often do you experience conflicts with dogs?**

Total respondents: 152

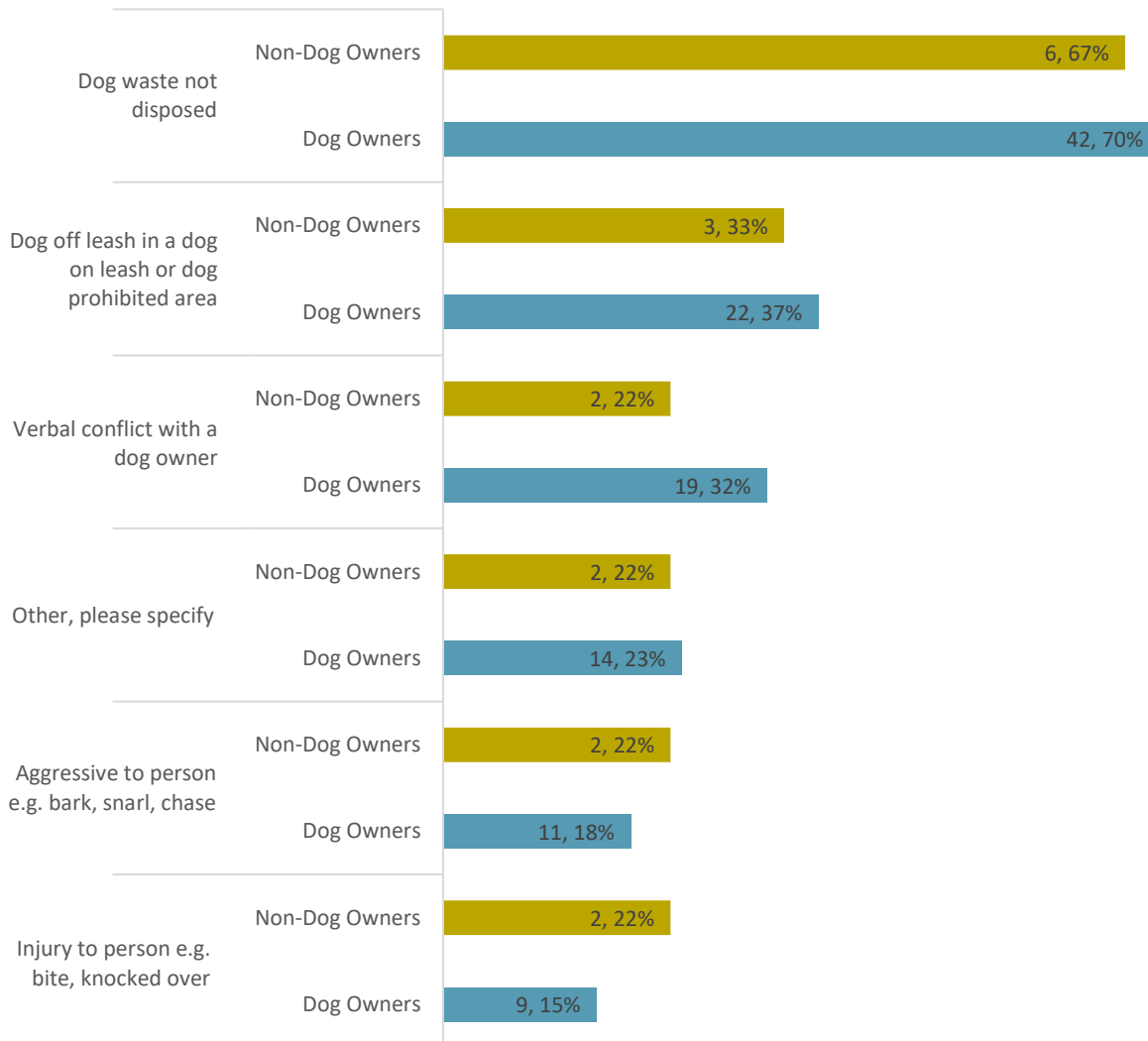
Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q2.



Q5: If you answered sometimes or more [in Q4], what type of conflicts do you experience with dogs?  
Select all that apply.

Total respondents: 69

Respondents could select one or more options. Percentages show the number of respondents who selected that activity. Results are shown by respondents who indicated they are dog owners and non-dog owners in Q2. Note some respondents who did not select “sometimes” or more in Q4 also answered this question.



Other, please specify:

Response themes with 5 or more responses:

- Dogs not under control / acting aggressively – 8



**Q6: Do you have any suggestions to help us improve the experience for people and dogs in parks?**

Total respondents: 147

Response themes with 10 or more responses reported below:

- Need more off-leash areas – 26
- Need more dog waste bins – 19
- Need more dog waste bags – 17
- No issues – 15
- Need more / improved enforcement – 15
- Dog waste not picked up – 14
- Need more signage (bylaws, etiquette) – 12

**Q7: I noticed your dog is off leash in this area, without any judgement or consequence, could you tell me why you chose to bring your dog to this place today?**

For this question, staff would approach park users with dogs that were off-leash in an area that is on-leash or prohibited to dogs to understand about their use of the area.

Total respondents: 30

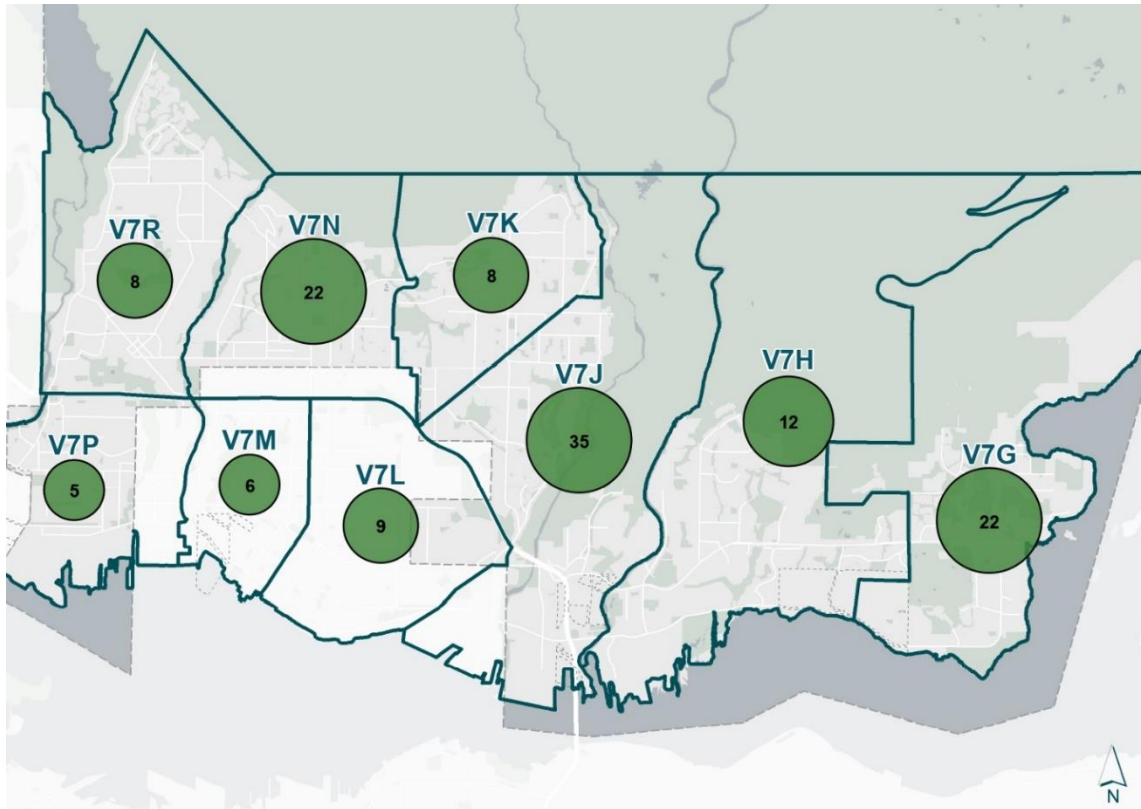
Response themes with 2 or more responses reported below:

- Accessible / convenient / close to home – 7
- No one else is around – 5
- Few other options – 5
- Rules aren't clear / don't make sense – 4
- Sports field / large open space for dog to run – 4
- Area used to be off-leash – 3
- Dog is well trained / good recall – 3
- Passing through – 3

Q8: What are the first three digits of your postal code?

Total respondents: 149

Total respondents from North Vancouver: 127 (85%)



Map of respondent postal codes

Respondents from outside of North Vancouver: 22

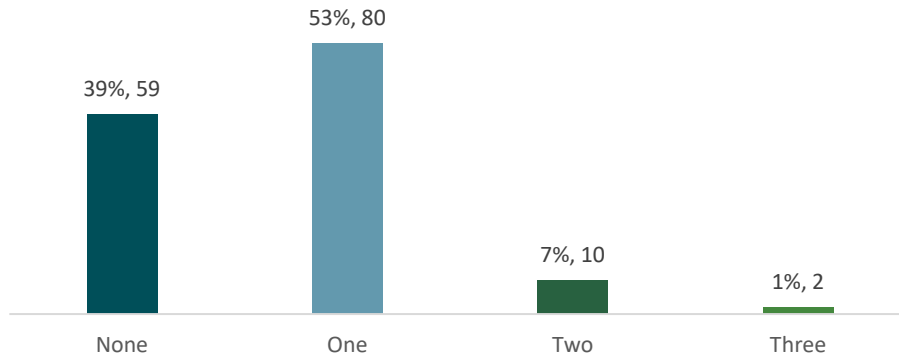
- Vancouver – 10
- Burnaby – 3
- New Westminster – 2
- West Vancouver – 1
- Other areas in the Lower Mainland – 5
- Outside BC – 1

Q9: Are you a resident of the District of North Vancouver?

Of 151 respondents, 124 (82%) were residents of the District.

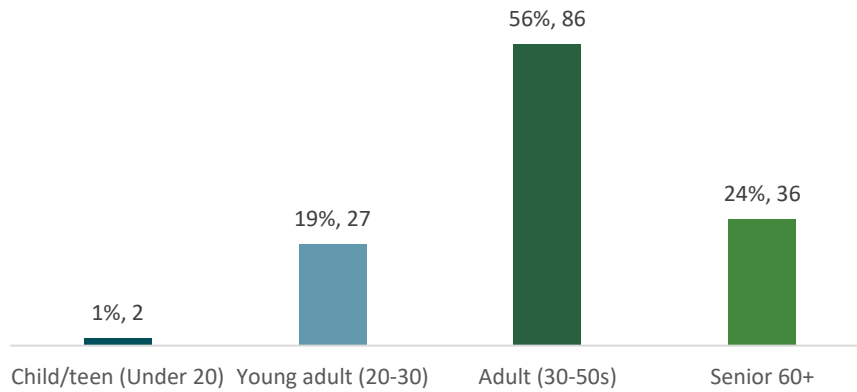
Q11: How many dogs with the respondent?

Total respondents: 151



Q12: Age guesstimate of the respondent.

Total respondents: 151



## APPENDIX C: POP-UP ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

### Format & methodology

The purpose of the pop-up engagement events was to meet with community members to learn more about key issues, opportunities and ideas for planning spaces for people and dogs in District parks, and to promote the online survey by handing out postcards. The pop-up engagement events were intended to reach passerby audiences, which may result in hearing from different user types or demographics than other engagement methods. It is intended to complement the online survey.

Three pop-up engagement events were conducted by District staff. In total, there were **210 participants** that interacted with staff at the pop-up events.

The events were held at:

- Parkgate Library / Community Centre, Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 10:00 am – noon (2 hours)
- Lynn Valley Public Library, Tuesday, November 21, 2023, 12:00 – 2:00 pm (2 hours)
- Mount Fromme trailhead, Wednesday, November 22, 2023, 3:00 – 5:00 pm (2 hours)

Locations and times for the events were selected for having high visibility, high likelihood of pedestrian passersby, and a variety of days and times (during daylight).

### Summary of main themes

Participants were able to provide comments that were recorded on sticky notes. Themes with 3 or more responses reported below.

- Off-leash trails and areas are good / need more - 13
- Dog waste not picked up / need more dog waste bins - 9
- Concerned about Princess Park (forest restoration signs are unclear, fencing, not engaged) - 8
- Off-leash dogs in on-leash / prohibited areas - 6
- Need more / improved enforcement - 5
- Engage dog owners regarding changes - 5
- Like having parking at dog off-leash parks - 3
- Improve dog bylaw signage - 3
- Concerns with mountain biking - 3
- Concerns with off-leash dogs injuring people - 3

## APPENDIX D: OTHER INPUT RECEIVED

Three emails were received with comments for the People, Dogs & Parks Strategic Plan.

Comments themes:

- Concern about dogs and dog waste on sports fields
- Support enforcement of dog waste bylaws
- Support for more dog waste bins
- Support enforcement of dog licencing
- Support for additional fenced off-leash areas, and with higher fences
- Support for fenced off-leash area for small dogs
- Suggestion for some parks and trails where dogs are not allowed
- Suggestion to expand the off-leash area in Inter River park, e.g. an area for throwing balls
- Suggestion of features within fenced off-leash areas, e.g. hills, trees, logs, not gravel surfacing